



MIDDLEBURGH CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
Office of the Superintendent
291 Main Street – P.O. Box 606
Middleburgh, New York 12122
(518) 827-3625

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As a Superintendent of a rural school district, I am sure it is not surprising that I am going to state that having affordable and reliable broadband access is important and critical in today's learning environment. As a Superintendent of a rural school district it is even more important and critical to close the achievement gap, break cycles of poverty and make sure that all students have equitable access to high quality learning opportunities with integrated technology.

As I am sure you know, classroom instruction now relies heavily on Internet and Broadband access. It is deeply integrated in every aspect teaching and learning in our schools. Yet, students in rural school districts are still having issues getting broadband into their homes and often have to travel to get to a usable (sometimes not even reliable) broadband source to complete their homework and research. They are at a disadvantage, not only with their own classmates but also with students in the more populated and well -resourced parts of the State and country.

We have been fortunate in the Middleburgh Central School District that MIDTEL has had DSL service and now Fiber to the Home service to nearly all of our students (in a district of 181 square miles). It has helped us begin to meet our goals of general academic improvement and state/federal accountability designations, but our work has just really begun. Our vision in Middleburgh-is to utilize our soon to be awarded 1 million dollars in Smart Schools aide to provide all of our students with access to university caliber technology and technology integration. All of our 7-12 students will have their own laptops to take home with them to continue their studies, research and projects. All of our homes need internet connectivity is to realize the promise of this initiative.

In closing, reliable and affordable broadband is critical to the success and advancement of students in rural school districts. Without it the digital divide will continue to widen and the viability of our rural school districts are in danger.

Thank you for inviting me to speak and allowing me to share my thoughts on rural broadband and its importance to rural school districts. I welcome any questions you may have.

Sincerely,

Brian P. Dunn
Superintendent of Schools