

# ***The OneBroward Broadband Initiative***

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## ***Abstract***

What if students and teachers could have connectivity at school and continue to connect in after school programs, libraries, parks, and in the home? What if we could bridge the digital divide while saving the District significant dollars and even create opportunities for revenue generation? What if safety and security in the schools could be enhanced, by implementing real-time video surveillance technology? This white paper will explore how these possibilities can become reality by utilizing our current infrastructure and creating a digital alliance with community partners.

## ***Background***

The race for last-mile communications link is taking on new dimensions. While today broadband is mainly a means for delivering Internet access, in the coming years broadband will become the backbone for delivering interactive voice, video and data telecommunications. Local telephone companies, cable television operators, and cellular carriers are currently looking to develop a common infrastructure to deliver high bandwidth services. The carriers are examining the viability of extending their networks using a combination of both wired and wireless network technologies.

Currently commercial carriers collect hefty monthly subscriber fees for basic services but the opportunity exists to capitalize on any advanced services that will emerge in the future. Schools, universities, government and public safety can all benefit by forming a new generation of “Alliance Carriers.”

## ***Alliance Carriers***

“Alliance Carriers” including schools, libraries, universities, public safety, government, hospital, transportation, cultural and municipal entities realize the demand for larger bandwidth is emerging and are recognizing the need to provide a common communications network rather than each one go it alone. In so doing, these “Alliance Carriers” are better positioned to offer ubiquitous and seamless network infrastructure that provides large pipes while reaching further into their communities in order to bridge the digital divide and save millions of dollars.

The challenge “Alliance Carriers” face is in forming the correct alliance doctrine. Cities like Cleveland, Philadelphia, and New York City have or are currently implementing

these alliances effectively. Successful models like *OneCleveland* entitled, “Connecting, Enabling and Transforming our Community” are scaleable and replicable.

### ***Broward County Schools’ Role***

Broward County Schools is the strongest link to the last mile for providing large bandwidth to its own schools and the *OneBroward Broadband Initiative*. The current infrastructure can help communities cross the digital-divide while leaving no child behind in the classroom. At the same time, it can reduce telecommunication costs to schools and provide higher bandwidth for teaching/learning demands while increasing student/teacher and overall community safety.

Broward County Schools is uniquely positioned to take advantage of existing school communication towers and ITFS frequencies to provide the missing link to last mile for increased bandwidth demands for today and the future. Broward County Schools is also uniquely positioned to be the foundation of the *OneBroward Broadband Initiative*.

### ***The OneBroward Broadband Initiative***

Constraints of bandwidth and speed can be removed by developing the *OneBroward Broadband Initiative* using a combination of wired and wireless network infrastructure and technologies. Alliance members would consist of those invested in building out a shared, managed network for both current and emerging technologies.

The *OneBroward Broadband Initiative* could be modeled after the *OneCleveland* Project, which has successfully connected numerous entities into a multifaceted, integrated network and is now in its third year. Broward County could be a nonprofit provider of community-based ultra broadband data networking services. Its network would connect subscribers to one another other and the Internet at high speeds with significant cost savings.

The creation of the *OneBroward Broadband Initiative* – with its broad community reach and its unprecedented speeds – may well open the door to increase community opportunity in a number of areas. Indeed, the *OneBroward Broadband Initiative* is intended to encourage applications that demand even more speed and bandwidth than were previously thought to be acceptable.

### ***Benefits to the District and Community***

The most significant benefit to the District and community would be the capability to bridge the digital divide. Second would be tremendous potential cost savings and the availability of ample bandwidth to employ multiple applications across a seamless network.

The following are examples of what might be possible using new applications and tools deployed inside the *OneBroward Broadband Initiative* for education, healthcare, government, cultural and other non-profit organizations.

#### Education

- “Virtual Classrooms” - connecting area schools, universities, museums, libraries, and hospitals
- Distance learning using laptop computers at schools, libraries, parks and homes
- Distribution of video on demand
- IP Voice Communications using desktop or wireless phones
- Remote monitoring of classroom activities and parental participation in classroom activities
- Remote Security Monitoring of Bus Activity and locations

#### Healthcare

- Healthcare and Insurance Cost Reduction via real time collaboration for needed procedures
- Increased Quality of Care
- Remote Care and diagnosis from doctors offices to schools, offices, or homes
- Realtime collaboration for Public Safety Crisis with Hospitals and County Management
- Ability to share high definition digital images in real-time
- Distance learning and telemedicine

#### e-Government

- Remote security monitoring
- First-responder access to real-time data, including real estate records, vehicle records and public safety information across disparate local, regional, state and federal agencies
- E-permitting and E-inspections, including ability to issue permits, access city records and update records remotely
- Sensory networks to provide advance notifications of accidents and bad road conditions to drivers or travelers
- E-Voter Registration

#### Arts and Cultural

- Broad distribution of public art and cultural experiences via online tools
- Melding of performances in remote locations
- Community outreach programs

## Nonprofit

- Enhanced communication tools to reach impoverished or isolated constituencies
- Shared services, such as data centers and disaster recovery
- Enhanced applications to improve human services
- Enables workforce development

### ***Getting Started***

Broward Schools can take the lead in bringing the appropriate entities to the table in order to get started forming the *OneBroward Broadband Initiative*. Key partners should be identified and invited to a preliminary meeting to begin the conversation of a shared vision.

The first meeting should include a discussion of broadband needs, current infrastructure, plans for broadband access and potential benefits. Subsequently, a task force with a handful of strong partners should be formed to draft the *OneBroward Broadband Initiative* doctrine including mission, governance, and technical specifications.