



MEDIA ADVISORY
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South Routt School District and Yampa Valley Electric/Luminate Fiber Announce Partnership to Increase High-Speed Broadband Access in South Routt County

(ROUTT COUNTY, CO),

Today, Rim Watson Superintendent South Routt School District (SRSD) and Steve Johnson General Manager/CEO of Yampa Valley Electric Association (YVEA) and Luminate Fiber LLC, announced the school district has partnered with Luminate Fiber to help increase access to broadband services for students, educators, and other staff who lack stable, reliable internet for online learning.

SRSD applied to the Colorado Department of Education and was awarded \$2.9 million dollars through the Connecting Colorado Students Grant Program (CCSG) to assist in the buildout costs aimed to connect students, educators, and families in the communities of Oak Creek, Phippsburg, and Yampa for the start of the 2021-2022 school year. Luminate/YVEA will link 1192 homes and SRSD campuses with access to a gigabit fiber to the premises network.

Superintendent Watson said, “The district is incredibly fortunate to combine efforts with a local provider who clearly understands the need of getting quality broadband service for the success of our students. This became abruptly clear when all school districts were shut down last March. Our teachers, students and staff quickly discovered their current internet speed was barely sufficient to accomplish the district’s learning objectives. For many families there was no access to the internet at all. We maintained our rigor, but not at the pace we wanted. This partnership will benefit not only our students, but our community at an affordable rate for years to come”.

General Manager/CEO Steve Johnson said, “We are honored to partner with the district on this important project. Thanks to the vision and work of many community partners, we are able to leverage this opportunity—including [Northwest Colorado Broadband \(NCB\)](#), [Routt County](#), and [Project Thor](#). Across our territory, it has been increasingly clear that broadband services are not an option at this time, but a necessity for community health and well-being, especially in our coal impacted communities. The buildout of broadband is the single most important investment we can make in our communities—impacting economic development, student achievement, emergency services, and healthcare. We are grateful to the South Routt School District and the Colorado Department of Education for partnering with us to help provide stability and opportunity to the students, educators, and citizens of South Routt County.”

The \$20 million available in the [Connecting Colorado Students Grant Program](#) was appropriated as part of the [Colorado Legislature’s HB-20B-1001](#).