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Jefferson-Scranton Community Schools

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March 9, 2001

00-258

The Honorable Senator Charles Grassley
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

RECEIVED

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Dear Senator Harkin:

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

We write to you to express our concern about the imperiled future of our educational wireless spectrum. The Federal Communications Commission has issued a Notice of Proposed Rule Making (ET Docket No. 00-258, RM-9920 and 9911) seeking comment on a plan to relinquish Instructional Television Fixed Service (ITFS) channels to cellular phone companies for third generation (3G) mobile telephone services, stripping our nation's educational community of a powerful and irreplaceable medium. ITFS is an important part of our educational program in the Jefferson-Scranton Community School District.

Over 1,200 school districts, colleges, universities, and other educational organizations have held ITFS licenses, many of which were issued decades ago. The majority of ITFS licenses have traditionally provided one-way video broadcasting, but recent FCC rule changes have expanded the educational power of ITFS to provide advanced learning services, interactive video, and wireless broadband Internet access to students and adult learners in classrooms, homes and workplaces.

We are currently using our ITFS spectrum to provide a broad range of distance learning classes for our high school students. For instance, our district provides a foreign language teacher for two other high schools in Greene county. We also use the two-way ITFS service for interactive video to our classroom to provide college credit programs from Iowa Central Community College to our high school students and to many adult learners in the community and Greene county.

Jefferson-Scranton Community Schools, in partnership with the communities, will educate all of its students to the greatest extent that their own potential and the resources of the school will allow.

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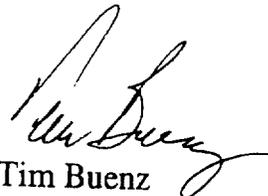
If the FCC reallocates any part of the ITFS spectrum for 3G mobile device services, the capacity, usefulness, and value of ITFS would be significantly diminished. Even if only part of the spectrum is taken away, many educational institutions would lose their ITFS service altogether, while others would face new equipment costs, service disruption and cutbacks, lower quality of service and signal interference.

If the ITFS spectrum is compromised in any way, these public benefits will be lost. We at the Jefferson-Scranton Community School District hope that you will support us in maintaining the integrity of our spectrum and in keeping this tremendous educational resource alive and well. Thank you for your support.

Sincerely,



Michael D. Haluska
Superintendent



Tim Buenz
Director of Technology