June 10, 2014

TO: Chief School Administrators
    Charter School Lead Persons
    School Business Administrators
    Nonpublic School Administrators

FROM: Evo Popoff, Assistant Commissioner/Chief Innovation Officer
       Division of Charter Schools, School Choice, Technology, Turnarounds

SUBJECT: Regional Broadband Purchasing Cooperatives – **Deadline Extended to June 25**

As outlined in a May 20, 2014 broadcast memorandum available at http://education.state.nj.us/broadcasts/, the Department has identified a potential cost savings opportunity in regional broadband purchasing cooperatives. The New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) is excited to be supporting the Middlesex Regional Educational Services Commission, Bergen County Technical Schools and the Educational Information and Resource Center, who are creating and implementing these regional cooperatives. The goal of the Broadband Initiative is to help LEAs, schools and nonpublic schools achieve significant gains in Internet capabilities to support emerging applications important to student academic achievement. It is expected that significantly reduced broadband costs will be available for members of the consortia/cooperative as of July 1, 2015, and that such future pricing will be announced beginning November 2014.

Due to a continued high level of interest in the regional broadband initiative, the deadline to participate in this cooperative purchase of Internet access **has been extended to Wednesday, June 25, 2014**. Any LEA, school or nonpublic school may participate. Please submit the attached forms if your LEA or school wishes to take part. The Letter of Intent and Service Order Form are also available for download at http://njdigitallearning.org/nj_digital_learning_portal_library/broadband-consortia-project/.

Please be advised that, in conjunction with N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-8.1(f) (9), which provides the authority to request a detailed list of efforts to improve administrative efficiency and realize other potential or real cost savings, the department encourages every school district to evaluate, on an annual basis, whether participation in a regional broadband purchasing cooperative would likely result in lower costs. In an effort to ensure that districts have undertaken such an evaluation, beginning with fiscal year 2015-16, the NJDOE plans to incorporate into the budget software and/or executive county business administrator budget review process an inquiry to ascertain whether or not the LEA has evaluated if participation in one of the New Jersey School Broadband Purchasing Cooperatives is more cost effective than any existing broadband contract(s). Participation in the Broadband Purchasing Cooperative is not required, but consideration of participation is strongly recommended.
Please complete and return the attached Letter of Intent and Service Order Form to broadband consultant John Matthews at jmatthews@dellicker.com no later than the new deadline of June 25, 2014. If you have any questions, please email Mr. Matthews or call 717-491-2936.