

# Raleigh County Schools

*Making a Difference One Child at a Time*

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**FOR INFORMATION, CONTACT:**

Charlotte Hutchens  
Superintendent, Raleigh County Schools  
(304) 256-4500

Michael Kelemen  
Suddenlink Communications  
(304) 760-2071

## **Raleigh County Schools Go High-Speed**

***Fiber Optic Wide Area Network to provide enhanced teaching, learning, collaboration and research***

**September 14, 2009: Beckley, WV** - The Raleigh County Board of Education today announced the launch of a high-speed, cutting-edge broadband network that connects all of its 29 Raleigh County School buildings to the West Virginia Department of Education in Charleston, and enables students and teachers to use the Internet for a variety of learning applications. The new fiber optic Wide Area Network (WAN) will be a 67-fold increase in capacity over the previous network, and will have the ability to integrate and strengthen classroom instruction options across the county.

The state-of-the-art network was built and installed by Suddenlink Communications, the largest cable broadband company in West Virginia. The majority of funding for the project was made possible by E-rate, the federal Universal Service Fund program that provides discounts to schools and libraries to help them obtain affordable telecommunications and Internet access. E-rate was created by Senator Jay Rockefeller as part of the Telecommunications Act of 1996, and to date, West Virginia has received over \$100 million in E-rate funds.

"The Raleigh County network moves Raleigh County forward and provides every student the opportunity to be engaged in 21<sup>st</sup> century learning and to be globally competitive," said First Lady Gayle Manchin. "As a former teacher, I appreciate the need to give our state's students every resource possible to enrich their educational experience."

The newly installed WAN network will support enhanced teaching, learning, collaboration and research by providing access to a variety of curriculum-rich Web sites and other Web-based applications. Students currently use online textbooks, have access to virtual-learning and take virtual field trips to enhance their educational experiences.

“The new network will not only enrich Raleigh County schools’ online capacities, but it will also aid teachers in fully integrating web resources into their curricula,” said Dr. Charlotte Hutchens, Raleigh School Board Superintendent. “The benefits and capabilities that the new network brings to our schools will mean greater educational offerings for our students.”

The increased Internet speed will also foster greater communication with parents and students via teacher, school and district Web sites. “Investing in West Virginia schools is an investment and continued priority for us,” said Michael Kelemen, Director of Government Relations for Suddenlink Communications.

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### **About Raleigh County Schools**

The Raleigh County school district is comprised of 29 schools, including four high schools, five middle schools, 19 elementary schools and one career-technical center. It ranks fourth largest in the state with a student population of over 12,000. The district has an annual operating budget of approximately \$125 million and a workforce of over 1,500 administrators, teachers and service personnel. <http://boe.rale.k12.wv.us/>

### **About Suddenlink Communications™**

Suddenlink Communications™ is a top-10 U.S. cable broadband provider, supporting the information, communication and entertainment demands of approximately 1.3 million customers. In a growing number of markets, Suddenlink offers digital TV, high-speed Internet and telephone service for the home and office. <http://suddenlinkfyi.com/states/wv/>