

Sprint and Charlotte Mecklenburg Library Launch Program to Help Provide Internet Access to Students at Home

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Just like books, students can check-out one of 150 wireless devices for hotspots this school year

This school year, Charlotte-area students will be able to check out a free Wi-Fi hotspot through a new agreement between Sprint (NYSE:S) and the Charlotte Mecklenburg Library. Sprint and the Charlotte Mecklenburg Library have made a commitment of offering 150 wireless hotspots to students of Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools who need to borrow the devices in order to stay connected at home. The Library will lend students without broadband access at home the devices for up to 30 days. For more information about how the pilot project will work, visit cmlibrary.org/oneaccess. The value of Sprint's service for the pilot project is estimated at \$288,000 for the 2016-2017 school year.

"Children in households without online access are, increasingly, locked out of learning once school lets out," notes Lee Keesler, CEO for Charlotte Mecklenburg Library. "That's why we're enthusiastic about this pilot. Giving CMS students the ability to borrow a device that will let them access the internet from home gives them the freedom to learn whenever they are curious. While this pilot program is limited in scope, it could be a catalyst for future, larger initiatives so that we can ensure no child or family is left behind."

With an estimated 18 percent of households in Charlotte without internet access in their homes due to costs, it significantly limits opportunities for children to complete homework assignments, research next-level learning, and apply for jobs online.

"Children today use the internet and wireless devices to stay on-track during the school day, but it's increasingly clear that far too many of our children simply don't have the access they also need at home to give them a competitive advantage and succeed," said Michael Miess, president, North Carolina/South Carolina Region at Sprint. "We're very excited about the opportunity these Wi-Fi hotspots will bring to Charlotte Mecklenburg students. It's time to close the digital divide and help students reach their highest educational potential."

As part of the ConnectED initiative, Sprint joined President Obama and other leaders in the technology and telecommunications industry in pledging its in-kind support. For the past two years, Sprint has worked to provide wireless broadband connectivity for 50,000 low-income K-12 students across the U.S. Sprint's in-kind contribution is valued at \$100 million.

About Sprint:

Sprint (NYSE: S) is a communications services company that creates more and better ways to connect its customers to the things they care about most. Sprint served more than 59.4 million connections as of June 30, 2016 and is widely recognized for developing, engineering and deploying innovative technologies, including the first wireless 4G service from a national carrier in the United States; leading no-contract brands including Virgin Mobile USA, Boost Mobile, and Assurance Wireless; instant national and international push-to-talk capabilities; and a global Tier 1 Internet backbone. Sprint has been named to the Dow Jones Sustainability Index (DJSI) North America for the past five years. You can learn more and visit Sprint at sprint.com or facebook.com/sprint and twitter.com/sprint.

About the Charlotte Mecklenburg Library:

The Charlotte Mecklenburg Library is one of America's leading urban public libraries, serving a community of more than one million citizens in Mecklenburg County, North Carolina. Through 20 locations, targeted outreach and online, the Library delivers exceptional services and programs, with a mission to create a community of readers and empower individuals with free access to information and the universe of ideas. For more, visit cmllibrary.org.