



STATE OF MICHIGAN  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
LANSING


RICK SNYDER  
GOVERNOR

BRIAN J. WHISTON  
STATE SUPERINTENDENT

**MEMORANDUM**

**DATE:** September 1, 2016

**TO:** Local and Intermediate School District Superintendents  
Public School Academy Directors

**FROM:** Venessa A. Keesler, Ph.D., Deputy Superintendent   
Division of Educator, Student, and School Supports

**SUBJECT:** Internet Options for Low Income Families

As the school year begins, the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) encourages districts to share with parents internet options for low income families. Learning can occur "Any Time, Any Place, Any Way, Any Pace," but to continue learning in the home, high speed reliable broadband is crucial. With more devices in the hands of students, districts have shifted away from traditional approaches to homework. According to the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), seven out of ten teachers assign homework that requires high speed internet access, yet in some communities as few as one in three students have home internet connectivity. When students do not have internet access at home, the gap widens in terms of what students can do. Equitable access to the internet is essential to maximize lifetime learning and success.

Families can access [www.everyoneon.org](http://www.everyoneon.org) to learn what internet options are available in their communities, including mobile hotspots. The website also lists information on discounted computers for qualified families as well as local technology training opportunities. In the coming year, the FCC's Lifeline program will begin to include internet access. Information on the updated program will be forthcoming.

cc: Michigan Education Alliance

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608 WEST ALLEGAN STREET • P.O. BOX 30008 • LANSING, MICHIGAN 48909  
[www.michigan.gov/mde](http://www.michigan.gov/mde) • 517-373-3324