

November 17, 2020

Control Number 385863

Matt Behrens
Deputy Chief Information Officer
State of Iowa
200 East Grand Ave
Des Moines, IA 50309

RE: Vinton Municipal Communications Utility (VMCU) Empower Rural Iowa Broadband Grant

Dear Deputy Chief Behrens,

As a Vinton, Iowa area school we believe it is important that our education system have access to high quality broadband service that is reliable, provided at an affordable rate and supported by a local broadband services entity. In the Vinton-Shellsburg Community School District 40% or approximately 600 of our students qualify for free or reduced cost lunch. These 600 students live at 345 different addresses within the Vinton-Shellsburg Community School District and 220 of these student addresses are located within the city of Vinton. We are excited by the Empower Rural Iowa grant award to VMCU/iVinton to provide financial assistance to these students through VMCU's Connect To Learn program.

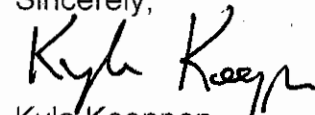
With the current Covid pandemic, it's critical to the Vinton, Iowa schools that quality high speed broadband service is readily available. Access to 1 Gigabit downstream and 1 Gigabit upstream broadband service for Vinton schools will greatly increase remote student learning and access to school materials and teachers when students cannot physically attend classroom instruction.

Rural Iowa Broadband Grant applications from communications service providers should reduce or eliminate unserved and underserved areas through the installation of 25/3 broadband or 100/20 broadband facilities. VMCU will use its Iowa broadband grant funds to provide much needed 1 Gigabit downstream and 1 Gigabit upstream broadband service to the Vinton, Iowa business community and the area covered under this application.

Vinton, Iowa is a growing community with an increasing number of residents and students. Today broadband coverage may be non-existent or limited in some areas making it difficult for some remote student learning services. The education of Vinton, Iowa students is enhanced with the deployment of Gigabit broadband service to the Vinton, Iowa community.

Thank you for the opportunity to express my support for the VMCU Empower Rural Iowa Broadband Grant application.

Sincerely,



Kyle Koeppen
Superintendent
Vinton-Shellsburg CSD