



MEDIA RELEASE

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Algoma District School Board, PUC Telecom and Ontera Partner To Expand Opportunities for Students

Algoma District School Board (ADSB) students will soon have access to more online opportunities as bandwidth to schools throughout their territory will be expanded in the near future.

The ADSB has selected Ontera and PUC Telecom, both Northern Ontario-based telecommunications service providers, as its partners in this project, which will see Ontera and PUC Telecom deliver greater bandwidth to ADSB secondary and public schools.

Mario Turco, ADSB Director of Education, Brian Curran with PUC Telecom and Scott Hancock, Director of Partner Solutions and Customer Care with Ontera, a division of Ontario Northland, recently met in Sault Ste. Marie to review progress on the project. Turco commented that "We look forward to offering our students expanded learning opportunities using the latest technology. The expanded bandwidth will facilitate e-learning and will allow more teachers to access educational videoconferencing. The higher bandwidth is also a benefit to improve the technical efficiency and effectiveness of the system."

"Ontera is very excited to be involved in a project that will have such a dramatic impact for learners," said Hancock. "We are committed to providing the infrastructure that allows Northerners to take advantage of telecommunications advances and to access a world of tools and opportunities, while still enjoying their Northern lifestyle."

Curran commented that "With 25 schools and other school board facilities to connect in Sault Ste. Marie, this is the largest expansion of our fibre optic system since we first installed our telecommunications network in 2000."

The installation of fibre optic cable is currently underway in Sault Ste. Marie and all ADSB facilities will have this new high speed broadband service by August 31, 2008.

Schools throughout the geographic area served by the Algoma District School Board will benefit from these telecommunication improvements. The ADSB service territory area encompasses the most schools and the largest territory among all Northeastern Ontario

school boards. It serves communities along the north shore of Lake Huron from Serpent River to Sault Ste. Marie and along the east coast of Lake Superior from Sault Ste. Marie to Wawa and includes Hornepayne, Chapleau and Elliot Lake.

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Photo:



Grand View Public School students are pictured with Mario Turco ADSB Director of Education (centre), Scott Hancock Director of Partner Solutions and Customer Care Ontera (standing) and Brian Curran President and CEO of PUC Telecom (kneeling). Greater bandwidth will provide ADSB students with more learning opportunities as they will now have access to more demanding recent applications of software, e-learning opportunities and videoconferencing.

Background:

What is bandwidth?

Bandwidth refers to the capacity of a communications line (channel) to transmit and/or receive information and, more specifically, the amount of data that one can upload and download using their Internet connection. The amount of bandwidth required to view a web page, for example, is much less than what is required for someone to dynamically participate in a live videoconference.

Algoma District School Board (www.adsb.on.ca)

The Algoma District School Board educates two-thirds of all students in the Algoma District. They are dedicated to providing a public education system that is open and accessible to all. They strive to meet the needs of all learners within an environment of respect, integrity, sensitivity and fairness. They believe it is their role to uphold the highest standards of achievement with positive learning experiences for all learners to realize their full potential.

PUC Telecom Inc. (www.ssmruc.com)

PUC Telecom is a wholly owned subsidiary of PUC Inc. a provider of multi utility services in Sault Ste. Marie and the Algoma District. PUC Inc. is owned by the City of Sault Ste. Marie. PUC Telecom in partnership with Ontera has been providing high speed broadband services to businesses and institutions in Sault Ste. Marie since 2000.

Ontera (www.ontera.ca)

Ontera, a fully integrated telecommunications company, offers a wide range of telecommunications and IP-based solutions including Internet, local, long distance, voice, data, and information technology services throughout Northern Ontario. Ontera is a wholly-owned subsidiary of the Ontario Northland Transportation Commission, an operational enterprise of the Province of Ontario.

Ontario Northland, established in 1902, is a recognized leader in creating prosperity in the North by providing innovative telecommunication and transportation solutions.

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