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To Whom It May Concern:

On behalf of the Silverton School District, I would like to express our support for the efforts of "Operation Link Up". Our District firmly believes in the importance of bringing fiber optics to San Juan County in order to enhance and deliver an appropriate education, focused on 21st Century Learning Skills, to the Silverton students.

The Silverton Public School is committed to building a solid educational foundation for our students. We want our students to enter the work force fully versed in the wide range of technological experiences. We want our students to meet the expectations of a 21st Century Education set forth by Governor Ritter, the State Legislature, and the Colorado Department of Education. We want our students to become global citizens, at ease in the technological world of real time, interactive simulations and conversations. We want our students to access opportunities and experiences, via the Internet, that are not available to them in a remote, rural, tiny community in Southwest Colorado. These goals are seriously compromised by the lack of fiber optic access in San Juan County.

We unconditionally believe our students should, at the very least, have the opportunity to access the same technologies the state has provided to every other county in the state. Without a fiber optic relay, we have been excluded from participating in the Fast Track Initiative that links all districts and colleges via an intranet, fiber optic framework. We have been unable to offer simultaneous opportunities for high school students to participate in interactive video classes with classes provided by other districts. Most importantly, over time, we know our District will slowly fall further and further behind the technological curve as new developments and upgrades will be based on fiber optic technologies.

The lack of fiber optics in San Juan County limits the opportunities for learning our teachers can provide to students. It precludes our students from participating in the next wave of technological and communication upgrades that the future will surely bring. We do not want the Silverton District to have the unfortunate label of being known as the only school district in Colorado that does not have access to a fiber optic network. We should not be forced to rely on increasing outdated technologies because we do not have any other options. We believe our students should have all the benefits and advantages that come with having access to a fiber optic network.

As such, we strongly support the efforts to bring fiber optics to San Juan County.

Sincerely,

Kim White
Superintendent