

RESOLUTION _____

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2 A RESOLUTION launching the Great Student Initiative, a City of Seattle effort to form new
3 partnerships with information, communication and technology companies, and financial
4 institutions to provide low-cost, high-speed Internet access, computer, software and services
5 for low-income students in the Seattle Public Schools, and create a steering committee to
6 advance the goals of the initiative.

7 WHEREAS, the Race and Social Justice Roundtable, a partnership of twenty-six members from
8 community organizations, government, social service agencies, and philanthropic
9 organizations working together to achieve racial equity in our communities, has identified
10 racial equity in education as their focused strategy to eliminate institutional racism in Seattle
11 and has identified affordable high-speed Internet access as an important component to
12 achieve an equal opportunity for a successful education; and

13 WHEREAS, the Race and Social Justice Roundtable have examined racial inequity in graduation
14 rates, incidences of discipline and pathways from high school to vocational training, college
15 and universities; and

16 WHEREAS, of the approximately 47,000 students in Seattle Public Schools, 39% are enrolled in the
17 Free or Reduced-Price Meals program; 57% are students of color; 12% have a non-English
18 speaking background; and

19 WHEREAS, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) has identified the three key barriers
20 to Internet adoption in their National Broadband Plan: 1) the cost of broadband access for
21 low-income households, 2) the lack of an affordable computing device in the home, and 3)
22 the absence of digital literacy; and

23 WHEREAS, in 2009, the Seattle City Council Budget Committee passed a Statement of legislative
24 Intent (SLI 92-1-A-1) to study high-speed Internet Access assistance programs for low-
25 income households; and

26 WHEREAS, according to a 2009 Department of Information Technology Residential Survey, 84%
27 of households with incomes above \$50,000 receive high-speed Internet, but only 46% of
28 households in Seattle with incomes averaging under \$30,000 receive high-speed Internet;
and

WHEREAS, in a major initial step for the Great Student Initiative, Comcast will establish the
Comcast Broadband Opportunity Program (CBOP) for low-income households using
broadband in Comcast service areas and work with local school districts to offer families
with children eligible for a free lunch under the National School Lunch Program a \$9.95 per
month high-speed Internet service, quality computer equipment for less than \$150, and
access to basic digital literacy training; and

WHEREAS, Microsoft employs approximately 40,000 employees in the Puget Sound region and
runs a program called Shape the Future which is designed to build public-private

1 partnerships that helps governments make technology solutions more affordable, accessible
2 and relevant for low-income communities; and

3 WHEREAS, companies such as Intel and Microsoft have created innovative public-private
4 programs to transform education and boost economies in countries like Portugal, United
5 Kingdom, Argentina, Guatemala, and Serbia.

6 WHEREAS, the City of Seattle will continue its standing as one of America's most wired cities in
7 terms of broadband adoption, access options, and public wireless Internet hot spots and is
8 committed to doing everything possible to provide high-speed Internet, personal computers,
9 and software to low-income students.

10 WHEREAS, a steering committee comprised of members from non-profit organizations
11 specializing in promoting technology and connecting underserved communities, local
12 financial institutions, local Internet service providers, Seattle Public Schools, and local
13 software companies will assist the City of Seattle in executing the City's plan of providing
14 every student in the Seattle Public Schools the opportunity and resources to have access to
15 high-speed Internet at home and a current generation computer; and

16 WHEREAS, the vision for the Great Student Initiative is to become a financially-stable technology
17 access program and an inclusive resource in the Seattle Public Schools system for years to
18 come.

19 **BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SEATTLE, MAYOR**
20 **CONCURRING, THAT:**

21 Section 1. Findings. The City Council finds the following:

- 22 1. High-speed Internet access is essential to prepare students for higher education and a
23 competitive labor market in a new global economy. Success for students in the 21st
24 century economy will be largely dependent upon an individual's ability, technology
25 skills, media literacy, effective communication skills, critical & systems thinking,
26 problem solving, collaboration, self-direction, global awareness, and civic literacy and
27 educators have stated that ownership of a computer at home is linked with higher
28 knowledge attainment, a greater capacity to learn independently.
2. Families who have a computer at home connected to the internet are able to take
advantage of other broad social and economic benefits, examples being the ability to
pay bills, shop online, look for jobs, post resumes, connect to city services, take
online learning courses, up-skill or retrain new careers. There is a multitude of
benefits when the access is at home versus just at school.
3. Improving the achievement gap by increasing educational opportunities are a means to
recognize racial and socioeconomic inequities. Pairing technology access with
appropriate content and learning programs can reduce the achievement gap and

1 potentially help parents become more active participants in their children's education
2 through home access.

3 Section 2. Based on these findings, the Mayor and the City Council shall work
4 collaboratively with the Seattle School District and non-governmental organizations and technology
5 companies to develop a sustainable deployment of solutions to address the Internet access and cost
6 issues identified above by launching the Great Student Initiative. Seattle's Office for Education,
7 Department of Information Technology and any other applicable City departments are requested to
8 consider the findings above when defining their work plans, policies and allocation of resources that
9 may serve as opportunities to effectuate positive outcomes based on the findings.

10 Section 3. Steering Committee. The City of Seattle will convene a Great Student Initiative
11 Steering Committee comprised of willing organizational participants that have agreed with the
12 findings defined in this Resolution and have agreed to commit resources and energy relative to
13 expanding Internet and computer access to Seattle Public School students who are in most need of
14 such access. The members of the Great Student Initiative Steering Committee will include at a
15 minimum representatives from the following:

- 16 1. Seattle Public Schools
- 17 2. Microsoft
- 18 3. Comcast
- 19 4. One Economy Corporation
- 20 5. Citizens' Telecommunications and Technology Advisory Board
- 21 6. City of Seattle Department of Information Technology
- 22 7. City of Seattle Office for Education
- 23 8. City of Seattle Office for Civil Rights

24 The Great Student Initiative Steering Committee will coordinate efforts and activities between the
25 Seattle Public Schools, private technology and communication companies, non-profits and the City
26 of Seattle. As an initial task, the Steering Committee is requested to develop a work plan and
27 identify strategies and next steps for implementing the goals of the initiative. The chair of the
28 Council's Technology Committee (or successor committee) will facilitate the coordination of
Steering Committee's activities with assistance from the Department of Information Technology
and the Office for Education. The Steering Committee is requested to submit a preliminary draft
report outlining a proposed work plan, resource mapping and strategies for advancing the goals of
the Great Student Initiative to the Energy, Technology and Civil Rights Committee on or before
September 30, 2011 as a means to evaluate the progress of this initiative.

Adopted by the City Council the ____ day of _____, 2011, and signed by me
in open session in authentication of its adoption this ____ day of _____, 2011.

President _____ of the City Council

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Filed by me this _____ day of _____, 2011.

City Clerk

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