

**PRESS RELEASE
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Southern Oregon Classrooms Are Racing Ahead With High Speed Internet Services

Medford, OR – Access to computers and high bandwidth internet is playing an increasingly crucial role in preparing students for success in the future workplace. Schools must have access to fast, reliable internet service in order to provide students and teachers with connections to online educational resources as well as give some hands-on experience with tools these students are bound to encounter in the post-education work place.

Over the past few years, the majority of our region's school districts have begun to receive those necessary, high speed internet connections, thanks in large part to Hunter Communications. In 2000 Hunter started building an all-fiber network throughout Jackson County with the vision of a Metropolitan Area Network (MAN) in rural Southern Oregon, and has since expanded their network to include services throughout Josephine and Klamath Counties. Hunter has been connecting school districts with fiber optics since this initial deployment and most recently has completed projects for rural schools in the Three Rivers and Eagle Point School Districts. Hunter will be completing a project for the Lake County ESD and School District by July, 2009. Past projects include fiber optic installations to more than 100 schools in the Medford, Central Point, Phoenix/Talent, Rogue River, Butte Falls, Klamath County and Klamath Falls City School Districts.

Hunter's Founder/ CEO, Richard Ryan, commented on the projects, saying, "We are excited to be helping this generation of students compete not just locally, but globally, making possible technologies and teaching opportunities not available without high speed internet. Unfortunately, the US has lagged behind the world in data speeds, and smaller communities typically trail even further behind. Thanks to the efforts of a lot of people, Southern Oregon students are now above par, and connect to the rest of the nation and world."

While increased connectivity is extremely important to our educational system as a whole, high speed connections have even larger implications for rural school districts. Rural schools historically have a harder time keeping technological pace with their urban counterparts due to inadequacies inherent in the communications infrastructure throughout the Country. Now, at least locally, nearly all schools (both rural and urban) have access to the same educational opportunities that traditionally better connected and larger pocketed metropolitan area school districts already enjoy. Hunter's projects for the Three Rivers and Eagle Point School Districts, for example, have provided 100 Megabit and Gigabit connections to schools with as few as **50** students. For many of these students, these school connections might be their only contact with new technology or with the internet.

"Our students have greatly benefited by the high-speed fiber network developed in partnership with Hunter Communications. We were one of the first districts in Oregon to implement the on-line state assessment which provides immediate feedback to students on their progress. Our district network provides efficient, inexpensive electronic data transfer and access to teaching and learning resources that make learning more relevant for our students. Such high-speed connectivity is essential for ensuring our students can learn and thrive in our increasingly competitive global economy." Phil Long, Superintendent - Medford School District 549C

Founded in 1992, Hunter Communications makes every effort to remain on the cutting edge of technology and thus manages to provide Southern Oregon with the fastest and most reliable internet services available. Hunter also offers phone service and has plans to provide television services in the near future. By advancing the communications capabilities of Southern Oregon, Hunter Communications hopes to help make the region a true communications hub and future model for facilitating local economic growth and global commerce. What better place to start than education?

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