

Governor Rauner recognizes Illinois' progress in bringing high speed internet to schools, students

January 19 2017 4:19 PM



EducationSuperHighway 2016 “State of the States” Annual Report Finds 83 Percent of Illinois School Districts Meet Minimum Connectivity Goal, Up from 71 Percent in 2015

CHICAGO — Governor Bruce Rauner today announced Illinois has made significant progress in bringing high-speed Internet to more schools and students statewide through the Illinois Classroom Connectivity Initiative this past year. The [EducationSuperHighway](#)'s 2016 "State of the States" annual [report](#) on K-12 broadband connectivity showed 83 percent of Illinois school districts now meet the minimum connectivity goal of 100 kbps per student, which is a significant jump from 71 percent at this time last year.

"This EducationSuperHighway is part of our overall goal of providing high-quality educational opportunities to our young people across the state," said Governor Rauner. "It is critical that we ensure access to the Internet in classrooms in every part of our state. I'm excited to see our teachers and students taking advantage of this great enhancement."

This year's report found that 717,580 Illinois students in total received access to additional bandwidth and 193 Illinois school districts upgraded their broadband connections.

"I am pleased this report shows, early on in the process, that we are getting results, and more Illinois young people are gaining access to the full range of online learning opportunities they need and deserve," said Illinois Secretary of Education Beth Purvis. "Modern education is increasingly moving online and our students must be there as well. There are many Illinois students who still lack access to the minimum connectivity they need to get a 21st century education and I look forward to continuing to build on this progress in the years ahead."

"Access to high-speed broadband is essential to becoming college and career ready in the twenty-first century. Every student deserves access to the tools that support digital learning and future-readiness," said State Superintendent of Education Tony Smith, Ph. D. "I would like to thank EducationSuperHighway for partnering with Illinois schools and school districts to create a scalable and cost-effective broadband infrastructure across the state. We are committed to continuing our work together to equip every classroom with the bandwidth needed to prepare all students for success."

In April 2016, the administration announced its participation in the Illinois Classroom Connectivity Initiative, a partnership between the Governor's Office, the Illinois State Board of Education, and the EducationSuperHighway to get high speed Internet into more Illinois schools. This is being done in conjunction with the National Governors Association.

School districts all across the state have benefited from the work this past year. At Allendale CCSD 17 the district was able to work with their existing provider and upgrade to a dedicated fiber connection at 100 Mbps. Now, the district can move forward with phasing in new chromebooks each year without worrying their connection may impede their teachers and students from taking advantage of new tools.

From Teutopolis Unit 50, to the Williamsfield Community School District, to Barrington High School, new educational technology is now being utilized as a result of access to greater bandwidth.

“In less than a year, Illinois has made powerful progress in the effort to get more students online at faster speeds,” said Evan Marwell, Founder and CEO of EducationSuperhighway. “In fact, over the past year 176,730 Illinois students gained access to the minimum connectivity they need to truly access all the educational opportunities available to them online. That’s a great accomplishment. It’s the result of the leadership of Governor Rauner, Secretary of Education Beth Purvis, State Superintendent of Education Tony Smith, and this wonderful partnership between their offices, the National Governors Association, and our organization. I want to applaud the governor and everyone involved, for their vision and commitment to this issue. At EducationSuperHighway our mission is student connectivity. It’s obvious that public policy leaders in Illinois believe in this mission as well, and that’s to the great benefit of every student, parent and teacher in the state.”

The full State of the States report can be found [here](#).