



April 17, 2020

## **It's Time for Free, High-Speed Internet for All Students**

As we have watched school districts across NC and the nation struggle to provide virtual learning, one thing is crystal clear-we need free, high-speed internet for all students. Too many of our students don't have internet at home or any device other than their cell phone. The digital divide exists in low-and-medium income families. Even when school districts provide students with computers, the lack of reliable internet has been undermining the virtual learning opportunity. We need a permanent long-term solution to ensure educational equity, not just for virtual learning but to allow students access to homework help, conduct research for their school projects, and to help families stay in touch with the school.

Providing free internet at every opportunity in our public places, in our low-income neighborhoods and in the homes of all public school students will require partnerships between private companies and government at the all levels.

Thanks to all of the companies who have stepped up providing computers and internet service during the pandemic. Now, let's keep it up. Our students will need all the help they can get to catch up over the next year.

**Yevonne Brannon**  
**Public Schools First NC, Chair**