

# The Bandera PROPHEET

March 31, 2020

BEC Foundation provides financial support to bring broadband Internet access to Bandera ISD students

Bandera Electric Cooperative has been working with Bandera ISD to provide a no-cost solution to disadvantaged students who lack internet access amid the coronavirus (COVID-19) health crisis.

Virtual learning has become the new normal as schools across the country have closed their doors to flatten the curve of the coronavirus. Internet access is a necessity now more than ever for students to continue their education.

“Working with Bandera Electric Cooperative has been phenomenal. They have stepped up to provide internet access in a very short time,” Bandera ISD Superintendent Jerry Hollingsworth said.

Eligible students identified by the school district will receive a 25 megabit per second broadband internet plan at no cost to them through June 30.

“There is no more important cause for BEC Fiber currently than to provide broadband access to further students’ education. Children are our future, and it is incumbent upon us to be good stewards of the community,” BEC Fiber Manager Shane Schmidt said.

The BEC Foundation, the charitable giving arm of Bandera Electric Cooperative, has agreed to cover the cost to support the education of its young members during this uncertain time. Education, training and information is not only a Cooperative Principal, but it is also a main focus of the foundation as a charitable nonprofit. The foundation board unanimously agreed to help the student-members.

“Expanding broadband access to the youth helps ensure education continuity and provides stability during this emergency health event. The community has to pull together to overcome a situation like this. After

all, we are all neighbors,” BEC Foundation Chairperson Toba Wright said.

BEC Fiber began building the fiber network in 2017 to expand broadband internet access to its rural members. BEC Fiber broadband is available to roughly half of its 26,000 members. The majority of the fiber broadband availability resides in Bandera County as it is the largest county served entirely by Bandera Electric Cooperative.

### **About Bandera Electric**

Bandera Electric Cooperative currently serves more than 26,000 members and provides highly reliable electric service to more than 36,000 meters in a seven-county territory in the Texas Hill Country. As a member-owned cooperative, BEC continually searches for new, innovative programs to promote energy efficiency and quality member service. Find more information about BEC at [BanderaElectric.com](http://BanderaElectric.com) or by calling (866) 226-3372.