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## **Vermont Department of Education Selects ENA as Statewide K-12 Broadband Connectivity Service Provider**

*New Agreement Solidifies Vision for Increased, Affordable and Robust Broadband Connectivity for All Vermont Schools*

**MONTPELIER** – The Vermont Department of Education has selected Education Networks of America (ENA) to provide managed Internet access and wide area network (WAN) services, including options to take advantage of new cost-effective IP voice and video conferencing services, on an opt-in basis to all public and private K-12 schools in the state.

On behalf of the state’s K-12 schools, the department issued a request for proposal (RFP) for managed connectivity and communication services in an effort to increase affordable bandwidth availability across the state through group purchase pricing, as well as to maximize E-Rate program funding for these services. The E-Rate program provides subsidized discounts to school and libraries for the purchase of telecommunication and networking services.

This action was driven by Vermont’s Transformation of Education initiative and follows an analysis in 2008 that determined Vermont’s schools were not getting the full benefit of E-Rate funding. Subsequently, the department began a process to solicit an entity to create an E-Rate eligible statewide managed network accessible to all Vermont schools. This endeavor begins a process that could lead to statewide organization of a number of services related to improved connectivity and communication such as video conferencing and Voice over IP (VoIP) and better E-Rate reimbursement rates for schools across Vermont.

“As we look realistically at the rapid rate of change in the world of technological innovation, it is imperative that Vermont’s K-12 education community have access to robust, affordable Internet and wide area bandwidth,” said Peter Drescher, educational technology coordinator for the department. “Technology plays a vital role in implementing two of the key tenets of the Transformation of Education initiative – student-centered education and the advent of flexible learning environments. Without robust broadband in place for schools to access the myriad of resources available via the Internet, we cannot expect to move our students into an environment that addresses those tenets or helps them build the skills necessary to live and work in a 21st century world.” In partnership with ENA, this action will deliver enhanced and affordable robust connectivity and communication services to Vermont schools.

“As a managed service provider, ENA is uniquely positioned to take advantage of the recent infrastructure investments throughout the state,” said Bob Collie, senior vice president and CTO of ENA. “Vermont has seen quite a bit of new fiber construction throughout the state from incumbent and competitive service providers, as well as new local and municipal networks taking advantage of Federal stimulus and state investment opportunities; however, harnessing this new capacity to truly benefit schools can often be challenging especially in light of the tight budget environment. We believe that Vermont’s choice of ENA in this procurement is based, in part, on our proven ability in multiple other states to cost-effectively deliver high-bandwidth connectivity and productivity services including services such as IP voice and video in similar environments.”

“We are truly honored to serve Vermont schools,” said David Pierce, president and CEO of ENA. “We believe our 15-year experience in serving statewide K-12 networks including successful E-Rate program management will add immediate benefits to Vermont schools. ENA looks forward to proving our commitment to delivering unbeatable service and exceptional network solutions to Vermont’s K–12 community.”

#### ABOUT EDUCATION NETWORKS OF AMERICA

ENA provides managed network, communication and video conferencing services to customers in the education, library and government sectors. Their scalable solutions facilitate collaboration, increase productivity and decrease the cost of information management through the convergence of data, voice and video technologies. ENA currently manages multiple statewide and district-wide education and library networks successfully serving over 5,345 end sites, 580 school districts and 230 libraries, more than 3.1 million students, teachers and administrators and more than 6.2 million librarians and patrons. Empowered by their networks, ENA’s customers can focus on what matters most: preparing students, strengthening communities and leading enterprises into the 21st century. For more information, please visit [www.ena.com](http://www.ena.com).

For more information contact:

Peter Drescher  
Vermont Department of Education  
(802) 828-5149  
[peter.drescher@state.vt.us](mailto:peter.drescher@state.vt.us)

Lillian Kellogg  
Education Networks of America  
(615) 312-6072  
[lkellogg@ena.com](mailto:lkellogg@ena.com)

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