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Governor Bullock Announces Broadband Connectivity Progress in Montana Schools

100 percent of K-12 students in Montana have access to high-speed broadband according to FCC minimum goals

MONTANA – Governor Steve Bullock today announced that 100 percent of K-12 students now have access to high-speed broadband in accordance with the Federal Communications Commission's minimum goal. This milestone opens the door to expanded opportunities for teaching and learning in Montana classrooms.

"We need to continue bridge the gap between urban and rural schools and ensure that every classroom is equipped with 21st-century technology to allow our teachers to be innovative and for students to be better prepared for a modern and changing workforce," Governor Bullock said. **"Every student in Montana now has access to high-speed broadband and we continue to work with local, state and federal partners to further enhance this access in every corner of the state."**

A [report](#) released today from EducationSuperHighway highlights the status of broadband connectivity in the nation's K-12 public schools. The report found that 100 percent of school districts in Montana can access the internet at speeds at 100 Kbps per student, up from 98 percent a year ago. This is up from 78% in 2015.

Montana schools are also making significant progress toward the FCC's long-term bandwidth goal of 1 Mbps per student. In Montana, 64 percent of schools upgraded to scalable infrastructure since 2016. The work to upgrade the remaining 62 schools continues, as having scalable infrastructure in place enables schools to keep up with growing bandwidth demand due to increasing digital innovation in K-12 classrooms.

"The progress that Governor Bullock has made in connecting Montana's classrooms is significant, and we applaud his efforts to ensure that digital learning isn't just a promise anymore — it's a reality," said Evan Marwell, CEO at EducationSuperHighway.

The state first partnered with national non-profit EducationSuperHighway in 2015 to increase access to reliable broadband in schools.

A [video](#) recently released by EducationSuperHighway highlights Governor Bullock's back to school visit to West Valley School north of Kalispell. Governor Bullock celebrated the school's progress in ensuring students have regular access to digital learning opportunities. In 2016, West Valley School had 30 Mbps of internet connection and has since upgraded to 200 Mbps.

Since partnering with EducationSuperHighway beginning in 2015:

- *Fiber access is expanding:* **over 60%** of Montana schools have upgraded to fiber. 450 Montana schools now have scalable infrastructure and only 62 schools still need to be upgraded to scalable infrastructure.
- *Demand is growing:* median bandwidth speeds have **increased by nearly 5 times**.
- *Cost is decreasing:* the median price of bandwidth has **decreased by 76%** from \$10.00 per Mbps to \$2.40 per Mbps.

Montana school districts can learn more about the support available to upgrade broadband by visiting educationsuperhighway.org/districts.

About the State of the States Report

EducationSuperHighway's State of the States report tracks progress toward the K-12 connectivity goals established by the Federal Communications Commission and provides state leaders with the information needed to finish the job of connecting America's students to high-speed broadband. The report, published annually, is based on publicly available E-rate data.

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