



# LIBRARIES AND E-RATE

## Leveraging Broadband to Provide Opportunity Across the Nation

**B**roadband is essential infrastructure for libraries. Whether advancing education, employment, entrepreneurship, empowerment, or engagement (The E's of Libraries®), the work of libraries demands robust and reasonably-priced internet connectivity.

A lynchpin of sê A

public libraries and K-12 schools, with greater financial support for high-poverty areas. Policy makers in the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), Congress, the White House, U.S. Department of Commerce, and elsewhere are urged to preserve and strengthen the E-rate program, empowering libraries and schools to provide online opportunities for all Americans, whether in urban, suburban, rural, or tribal areas.

### **E-rate: Powering Library Technology Access**

The Nashville Public Library upgraded all broadband connections at 21 branches to at least 100 Mbps, supporting 1,100 public access computers and many

additional services—a significant upgrade that was only possible with the assistance of the E-rate program. The Pima County Public Library in Tucson leveraged E-rate funds to upgrade its wireless network. In fiscal year 2015-16, the library had 16,720 laptop internet sessions, 2,025,514 wireless sessions, and computer class attendance of 18,678.

### **Connectivity for Educational and Employment Opportunity**

At the Gregory (S.D.) Public Library “Most students are required to do their homework and submit it online. However, many of our students have no Internet access at home, so, although the school may have provided a tablet or laptop, they have no way of completing the task.” Students come to the library to use the free Wi-Fi and take advantage of study space and other library resources. In Indiana, the ▶

DeKalb County Central United School District initiated one-to-one programming for older students and has implemented eLearning for all ages to make up for weather cancellations. However, without the internet access and other resources at the Eckhart Public Library, many students could not complete their online assignments.

Libraries assist post-secondary and continuing education students as well. In Hodgenville (Ky.) Ethan Napier, a student at Elizabethtown Community and Technical College and a U.S. Army Reserves member, uses the LaRue County Public Library for internet access. He has internet access at home, but in this rural part of Kentucky he doesn't have any choice of provider and his slow 700 Kbps connection at home is weak and unreliable. The faster, more reliable library internet connection allows Ethan to take online self-development classes for the Reserves, submit college coursework, and take tests without fear that his connection will be slow or time out.

### **Libraries Cultivate Vibrant Entrepreneurship**

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**T**he 120,000 libraries across the United States are a powerful force in addressing public policy priorities. Libraries advance Education, Employment, Entrepreneurship, Empowerment, and Engagement for Everyone, Everywhere. The E's of Libraries.

Libraries serve America's cities, towns, counties, and states; on school and college campuses; on military bases; in hospitals, government agencies, corporations, and other institutions. Librar