



SHERRI YBARRA
SUPERINTENDENT OF
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

650 W. STATE STREET
P.O. BOX 83720
BOISE, IDAHO 83720-0027

OFFICE: 208-332-6800
FAX: 208-334-2228
SPEECH/HEARING
IMPAIRED: 1-800-377-3529

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www.sde.idaho.gov

Media contact:

Kelly Everitt, Communications
Specialist
(208) 332-6818
keveritt@sde.idaho.gov

Melinda Nothern
Interim Communication Director
(208) 867-5847
mnothern@sde.idaho.gov

PAYMENTS GO OUT TO SCHOOLS FOR BROADBAND SERVICE

(BOISE) – Payments from the Superintendent of Public Instruction’s office began going out today to school districts making the transition from the previous Idaho Education Network to their own broadband service.

Last week, every IEN school district/charter in the state reported that they were successful in securing alternative broadband service, after the IEN and its statewide broadband service to schools was functionally dissolved by a Feb. 11 court order.

The payments will be made in two stages. In the initial stage, the superintendent’s office is sending \$2,000 to each district. A second, supplemental payment will be made later in the year once all final costs are known.

“We wanted to get some money to the districts as soon as possible to help pay for installation and equipment fees,” said Will Goodman, Superintendent Sherri Ybarra’s chief of technology. The districts have until March 9 to submit their requests for funding and a number have already begun doing so.

Under legislation passed by the legislature and signed last week by the governor, the authority through the rest of the school year for ensuring broadband service is available to local schools is now the responsibility of the Superintendent of Public Instruction’s office, rather than the Department of Administration. The legislation appropriated \$3.6 million to make sure school districts did not lose their broadband service between now and July.

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