

October 26, 2024

Chairwoman Jessica Rosenworcel
Federal Communications Commission
45 L St NE
Washington, DC 20554

In the Matter of: Nomination for Universal Service Administrative Company Board of Directors, CC Docket 96-45, 97-21

Dear Chairwoman Rosenworcel:

On behalf of the public and private schools and America's public libraries, we write today to urge you to appoint Dr. David R. Schuler to the Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC) Board of Directors as the representative for schools that are eligible to receive discounts. Dr. Schuler welcomes the chance to serve in this role at a critical juncture for the Universal Service Fund programs and pursuant to § 54.501. We greatly appreciate the opportunity to submit this nomination.

Dr. Schuler currently serves as the Executive Director of AASA, The School Superintendents Association, the national professional organization representing chief executive officers, superintendents and senior level school administrators as well as cabinet members, professors and aspiring school system leaders. Dr. Schuler has more than 3 years of experience in public education, including 21 years served as a school superintendent. His education and leadership background have been a tremendous asset to the Board and the entire universal service program. Further, his direct link to public school systems through his position at AASA allows him to provide the Board with information on school system-level thoughts and opinions.

As the Executive Director for AASA, Dr. Schuler is deeply committed to supporting the total child, from physical and mental health to the development of fundamental, lifelong learning skills. In today's increasingly global and competitive world, a top-notch education and the building of lifelong learning skills require access to education technology and the broadband connectivity that the E-Rate program supplies to schools and libraries. Dr. Schuler was serving as a superintendent during the COVID-19 pandemic, which upended schooling as we knew it, drove students and staff home in unprecedented levels, and forced Congress to address the Homework Gap. A tireless advocate for the role of technology in education, and deeply familiar with the critical need of access to connectivity, Dr. Schuler was very pleased to see E-Rate remain critical to school connectivity while also working to ensure students had access to adequate internet connectivity during remote learning. Dr. Schuler looks forward to working with his peers on the USAC board to support connectivity to schools and libraries through E-Rate and Universal Service Fund programs.

Prior to AASA, Dr. Schuler served as a superintendent in two school districts in Illinois, where he focused on continual improvement planning processes, initiating growth programs, building strong community partnerships to support program investment, student education, and local business engagement, and integrating technology and connectivity into all aspects of teaching, learning and operations. Dr. Schuler served seven years as classroom teacher, with additional experience in curriculum development, department leadership, and directing student activities. He's also served as an adjunct professor, teaching future educators at both the undergraduate and graduate level.

Dr. Schuler, an AASA member since 2000, served as president of AASA from July 2015 to June 2016. He has served on both AASA's governing board and executive committee. He co-founded a successful business educational technology start-up company focused on college, career and life readiness, and as chair of the CoSN superintendent advisory council.

The Education and Libraries Networks Coalition (EdLiNC), a coalition representing the nation's leading public and private K-12 education and library associations, strongly supports the appointment of Dr. Schuler to the Universal Service Administrative Company Board of Directors. EdLiNC has been working with the Commission to improve the E-Rate program since its inception. We believe that Dr. Schuler's broad understanding of education, education leadership and education technology, coupled with a strong work ethic and deep commitment to expanding educational opportunities to the nation's students will continue to be of great benefit to the work of USAC. His appointment to the USAC board will provide USAC with the continuity and leadership that it needs as the E-Rate program continues to operate and evolve.

For these reasons, we respectfully request your approval of Dr. Schuler's appointment to the USAC Board of directors, representing schools and libraries that are eligible to receive discounts. A copy of his professional biography is attached. If you have any questions, please email Noelle Ellerson Ng (nellerson@aasa.org).

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

AASA, The School Superintendents Association
American Federation of School Administrators
American Federation of Teachers
Association of Educational Service Agencies
Association of School Business Officials International (ASBO)
CoSN - The Consortium for School Networking
ISTE + ASCD
National Association for Pupil Transportation
National Association of Elementary School Principals
National Association of Federally Impacted Schools
National Association of Independent Schools
National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP)
National Catholic Educational Association
National Education Association (NEA)
National Rural Education Association
National School Attorneys Association
SETDA

CC: Mr. Charles Tyler (Charles.Tyler@fcc.gov)