No Child Left Offline Donates 202 Computers to Bell County Students

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*Bell County receives No Child Left Offline computers
provided by Appalachian Regional Commission grant*

Middlesboro, KY: Today, 202 Bell County sixth graders received the news that they will be receiving computers and printers at a ceremony held at Yellow Creek School Center. The computers were donated through ConnectKentucky's No Child Left Offline (NCLO) program, an innovative program designed to help close the digital divide among Kentucky's youth. This donation was made possible by a grant from the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC).

"This is a wonderful program to help boys and girls get a leg up in education since computers are the future," said Representative Rick Nelson. "I would like to congratulate ConnectKentucky on this great program."

ConnectKentucky was recently awarded a $300,000 grant by Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) to distribute over 1000 refurbished computers in the ARC region. With the generous support of the Appalachian Regional Commission and in partnership with Microsoft Corp., CA, Inc., and Lexmark International, ConnectKentucky will be distributing 202 refurbished Internet-ready computers donated by Morehead State University. Each computer will be paired with a Lexmark Inkjet Printer, security software donated by CA Inc, and XP operating systems and Office Applications donated by Microsoft.

No Child Left Offline brings together public and private partners to help Kentucky households join the Information Age. The program is the most comprehensive initiative of its kind undertaken by any state in the nation. It ensures that computers donated by the state and private providers will be saved from landfills and used for the benefit of Kentucky families.

Today, thousands of Kentucky children live in homes without computers. No Child Left Offline is designed to help those children by providing access to technology where the need is greatest. For many families, owning a computer is the first step to reaching the opportunities available through the Internet.

"No Child Left Offline continues to transform the lives of Kentucky's families," stated Andrew V. McNeill, Vice President of Program Development for ConnectKentucky. "Through the generous contribution of the Appalachian Regional Commission and the support of our corporate partners, ConnectKentucky is closing Kentucky's digital divide, one household at a time."

Placing computers in the hands of underprivileged students awards them the opportunity to access educational and research materials they need in order to effectively compete in today's global economy. Recent research revealed that broadband adoption grew five times faster in counties that received computers through No Child Left Offline in the last two years.

ConnectKentucky has already initiated and executed a successful pilot project of No Child Left Offline and has delivered nearly 2000 Internet-ready computers to middle school students and their families in 11 ARC counties. As part of the ARC initiative, ConnectKentucky has already delivered over 400 computers to Powell, Estill, Lee and Elliott Counties and will continue to do so across the ARC until schools close for summer break.

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About ConnectKentucky: ConnectKentucky is leading the way into a new economy for Kentuckians. As an independent technology-based economic development organization, ConnectKentucky works to ensure that Kentucky remains the place of choice to live, work and raise a family. ConnectKentucky is an alliance of technology-minded businesses, government entities and universities working together to accelerate technology in the Commonwealth. *For more information about ConnectKentucky visit www.connectkentucky.org*