



# County of San Mateo

## Inter-Departmental Correspondence

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**Department:** INFORMATION SERVICES

**File #:** 20-642

Board Meeting Date: 9/15/2020

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**Special Notice / Hearing:** None  
**Vote Required:** Majority

**To:** Honorable Board of Supervisors  
**From:** Michael Callagy, County Manager  
Jon Walton, Chief Information Officer  
**Subject:** Public Internet Connectivity Pilot Project Update

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Accept this informational report on the progress of the Public Internet Connectivity Pilot Project.

**BACKGROUND:**

In March 2020, as a result of the COVID-19 global pandemic, as well as local and state shelter-in-place orders, San Mateo County school districts resorted to distance learning conducted virtually over video conferencing platforms. The proliferation of students engaged in distance learning revealed significant internet connectivity challenges for school districts, especially those serving students in vulnerable communities.

During the 2020-2021 school year, most San Mateo County school districts will employ distance learning until the risk of COVID-19 has been abated. The effective implementation of distance learning requires access to affordable, reliable and fast internet service, which not all San Mateo County students currently have.

On August 4, 2020 this Board adopted Resolution No. 077629 authorizing the use of \$2,879,010 of Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act funds for the purposes of funding the "Public Internet Connectivity Pilot Project" (Project) to improve high-speed internet access for disadvantaged students.

**DISCUSSION:**

Since this Board's approval of the Project, the Information Services Department (ISD) has worked to finalize plans with school districts, gather quotes for equipment, and establish contracts with vendors. Through this work, ISD has determined that some adjustments will need to be made to some of the original procurement and contracting plans to ensure the success of these projects. These adjustments will stay within the \$2,879,010 already allocated to the Project and will be presented at a future Board meeting.

The following progress has been made in the Pilot School Districts:

**Ravenswood:** 275 T-Mobile Hotspots and 275 Comcast Internet Essentials promotional codes have been delivered to the schools and deployed to students. The promotional codes will be distributed to students and their families who qualify for the program. The County Wi-Fi expansion is underway and is on target to complete by the first week of October. A mobile wireless access unit has been placed in the East Menlo Park region of the Ravenswood school district to provide internet connectivity for students in that area.

**La Honda/Pescadero:** 50 T-Mobile hotspots and 50 Comcast Internet Essentials promotion codes have been delivered to the schools. Distribution of these hotspots and promotion codes to students was scheduled to begin the week of September 14, however, the wildfires and subsequent evacuation orders have caused delays. The school district plans to setup up “Learning Centers” on six ranches and farms in the community. Based on internet access availability, the County will place two mobile wireless access units to bolster internet connectivity for students in these areas.

**Redwood City & Sequoia:** The Wi-Fi expansion work is underway. The network design has been finalized and hardware has been ordered. Kaiser Permanente has agreed to allow placement of wi-fi equipment on their facility located at 1150 Veterans Avenue. Similar discussions with Stanford and other local business are in progress. This work is scheduled for completion in the first week of November.

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

There is no fiscal impact associated with accepting this report.