



Mobile Beacon's HomeWorks Program Proposal

Objective

Mobile Beacon will build and operate a private fixed-wireless network that will provide service to a pilot partner school district (or individual public, private, or charter schools) to support its educational mission. Our HomeWorks pilot program will begin in April 2020 and run through June 2021 with the goal of providing continuity of broadband service to 100-150 homes (as well as the school building) for the remainder of this school year and next school year.

Background

[Mobile Beacon](#) was created by [NACEPF](#), a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization and the second-largest national Educational Broadband Service (EBS) provider in the United States. As a nonprofit EBS licensee, NACEPF's purposes are educational and include providing instructional materials and internet connectivity to accredited public and private schools, colleges, and universities to further their educational missions.

Mobile Beacon's programs and services are an extension of our EBS mission—to use broadband to help educators provide equal educational and digital opportunities to students of all ages and abilities. Over the last 10 years, Mobile Beacon has provided affordable, mobile, high-speed internet access to over 850 schools, 1,100 libraries, and 5,430 nonprofits to help them carry out their missions.

We have an EBS spectrum license that covers the lower eastern region of AZ. Mobile Beacon has partnered with A Better Wireless, a wireless internet service provider with experience building networks in rural areas and a devotion for education, and MuralNet, a nonprofit that has helped tribal communities build networks using EBS spectrum. Through this partnership, Mobile Beacon will build its first fixed-wireless network to support educational institutions in the Benson, St. David, or Tombstone, AZ areas.

Pilot Description

Mobile Beacon, through its partnership with [A Better Wireless](#) and [MuralNet](#), will build a fixed wireless network to deliver true broadband speeds (25 Mbps / 3 Mbps) to a local school partner for use at the school as well to participating teachers and families (50-150 homes can be served) in need of home broadband access. Our pilot school partner will also have [use of our free online course offerings](#) if they so wish to utilize as part of their distance-learning curriculum. Our fixed broadband service, as well as all associated equipment costs, will be provided free-of-charge to pilot participants through the end of June 2021. This will ensure continuity of service for the remainder of this school year and into the next.

Timeline

- **March 2020:** Identify and establish partner school(s) within the area
- **Early April 2020:** network study, procurement, get permits and permissions for deployment
- **Early April 2020:** deploy access point(s) to provide broadband access to selected pilot participants in the target area
- **Through June 2021:** Test network operations, optimize network performance, provide ongoing technical support to pilot participants as needed

Deliverables

Mobile Beacon, with the help of MuralNet and A Better Wireless, will provide:

- All network and end-user equipment
- Backhaul
- Construction costs and ongoing operational/maintenance costs
- Technical support through June 2021 to support 50 to 150 homes with broadband internet

Partner schools will:

- Allow for network equipment to be used on their premises
- Identify teachers and students in need of home broadband
- Assist in distributing home equipment for internet access to pilot participants
- Provide feedback on network performance and educational uses of the home broadband service during the pilot

Beyond the Pilot

If this pilot is successful, Mobile Beacon will create projections about scaling the deployment to include more schools, families with enrolled students, and teachers/administrators in need of home connectivity. If the partner school requests, all equipment will be removed from their premises in a timely manner.

Interested in Participating?

Contact Katherine Messier, Executive Director, Mobile Beacon (kmessier@mobilebeacon.org) and Mariel Triggs of MuralNet (mariel@muralnet.org).