Iowa EdTech Update

October 2024

Statewide Youth Broadband Advisory Council Update

GUEST BRANDON FROM PROCIRCULAR

Learning about Cybersecurity, Trust, and Client Protection Strategies.

Brandon Blankenship - ProCircular

Learning about Cybersecurity with ProCircular

This month, we hosted Brandon from ProCircular, who gave a great presentation on the company's mission, values, and client protection strategies. He also discussed hacking competitions at his workplace, where the "red team" tries to breach defenses while the "blue team" defends against attacks, serving as an excellent training tool for skill enhancement and problem-solving.

We also discussed various tech careers and employer expectations, highlighting the balance between education and experience. Students were encouraged to recognize that success isn't one-size-fits-all; it's important to pursue college, gain work experience, explore hobbies, and develop soft skills and customer service abilities.

Find out more about the SYBAC Council on our website.

SYBAC Page
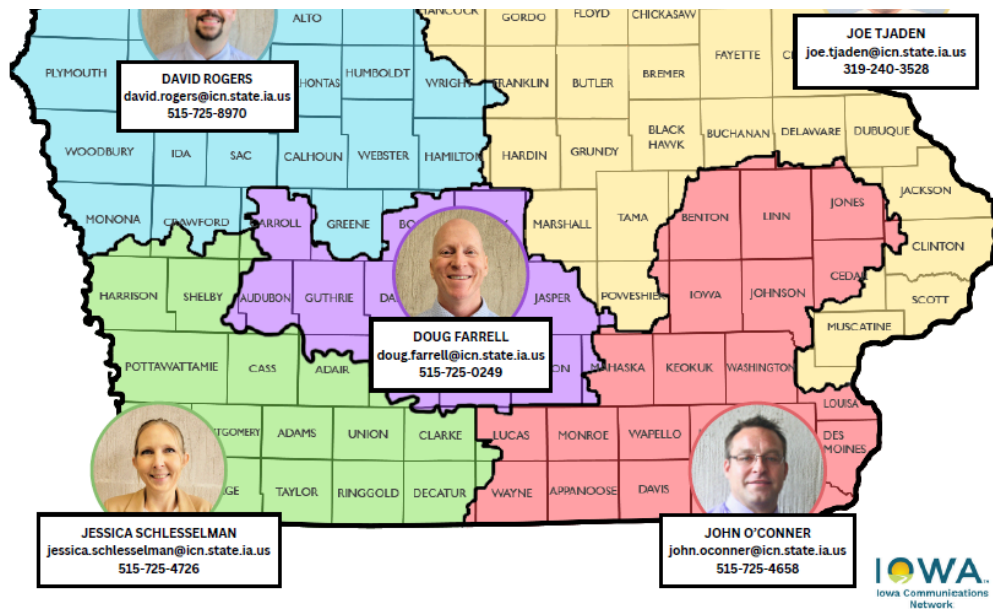

In the News

Each month, a SYBAC student shares a tech news topic with the council.

This time, Dominic from Dike-New Hartford High School presented an article on recognizing and **watermarking AI-generated content**, discussing the challenges of distinguishing between AI and human creations. We had a great discussion about what this could mean, how it impacts jobs and creative work right now, and what challenges there might be for implementation.

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
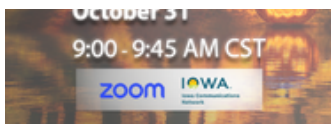
Do you have any other questions or suggestions?

Contact Us

Upcoming Events

Unleash the Full Power of Zoom!

Join us for an exciting and informative Zoom Webinar where we'll go beyond video conferencing and give you a

where we'll go beyond video conferencing and give you a guided tour of Zoom's complete platform—covering everything from chat, phone systems, webinars, and much more. Please register to attend.

Thursday, October 31 | 9:00 AM - 9:45 AM
ICN and Zoom Spooky Platform Review

Click Here to Register

HIGHLIGHTED SERVICE

CYBERSECURITY SERVICES

OUR CYBERSECURITY SERVICES ARE ROBUST AND ADAPTABLE, ENSURING THE SAFETY OF YOUR SCHOOL AND DATA

Cybersecurity Services: Managed Firewall and DDoS Mitigation

October marks Cybersecurity Awareness Month! We are excited to showcase our cybersecurity services designed to help you safeguard your data, protect your organization, and secure your connections.

Our cybersecurity services are designed to work in harmony to strengthen your organization's defenses. With our advanced, next generation **Managed Firewall Service** and our **DDoS Mitigation Service**, you gain a robust, multi-layered shield that ensures your protection is both comprehensive and resilient.

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.
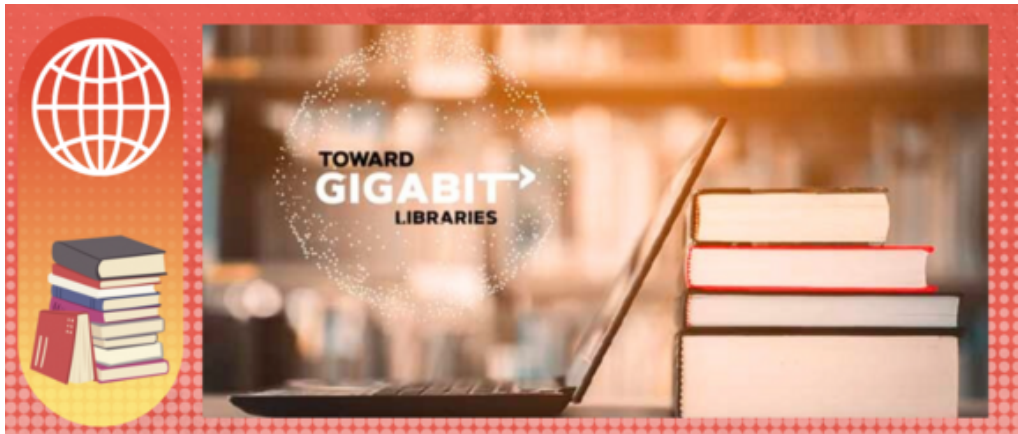
We provide Managed Firewall and DDoS mitigation services that are now covered under the cyber security pilot program. Find out more about What ICN Services

Qualify for E-Rate on our website.

Toward Gigabit Libraries - Internet2

The Toward Gigabit Libraries toolkit and Broadband Improvement Plan is an amazing, no-cost resource designed to assist libraries in enhancing their existing broadband systems and internal IT setups.

Visit their website for the toolkit and instructional videos to improve your understanding of your library's broadband and IT setup, identify areas for improvement, and strengthen your case for broadband needs.

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

Article Awareness

Malware and Phishing: What Educators Need to Know

Tech & Learning
By Michael Millington

As educational technology use grows, so too do cybersecurity risks of being breached and hacked. Schools and districts become more vulnerable with more technology being used, especially with the emergence of artificial intelligence.

Millions of sites are working to embed malicious software into school systems on a regular basis, either through malware or phishing attacks, which involve tricking users into providing security access. But how much of this is known to regular internet users?

So there are unseen digital threats all around us. In an age where everything is connected and everything is digital, how do we begin to protect ourselves?

Read More

Rising Cybersecurity Threats Target U.S. Higher Education Institutions

EdScoop
By: EdScoopNewGroup

By understanding who, where and how attackers are targeting universities and colleges, and taking a human-centric approach, officials can better safeguard their sensitive data.

Chris Montgomery, a cybersecurity solutions architect at Proofpoint, points out that universities' collaborative nature makes them soft targets. While academic environments encourage free-flowing information, this openness can become a security risk — especially to business email compromise (BEC) scams, ransomware, and espionage...

Read More

The Power of Unified Cybersecurity and Safety Systems in K-12 Education

K-12Dive
By: Charlie Sander

The cybersecurity and safety needs of K-12 schools are inextricably linked. We've seen in incidents over the years that data breaches can directly impact physical safety, and vice versa.

Students' digital lives and physical lives have merged to such a degree that there is virtually no difference. Technology teams, administrators, and teachers are facing these interconnected challenges at the same time they're trying to do more with less. Less time. Less resources. Less money.

Balancing the needs for cybersecurity and safety is a difficult task. Using combined cybersecurity and safety systems can be really helpful. Keep reading to discover five advantages of consolidating cybersecurity and student safety...

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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