

Iowa EdTech Update

December 2024



Wishing everyone a Happy Holidays!

We hope your break is filled with warmth, joy, and relaxation, no matter how you choose to celebrate. We will see you in the new year!

Statewide Youth Broadband Advisory Council Update



Exploring Technology with Scott Pappan

Scott Pappan, ICN's Chief Technology Officer, participated in our December SYBAC session, discussing the statewide network's critical infrastructure and daily technology applications. Two students presented articles on careers and AI, sparking a conversation about AI's practical implications for our lives, careers, education, and the future of businesses.

Scott shared insights on ICN's cybersecurity technologies, types of AI used in various sectors, and the future job landscape, emphasizing that AI will both replace certain roles and create new opportunities.

Find out more about the SYBAC Council on our website.

More about SYBAC



In the News

Two SYBAC students led the session by presenting articles that sparked their interest, leading to enlightening discussions.

First up was Lakshmi from Ankeny High School, who discussed an article on the dangers of digital advertising and the potential new regulations that lawmakers might be considering.

Raymond from Green County High School shared an article about AI transforming the job landscape by replacing repetitive jobs and creating new opportunities in AI ethics and machine learning engineering.

HIGHLIGHTED SERVICE





COLOCATION SERVICES



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Secure Colocation Services

Colocation services are crucial because schools want safe data storage for their critical systems in addition to dependable and fast internet connectivity. Our colocation service provides everything from electricity, equipment cabinets, network connections, bandwidth, facilities, cooling, and physical security.

We have three colocation locations where you can rent space in full, half, or quarter cabinets, and we take security very seriously at our sites. Our high-quality colocation centers have secure facilities with controlled access points and safeguarded cabinets. Plus, we offer options for cross-connects, bandwidth, and network connectivity, so if you're interested in those additional services, be sure to reach out to your account consultant.

[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, which funds telecommunications and Internet services to bridge the digital divide.

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.

Have you checked out the ICN's [Managed Firewall](#) service which is E-Rate eligible? We can handle the setup and management for you, allowing your team to concentrate on other important work. [Contact your Account Consultant for more info.](#)

[Our E-rate Webpage](#)

Internet2's Presidential Primary Sources Project



Internet2 has announced their 2025 series of FREE interactive webinars for students in grades 4-12, in partnership with the National Park Service, National Archives, Presidential Libraries, and cultural organizations. These sessions will be both fun and informative!

Here are the first three sessions next year:

- January 14 - NASA: The Beginning of a New Frontier, Eisenhower Foundation
- January 16 - An Old and Haunting Dream: Andrew Jackson, Theodore Roosevelt, and Popular Imperialism, The Hermitage & Theodore Roosevelt Center
- January 21 - The First 100 Days: FDR Set the Benchmark, Roosevelt Presidential Library and Museum

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

Ed. Dept. Recommends These 3 Principles to Develop School Cellphone Policies



EdWeek

By Alyson Klein

Every district and school in the country should have a policy addressing whether—and how—students can use cellphones in school, the U.S. Department of Education recommends in new guidance released Dec. 3.

The department doesn't take a position on whether schools should ban cellphones, allow them to be used at certain times of the day or in certain circumstances, or permit them for every student. Instead, the agency offered district-level examples of all three approaches.

The department's move is part of a growing push among policymakers to set some parameters around cellphone use in schools. At least 18 states have passed laws or enacted policies that ban or restrict students' use of cellphones in schools statewide or recommend local districts enact their own bans or restrictive policies, according to an Education Week analysis...

[Read More](#)

Infrastructure Upgrades Allow Schools to Improve Clock, Bell and Phone Technologies



EdTech - Focus on K-12

By: Rebecca Torchia

There are many technologies that help keep a school running smoothly. Some of these are obvious, while others work in the background to keep everyone on track. Clocks, bells and paging systems may not be the flashiest educational technology tools in K–12 buildings, but without these systems, the school day would fall apart for lack of structure. The district is also working toward modernizing its phone system as part of its plan to upgrade collaboration technologies.

“One of the biggest concerns we have on the operations side is our current telephone system, which is original and antiquated,” Koslow says. “We have a very limited number of staff who can manage the system.” The antiquated system is hard to maintain and creates concerns for district staff, especially when it comes to school safety needs. The ability to communicate in the event of an emergency is critical...

Here in Iowa, Nashua-Plainfield CSD turned to the ICN for assistance with upgrading to a VOIP system. More details are in our [case study](#).

Read More

Fast and Fun Hour of Code Resources



eSchool News

By: Laura Ascione

Even though Computer Science Education Week is over, the Hour of Code resources serve as the perfect opportunity to introduce students and educators to coding through hour-long activities. The event is intended to “demystify coding and show that anyone can learn the basics, inspiring future interest in computer science,” according to HourOfCode.com.

Here are 5 Hour of Code resources to try:

- 1. Music Lab: Jam Session (Amazon):** Make music and learn to code with Music Lab: Jam Session!
- 2. Hello World (Code.org):** Learn the basics of computer science by programming in Sprite Lab.
- 3. The Show Must Go On (Minecraft Education):** Welcome to The Show Must Go On, where your creativity and coding skills take center stage!
- 4. Code Farm: Plant a Garden (CoderZ):** Program a robot to plant a garden, and learn how robots help farmers in the real world.
- 5. Spreading Kindness with Scratch and Gitanjali Rao (Scratch Foundation):** Remix our starter project to develop and share a message of kindness, inspired by Gitanjali’s innovative approach to anti-bullying efforts for young people around the world.

[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.

Contact Us

Iowa Communications Network

Phone (515) 725-4692

Toll Free: (877) 426-4692

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