



Michelle Lujan Grisham
Governor

Jeff Lopez
Broadband Director

Aquiles Trujillo
Broadband Deputy Director

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 9, 2025

Contact: Mike Curtis
Public Relations Coordinator
Office of Broadband Access and Expansion
Michael.curtis@connect.nm.gov
(505) 231-4477

State broadband initiative to connect hundreds of rural students in Grant County

ALBUQUERQUE – The Office of Broadband Access and Expansion (OBAE) announced today that it's awarded a \$1.5 million state grant to Transworld Network L.L.C. (TWN) to deliver high-speed broadband access to rural students and school staff in Silver City.

This funding comes from the \$25 million *Student Connect* program which was part of the Connect NM Fund. *Student Connect* funding addresses critical disadvantages faced by rural students who lack home internet access. TWN will work with the Silver Consolidated School District to connect 484 unserved or underserved rural students.

“This project will change lives for nearly 500 Grant County students who lack access to the internet at home,” said **Jeff Lopez**, director of OBAE. “*Student Connect* ensures that rural students are able to fully participate in the classroom, whether they are at school or doing homework. This is one important part to ensure every student has the resources to succeed.”

The state grant will go toward the construction of towers and fixed wireless service and provide receivers for designated student homes. Participating students and staff will also receive three years of complimentary broadband.

“As a teacher, reliable high-speed internet is crucial for providing students with equitable access to digital learning tools, research resources, and real-time feedback,” said **Rebecca Traeger**, a 6th grade teacher at Silver Consolidated Schools. “This broadband project will bridge the connectivity gap for many of our families, ensuring that learning doesn't stop when the school day ends. It allows me to extend meaningful learning opportunities beyond the classroom.”

“Faster internet speeds will make our Chromebooks work more efficiently, which helps students get assignments done faster and with fewer interruptions,” said **Bennett Traeger**, a Silver High School student.

“This project represents more than just faster internet—it’s about equity, access, and opportunity,” said **Will Hawkins**, Superintendent, Silver Consolidated Schools. “For many of our students, especially in rural areas, reliable broadband is the missing link to fully participating in 21st-century learning. With this support, Silver Schools can better connect classrooms to homes, extend learning time, and remove barriers that too often hold students back.”

OBAE has approved 12 *Student Connect* grants, totaling \$23.3 million with about \$1.7 million still available. OBAE actively encourages applications from schools and internet service providers.

Student Connect projects must be completed by June 30, 2026. [Applications remain open](#) with no deadline, requiring only that proposals meet program criteria.

The Connect New Mexico Fund was established by the Legislature in 2021 through the Connect New Mexico Act.

###

The Office of Broadband Access and Expansion is dedicated to serving New Mexico with a commitment to make high-speed broadband accessible to all New Mexicans. OBAE’s mission is to expand and improve high-speed internet service with passionate leadership that drives bold, equitable, affordable and inclusive broadband solutions. OBAE seeks results that honor the state’s rich heritage and elevate quality of life for all.