



AT&T TRANSFORMS LEARNING IN PICKENS COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT WITH \$5 MILLION IN WIRELESS SERVICES

High-Speed Internet Provided by AT&T and Tablets from Samsung Enable Personalized and Mobilized Learning for More Than 2,500 Students and Teachers in Pickens County

PICKENS, SC, Aug. 31, 2016 — Students in the School District of Pickens County (SDPC) are preparing to take learning beyond the classroom walls with free mobile internet from AT&T, as part of [AT&T Aspire](#), its signature philanthropic initiative, and with free tablets from Samsung.

AT&T is providing free 4G internet to 6th and 7th grade students and teachers in the district's five middle schools: Dacusville Middle School, R.C. Edwards Middle School, R.H. Gettys Middle School, Liberty Middle School, and Pickens Middle School. These students and teachers will receive 2,500 Galaxy tablets, donated by Samsung.

Valued at more than \$5 million over 3 years, the contribution is part of AT&T's national commitment to the White House [ConnectED initiative](#).

"I can't wait to see how our teachers are going to use these tools to help our kids learn and achieve," said Dr. Danny Merck, SDPC Superintendent. "Giving a student a device is great, but if the student's family doesn't have internet access, that device becomes less useful when the student goes home from school. Providing both a device and access will open up so many doors for learning and put all of our 6th and 7th graders on a more level playing field when it comes to technology."

"This project will help students set goals and pursue dreams which may be far beyond any they previously imagined," said U.S. Senator Lindsey Graham. "It is truly an investment in our students and in South Carolina's future."

In addition to the tablets and high-speed internet access, AT&T is providing SDPC with device management capabilities to ensure a highly secure environment on ConnectED devices, professional development training for teachers, and with training from its Digital You curriculum that teaches students how to use technology responsibly. The tablets are equipped with filtering software which will allow students to access only age-appropriate content.

"Technology is fundamentally altering education, both in terms of how it is delivered and what is needed to succeed in today's global economy and culture," said Pamela Lackey, president of AT&T South Carolina. "At AT&T, we believe there is no better investment for the future than an investment in the education of children. So not only are we building the networks which deliver advanced, high-speed service, but we are also working to drive the changes needed to help teachers teach and students learn anywhere, anytime."



“Samsung and AT&T share a commitment to delivering technology solutions that help improve student outcomes,” said Ted Brodheim, vice president of Vertical Business at Samsung Electronics America. “By combining our classroom-ready Galaxy tablets with the reach of AT&T’s 4G internet connection, we look forward to helping Pickens County teachers and students unlock the power of technology in their classrooms.”

[A recent study by the Pew Institute](#) found that people are more eager to harness the power of the internet when they understand its relevance to their lives, when they feel confident in their knowledge of using it and when their budgets can comfortably accommodate it. AT&T is working hard every day to help everyone harness the power of the internet and to ensure South Carolina is connected – from every corner and at every age.

More than 150 school districts nationwide, representing nearly 450 schools, applied to participate in AT&T’s ConnectEd initiative. Connected Nation, an independent non-profit organization dedicated to increasing broadband internet access to families in underserved areas, administered the school application and selection process on behalf of AT&T. Applicants were reviewed for economic need and their readiness to implement innovative teaching practices in the classroom using the devices. Connected Nation is also providing on-site support for the device rollout to students and teachers.

###

About Philanthropy and Social Innovation at AT&T

AT&T Inc. is committed to advancing education, strengthening communities and improving lives. Through its community initiatives, AT&T has a long history of investing in projects that create learning opportunities; promote academic and economic achievement; or address community needs. AT&T Aspire is AT&T’s signature philanthropic initiative that drives innovation in education by bringing diverse resources to bear on the issue including funding, technology, employee volunteerism, and mentoring. Through Aspire, we’ve passed the \$250 million mark on our plan to invest \$350 million in education from 2008-2017.

About the School District of Pickens County

The School District of Pickens County is a county-wide school system, serving all of Pickens County with 14 elementary schools, five middle schools, four high schools, and a state-of-the-art Career and Technology Center. With an annual enrollment of about 16,600 students, SDPC is the 12th largest school district in South Carolina, and our students consistently rank near the top of the state in academic achievement. Our vision is to provide a quality 21st century education that prepares all students for success beyond the classroom.

For more information, contact:

Clifton Metcalf
AT&T Public Affairs
704-620-4235
cm0623@att.com

John Eby
School District of Pickens County
864-397-1045