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Learning First Alliance Calls for Increase to E-Rate Funding Cap

Washington, D.C. – August 12, 2013 – Today, the Learning First Alliance (LFA), a partnership of 15 leading education associations representing more than 10 million parents, educators and policymakers, released the following statement:

The Learning First Alliance applauds recent initiatives to modernize the E-Rate program, including the Federal Communications Commission's (FCC) approval of the E-Rate Notice of Proposed Rule Making (NPRM) on July 19, 2013.

E-Rate has played a critical role in supporting school connectivity and student learning since it was initially enacted in 1996. However, given advances in telecommunications and education technology that have occurred since its inception, the need for E-Rate has grown significantly. Currently, the program receives requests for assistance that more than double the resources available for it.

As the FCC moves forward with the rulemaking process, LFA urges the Commission to approve a significant and permanent increase to the E-Rate funding cap. This increased funding will ensure that our nation's students gain access to high speed broadband and digital learning opportunities that will help them acquire the skills necessary for success in the global community.

LFA also recommends careful consideration of the goals and other aspects of E-Rate in the context of the changes in the telecommunications landscape that have occurred since the initial enactment of the program.

LFA urges interested parties to provide feedback on the NPRM. Comments will be accepted until September 16, 2013.

About The Learning First Alliance

The Learning First Alliance is a partnership of 15 leading education associations with more than 10 million members dedicated to improving student learning in America's public schools. Alliance members include: the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, American Association of School Administrators, American Federation of Teachers, American School Counselor Association, Association for Middle Level Education , International Society for Technology in Education, Learning Forward (formerly National Staff Development Council), National Association of Elementary School Principals, National Association of Secondary School Principals, National Association of State Boards of Education, National Education Association, National School Public Relations Association, National PTA, National School Boards Association and Phi Delta Kappa International. The Alliance maintains www.learningfirst.org, a website that features what's working in public schools and districts across the country.

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