
From: Jennifer Eller [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, May 10, 2023 9:49 AM
To: House Finance
Subject: Re: SB 140-Increase funding for Internet Services for schools

My apologies, the previous email should have stated, HB193.

Thanks,
Jennifer

On Wed, May 10, 2023 at 9:11 AM Jennifer Eller [REDACTED] wrote:
House Finance Committee,

Currently, Internet for Bering Strait School District is capped at 25Mbps as this is the current maximum speed that is allowed with the Alaska School Broadband Assistance Grant. Without this grant, the financial burden to our district to operate at these speeds would exceed our budget. This grant is imperative to the operations and education of the students in the Bering Strait School District.

As educators in rural Alaska, we face many challenges that limit our ability to provide quality education to our students. One of the most significant barriers is limited access to high-speed internet. Despite its importance in modern education, the cost of internet access is not always adequately accounted for in the base student allocation funding. As a result, rural districts like ours often rely on programs like E-rate and BAG to cover a substantial portion of the cost of internet services in our schools.

However, even with additional funding, it remains challenging to increase our internet speeds to match those of schools in other parts of the country. For example, we can only operate at speeds of up to 25 Mbps, which is the FCC's minimum speed to be considered broadband. This puts our students at a significant disadvantage and limits their access to the kind of cutting-edge learning opportunities that are available to their peers in more urban areas. To make matters worse, our technical staff is forced to spend significant time and effort "sleuthing" our network to restrict access and ensure that the basic functionality of the internet is available to our students and staff. This takes time and resources away from providing innovative learning opportunities that could truly benefit our students.

Finally, limited internet access also creates significant problems during state testing, as we are unable to operate at speeds greater than 25Mbps. As a result, we must stagger testing start times and for the most part, only test one classroom at a time, which not only disrupts the normal flow of the school day for weeks but also hinders opportunities for advanced instruction. This situation highlights the urgent need for additional funding and support to help rural schools like ours meet the needs of our students and provide them with the education they deserve.

I strongly urge the Senate Finance Committee to approve [Senate Bill 140](#), Internet for Schools and support rural education with the increase of BAG support to 100Mbps to improve internet access in Alaska's Schools and ensure that Alaska students have the tools they need to succeed in the digital age.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

--
Jennifer Eller
Educational Technology Coordinator

Bering Strait School District
[REDACTED]

--

Jennifer Eller
Educational Technology Coordinator
Bering Strait School District
[REDACTED]

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From: Jennifer Eller <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Wednesday, May 10, 2023 9:12 AM
To: House Finance
Subject: SB 140-Increase funding for Internet Services for schools

House Finance Committee,

Currently, Internet for Bering Strait School District is capped at 25Mbps as this is the current maximum speed that is allowed with the Alaska School Broadband Assistance Grant. Without this grant, the financial burden to our district to operate at these speeds would exceed our budget. This grant is imperative to the operations and education of the students in the Bering Strait School District.

As educators in rural Alaska, we face many challenges that limit our ability to provide quality education to our students. One of the most significant barriers is limited access to high-speed internet. Despite its importance in modern education, the cost of internet access is not always adequately accounted for in the base student allocation funding. As a result, rural districts like ours often rely on programs like E-rate and BAG to cover a substantial portion of the cost of internet services in our schools.

However, even with additional funding, it remains challenging to increase our internet speeds to match those of schools in other parts of the country. For example, we can only operate at speeds of up to 25 Mbps, which is the FCC's minimum speed to be considered broadband. This puts our students at a significant disadvantage and limits their access to the kind of cutting-edge learning opportunities that are available to their peers in more urban areas. To make matters worse, our technical staff is forced to spend significant time and effort "sleuthing" our network to restrict access and ensure that the basic functionality of the internet is available to our students and staff. This takes time and resources away from providing innovative learning opportunities that could truly benefit our students.

Finally, limited internet access also creates significant problems during state testing, as we are unable to operate at speeds greater than 25Mbps. As a result, we must stagger testing start times and for the most part, only test one classroom at a time, which not only disrupts the normal flow of the school day for weeks but also hinders opportunities for advanced instruction. This situation highlights the urgent need for additional funding and support to help rural schools like ours meet the needs of our students and provide them with the education they deserve.

I strongly urge the Senate Finance Committee to approve [Senate Bill 140](#), Internet for Schools and support rural education with the increase of BAG support to 100Mbps to improve internet access in Alaska's Schools and ensure that Alaska students have the tools they need to succeed in the digital age.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

--

Jennifer Eller
Educational Technology Coordinator
Bering Strait School District
[REDACTED]

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From: Jacinda Ahkvaluk [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, May 10, 2023 9:55 AM
To: House Finance
Cc: Santiago Hubahib
Subject: INTERNET speed

May I Request to increase speed internet to 25mbs to 100mbs in our Diomedes School.

Thank you

Truly yours,

JJ

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From: Jacinda Ahkvaluk [REDACTED] >
Sent: Wednesday, May 10, 2023 9:43 AM
To: House Finance; Santiago Hubahib
Subject: INTERNET speed

Request to increase speed internet from 25mbps to 100mbps in our Diomedes School.

Thank you

Very truly yours,

JJ

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From: Nova Ahkvaluk <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Wednesday, May 10, 2023 9:42 AM
To: House Finance
Cc: Susan Nedza
Subject: INTERNET SPEED

Dear Sir/Madam:

May I request to help our school internet speed increase from 5 to 100 mbs since our net here is very slow. Hope to hear from you soon.

Thank you.

Very truly yours,

Nova

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From: Kristen Ozenna <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Wednesday, May 10, 2023 9:46 AM
To: House Finance
Cc: Susan Nedza; Santiago Hubahib
Subject: Internet Speed

Dear Madam/Sir:
Greetings!

I am writing in behalf of our school which has only 5 mbs for our internet speed connection. This really affects our engagement in doing our school work. Please increase the speed to 100 mbs. Thank you.

Sincerely yours,

Kristen

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From: Jacinda Ahkvaluk [REDACTED] >
Sent: Wednesday, May 10, 2023 9:41 AM
To: House Finance
Cc: Santiago Hubahib
Subject: INTERNET speed

Request to increase speed internet from 25mbs to 100mbs in our Diomedes School. Very truly yours, 🙏

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From: Kristen Ozenna [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, May 10, 2023 9:39 AM
To: House Finance; santiago.hubahib@dio.bssd.gov
Subject: INTERNET SPEED

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From: Jeremy Ahkvaluk [REDACTED] >
Sent: Wednesday, May 10, 2023 9:38 AM
To: House Finance
Cc: Susan Nedza
Subject: internet speed

Dear Sir/Madam:

May I request to increase the speed our internet in school from 5mbs to 100 mbs since it will make our learning more engaging.

Thank you.

Sincerely yours,

Jeremy

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From: Peter Hubahib [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, May 10, 2023 9:29 AM
To: House Finance
Cc: Santiago Hubahib
Subject: INTERNET SPEED

Request to increase speed internet from 25mbs to 100mbs

Very truly yours,

Peter

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From: Liliana Miklahook [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, May 10, 2023 10:51 AM
To: House Finance; Susan Nedza

To the house finance committee my name is Liliana miklahook. I'm a 7th grader at Savoonga, Alaska. I'm writing this message to your committee today to petition for increasing our 25 Mbps internet speed to 100 Mbps. This would be a huge help than you.

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From: Riel Pungowiyi-Murdock <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Wednesday, May 10, 2023 9:39 AM
To: House Finance; Susan Nedza

To the House Finance committee My name is Riel. I'm a 6th grader at Savoonga, Alaska. i'm writing this message to your committee today to petition for increasing our 25 mbs internet speed to 100 mbs . this would be a huge help thank you

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From: Kayden Wongittilin-Pungowiyi [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, May 10, 2023 9:33 AM
To: House Finance; Susan Nedza

hello my name is kayden Drew Curtis Sukallqaq Tasighuvik Wongittilin-pungowiyi i'm a 6th grader in savoonga, alaska i'm writing this message to your committee today to petition for increasing our internet speed from 25mbs to 100mbs this would be a huge help to get our work done faster thank you!!!!

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From: Jose Villamor [REDACTED] >
Sent: Wednesday, May 10, 2023 11:43 AM
To: House Finance
Subject: increase school internet speed

House Finance Committee,

I hope this email finds you well.

I would like to ask from your good office to increase school internet speed from 25mbs to 100mbs to have a better and faster internet connection. Faster internet connection means no time wasted in our instruction and delivery of our lessons.

Thank you very much!

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From: Margaret Gray [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, May 10, 2023 10:54 AM
To: House Finance
Subject: Increase School Internet Speed
Attachments: Internet Speed Increase.pdf

To Whom It May Concern:

Please see attached letter regarding support for increasing schools' internet speeds.

Thank you,

--

Maggie Gray

NACTEC Program Coordinator

Northwestern Alaska Career and Technical Center

[REDACTED]

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From: Cheryl Lusares <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Wednesday, May 10, 2023 11:44 AM
To: House Finance
Subject: INTERNET SPEED INCREASE

Dear Sir/Ma'am,

I am writing on behalf of my school district Bering Strait School District and my students from Savoonga, Alaska.

I strongly believe that we need an increase of internet speed from 25mbps to 100mbps. You see, our district caters to rural schools in the area. Being in this far distant land specifically, our students are deprived of opportunities to travel, to see and experience what it is like in the big cities. We are always behind with what's happening in the world. We are always the last to know of the news and development that's going on around. Through increasing our internet speed, they have more chances of utilizing the technology and being online and connected to the big world. Our students will also have the chance to communicate and learn online from key persons, too.

Thank you so much for this chance to be heard.

Respectfully,

--

Cheryl C. Lusares
HS Science Teacher
Hogarth Kingeekuk Sr. Memorial School
Bering Strait School District
[REDACTED]

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Respectfully,

--

Cheryl C. Lusares
HS Science Teacher
Hogarth Kingeekuk Sr. Memorial School
Bering Strait School District
[REDACTED]

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From: Heather Swanson [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, May 10, 2023 9:23 AM
To: House Finance
Subject: Internet Speed Increase

Dear House Finance Committee,

Please support funding to raise our school Internet speed from 25 mbs to 100 mbs.

I am a first and second grade teacher in Koyuk, Alaska. I am also a parent of 4 children who attend Koyuk School.

Our school Internet Speed is currently 25 mbs. Though we are very appreciative for having Internet, this speed is quite slow and causes a variety of problems throughout the day. Beginning with morning attendance, there are some days when the Power School program won't even load to accurately take attendance. This wastes instructional time waiting for it to load.

Later in the day, during science, our science website takes so long to load that I don't even use it because it wastes instructional time to wait. But, not using the program, prevents students from seeing videos and animations that would enhance understanding of the concepts they are learning.

In addition, during benchmark and state wide testing, we have to use the computers in shifts because if we have too many students on at one time, the testing apps won't load. As a result, some students have to test in the afternoon, when they are sleepy. This creates a less than ideal testing environment.

Please support funding to raise our school Internet speed from 25 mbs to 100 mbs. Thank you!

Heather Swanson
Koyuk Malimiut School
1-2 grade teacher

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From: Robert Cooper [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, May 10, 2023 11:59 AM
To: House Finance
Subject: Increasing school internet speed

To whom it may concern,

It is vital that the internet speed for schools be increased both for student achievement and for the more efficient operation of the school districts.

Robert Cooper
Asst Principal
Stebbins, Alaska

Sent from my iPhone

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N2QOHHGav35GMLJA4Xcu0_NfhB\$ >. If the reader of this message is not the intended recipient, you are hereby notified that any dissemination, distribution, or copying of this message (including any attachments) is strictly prohibited. If you have received this message in error, please destroy all copies of the original message (including attachments) and notify me immediately.

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Robert Cooper
Asst Principal
Stebbins, Alaska

Sent from my iPhone

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From: Malia Gabbitas <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Wednesday, May 10, 2023 10:28 AM
To: House Finance
Subject: Increasing school internet speed

House Finance Committee,

Increasing the speed of school internet from 25mbs to 100mbs would benefit our schools in rural Alaska. The AK-Star test is given online, and losing internet connection during the testing window (which has happened here) along with much of the curriculum and student practice of skills which are done online, is hampering our ability to provide needed services to these students in these rural areas. Please increase the speed of the school internet.

Malia Gabbitas
Special Education Teacher
White Mountain School
Bering Strait School District.

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From: Rebecca Siegel <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Wednesday, May 10, 2023 10:08 AM
To: House Finance
Subject: Increasing School Internet Speed

To the House Finance Committee:

My name is Rebecca Siegel. I am a teacher at Brevig Mission School in Brevig Mission, AK. Our school relies on internet for many aspects of student learning, such as:

- The PowerSchool software that manages attendance
- MAP Testing to monitor student progress
- Annual AK STAR testing
- Accessing educational materials such as simulations for science class, primary sources in social studies, and reading programs.
- Communications
- Simply using a chromebook requires an internet connection

Unfortunately, the internet in our school is often slow and overloaded. Students must sit and wait while the programs they need to learn load extremely slowly, or fail to load at all. A better internet connection means that our students will have more time to learn, and will be able to learn without interruptions. Please increase school internet speed from 25mbs to 100mbs.

Sincerely,
Rebecca Siegel
2 High School Rd
Brevig Mission, AK
[REDACTED]

--
Rebecca Siegel
she/ her/ hers

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From: Michael Baldwin [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, May 10, 2023 9:03 AM
To: House Finance
Subject: HB 193

Hello I am writing from the Pribilof School District. I am the Superintendent and K-12 Principal. I want to inform you I support this bill HP 193 to raise the cap for broadband to help our District.

These grants help with cost with our E-Rate to provide reliable internet to our students. Our students rely on the internet to take online classes, research projects, work from home, and do their correspondence classes. With an increase in bandwidth students won't need to wait as long for downloads, buffering, or just doing their classes and will be able to stay on task longer while doing their online courses.

We are not close to the mainland, everything we order for our school has to arrive by barge or plane and the cost is very high. We are as remote and rural as it gets out here in the middle of the Bering Sea.

We have been fortunate in the past with local donations and contributions to help our school. With the crab crash and no processing of the crab on the island, our community is hit hard financially and the school will not be as fortunate now as entities are tightening their belts as income from the crabbing industry is important to our community. This will take a hit on our general fund account to purchase items that were donated by the entities in the past.

Again, I can't stress enough the importance of this grant for our school and students as it helps us get the internet to succeed in school, and allows us to use our general funds for supplies, and resources instead of all of it on the internet.

Thank you again for your time.

--

Michael Baldwin
Pribilof School District
Superintendent / K-1 Principal

[REDACTED]

From: Ali Najarro [REDACTED] >
Sent: Wednesday, May 10, 2023 9:23 AM
To: House Finance
Subject: High Speed Internet In Rural Alaska

I am writing to express my strong support for increasing school internet speed from 25mbs to 100mbs. As an EdTech Facilitator, I have seen firsthand the impact that slow internet speeds can have on our schools.

In today's world, access to high-speed internet is essential for effective teaching and learning. With the increasing use of technology in the classroom, including online research, virtual learning, and video conferencing, students and teachers alike rely heavily on internet connectivity. Slow internet speeds can lead to frustratingly slow load times, buffering, and even connection drops, disrupting the learning experience.

Furthermore, many students may not have access to reliable internet at home, making it even more critical for schools to provide reliable high-speed internet. Ensuring that all students have access to high-speed internet is crucial for promoting equal access to education and providing all students with the same opportunities to succeed.

I strongly urge you to support the increase in school internet speed from 25mbs to 100mbs. Investing in our schools' infrastructure will not only benefit our students and teachers but also help to position our communities for future growth and success.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,

--

"Together we can make things happen"

Ali C. Najarro
Education Technology Facilitator
Bering Strait School District

[REDACTED]

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From: Hazel Craft [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, May 10, 2023 9:25 AM
To: House Finance; Susan Nedza
Subject: Hazel Craft - Internet Speed Petition

To the House Finance Committee,

My name is Hazel Craft. I'm a 6th grader at Savoonga, Alaska. I'm writing this message to your committee today to petition for increasing our 25 mbs internet speed to 100 mbs. This would be huge help. Thank you!

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From: John Welsh [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, May 10, 2023 9:30 AM
To: House Finance
Subject: Village Schools' Internet Speed

Dear Legislators,

Slow speed and intermittent internet service in village schools is an impediment to learning. In my U.S History, World History, Social Studies and English Language Arts, students often are stymied in their attempts to check vocabulary, investigate background for concepts, or to do research.

Sincerely,

John Welsh, Teacher
James C. Isabell School
Teller, Alaska.

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From: JoAnn Kaningok [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, May 10, 2023 9:30 AM
To: House Finance
Subject: Increasing school internet

I live in Little Diomed, Alaska; an isolated island where our internet is not always reliable due to poor weather plus we rely on our tower that is at Wales Alaska. The Diomed School is under GCI network, most of the time we do have issues with internet, calling and texts and we have to call GCI to inform them to let them know we are not able to call or text out.

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From: Sebastian Santos [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, May 10, 2023 9:43 AM
To: House Finance; Susan Nedza
Subject: Sebastian Santos (Savoonga, Alaska) - Petition for Internet Speed

Good morning,

For the record, my name is Sebastian Santos. I am currently a middle school social studies teacher at Savoonga, Alaska. I am writing this message to your committee today to petition for an increase in our internet speed (currently 25 mbs) to 100 mbs. Increasing our internet speed would improve the quality of the education our students are receiving, as being a student in the isolated Bering Strait region will require access to information via internet use.

Having a reliable internet source to keep our school days running smoothly is a necessity. At times, the weather conditions and days of online testing/ assessments will slow down our internet; but these are just a few examples of circumstances when our signal will weaken. We are also progressively having an increase in our student:teacher ratio - which will require a more capable internet source. I hope your committee can take this matter into consideration.

Thank you for your time,

Sebastian Santos
Middle School - Social Studies
Hogarth Kingeekuk Sr. Memorial School
[REDACTED]

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From: Luchie Manlangit [REDACTED] >
Sent: Wednesday, May 10, 2023 9:45 AM
To: House Finance
Subject: Internet Concern

Hello,

Greetings from Stebbin!

Jus wanted to inform me that being a teacher is very important for me to have at least 100mbs for me to be able to work well on my preparation of my lessons and some online classes and training.I would be a great help to me. Thank you for all that you do.

Sincerely,
Luchie Manlangit
Elementary Teacher

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From: Bjorn Paje [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, May 10, 2023 9:49 AM
To: House Finance
Subject: School Internet Speed Increase

Dear Finance Committee of the House,

As a teacher who wants to give his students the best education possible, I am writing to ask that our school's internet speed be increased from 25 mbps to 100 mbps. Slow internet speed is a big problem in our schools, and it slows down the work of both students and teachers.

With only 25 mbps of internet speed, it's hard for students and teachers to access online tools and learning platforms. Poor connection quality makes downloads take longer, video conferencing in Zoom or Google Meet is intermittent. These problems not only make it hard to learn but also make things frustrating for both students and teachers.

Upgrading the internet speed to 100 mbps would solve these problems and have many positive effects on our schools. If download and upload speeds were faster, students and teachers would be able to get to teaching materials more quickly and easily.

Increasing internet speed has also already helped schools and towns in other places. For example, when a school system in Minnesota upgraded its internet speed to 100 mbps, students did much better on tests. Teachers could use more interactive digital content in their lessons, and students could use online tools that they hadn't been able to use before.

So, I'm asking the House Finance Committee to do something about it and speed up school internet to 100 mbps. This is a smart investment in our kids' and schools' futures.

Thank you for taking the time to think about this.

Sincerely,

Bjorn Paje



Middle School Teacher



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From: Camillus Pete [REDACTED] >
Sent: Wednesday, May 10, 2023 9:52 AM
To: House Finance
Subject: Raising up to 100mps

Good morning this is Camillus Pete from Stebbins School parapro, Migrant Recruiter, and tech liaison. Raising the internet service would be great for our schools get jobs done quicker, make teaching a subject go by quicker for students to get their work done. Testing would be loading up better than just watch the screen think and think and think. Raising our internet service can help the front desk take their attendance done, because all this school year they have been struggling to get their attendance done, sometimes the page won't load to do their jobs. When a teacher needs a download or a update it would make things go a lot more quicker to teach students instead of waiting the whole school day to get what they need to teach. Entering grades for our students would be done better and quicker so a teacher can enjoy the rest of their day after a days work. Updating student computers faster so they won't get behind and not have to wait to get their work done in a classroom, emailing attachments can get out faster. Raising from 25mbs to 100mbs means a better, smoothly, and more efficient work place for our teachers, office staff and students.

Thanks
Camillus

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From: Linda Schipman [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, May 10, 2023 9:52 AM
To: House Finance
Cc: Susan Nedza
Subject: Slow Internet impedes learning - Please vote for increasing Alaska's public school internet speed

Imagine finding a wonderful looking book in the library, then finding the pages are stuck together. As desirable as the book might look, chances are you are not going to check it out.

The frustration from students as they wait and wait for pages to load is just as frustrating. It is a "turn off" from learning, While waiting, they lose their "anticipation" and "excitement" about finding the information they need.

Removing any barrier to learning is important, and when it comes to internet speed, you can make a difference in the lives of our students,

Please vote for increasing Alaska's public school internet speed from 25mbs to 100mbs.

Thank you for your consideration.

Linda Schipman, Ma.Ed
Special Education Teacher
Tukurngailnguq School, Stebbins, Alaska
Bering Strait School District.

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From: Amber Otton [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, May 10, 2023 10:06 AM
To: House Finance
Subject: Increase Internet Speed by 75mbs in Rural AK

Uvlaalluataq,

My name is Amber Otton, and I am currently a CTE teacher for the Bering Strait School District. I am emailing the House Finance Committee to please increase the school internet speed in rural Alaska from 25mbs to 100 mbs to improve the following areas in our schools:

1. Equity: Students will have access to high-speed internet that their peers in other parts of the state have access to.
2. Isolation: With high-speed internet, the collaboration between schools and partners will allow effective planning to deliver quality student activities across the district.
3. Education: Teachers will have adequate internet speeds to deliver education with technology tools without delays or interruptions to their lessons.

Please consider upping the school internet speed in rural Alaska by at least 75mbs. Quyana.

--

Amber "Attasiaq" Otton
NACTEC Teacher
Northwestern Alaska Career & Technical Center
[REDACTED]

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From: Liila Pelowook [REDACTED] >
Sent: Wednesday, May 10, 2023 10:13 AM
To: House Finance; Susan.nedza@bssd.org
Subject: Liila Pelowook-internet speed

To the House Finance Committee. My name is Liile Pelowook. I'm a 7 grader at Savoonga, Alaska. I'm writing this message to your committee today to petition for increasing our 25 mbs internet speed to 100 mbs. This would be a huge help.

Thank you!

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From: Caitlin Soonagrook <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Wednesday, May 10, 2023 10:17 AM
To: House Finance
Subject: Caitlin Soonagrook - internet speed

im a 7th grader at savoonga, alaska. im writing this message to your committee today to petition for increasing our 25 mbs internet speed to 100 mbs . This would be a huge help Thank you!

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From: Kathy Commack [REDACTED] >
Sent: Wednesday, May 10, 2023 10:29 AM
To: House Finance
Subject: HB 193 Support Letter

House Finance Committee,

Please see attached Letter of Support for HB 193.

Thank you,

--

Kathy Commack
Bering Strait School District
[REDACTED]

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From: [REDACTED] on behalf of Tara Chrisman [REDACTED] >
Sent: Wednesday, May 10, 2023 10:40 AM
To: House Finance
Subject: I support HB 154

Dear House Finance Committee,

Please prioritize the Governor's legislation to create an Alaska Energy Independence Fund in the Alaska Housing Finance Corporation.

I support HB 154 and its companion bill SB 125. It is important that these bills pass the legislature this session for a few reasons. States with established Green Banks are in a more competitive position to receive federal funding for clean energy programs under the \$27 billion Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund administered by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Funds are to be allocated by September of 2024. Since it will take time for the Alaska Housing Finance Corporation to establish the Green Bank after it is signed into law, it makes great sense for the legislature to act now. The next twelve days could determine whether we are eligible and prepared for a huge investment in clean energy and transportation projects that will save Alaskans billions of dollars in electric, home heating, gasoline, diesel, and car maintenance bills.

Federal investment tax credits for renewable energy projects were extended for a ten-year period under the Inflation Reduction Act. Another clear reason for the AK Legislature to pass a Green Bank this year is that the clock is ticking on the decade of available tax credits. These are significant, historic tax credits. With a Green Bank to provide low-interest financing and tax credits to incentivize purchases, energy efficiency construction projects, and rooftop and community solar projects will skyrocket in Alaska, providing good-paying jobs. By not moving the Green Bank bills this year, another year in the life of the IRA tax credits will be gone.

Please consider moving these bills forward this session. Good luck in the home stretch!

Sincerely,
Tara Chrisman

[REDACTED] Fairbanks, AK [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

From: Patricia Vink [REDACTED] >
Sent: Wednesday, May 10, 2023 10:42 AM
To: House Finance
Subject: Internet speeds

Dearest House Finance Committee,

The use of technology in the classroom has become as standard as it has throughout every aspect of our lives, as it should! This is the world we live in and we need to make sure our students will be able to thrive in this world!

Working in Educational Technology and Special Education for Bering Strait School District, I cannot tell you how increasing internet speeds would greatly improve our ability to provide consistent and reliable access to educational opportunities for our students.

Right now slow internet speeds impact us particularly during state and district wide testing windows. During this time we have to request sites to only limit internet usage to those taking online tests and some sites have to limit the number of students taking tests at one time. That is simply unacceptable in this day and age!

Slow internet speeds also greatly impact our special education population. Many students rely on the internet and its extensions to access visual aids and content that is read to them. Our students utilize the ability of the internet to help them better understand complex topics, take online courses, and access special services.

Because of the teacher shortage our district has, as many others throughout the United States have, had to rely on contracting speech and language, occupational therapy and physical therapy services via an online platform. We have seen that these services can be greatly negatively impacted with our current coverage. Increasing internet speeds is integral in ensuring our special education students do not miss out on legally required services.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,

Patty Vink
EdTech Facilitator
Bering Strait School District
[REDACTED]

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From: Cammy Noongwook [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, May 10, 2023 10:47 AM
To: House Finance; Susan Nedza
Subject: Cammy Noongwook- internet speed

To the House Finance Committee,
My name is Cammy Noongwook. I'm a 7th grader at Savoonga Alaska. I'm writing this message to your committee today to petition for increasing our 25 mbs internet speed to 100 mbs. This would be a huge help. Thank you!

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From: Francis Uy [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, May 10, 2023 10:57 AM
To: House Finance
Subject: Appeal to increase internet speed from 25mbps to 100mbps

Good day,

I am Francis Julian C. Uy, a Filipino cultural exchange teacher currently teaching in Stebbins, Alaska with the Bering Strait School District. I would like to request if possible to increase the internet speed given to schools in rural Alaska as this can be very beneficial for students and teachers.

For students, this is very beneficial as all state and national testing is done over the internet. Usually, when we have state testing, we have to limit how many students/classes can test per day since we have to share the internet between all classes for teaching and taking tests. If too many students are on curriculum websites to take lessons like Myngconnect, Zearn, fastforwad, etc. the students taking the online test have difficulty with the time allotted since the websites load longer. On the other hand, if no one uses those websites then the students are usually able to take the test a bit faster but the other students are not able to take in their lessons for that day.

For teachers, it would be very beneficial as we can attend more online training which minimizes costs of teachers travelling out to attend said training. It is also better for us to help prepare for our lessons as most of our curriculum resources are located online and need internet access to download or use in class.

I am hoping that this email will help sway the decision to increase the internet allotment for rural schools in Alaska as this is for the benefit of the students which in turn benefits the community and the state.

Sincerely,
Francis

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From: Annie Woods <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Wednesday, May 10, 2023 11:13 AM
To: House Finance
Cc: Susan Nedza
Subject: School internet speed

Dear Alaska Legislature,

I am writing this email to request your approval to increase our school internet speed from 25mbps to 100mbps. As you all know the unfortunate bear encounter in Wales this winter - if they weren't able to call us or reach us by email during the tragedy, we wouldn't be able to lend them support. Sometimes their phones don't work, but that's another matter (another company).

Many, many times throughout the school year the Wales and Diomedes internet service drops due to weather and equipment. Students are unable to take tests online. We have 15 schools and that's just an example of 2 schools.

I see this as a safety issue, and rural Alaska schools can only benefit from the increased internet speed.

Thank you for your time. Quayana

Annie Woods

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From: AlaskaCAN [REDACTED] >
Sent: Wednesday, May 10, 2023 11:15 AM
To: Representative.Bryce.Edgemon@akleg.gov; Rep. Neal Foster; Rep. DeLena Johnson; Rep. Julie Coulombe; Rep. Mike Cronk; Rep. Will Stapp; Rep. Alyse Galvin; Rep. Sara Hannan; Rep. Andy Josephson; Rep. Daniel Ortiz; Rep. Frank Tomaszewski
Cc: House Finance
Subject: CSHB 148 Official Statement of Support from AlaskaCAN
Attachments: AK CAN Statement of Support - APS Legislation.docx (2).pdf

Please find attached an official statement from AlaskaCAN in support of the current APS legislation: CSHB 148.

Thank you for your work on and support of CSHB 148.

Sincerely,

AlaskaCAN

From: Kristina Benitez <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Wednesday, May 10, 2023 11:18 AM
To: House Finance
Subject: School Internet

To Whom it May Concern,

I have two children enrolled at Anthony A. Andrews School in Saint Michael (a medium-sized village along the Bering Strait). I am also a 1st grade teacher. The Internet plays a huge role in our classrooms. When the internet is used correctly, it gives our students and my children a wider view outside our rural communities, and gives students opportunities to make connections of similarities and differences from one community to the next. The internet opens the world to small communities.

We use the internet a lot for social studies, to stream curriculum that relies on the internet, and a huge one is professional development. Many of my colleagues and I take online educational courses to further our teaching skills. Often, we are cut off or the bandwidth prevents us from being able to effectively participate in professional development and courses. A stronger bandwidth would greatly improve how we deliver education to our students. An investment in a greater internet is an investment in the future of our growing communities and leaders of tomorrow.

Sincerely,

Kristina Benitez
Parent and Educator

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From: Amy Brower [REDACTED] >
Sent: Wednesday, May 10, 2023 11:23 AM
To: Rep. Bryce Edgmon; House Finance
Subject: HB 193 Internet for Schools

Representative Edgmon and House Finance Committee,

Thank you for bringing forth and considering HB 193. Internet access in rural Alaska schools is vital to the success of our students. Currently, Dillingham City School District (DCSD) receives the BAG grant for both of our schools. This brings internet access up to 25Mbps for each school. DCSD is grateful for the BAG grant and the additional access it provides to our district, but 25 Mbps still leaves our students woefully behind in accessing educational opportunities.

In addition to educational opportunities missed because of low internet access, all state testing is on digital platforms. This means that during the four-week testing window, our schools' schedules and learning opportunities are dealt a blow in chaos. While many districts have the opportunity to have a "testing week", DCSD has to spread our testing out over the course of all four weeks of the testing window. During these four weeks, we have to put a moratorium on teachers using the internet for anything other than testing- so no informational videos, no fun supplemental educational opportunities, and no accessing learning platforms to help our students grow. We stagger testing start times so that having about 25 students log on all at once does not overwhelm our internet. This leads to students testing all day- again a disruption to the learning process and means we have students testing at non-optimal times.

It is not uncommon for teachers and students to not be able to access educational videos and supplemental educational materials. These digital resources add interest, excitement, and engagement to learning. DCSD provides access to several digital-based intervention software systems that allow students to receive the type of personalized learning that is valued and supported through best practices in education. However, can you imagine the disappointment of a student when they are working through a task/lesson on one of these platforms and the internet becomes unstable due to too many devices trying to access data at the same time? This student who has worked so hard on this task is "kicked off" and has to start over. It is frustrating at best and can be devastating to a struggling learner.

I am offering this written testimony in strong support of HB 193 Internet for Schools, in the hope that during our FY25 school year, we will be able to offer students in DCSD the opportunities they deserve to access the world and be 21st Century Learners.

Thank you,
Amy Brower
Dillingham City School District



From: Celeste Foster [REDACTED] >
Sent: Wednesday, May 10, 2023 11:18 AM
To: House Finance
Subject: Hogarth Kingeekuk Senior Memorial School, Savoonga, AK-internet speed.

Dear House Finance Team:

It would increase the academics of the students during testing and other misc. times they are on the computer. There would be no more loading time or misc. problems with the internet.

We live on a remote island in the middle of the Bering Sea and our students would like to have the same advantages as the students on the road system.

Increasing the current 25mbps to 100mbps would be extremely helpful to the students and staff. Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,

Celeste D. Foster
5th Grade teacher
[REDACTED]

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From: Dane Eller <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Wednesday, May 10, 2023 11:25 AM
To: House Finance
Subject: Why Increase to 100Mbps?

Test Day Scenario

Testing day has arrived. The kids are ready. We have practiced using our Chromebooks so they are familiar with testing key functions. Some students arrive early to class so they can have a snack before we begin. My diabetic student had a low-carbohydrate breakfast to ensure stable blood sugars during testing. We are ready.

Sign in time for testing. For some reason, students are not being allowed to sign in to the testing portal. We keep getting an error. I quickly call our tech liaison who is also busy teaching their own class, but I need help. They don't know what is happening because they are getting the same error. I put in a call to the principal to see what might be going on. The internet seems unresponsive.

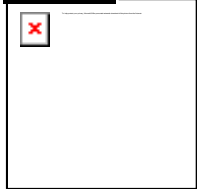
My principal called our Educational Technology Department to see what was going on since all testing at our school was failing. About 10 minutes later our principal made an announcement over the intercom to please stop using any personal devices during state testing time that are connected to the WiFi network. After about 30 more minutes we were able to sign in. Now my students were flustered and confused about why the test didn't start when it was supposed to. Now I have to field anxious student questions before they take their state test; Will we be late for lunch? Will I have time to finish my test? I need to go to the bathroom again!

I spoke with our tech liaison at the end of the day and found out that a cell phone in the school connected to the Visitor WiFi Network was set for automatic updates and was using all the internet. Our school only receives 25Mbps download speed. The Educational Technology Department discovered that this one cell phone was using 24.4 Mbps while updating. Just one cell phone can use our entire school's internet bandwidth.

Increasing to 100Mbps from 25Mbps is a must! Please help!!

--

Dane Eller
Educational Technology Facilitator
Bering Strait School District



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From: Susanne Smock <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Wednesday, May 10, 2023 11:45 AM
To: House Finance
Subject: Increase internet speed need

Dear House Finance Team:

I work at Hogarth Kingeekuk Sr. Memorial School in Savoonga, Alaska. When working with the students with online programs or if they are on their computers, the majority of the time there is a lag time. My kindergarteners get anxious and we lose learning time. If we could increase from 25mbs to 100mbs for our internet, it would be beneficial to the students. We are a remote school and the students deserve the same opportunity as students on the road system.

Thank you for taking time to consider increasing the internet speed for our school.

Sincerely,

Susanne Smock
Kindergarten Teacher
[REDACTED]

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From: Elizabeth Avalnun <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Wednesday, May 10, 2023 11:49 AM
To: House Finance
Subject: Increasing school internet importance

To the House Finncial Committee,

My name is Elizabeth R Avalnun. I'm 16 Years Old, I go to John Apangalook Highschool. We need faster WIFI so all of us can test at the same time, because the Internet is soooo slow we have to test one class at a time. It's important we all test and work, we need faster WIFI so all of us can work and learn together.

We all learn something different like Math, English, Photography, History, PE, Science, Art, and Reading. It's important that we learn more than 1 thing. It's important that we learn about the plants, the earth, the galaxy, and we need faster WIFI to learn everything in the World. We need to know about our World. It's Important we learn, like what if we want to become doctors or nurses or try to enlist in the military, and most of all we need to learn about the meaning of life. Our current setup does not allow for success.

Thank you for taking the time to read my email.

Elizabeth Avalnun

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From: Zoe Kobuk [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, May 10, 2023 11:53 AM
To: House Finance
Subject: Increasing School Internet Please

Hello,

I am the secretary of Stebbins School. I am writing to request the increase of our school internet from 25mbs to 100mbs. Increasing it would greatly benefit all aspects of our school from office to teacher and student work. Currently during state testing we as an entire school limit all school internet usage to keep from delaying testing because the internet gets so very slow. Also our attendance liaison at times and very frequently take nearly a day to complete attendance due to the frequent lag of our internet speed. Thank you for providing me the opportunity to provide this feedback and testimony of my opinion.

Zoe Kobuk

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From: Roy Getchell [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, May 10, 2023 11:55 AM
To: House Finance
Subject: Support for HB 193

Dear Members of the House Finance Committee,

Please strongly consider and support HB 193 as you make decisions at the end of what has been an incredibly busy session. I know that education is important to all of you and HB 193 helps strengthen *access* to a high quality education for Alaska's most rural students.

I was at a national meeting in Washington DC last summer and was shocked by much of our state's broadband infrastructure as compared to the rest of the country. HB 193 will close part of that gap and ensure that Alaska's own lawmakers are doing their very best to resolve this critical issue.

I know you all want the same benefits for our children that those Down South receive. I am hopeful and thankful for your support of HB 193.

Thank you all so much for your service to our state.

Yours in Education,

Roy Getchell

--

Roy Getchell, Ph.D.
Superintendent
Haines Borough School District

Empowering Excellence Every Day

From: Susanne Smock <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Wednesday, May 10, 2023 11:56 AM
To: House Finance
Subject: House Finance - Increase of Internet Speed

Dear House Finance Committee,

As a special education teacher at Hogarth Sr. Memorial Kingeekuk School in Savoonga, Alaska, our school is in need of increased internet speeds.

This is essential when working with students who need visual and auditory supports that are outside of the curriculum. Our students, as visual/auditory learners, benefit best when they are given real-world resources to make connections to. When our entire school (of 200 plus) students attempt to access the internet at the same time - we experience significant delays; as a result, instruction is interrupted and students are not able to utilize real-world/internet resources. I believe that with an increase of internet speeds, our students would benefit from this resource to be successful in their academic environment.

Additionally, when working on electronic reports for students with disabilities, the delay in the internet speed creates concerns when retrieving information for parents or other service providers.

Thank you for taking time to consider the increase in internet speeds for educational purposes.

Robyn Dulco, Special Education Teacher

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From: Kaylea Eller [REDACTED] >
Sent: Wednesday, May 10, 2023 12:02 PM
To: House Finance
Cc: Susan Nedza
Subject: Importance of Speedy School Internet

To whom it may concern,

I am sending this email today to stress just how beneficial increasing school internet speed from 25mbps to 100mbps would be for schools part of the Bering Strait School District. This advance in connection would undoubtedly improve students' overall school experience, a key idea being that this would allow students to access their online educational materials effectively, without hassle. I believe that students should not have to make sacrifices in their studies due to sluggish internet connection, especially in this day and age.

As a student, I have actually had my learning interrupted by the school's internet connection a few times too many. I sometimes sit in front of my Chromebook for 5 whole minutes waiting for a Google Document to load so I can even get started on my college writing, which has collectively wasted many valuable minutes of class time. Additionally, by the end of the school day, some websites are practically unusable due to the school's internet connection. This greatly affected the student yearbook staff this year, as the program we chose to create the yearbooks on would not even load during our class period.

All of these setbacks can be almost diminished with just a change in megabits per second, improving students' academic endeavours in the process.

Thank you for your time,

-Kaylea Eller

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Bering Strait School District



P.O. Box 225 • Unalakleet, Alaska • 99684 • (907) 624-4261
Susan R Nedza, Chief School Administrator
susan.nedza@bssd.org

May 10, 2023

Chair and Members of the Committee:

First, thank you for all the work you are doing to focus on the needs of schools and the hours you have put in to hear all sides of several issues this session. Your work is appreciated and will impact our future through the students schools serve.

I would like to take this opportunity to write in support of HB193 increasing the eligible internet speed to 100 megabits of download per second at each school. For all students in a digital age internet is essential to learning and job skill development. We must be able to leverage this tool in a learning environment where students can access content, use programs for job related items such as virtual CTE and have the support of their teachers to learn how to stay safe while engaging in this platform. For rural schools, in particular, we cannot visit locations for college and career options often and use virtual tours to help students explore their world and collaborate with others. Our students and teachers deal with frustration of spotty connections, outages, slow speeds and disruptions during learning times and testing times. This increase will help this improve.

While I am in support of increasing the speed allowed for funding, I want to mention that contracts should be allowed language such as bursting as well to assist in maintaining connections. It is also necessary to improve infrastructure as our current infrastructure in many of our schools in Bering Strait School District will not be able to reach 100 mbs and will remain at a disadvantage.

Brian Walston P.O. Box 59009 St. Michael AK, 99659 5/10/2023
The Honorable Members of the House Finance Committee

Subject: Importance of Increasing School Internet Speed to 100Mbps for Enhanced Educational Opportunities in Rural Alaska

Dear Members of the House Finance Committee,

I hope this letter finds you in good health and high spirits. I am writing to express my deep concern regarding the current state of Internet connectivity in our rural schools in Alaska, particularly in relation to the speed of the connection. I strongly urge you to consider the significance of increasing the school Internet speed from 25Mbps to 100Mbps, as it holds the potential to revolutionize educational opportunities for our students.

Access to high-speed Internet is no longer a luxury but a necessity in today's interconnected world. It has become an integral part of our daily lives, impacting various sectors, including education. In the case of rural areas such as Alaska, where physical distance often limits access to educational resources, a reliable and faster Internet connection becomes even more critical.

By increasing the school Internet speed to 100Mbps, we can unlock a plethora of opportunities for students and educators alike. Let me emphasize some of the key benefits that can be realized by bridging the digital divide in our rural schools:

1. **Enriched Learning Experience:** A faster Internet connection would enable students to access online educational resources, digital libraries, and interactive learning platforms seamlessly. This would enhance their learning experience, facilitate research, and foster a culture of curiosity, critical thinking, and innovation.
2. **Expanded Curriculum:** With improved Internet speed, schools would be able to offer a wider range of educational programs and courses. Students in rural Alaska would have the same access to diverse subjects, including STEM, arts, and foreign languages, as their urban counterparts. This would help bridge the educational gap and promote equal opportunities for all students across the state.
3. **Collaborative Learning:** The increased Internet speed would facilitate real-time collaboration among students, teachers, and experts from around the world. Virtual classrooms, video conferences, and online discussion platforms would become more accessible, allowing students in rural Alaska to connect with peers and professionals from different backgrounds and cultures. This would promote cultural exchange, global awareness, and develop essential skills for the 21st-century workforce.
4. **Enhanced Professional Development:** High-speed Internet would enable teachers in rural areas to engage in online professional development programs, webinars, and workshops. They would have access to the latest teaching methodologies, educational research, and networking opportunities. This would empower

- educators to continually upgrade their skills and knowledge, ultimately benefiting the students they serve.
5. Economic Empowerment: Improved Internet connectivity in rural Alaska would create new opportunities for economic growth. It would attract online businesses, telecommuting, and remote job opportunities. By equipping our students with the necessary digital skills, we can prepare them for the workforce of the future and contribute to the economic development of our state.

I urge you, esteemed committee members, to recognize the urgency of this matter and prioritize the allocation of funds to upgrade the school Internet speed to 100Mbps. The future of our students and the prosperity of our communities depend on providing them with equitable access to modern educational resources and opportunities. Thank you for your time and consideration of this vital issue. I trust that you will take the necessary steps to ensure that our students in rural Alaska are not left behind in the digital age.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Brian Walston". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Brian" being more prominent than the last name "Walston".

Brian Walston
Assistant Principal
Anthony A. Andrews School
St. Michael AK

Greetings House Finance Committee,

I am a 7-12 grade science teacher asking you to increase the school internet speed from a paltry 25 mbs to a more acceptable 100mbs. Everything teachers and students need to do requires the use of the computer and good internet speed. **Internet is a tool**, and **in bush Alaska we are wielding a butter knife to hunt polar bears.**

In short, I cannot do my job without good internet speed, and students can't focus and learn in the short period of time they have in school if they are constantly waiting for web pages during any online activity, research, learning game, or educational video. Below is a short bullet list of bandwidth issues I have experienced in just the last few weeks of school.

- Teachers unable to access powerschool to enter grades.
- Students cannot access internet without experience considerable lag time **every single time they use the computer.**
- As part of Brie's Law we are required to play video modules for the Child Protective Unit, but yesterday one of the classes had to cut their lesson short (to be continued today) because the internet was causing a huge lag. This is especially frustrating because the content can be a sensitive topic for many students.
- The **science curriculum** has labs, learning activities, interactivities, tests, short videos, text (great for students that require text to speech) and quizzes that students **can only complete online.**
- Other useful websites we visit Brainpop, IXL, sciencebuddies.org, Khan Academy, NewsELA (reading articles at different lexiles), YouTube (education, social emotional learning, brainbreaks) google tools such as sheets, slides, and docs, clever, etc.
- **AK STARS and MAPS testing** is implemented by the school so that half the school completes testing in one week, the other half the next week, then the third week (and throughout) students are completing make up testing.
 - What would your grade be on a two hour test if you had to wait several minutes for each question to pop up? They're frustrated and their focus is disrupted. Schools are evaluated based in part on these test scores. Students set goals based on MAPS scores. Bandwidth shouldn't

As a teacher, there have been many times that I could not access my gradebook due to bandwidth issues. As a teacher in the bush, I do not have internet at home so it is vital for me to be able to use my time at school wisely. I will have internet next year, but I should not have to use it to complete my work. I walk a little less than mile to and from school everyday in all types of weather. I should not have to use my internet to record grades. Student work belongs in the classroom, not my home.

Yesterday a group of 12 students were visiting a virtual job shadowing website and watching short video interviews with people in different career fields. First we had to access the clever website, and it took some time. Then the videos were lagging so students became unfocused and bored waiting for their content to upload and play.

Please provide us with a better educational tool.

Sincerely,

Kristin Rothe
Anthony A Andrews
7-12 Grade Science Teacher
St. Michael, AK