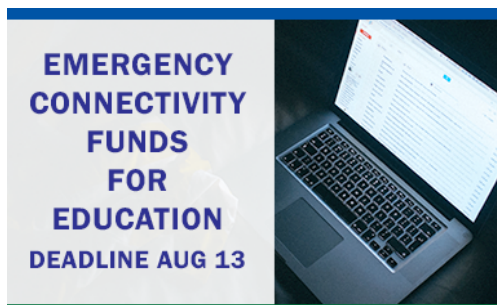*A Broadband Awareness Initiative from the [Iowa Communications Network](#)*
Weekly Update: July 23, 2021

Get Students Online for Free. ECF Forms Are Due ASAP

The Emergency Connectivity Fund (ECF) will provide internet access and laptop computers for K-12 students and library patrons across the country. Deadline: August 13, 2021.

Source: Funds For Learning

ICN launched a Hotspot service that qualifies for the ECF program. [Learn more about our service](#).

Digital Divide

[Lack of broadband internet creating divide in America](#)
The Internet is a public utility in Wilson, North Carolina, but that isn't an option in other rural areas as they struggle with slow and spotty service.
Source: NBC News

[Midco's Fiber Forward program to bring 10 Gbps capable fiber broadband to areas of South Dakota](#)
The expansion will reach more than 150,000 residences and businesses; the first step is service to Sioux Falls and surrounding communities.
Source: Telecompetitor

Education

[Managed Vs. Professional IT Services: How They Support Campus Reopening Plans](#)
As universities and colleges ramp up planning for campus reopening, here's a look at which IT services can be outsourced.
Source: Ed Tech for Higher Ed

[School's Out! But Cyber Criminals Are Here to Stay](#)
In light of an ongoing cyber crime epidemic, federal agencies must take action to update policy definitions, increase spending caps & partner w/ school districts to defend their networks.
Source: Government Technology

Cybersecurity

[What Does It Take to Be a Cybersecurity Professional?](#)
With a red-hot job market and great career prospects, more and more people want to know what they have to do to get a cybersecurity job — or better yet a career.
Source: Government Technology

[National Cybersecurity Center launched cyber-hygiene app for lawmakers](#)
The app contains a collection of best practices and cybersecurity resources for a non-technical audience.
Source: State Scoop

Government

[Mobile Driver's Licenses Pave the Way for Unified Digital IDs](#)
More states are rolling out digital driver's licenses. Experts see that trend continuing as federal standards take shape & citizens embrace an improved government experience.
Source: Government Technology

[California's ambitious fiber-Internet plan approved unanimously by legislature](#)
CA to build middle-mile network open to all ISPs and give $2B in last-mile grants.
Source: Ars Technica

[Is broadband fast enough for small business owners?](#)
The FCC has not updated its speed benchmark for 6 years. The GAO recommends the FCC determine whether its current definition of broadband meets the needs of small businesses.
Source: US Government Accountability Office

Healthcare

[Telehealth services helping doctors reach more patients](#)
Telehealth expands access to specialists and to those who live in rural areas as it could take hours for some people to get to the doctor.
Source: 3 News Now Omaha

[Getting Ahead of the Opioid Crisis: Lessons Learned From COVID-19](#)
The recommendations outlined here can help clinicians identify the factors that predispose people to opioid addiction & make targeted interventions before addiction occurs.
Source: Fierce Health

Public Safety

[Penn State Putting All First Responders on FirstNet](#)
Penn State is expanding its use of FirstNet, AT&T's dedicated telecommunications network for first responders, to include all its police officers & key personnel across several campuses.
Source: Government Technology

[NENA Releases New Version of the i3 Standard for Next Generation 9-1-1](#)
North America's leading 9-1-1 standards-development body today approved a landmark new version of its Next Generation 9-1-1 standard, a move that will accelerate the transition to smarter, faster, and more resilient emergency response.
Source: NENA 911 Association

The Iowa Communications Network is a state-of-the-art fiber optic network
providing high-speed Internet, data, voice, security, and consulting services to
Iowa's healthcare, education, government, and public safety sectors.

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