IOWA. | Iowa Communications Network

Iowa EdTech Update

November 2024

We truly appreciate all our education partners and customers across Iowa. Together, we are working hard to bridge the digital gap and make sure every student, regardless of their location, has access to essential connections and services.

THANK YOU ALL for your hard work and dedication!

Statewide Youth Broadband Advisory Council Update

Learning about Traffic Solutions with Matthew Miller

This month's SYBAC meeting featured Matthew Miller from the Iowa Department of Transportation, who offered insightful perspectives on automated vehicles and traffic flow. As a drone pilot, he showcased impressive aerial footage and images of road construction sites and projects he has been involved with. He discussed future initiatives that incorporate AI, traffic management, and the integration of self-driving technology, highlighting their implications for civil engineering and road planning.

Additionally, he outlined the workflow his team employs to achieve their objectives. We

also had three students present intriguing technology news articles, sparking a lively discussion about the potential impacts of these advancements on the future of technology. Furthermore, ICN's Business Services Director, Stephanie Devault, participated in the meeting to address the effects of cyber attacks on various sectors and their customers.

Find out more about the SYBAC Council on our website.

SYBAC Page

In the News

We had THREE students gather a website link, read a news article that interested them, and then bring it to the SYBAC meeting and present it to us and answer questions.

Elli from Holy Trinity Catholic High School discussed the future of Quantum Computing as an emerging technology. Nick from West Delaware High School addressed the potential slowdown in microchip production due to the cancellation of a major factory in Germany. Kelly from Pleasant Valley High School explained the impact of the Crowdstrike attack on various industries.

Upcoming Events

Join ICN's Security Exchange Sessions

During these virtual sessions, participants will enhance their networking and security skills, share best practices, and remain informed about the evolving security landscape.

Session Dates:

December 18 from 10 AM - 11 AM
Building a Network Map
February 5 from 10 AM - 11 AM
Building a Device Inventory

Register Here!

Did you miss our Halloween Zoom Webinar in October?

We have a recording available that gives you insights and a guided tour of Zoom's complete platform—covering everything from chat, phone systems, webinars, and much more.

Check out the recording **through this link.**
Passcode: #KqxQ2cR
Contact your Account Consultant for more info.

HIGHLIGHTED SERVICE

Critical Infrastructure Month and Our Essential Services

Our objective is to **enhance effective communication** during efforts to restore and support communication systems during and in the aftermath of cyber-attacks, natural disasters like tornadoes and floods, and any other emergencies that may occur, ensuring that these critical services are operational:

Communication Services like MVS and Zoom
Cybersecurity Services like Firewalls and DDoS Mitigation
Data Services like Internet and Ethernet

To learn more about our participation in Critical Infrastructure Month and why it matters to us, check out our article on the topic.

Find Out 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.

Toward Gigabit Libraries - Internet2

Are you looking to make history exciting for your students? Join us now to access the amazing Presidential Primary Sources Project (PPSP) and dive into America's like never before:

- Participate in live video discussions with experts
- Examine primary source documents
- Enjoy virtual tours -- no travel required!

This FREE webinar series is happening from January to April 2025, offering engaging sessions designed to spark your students' enthusiasm for the fascinating aspects of our history. Don't miss out!

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

Malicious QR Codes: 5 Ways To Protect Educators and Students
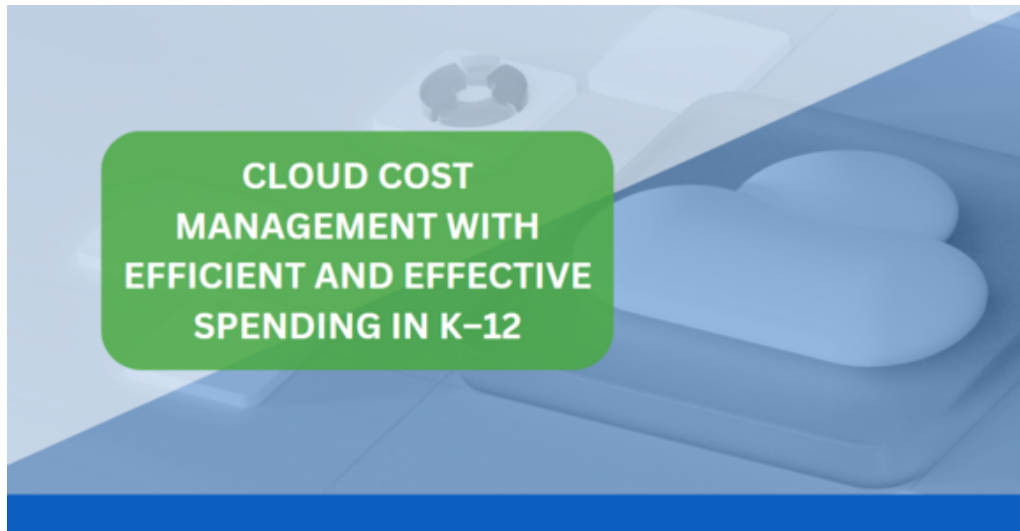
Tech & Learning
By Erik Ofgang

QR codes have become more common in and beyond education. Teachers use these instead of printed handouts and many are regularly placed on fliers advertising university or school events. So it shouldn't be a surprise that hackers have begun looking for ways to exploit QR codes.

One way they do this is by hanging fraudulent QR code links in real life or by including malicious QR codes in gifs or as part of fliers sent in emails. Since spam blockers have more trouble recognizing images, and because it's common for school announcements to include QR codes, this is a particular concern for education...

*It's always a good idea to have a cybersecurity service, like our Firewall and DDoS Mitigation, keeping an eye on things. This way, if anyone scans a bogus QR code, you'll have extra protection against potential attacks.

Read More

Cloud Cost Management with Efficient and Effective Spending in K–12

EdTech - Focus on K-12
By: Jennette Vanderpoll and Shannon Forte

K–12 schools are entering an era of restricted budgets that require effective and sustainable solutions. Buoyed with ESSER funds, some schools have already exemplified thoughtful, sustainable planning through their investments and the positions they created within their districts. Others spent the money without an eye toward the future out of necessity, implementing technologies and roles they won't be able to afford without additional funding.

One area in which schools can manage their spending is the cloud. Experts can help schools compare their storage and application needs to available cloud solutions, like the Cloud Connect Service with the ICN. They can help schools create plans for efficient and effective spending, especially if schools don't already have those solutions in place...

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Demand for $200M FCC cybersecurity pilot far exceeds capacity

K-12 Dive
By: Anna Merod

The agency said it received requests totaling $3.7 billion from school and library applicants nationwide in need of cybersecurity supports.
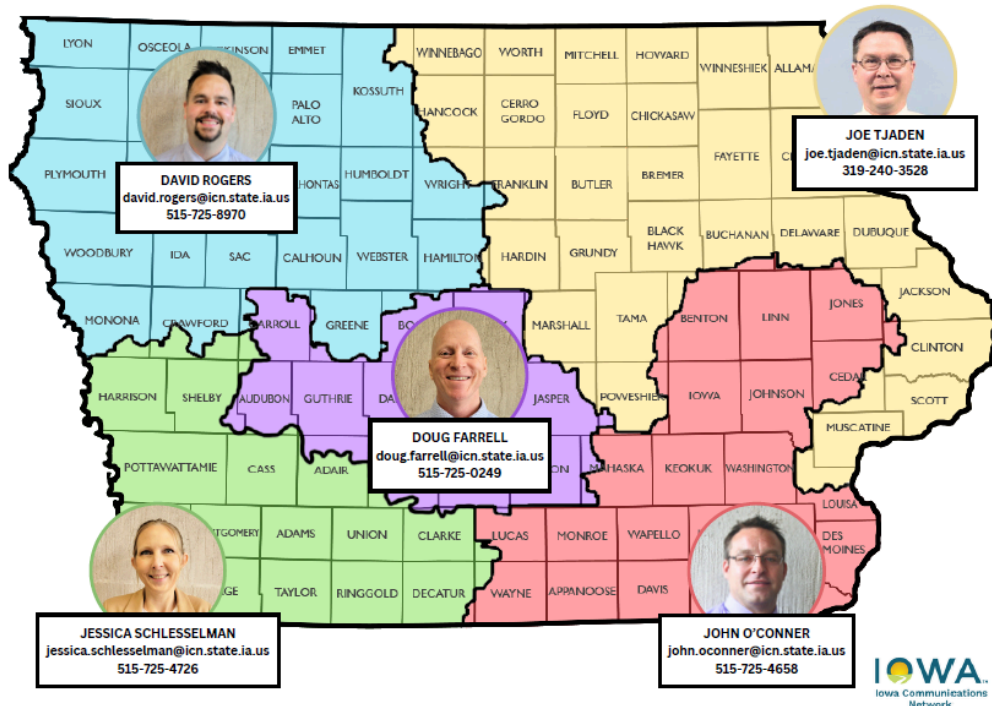
"The vulnerabilities in the networks we have in our schools and libraries are real — and growing," said FCC Chair Jessica Rosenworcel in a statement. "The overwhelming response to our pilot program makes clear that the cybersecurity threats impacting school systems are widespread. The Pilot Program provides an excellent opportunity to both learn from these varied experiences, and also test out solutions in different environments."

Schools and libraries may use the funds for securing their networks within four categories: advanced or next-generation firewalls; endpoint protection; identity protection and authentication; and monitoring, detection and response. Pilot program participants, however, will be required to pay a portion of the costs for any cybersecurity services or equipment purchased using the federal program dollars...

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Who is your Account Consultant?

ICN Account Map

Our dedicated Account Consultants support every region of our state. Below is a useful list of the various territories along with the corresponding Account Consultant assigned to your area. Please refer to the map above for the color codes representing each territory. Here is a PDF version of the AC Map for your convenience.

North-West Territory (Blue)
David Rogers, 515-725-8970
david.rogers@icn.state.ia.us

North-East Territory (Yellow)
Joe Tjaden, 319-240-3528
joe.tjaden@icn.state.ia.us

Central Territory (Purple)
Doug Farrell, 515-725-0249
doug.farrell@icn.state.ia.us

South-West Territory (Green)
Jessica Schlesselman, 515-725-4726
jessica.schlesselman@icn.state.ia.us

South-East Territory (Red)
John O'Conner: 515-725-4658
john.oconner@icn.state.ia.us

Do you have any other questions or suggestions?

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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