



California Senate District 34

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Senator Umberg helps to deliver 400 Chromebooks to area high school students

By: courtesy / On: March 10, 2022 / In: Anaheim Union High School District, Government, High School
/ Tagged: 34th Senate District, Anaheim Union High School District, Tom Umberg

Senator Thomas J. Umberg (D – Orange County) was on hand at the Anaheim Union High School District Office to help distribute 400 Chromebook laptops to students from Frontier Communications.

“The pandemic has highlighted some of California’s infrastructure deficiencies with startling clarity. Some of those exist in our wireless networks and educational technology right here in the heart of Orange County,” said Senator Umberg. He went on to say that, “This age group, in particular, has had so much stolen from them. It’s vitally important that we provide them with the tools necessary to be able to finish their high school education to go on and make a difference in the world.”

Distributed laptops were prioritized to students and families currently lacking Internet-capable devices at home – a severe impediment to distance learning. Frontier Communications partnered with Anaheim Union High School District Trustee, Al Jabbar, and Senator Tom Umberg to provide the Chromebooks through the California Emerging Technology Fund (CETF).

Trustee Jabbar expressed his gratitude for this donation to help the AUHSD community: “This donation will help many students stay on top of their studies and homework and they will be able to keep the Chromebook to provide them with an essential digital-age device to advance student learning and achievement. I am very thankful to Senator Umberg for bringing this opportunity to our Anaheim students and parents. I also want to thank Frontier Communications and the California Emerging Technology Fund for the generous donation to help our schools.”

“Frontier Communications is pleased to be a community partner and join with CETF to provide devices to enable students to connect to the Internet, their teachers and their classrooms to engage in distance learning. We recognize the additional challenges created by the COVID pandemic that are impacting families and the education opportunities of students in high-need school districts,” said Joe Gamble, Senior Vice President for Frontier Communications West Region. “Frontier remains committed to the California communities we serve and is proud to partner with CETF in helping 16 school districts and 350 families living on Tribal Lands, adapt to the increased reliance on Internet-based learning.”

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.

The California Emerging Technology Fund (CETF) was established as a non-profit corporation pursuant to orders from the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) in

approving the mergers of SBC-AT&T and Verizon-MCI in 2005. As a condition of approval of the mergers, AT&T and Verizon are required to contribute to CETF a total of \$60 million over 5 years “for the purpose of achieving ubiquitous access to broadband and advanced services in California, particularly in underserved communities, through the use of emerging technologies.”

Senator Umberg added that, “This was a very special experience for me – to be able to look into the eyes of these teenagers and their families and let them know that we have their backs.”

This article was released by the Office of Senator Josh Newman.

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