

Del Norte Unified School District Receives 200 Chromebooks from Frontier Communications

The Del Norte Unified School District announced last week that it has accepted a donation of 200 number Chromebooks from Frontier Communications that will be issued to students who lack devices at home so they may participate in distance learning.

“We are so grateful to Frontier Communications and the California Emerging Technology Fund (CETF) for providing our children and families with 200 devices during these unprecedented times.

A number of students and families in Del Norte County do not have access to the internet or devices in the home. As our country and county responds to the COVID-19 Pandemic, this means that families are unable to access work, attend school, or acquire basic necessities in their home. The digital divide is a national issue, and it is very often the case that problems that plague our nation are issues that are further magnified in small rural communities like Del Norte county.

In Del Norte, our students are often last in line for support and relief when compared to the rest of California. The fact that there are organizations like Frontier and the California Emerging Technology fund that are finding new and innovative ways to make a real difference in our small community, is something that we will never forget.” **-Jeff Harris, DNUSD & DNCOE Superintendent**

This Device Distribution Project is the result of a Memorandum of Understanding that Frontier Communications entered into with California Emerging Technology Fund (CETF) in 2015 when Frontier bought the wireline network from Verizon.

“We are pleased to be working with CETF to distribute 200 Chromebooks in Del Norte County, and a total of 5,000 Chromebooks to families with K-12 students in 17 school districts located in Frontier service areas, and an additional 350 families living on Tribal Lands with children in public schools in those areas,” said Charlie Born, Frontier Communications Government Affairs Manager.

Parents will own the Chromebook and be encouraged to have their children use it to participate in classroom instruction as requested by the School, enable home distance learning and increase parent engagement with their school and public services. The District will be able to count on these devices for students in the classroom, even though the family owns the device.

CETF President and CEO Sunne Wright McPeak said the coordinated effort with Frontier and School Districts includes following best practices for distributing and managing devices and supporting basic digital literacy training for parents receiving the Chromebooks. “This collaboration will help pivot to the future to effectively incorporate the added technology as a learning tool to enhance distance teaching and learning with deep parent engagement to continue to support academic opportunities,” she added.

Further, although the Chromebooks are being distributed to students in households in Frontier Service Areas, families receiving the devices may choose, but are not required, to sign up for Frontier Fundamental Internet, at \$19.99 a month, or another affordable offer. The participating School Districts will provide information about family eligibility for all affordable home Internet offers available at their address.

About California Emerging Technology Fund

The mission of CETF is to close the Digital Divide in California by institutionalizing digital inclusion, including expanding telehealth and distance learning opportunities. The overall goal is to reach 98% of California residences with broadband infrastructure and to achieve 90% home broadband adoption by 2022. CETF strives to achieve these goals through public awareness and education, partnerships, grantmaking to community organizations, and advancing public policy. For more information, please visit www.cetfund.org.