

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR TO SPONSOR TELECOMMUNICATIONS DAY AT CAPITOL

From The Office of the Lieutenant Governor

■(OKLAHOMA CITY) Lt. Governor Mary Fallin will have a News Conference on Wednesday, March 27 at 9 a.m. in the Fourth Floor Rotunda of the State Capitol to kick off Telecommunications Day, which will include the first ever live broadcast of the House and Senate proceedings on the Internet. The activities will continue from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Various participants will be displaying and demonstrating their technology in the areas of telemedicine, telecommunication, distance learning and the latest in Internet technology.

"One of our greatest assets is the degree of technology which we have developed in this state. When companies come to Oklahoma, they can see that we are well on our way to the 21st century, and that we have a bright future ahead of us. I want to make sure that we use this to our advantage," said Fallin.

Oklahoma's predominantly rural environment is particularly benefited by the development of various technologies. "Schools will have more opportunities with access to the Internet as well as classes from across the state, the nation and world. Colleges and universities can provide business and industry classes on-site at the workplace. Medical evaluation and treatment will be made easier and more cost effective by the use of telemedicine technology. And businesses will benefit from videoconferencing and telecommunication advances," Fallin said.

"One fact that most people might not know is that Oklahoma has one of the largest telemedicine networks in the country. This fact alone helps attract businesses to rural communities, because they know that their employees can receive quality health care via telemedicine technology," Fallin said.

The public may participate first hand in this historic event electronically by accessing the Telecommunications Day home page at <http://catt.bus.okstate.edu/trade/>

COPPEDGE TO PRESENT '4 BY 4' GRADUATION PLAN TO BOARD

From The Governor's Office

■(OKLAHOMA CITY) Secretary of Education Floyd Coppedge will urge the State Board of Education on Thursday to adopt Gov. Frank Keating's plan to increase Oklahoma's high school graduation requirements to four years each of math, science, English, and social studies.

"We have an opportunity to raise expectations for every child in our state and to give them a true head start on tomorrow," Coppedge said. "Higher graduation requirements will assure that every student enrolls in the kind of academic core curriculum that raises college entrance scores and better prepares them for the world of work."

The Governor's "4 by 4" plan would take effect for the entering high school freshman class of 1999, making the graduates of 2003 the first in Oklahoma's history to have completed four years in each of the core subjects.

Coppedge said Oklahoma's average ACT college entrance scores still lag behind national and regional averages, a deficit the 4 by 4 plan would do much to remedy. Oklahoma's ACT average is 20.3, compared with the national average of 20.8. Students who complete an ACT suggested core curriculum average 2.7 points higher on the test.

"Oklahoma students continue to lag behind on the college entrance test most of our young people take," Coppedge said.

He said Oklahoma's average score of 20.3 ranks 17th out of 25 states where half or more of high school seniors take the test.

"Some say that we have a lot of students taking the ACT, so that lowers the average score,"

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