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## League of Innovative Schools Applauds Signing of Historic Infrastructure Bill to Bridge Digital Divide

**NOVEMBER 15, 2021 | Washington, D.C.** – The Digital Promise League of Innovative Schools, a national coalition of forward-thinking K-12 school districts, applauds President Biden for signing the bipartisan Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act into law, which will invest \$65 billion to ensure every American has access to reliable high-speed internet and lower the cost of internet service.

Nearly 17 million school children lack internet access at home—a problem that disproportionately affects students of color, low-income families, and rural communities, and has been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. This once-in-a-generation bill makes significant investments in broadband infrastructure, affordability, and adoption to address the homework gap many school children face due to the connectivity divide in our country.

“A digital divide exists today, which means equal access to education is impossible,” said Dewayne J. McClary, director of the League of Innovative Schools. “By bridging the digital divide, we can give all students—who are our future—access to the tools, resources, and information they need to participate fully in powerful learning opportunities.”

Since 2011, the League of Innovative Schools—a member-based network—has implemented and championed equitable access to technologies to close the Digital Learning Gap. Throughout the pandemic, the League has advocated for digital equity with renewed urgency, calling on the federal government to [#ConnectKidsNow](#).

“These past few years have truly shown the need for our nation's students to have a strong and fast connection to the internet. Quarantines and online instruction have driven home the need to ensure fair and equitable access to essential communications services. Access to high speed internet is not a luxury, it is an essential tool to create a well-rounded and knowledgeable graduate.” said Kristine Orr, superintendent of the South Glens Falls Central School District (New York). “We are thrilled to see our federal government take the steps necessary to bring these services to rural and underserved families.”

Districts in the League of Innovative Schools are selected for their innovative vision for learning and commitment to advancing equity. By collaborating on shared priorities, the League spearheads innovative learning and leadership practices to achieve equitable outcomes for every student.

"The League of Innovative Schools has created new practices that prepare young people to thrive in an increasingly digital world," said Dr. Gudiel R. Crosthwaite, superintendent of Lynwood Unified School District (California). "Internet connectivity is essential to learning, and through our district's participation in professional learning and collaboration with partners, we are strengthening our network and ensuring students receive the tools they need for equitable education and future success."

During their annual fall convening in October, district leaders representing 25 districts in the League attended meetings with congressional leaders across the aisle to share insights on current policy issues and highlight how their districts and schools have benefited from the Elementary and Secondary Emergency Relief (ESSER) funds. In discussions, League leaders expressed support for the broadband infrastructure provisions of the bipartisan infrastructure bill, strongly encouraging House members to act to close the digital divide and ensure every student and household has access to affordable high-speed internet.

"I am so pleased with the advocacy of Digital Promise and with our legislators for the bipartisan passage of the infrastructure bill which will provide life changing opportunities to the students of Rowan-Salisbury Schools and across our nation," said Dr. Tony Watlington, superintendent of Rowan-Salisbury School System (North Carolina).

**Press Contacts:**

My Nguyen  
Project Director, Communications  
Digital Promise  
mnguyen@digitalpromise.org

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**About Digital Promise**

Digital Promise is a nonprofit organization that builds powerful networks and takes on grand challenges by working at the intersection of researchers, entrepreneurs, and



educators. Our vision is that all people, at every stage of their lives, have access to learning experiences that help them acquire the knowledge and skills they need to thrive and continuously learn in an ever-changing world. For more information, visit the [Digital Promise website](#) and follow [@digitalpromise](#) for updates.

