



Arizona School Facilities Board

Not just another state agency

1700 W. Washington St
Suite 602
Phoenix, Arizona 85007
Phone: 602-542-6507
Fax: 602-542-6526

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NEWS RELEASE

Dr. Philip E. Geiger, Executive Director
School Facilities Board
602-542-6143 (O)
480-419-7718 (H)
602-290-0471 (cellular)
pgeiger@sfb.state.az.us

For more information, contact:
Darla A. Jordan
Public Information Officer
602-542-6144 (O)
djordan@sfb.state.az.us

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\$27.9 MILLION EDUCATION DELIVERY CONTRACT AWARDED TO COX BUSINESS SERVICES

Comprehensive system provides equal access, promotes life-long learning

The Arizona School Facilities Board awarded a \$27.9 million Application Service Provider (ASP) contract to Cox Business Services, a full-service, facilities-based provider of telecommunications solutions. Cox Business Services and its three major providers - KPMG Consulting, one of the world's largest consulting companies; LearningStation, a leading educational ASP and content aggregator; and Ensynch, an Arizona managed solutions and education technology services provider - have formed the Cox Education Network to provide the industry's most expansive collection of educational tools and resources to teachers and students throughout Arizona.

"The award of the ASP contract will revolutionize education in Arizona," stated Dr. Philip E. Geiger, executive director of the School Facilities Board. The ASP will enable schools to access productivity software, over 250 educational titles, (i.e., content, courseware, reference materials), and communications software. These resources will be available over the Internet, making them more accessible to students, staff, parents, and teachers whether working from school or home. "Students will be able to access their own work and the school district's software from any place on the planet through the Internet," stated Geiger. "This comprehensive system does not exist elsewhere in the country. Arizona will lead the nation in the delivery of educational tools and resources while saving tax dollars."

According to Margie A. Emmermann, director of the Arizona Department of Commerce, "This is exactly the sort of bold initiative Governor Hull envisioned with the Arizona Partnership for the New Economy (APNE). It not only demonstrates that technology is a given and that knowledge builds wealth, it accounts for the need to cultivate Arizona's workforce with a system that promotes life-long learning."

The ASP will host school and teacher websites, provide e-mail services for staff and students, and can provide SAIS-compliant student information management systems, student assessment tracking systems, and teacher resource management systems. The ASP comes with service and warranty until June 30, 2005 when the obligation for an ASP will "sunset" from the School Facilities Board's guidelines. The Network providers will hold firm pricing for districts for an additional two years after the term.

"Cox recognizes the unlimited possibilities of using technology as a learning tool," said Robert Carter, vice president and general manager of Cox Business Services, "and the Cox Education Network will provide

Arizona students with state-of-the art education via state-of-the art technology." The all-encompassing network will benefit educators, parents and students alike. "This tremendous tool will allow teachers to monitor students online, and parents to look over their children's shoulders as they do homework on the computer," continued Carter. "It will also enhance a student's ability to learn."

The project cost of the ASP will not exceed \$27.9 million over four years, or \$8.16 per student per year-less than the price of one book. Craig Larsen, CEO of LearningStation, said this "visionary product, the ASP, is the most cost-effective method of curriculum delivery and will provide a model for the nation in the implementation of technology in education." Additionally, the Network will provide 20 Cisco Academies, 30 Microsoft-Authorized Academic Training Programs, ASSET professional teacher training, an Intel Model School Program, smart cards and smart card readers, and a variety of education and awareness seminars.

Many of the companies in the Network will open base or satellite offices in Arizona. Ensynch, the managed service provider responsible for the data center, is located in Tempe. Similarly, other companies like Cox Business Services are already part of Arizona's business community. Commerce Director Emmermann comments that, "by fostering these dynamic strategic alliances, the project impacts both short and long-term economic development. It encourages existing companies to grow, brings new companies here and ultimately results in a better trained workforce."

The first group of districts will have access to the ASP by the end of September 2001. In order to facilitate the implementation process, the School Facilities Board will conduct an ASP roll-out conference titled, "Revolutionizing Educational Opportunities: Arizona's Implementation of a K-12 Application Service Provider," on Tuesday, September 25th at the Glendale Civic Center. Dr. Jamieson McKenzie, editor of From Now On - The Educational Technology Journal, will give the keynote address.

Major partners in the Cox Education Network include: Cox Business Services, a full-service facilities-based provider of telecommunications solutions providing media academies, marketing, and professional development; KPMG Consulting, one of the world's largest consulting companies providing overall project management for the ASP project; LearningStation, a leading educational ASP and content aggregator providing the educational content and application integration; and Ensynch, an Arizona managed solutions and education technology services provider providing managed hosting services. Other contributors to the Network include: Apple Computers (hardware at greater educational discounts), ASSET (training and professional development), Beyond Books (educational content), Cisco Systems (35 Cisco Network Academies), Citrix (application software), Compaq Computer (hardware), EdGate (educational content, online Internet channels, smart card for teachers), Edmin.com (teacher resource management), Education-Online (educational content), Intel (professional development, student hardware discount programs), Kids123 (teacher resource management), Microsoft (software licenses, 30 Microsoft-Authorized Training Programs), MIG (student and teacher information management systems), NCS Pearson (student and teacher information management systems), NetSchools (curriculum management, student assessment and information systems), PowerSchool (student assessment and information systems), Princeton Review (student and teacher information management systems), SchoolNet (student assessment, information, and teacher resource systems), and VIP Tone (K-12 Internet portal).

The Arizona School Facilities Board is charged with administering the Students FIRST law, which mandates that all Arizona schools meet minimum state standards by June 2003. The ASP project is the board's third step in addressing educational technology in Arizona. Previously, the board purchased 36,000 microcomputers, bringing the computer to student ratio to 1:8 in every school district. More recently, the board approved a \$100 million school networking and Internet connectivity project. For more information about the School Facilities Board or the Students FIRST program, see our website at <http://www.sfb.state.az.us>.

Cox Business Services is a division of Atlanta-based Cox Communications, Inc., a Fortune 500 company and the nation's fifth largest cable broadband communications company. A full-service, facilities-based

provider of telecommunications solutions, Cox Business Services serves home offices; small, medium and large-sized businesses; school districts; and hospitality, government and military properties in cities across the nation. Cox offers high-speed Internet services; switched voice services and long-distance; and dedicated voice, data and video transport services. More information about Cox can be accessed on the Internet at <http://www.cox.com>.

KPMG Consulting, Inc. (NASDAQ: KCIN), based in McLean, Virginia, is one of the world's largest consulting companies with more than \$2 billion in annual revenues. Our more than 10,000 employees provide business and technology strategy, systems design and architecture, applications implementation, and network and systems integration, designed to enable clients to leverage technology for stronger return on investment and enhanced service to their own customers, vendors and employees. We serve more than 2,500 clients, including global companies, Fortune 1000 companies, small and medium-sized businesses, government agencies and other organizations, through industry-focused lines of business, including: financial services, consumer and industrial markets, high tech, communications and content, public services and health care. As of February 8, 2001, KPMG Consulting, Inc. is an independent consulting company, no longer affiliated with KPMG LLP, the tax and audit firm. For more information about KPMG Consulting, visit the Web site at www.kpmgconsulting.com. For news media, visit http://kpmgconsulting.com/news/media_contacts.html.

LearningStation, based in Charlotte, North Carolina and founded in 1997, is the leading Application Service Provider to the education market. Recently awarded the ASPire Award for Best Delivery of ASP Services by the ASP Consortium, LearningStation provides educators and students access, on a rental or subscription basis, to instructional applications and content through the Internet. In addition, LearningStation provides schools with innovative solutions for their hardware, software, curriculum content and system administration needs. More information about LearningStation can be accessed at <http://www.learningstation.com>.

Ensynch was founded in 1999 with a business focus in the southwestern United States. Ensynch is a Managed Solutions Provider focused on technology outsourcing and services to organizations in the Southwest. Ensynch allows Customers to concentrate on their core competencies and use technology as an enabling tool for lowering operating costs, mitigating capital expenses, increasing scalability and growth, and insuring higher profitability and probability of success. Services provided include turn-key solutions for Utility Computing products, Application Service Provisioning (ASP), Application Infrastructure Outsourcing, Managed Hosting, and project-based infrastructure and development services. For more information about Ensynch, visit <http://www.ensynch.com>.

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