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MONDAY, SEPT. 13, 2010

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COLO. SECURES \$100M TO EXPAND BROADBAND

2 p.m. news conference scheduled for today

Gov. Bill Ritter announced today that Colorado has won a \$100 million federal grant to create an affordable broadband network across the state that will provide underserved schools, libraries, colleges and communities with high-speed Internet access.

“This project has the potential to provide a modern, 21st century link for every school, library and community that has been underserved because of rural location and challenging geography,” Gov. Ritter said. “It will allow schools to better prepare our students for the workforce, help create vibrant business communities throughout the state, and improve access to health care and public safety.”

A news conference is set for 2 p.m. today at the Denver Athletic Club, 1325 Glenarm Place.

The project will be led by EAGLE-Net, an intergovernmental agency comprised of multiple governmental entities throughout the state, borne out of the Centennial BOCES. IBM, through a vendor partnership, will provide systems integration services. The \$100 million grant will be funded through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, which included \$7.2 billion to expand broadband connectivity nationwide. Colorado’s grant is among the largest awards in the state this year.

Colorado ranks 42nd out of 50 states in broadband connectivity, with broadband service costing 10 times that of neighboring states. Meanwhile, Colorado schools average approximately 55 percent of the national average when it comes to Internet bandwidth per student.

“Our goal with this project is to make broadband accessible and affordable throughout the state.” said Denise Atkinson-Shorey, Chief Information Officer for EAGLE-Net. “The benefits include enhanced services for education, research, healthcare delivery and public safety.”

The EAGLE-Net project will potentially serve all 178 of Colorado’s K-12 school districts – approximately 1,700 schools and more than 830,000 students – as well as 15 community colleges, 26 libraries, and three institutions of higher education. The project also will provide Internet, Internet2 and wholesale capacity to more than 200 community anchor institutions.

As the systems integrator for the project, IBM will assist EAGLE-Net in building out a statewide broadband infrastructure to 234 community anchor institutions. IBM will staff and manage the project management office and provide network architects and engineers to design the overall solution and manage its deployment. In addition, IBM will be responsible for contracting with backhaul providers, local exchange carriers, network equipment vendors and wireless providers, among others.

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FACT SHEET

Colorado's Centennial Board of Cooperative Educational Services (CBOCES), as the sponsoring entity is proposing a public-private partnership (EAGLE-Net) to bring broadband service to school districts, libraries, and community anchor institutions across Colorado.

The project would address the lack of affordable high-capacity broadband access at many rural and underserved school districts and educational institutions, many of which currently rely on outdated copper-based telecommunications facilities. The proposed Educational Access Gateway Learning Environment Network (EAGLE-Net) is a hybrid of more than 1,600 miles of terrestrial fiber and 3,000 miles of microwave wireless broadband expanding services across each of Colorado's 64 counties.

Among the approximately 234 institutions to be connected at speeds from 10 Mbps to 1 Gbps are 178 school districts, 26 libraries, 15 community colleges, and 3 universities, including the University of Northern Colorado, Air Force Academy and Colorado College. The school districts to be served initially represent more than 1,100 schools and 685,000 students (with growth to over 1,700 schools and 830,000 students), many from economically vulnerable populations, including Hispanics and other English-second-language users, African-Americans, Native Americans, low-income and at-risk youth.

The Colorado Community Anchors project also proposes to:

- Facilitate more affordable and accessible broadband service for up to 1.6 million households and 50,000 businesses by enabling local Internet service providers to utilize the project's open network.
- Connect one school district and two libraries on the Southern Ute Indian Reservation.
- Extend fiber to the University of Wyoming on Colorado's northern edge, connecting its new National Center of Atmospheric Research computing center to national networks. Colorado State University and the University of Colorado also plan a fiber build out to this network.

Centennial Board of Cooperative Educational Services of Colorado provides cost-effective, shared educational services and programs for 14 member school districts in the northern Colorado counties of Larimer, Weld, Morgan, and Boulder. Governed by its member districts, CBOCES provides special education, technology services and support, professional development, administrative and business services, grants management and supplemental educational services to children of migrant agricultural workers in Colorado.

PROJECT PARTNERS

- Adesta, LLC
- Cisco Systems
- Colorado Department of Transportation
- Colorado State University
- Conterra Telecom Services/BNI Solutions
- IBM
- Level 3 Communications, LLC
- Rotary Clubs of Colorado
- Tri-State Generation and Transmission Association
- University of Wyoming
- Zayo Bandwidth, LLC