

# Closing the Homework Gap

## EQUIPPING SCHOOL BUSES WITH MOBILE HOT SPOTS



### Meet Deonna

Deonna is the head of technology within her districts' board of education. In response to COVID-19 pandemic, her departments priorities shifted virtually overnight. She needed to get student learning materials online, and moreover, she needed to get educators and students struggling with little to no internet access online as well. She put several plans into action to help close the 'digital divide', but CARES Act funding eventually ran out.

### Challenges Faced | CLOSING THE HOMEWORK GAP

After building and launching a new online learning platform in 2020, Deonna obtained CARES Act funding to provide students without home computers WiFi enabled laptops and tablets. She also requested and received funding that allowed her district to provide in-home cellular routers to students in areas without access to broadband internet and to home educators who needed secure access to the districts network and distance learning platforms.

But there was still a problem. Many students, even those with computers and smart devices still did not have reliable access to the internet, and the funding deadlines had come and gone. Thankfully, the FCC just launched a new program to help further bridge the digital divide.

The FCC's new Emergency Connectivity Fund (ECF) is providing \$7.17 billion to school systems like Deonna's that are still struggling to provide all their students reliable internet access.

### Working the Problem | THE CONNECTED SCHOOL BUS

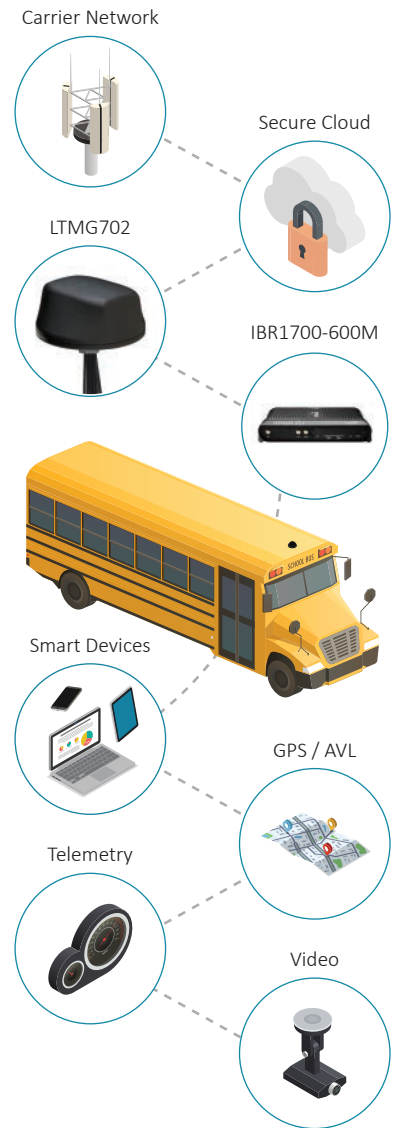
Deonna realized the funding she receives this year still wouldn't be enough to place a cellular router in every student home. And even if it did, she realized that home environments can be unpredictable. With schools starting to reopen, she realized her district needed cost-effective solutions that would provide the ability to deliver secure and regulated internet access to the largest number of students possible - in as safe and controlled of an environment as possible-whether those students were at home or in-transit to school.

Having previously worked with the experts at USAT to make use of CARES Act funding, Deonna again reached out to a team she knew she could trust. USAT recommended that she equip her districts school buses with cellular connectivity and Wi-Fi services to maximize the impact of her funding allocations. With this solution, students would be able to complete homework on the way to and from school. Additionally, school buses not in use could be placed outside of apartment buildings and other public areas to broadcast Wi-Fi over large distances and up to 128 student devices at a time.

### Solution Delivered | CONNECTIVITY ON AND AROUND THE BUS

The USAT team helped select, provision, activate, and install purpose-built mobile routers and high-powered antenna assemblies within all of her districts transportation vehicles. Students could now do homework on their way to and from each school building, and at home during scheduled visits to neighborhoods with the greatest need in high student density areas.

Also, Deonna and her team could now access the various additional benefits of connected vehicles including live video monitoring, automatic vehicle location, telemetry data, and more - all monitored and controlled via software included with the purchase of each router.



**CONTACT US TO ENGINEER YOUR SCHOOL BUS CONNECTIVITY SOLUTION TODAY**

