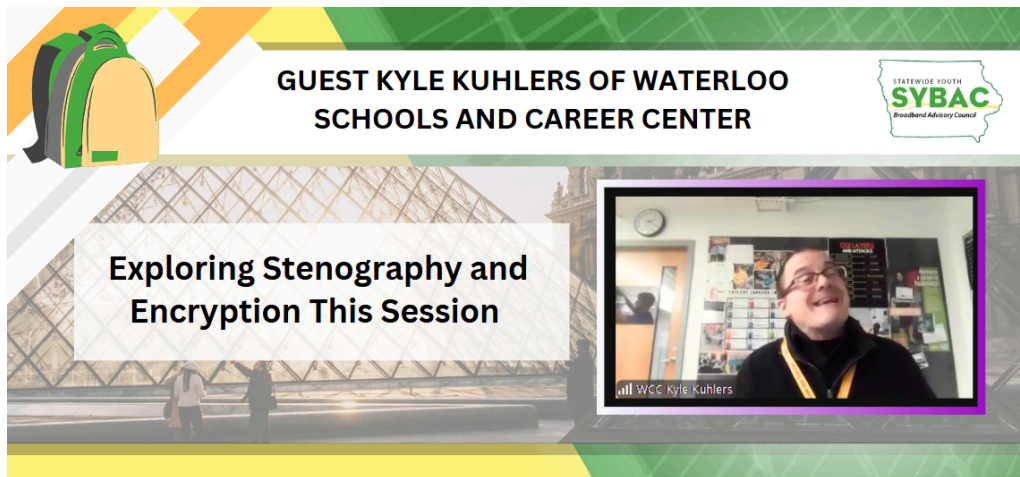


Iowa EdTech Update

January 2024

Statewide Youth Broadband Advisory Council Update



What happened at our January SYBAC Meeting:

Kyle Kuhlers, who teaches various cybersecurity and IT/STEM classes, joined us this month as our special guest. We discussed encryption, finding a baseline, and the importance of both in IT and cybersecurity.

Kyle organized some engaging activities that helped us identify the differences and similarities in number groups, illustrating the concept of establishing a baseline. Additionally, we took part in two steganography-focused exercises that illustrated how secret messages could be transmitted. The objective was to provide the group a basic understanding of cybersecurity and encryption while encouraging them to learn more about these topics and think about possible careers that use these skills.

Find out more about the SYBAC Council on our website.

More about SYBAC

Allamakee High School Sessions

On January 10, the first virtual session with Allamakee High School kicked off. These sessions are based on our monthly SYBAC meetings. During this session, we offered an overview of the ICN, a free coding resource, and listened to insights from ICN's Security Architect regarding his professional journey in cybersecurity and his experiences.



If you're interested in learning more about this initial session, feel free to [read our article](#) on our website.

Getting to Know Executive Director Mulhall





Des Moines Business Record had a conversation with our Executive Director, Ryan Mulhall. During the interview, he shared his journey to his current position, including his time in the military. After spending eight years as the chief information officer, he took on the role of executive director at the ICN. The discussion highlights his aspirations, the mission of the ICN, and the importance of always putting your best foot forward.

Read the [full interview](#) on their website.

Upcoming Events



ICN's Virtual Security Exchange Series

During this session, participants will enhance their networking and security skills, share best practices, and remain informed about the evolving security landscape. This is for the networking and security experts at any level who are currently employed at ICN's customer sites.

Next Session:

February 5 from 10 AM - 11 AM

Identifying Assets On Your Network

These workshops are **free** to all ICN's customer base.

Register Today!

HIGHLIGHTED SERVICE



Structured Cabling

Every building has its own unique infrastructure. We understand this and when we evaluate a site, we examine the existing cabling routes to make sure they can support both current and future services. By predicting future needs, ICN can install cabling that supports various communication applications. Our TAC team is available to assist you with the planning, design, installation, and upkeep of all your LAN and WAN infrastructure needs.

If you are looking to address existing cable issues or plan for future needs, we've got you covered. Check out our structured cabling page for more information.

[Learn More](#)

E-RATE Update

E-Rate News for K-12 Education & Library Customers



Schools and libraries can improve their network technology through the federal E-rate program.

The E-Rate application filing window opened on January 15 and will close on **March 26, 2025**.

To access E-rate funding, institutions must complete a detailed application process, including competitive bidding for services to ensure transparency in provider selection. For more information on eligible services, see our [E-rate Services](#) article.

Do you need more assistance? [Contact your Account Consultant for more info.](#)

[Our E-rate Webpage](#)

Internet2's Presidential Primary Sources Project



Embark on an adventure with your students to explore the sites that influenced our former presidents! The Presidential Primary Resources Project is a collaboration between Internet2, the National Park Service, and the National Archives. A 2025 series of FREE interactive webinars for grades 4-12 has begun, with more exciting sessions

to come. These webinars promise to be both fun and informative!

Here are the first three sessions next year:

- **Jan. 28** - How To Be First: General Washington and Williamsburg's Presidential Proving Ground
- **Jan. 30** - Camping and Tramping in New York, Maine, and North Dakota: Theodore Roosevelt's Changing Concept of Wilderness
- **Feb. 4** - The Unexpected Presidencies

Iowa Communications Network (ICN) is Iowa's only authorized Research & Education Network giving our education customers exclusive access to [Internet2](#) services.

Register Today!

Article Awareness

Selling fear: Marketing for cybersecurity products often leaves consumers less secure



The Conversation

By ISU Professor Doug Jacobson

It works like this: Cybersecurity companies often market their products using tactics that emphasize fear ("Hackers are coming for your data!"), blame ("It's your fault if something happens!") and complexity ("Only our advanced solution can protect you"). They perpetuate the idea that users are inherently not savvy enough to manage security independently and that the solution is to adopt the latest product or service.

As a cybersecurity researcher, I find that this approach often has unintended, harmful consequences for people. Rather than feeling empowered, users feel helpless, convinced that cybersecurity is beyond their understanding. They may even develop techno-stress, overwhelmed by the need to keep up with constant updates, new tools and never-ending warnings about threats...

Read More

8 K-12 IT priorities for 2025



eschoolnews

By: Laura Ascione

In a rapidly evolving digital landscape, K-12 IT teams play a critical role in shaping the future of learning. As schools navigate complex cybersecurity and data protection challenges, they also juggle issues including equitable access to technology.

Classrooms are increasingly reliant on digital learning tools, and the focus on robust infrastructure, cybersecurity, and effective technology implementation has never been more urgent. Prioritizing these areas empowers schools to create safe, inclusive, and future-ready learning environments for all students.

Hear from K-12 IT Leaders who shared their thoughts about IT priorities for education in the new year...

[Read More](#)

Talking Tech: 4 Strategies to Help Districts Manage the Device Boom



Tech&Learning

By: Phil Hintz, Carl Hooker, Shad McGaha, Eva Mendoza

Providing every student with reliable and consistent access to digital learning tools is no longer a luxury for school districts—it's the cost of a 21st-century education. While it can significantly enhance learning, the widespread adoption of 1:1 student-to-device programs places a heavy burden on district resources for device upkeep, security, and software updates.

Schools are now tasked not only with ensuring each student has access to a device, but are also navigating a new set of challenges with developing systems to manage repairs, replacements, and secure internet access for thousands of iPads, Chromebooks, and other technology devices...

[Read More](#)

More Than a Newsletter

About the Iowa Communications Network

The ICN is a state-of-the-art fiber optic network providing broadband and telecommunications services to its authorized users including high-speed Internet, data, voice, security, and consulting services. The authorized users of the ICN include: K-12 schools, higher education, hospitals and clinics, state and federal government, public safety, National Guard armories, & libraries.

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