



# School Administrative Unit 70

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To Whom it May Concern:

As Superintendent of Schools of SAU 70, which includes the towns of Hanover, New Hampshire and Norwich, Vermont, I am writing to offer my strong support for the ValleyNet's Upper Valley Fiber Initiative. In a district that serves the communities that include employees of Dartmouth College, Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical Center, and an array of high tech businesses, it is unacceptable that roughly one-third of the households in our communities do not have access to high speed internet. This means that a sizable minority of our students do not have access to the wealth of resources that are available on-line to support and/or enhance their learning opportunities.

Most importantly, an even higher percentage of our faculty members and administrators--- myself included--- lack high-speed internet access. This limited access to the internet stunts our school district's ability to introduce high tech solutions to our instruction and challenges teachers who increasingly need to avail themselves of web-based recordkeeping at the State and local level. If teachers cannot interact with students in real time, cannot gain remote access to the grade books that we now keep electronically at our schools, and cannot engage in the many asynchronous teaching and learning opportunities that are possible with high-speed internet, our ability to innovate is hampered.

As an aside, the Dresden school district was formed in 1963 as the first interstate school district in the country and the area now has an additional interstate district to the north. The Upper Valley is truly an integrated community covering both states and one can find numerous other examples of cross-border co-operation in the corporate, non-profit and government realms.

Before moving to this area, the district where I worked ten years ago had these services available throughout their attendance area. In this day and age of rich on-line resources, regions like the Upper Valley and districts in the Upper Valley are falling behind... in some cases a decade or more behind. We need affordable high-speed internet connections now. For that reason, I fully support the Upper Valley Fiber Initiative and hope that it will gain your support.

Sincerely,

Wayne Gersen, Ed. D.  
Superintendent, SAU 70