

NAVAJO TIMES

DINÉ BI NAALTSOOS

THURSDAY
January 17, 2019

Apache Co. schools broadband project cites progress

ST. JOHNS, Ariz. – The Apache County Schools Business Consortium broadband improvement project is moving forward with boots now on the ground, according to a news release.

The project is bringing a fiber backbone to several underserved schools in Apache County, including Red Mesa, Round Rock, Red Valley-Cove, Sanders, McNary, Vernon, Round Valley and St. Johns.

Over 20 miles of fiber have been placed and facility entrance construction has been completed or started at all locations.

When completed, more than 175 miles of fiber will have been installed.

All sites are expected be hooked up to the new fiber by June 2019.

A second project will connect county libraries in Concho, Greer, Vernon, St. Johns, Round Valley and Sanders.

“The most time-consuming component to making this project a reality has been the required permitting with the agencies that have oversight of the land the fiber must pass to connect our schools and libraries,” said Barry Williams, Apache County school superintendent.

“The project is still accepting applications and we are hopeful that schools like Pine Springs, Wide Ruins, Cottonwood, Kinlichee and Nazlini will take advantage of this free or little cost unique opportunity,” Williams said.

Schools and libraries that would like more information regarding this program are encouraged to reach out the Arizona’s State E-rate director, Milan Eaton (Milan.Eaton@azed.gov).

The project is funded through the Universal Service Fund that provides E-rate support to schools and libraries along with some matching funds from Arizona’s Universal Service Fund.