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SWWC Service Cooperative Chooses SDN, Local Internet Providers to Connect Schools for Broadband Services

SIOUX FALLS – April 18, 2018 – Southwest West Central Service Cooperative (SWWC) headquartered in Marshall, MN, has chosen SDN Communications and its Minnesota and South Dakota partner companies to provide several broadband services to approximately 50 sites, including schools, libraries and other government agencies.

SDN and the independent telephone companies of southern Minnesota won the business through a competitive Request for Proposal (RFP) process. SDN has been providing internet and digital transport services to the schools and libraries, but the new contract includes fiber-based Wide Area Network (WAN) connectivity among the schools and libraries and the SWWC's data centers, as well as managed routers providing a level of cybersecurity.

“SDN's proposal offered the complete package,” says SWWC Director of Technology Josh Sumption. “And the fact that SDN is partnered with Minnesota telephone/broadband providers means SWWC still is doing business with the local companies already serving our communities. That's important to the schools, libraries and other government agencies in our cooperative's membership.”

The SDN partners providing direct fiber connections to SWWC members include NU-Telecom (New Ulm, MN), Woodstock Telephone (Ruthton, MN), Alliance Communications (Garretson, SD) and ITC (Clear Lake, SD).

“We've put together a very nice, robust network in southern Minnesota,” says SDN Communications CEO Mark Shlanta. “With SDN acting as the single point of contact and tying our Minnesota and South Dakota partners' and other fiber networks together, we reduce the possible points of failure for SWWC. That will provide better uptime to the end users.”

Sumption says: “In receiving a fully fiber-based Wide Area Network solution through SDN and their local partners, we will be able to provide more advanced services allowing our members to receive secure, enterprise-class technical operations at a fraction of the costs if they were to try to achieve the same quality on their own. It is the goal of all of our member school districts to

provide more opportunities with the greatest level of data protection available to benefit the 20,000 plus students to be served.”

SDN forged a fiber alliance with six southern Minnesota telephone companies two years ago, interconnecting them to create an 800-mile fiber optic footprint in Minnesota. That is in addition to SDN’s existing network crisscrossing the state of South Dakota with 45,000 miles of fiber. Seventeen rural telephone companies in South Dakota started and own SDN Communications. The interconnected networks now create a single fiber optic footprint extending from just south of the Twin Cities to northern Iowa, and east to west from Wisconsin all the way through South Dakota.

“We’re fortunate to have created a good business and fiber plan utilizing rural telephone companies’ existing networks and linking them together to create one large interconnected, broadband network,” Shlanta says. “We’re stronger together than we are apart.”

SDN has nearly 30 years of experience in business-to-business broadband services. Just as SWWC needed to connect multiple school and library locations, SDN can also connect any multi-site business, such as banks, hospitals, agricultural processing plants or manufacturing facilities scattered across the region or nation.

“The SDN-led network can do it with a minimum of territorial complications,” Shlanta says.

Sumption says: “SWWC looks forward to the robust uptime that the SDN network will offer our members and is excited about the local Internet service provider alliances that the network utilizes, providing an even greater benefit to our local communities.”

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About SWWC – SWWC provides educational and administrative services, including technology, to schools, cities, counties and other government agencies in the 18-county region of southwest and west central Minnesota (over 12,500 square miles). For more information call (507) 537-2240 or visit www.swsc.org.

SDN Communications – SDN interconnects independent telephone companies in South Dakota (17 companies), Minnesota (6) and Iowa (1), creating a 45,000-mile fiber optic footprint. SDN offers business-to-business broadband services for multi-location businesses, such as hospitals, banks, schools, manufacturing and agriculture. SDN’s products include Wide Area Networking, internet and managed cybersecurity. For more information call 800-247-1442 or visit www.sdncommunications.com