

**From:** Cindy Livers  
**To:** [CA Broadband Council](#)  
**Subject:** CA Broadband for All Action Plan - Public Comment  
**Date:** Thursday, November 19, 2020 12:08:12 PM  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)  
[image002.png](#)  
[image003.png](#)  
[image004.png](#)  
[image005.png](#)  
[CA Broadband Council Letter re Action Plan 111920.pdf](#)

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Please find attached a letter for public comment on the California Broadband for All draft Action Plan.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Eric Calderon, Chief Technology Officer ( [REDACTED] ), or Leticia Garcia, Governmental Relations Policy Director ( [REDACTED] ) with the Riverside County Office of Education.

Thank you,

**Cindy Livers**  
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### Riverside County K-12 School Districts

Alvord USD  
Banning USD  
Beaumont USD  
Coachella Valley USD  
Corona-Norco USD  
Desert Center USD  
Desert Sands USD  
Hemet USD  
Jurupa USD  
Lake Elsinore USD  
Menifee Union SD  
Moreno Valley USD  
Murrieta Valley USD  
Nuview Union SD  
Palm Springs USD  
Palo Verde USD  
Perris Elem. SD  
Perris Union High SD  
Riverside USD  
Romoland SD  
San Jacinto USD  
Temecula Valley USD  
Val Verde USD

November 19, 2020

Ms. Amy Tong  
Chair of the California Broadband Council  
Director of the California Department of Technology  
1325 J Street, Suite 1600  
Sacramento, CA 95814

### **RE: California Broadband for All Action DRAFT Plan—Public Comment**

Dear Chair and Members of the California Broadband Council:

On behalf of the Riverside County Office of Education (RCOE) and the 23 public school district superintendents in Riverside County, we appreciate the opportunity to provide public comment on the California Broadband for All Action DRAFT Plan. The action plan affords an opportunity to ensure that California students in the K-12 system have equitable access to devices and connectivity to access distance learning.

Last year, Riverside County school districts served more than 430,000 students, with over 70% of our students qualifying for Free and Reduced-Price Meals, and over 17% English Learners. In addition, RCOE's Early Learning Services division served 40,000 children and families through our early education programs and subsidized care. As California schools closed in March due to the COVID-19 pandemic and shifted to provide educational instruction via distance learning, it was evident that students with the greatest need were also the most disadvantaged in their ability to access distance learning.

In Riverside County alone, we estimate that nearly 10% or 43,000 students do not have reliable internet access—they are unable to continue their education. Many school districts utilized funding from the federal CARES Act and state funding to mitigate learning loss and to provide devices and connectivity to their communities. Often, wireless providers became partners with schools by providing discounted rates, increasing the number of homes with access to the Internet. While these efforts helped address an immediate need, they are not a long-term solution. In addition,

Jeffrey A. Vaca | Chief Governmental Relations Officer

Ms. Amy Tong  
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Director of the California Department of Technology  
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despite our best efforts, school districts were unable to provide connectivity in many areas, simply because wired and wireless providers do not offer current services in those regions. Riverside County spans over 7,300 miles, much is mountainous and remote desert areas lacking the infrastructure and cellular towers necessary to provide reliable internet connectivity to our students.

We appreciate that the plan is a 12-month action plan, it articulates the core challenges, and it contains broad categories and action goals. However, **we believe that it is critical to require telecommunications companies to create/provide an inventory of areas that are served, underserved, and not served and to demonstrate progress towards serving all areas in the 12-month period of the action plan. Without the opportunity to monitor progress, we will not know the real impact of the action plan in eradicating the digital divide.**

Again, thank you for the opportunity to provide public input, and we look forward to continued discussions to ensure every student in California, regardless of circumstances, has affordable and reliable connectivity to access learning. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Eric Calderon, Chief Technology Officer ([REDACTED]), or Leticia Garcia, Governmental Relations Policy Director ([REDACTED]) with the Riverside County Office of Education.

Sincerely,



Jeffrey A. Vaca  
Chief Governmental Relations Officer  
Office of the Riverside County Superintendent of Schools

JAV/LG/EC:cl