

# Cherokee County Schools

To Whom It May Concern:

E-rate funding has provided Internet and WAN access to all students and teachers in Cherokee County Schools. Without E-rate support, the expense of providing this connectivity at current levels would not be possible.

Teachers and students can be observed on a daily basis utilizing the resources of the Internet in instruction. Virtual field trips, remote dissections, research, curriculum enhancements, and web-quests are only a few of the activities that are being conducted. Additionally, teachers are using the resources available to them to improve teacher-to-parent, teacher-to-student, and peer contacts via e-mail and telecommunication mechanisms.

Future plans include upgrading the network infrastructure to accommodate the additional computing demands that are being placed upon the network. Without E-rate funding, this project will certainly not be completed in a timely manner, if at all. Providing the connectivity necessary for Internet access for teachers and students is important as the world continues to rely more strongly upon electronic resources available through the Internet.

If E-rate funding went away, the pipeline with which these resources are provided would shrink, and even possibly disappear. Technology is evolving at a pace that requires constant upgrades and attention to ensure the adequate operation of the networks. It is with E-rate funds that this infrastructure can be successfully implemented.

There is no argument that the funding provided through E-rate is a great benefit for school systems. However, the process required to obtain funding could use some tweaking. The paperwork and time burden placed upon districts is increasing exponentially yearly. Many districts do not apply for E-rate funding because of the overly complex process. Not only is the process cumbersome, but the rules and reviews are confusing and difficult to interpret. Some clearer and simpler guidelines would make the process much easier for those involved. Time spent worrying about correctly completing numerous cumbersome applications would be better spent providing technology to teachers and students in our schools.

- Jimmy Myrick, Cherokee County Schools