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Educational Technology Monthly Call

February 9, 2023

https://bit.ly/EdTech-Feb2023

Agenda

- Digital Learning Updates
- Cybersecurity
- Emergency Connectivity Fund, E-Rate, and ACP
- Important Reminders and Other Information

Suggested participants
for this call:

- Chief Technology Officers
- Information Technology Staff
- E-Rate Coordinators
- Privacy Coordinators
- Digital or Virtual Learning Staff

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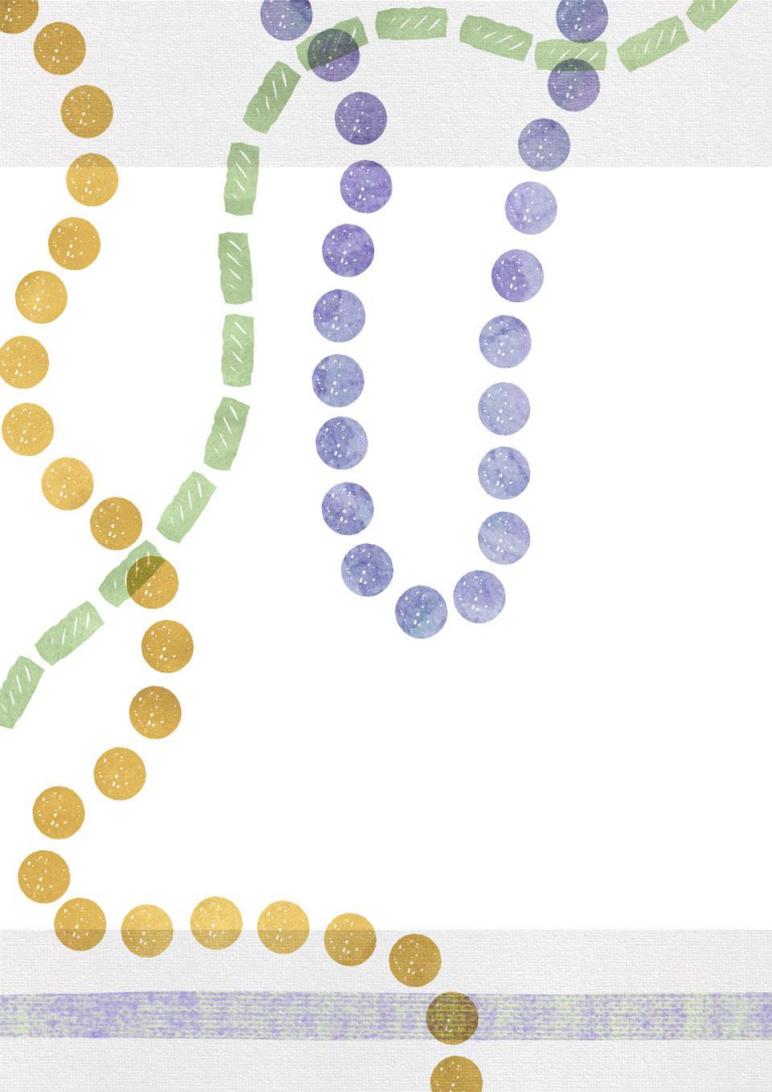
Digital Learning Updates

Change in Office Hours

- We will begin phasing out Office Hours
- We will have them this month on February 23rd
- In the future, we will hold office hours during major projects and upon request

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Teacher Leader Summit

- May 30th - June 1st in New Orleans
- We will have a technology track to ensure there are a variety of sessions for tech leaders and educators
  - Including:
    - Subject specific tech integration
    - Cyber.org training for both K-8 and 9-12 (including hands on labs in the Cyber Range)
- Registration is now upon and request for proposals will be open soon

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Request for EdTech and Cyber Security Plans

- If your school system has an EdTech Plan and/or Cybersecurity Plan, please send a copy or link to digitallearning@la.gov
- We plan on using these plans to understand key initiatives across our state and ensure that those items are in SuperApp to support funding.
- School Systems are encouraged to highlight their plan at one of our monthly meetings to demonstrate their success and support other school systems.

Please

# 2023 Annual LaTEM Summit Call For Presentations

"Louisiana's Future Belongs to You!" Come join LaSTEM, the Louisiana Science Teachers Association (LSTA), and the Louisiana Association of Math Teachers (LATM) for the 2023 Annual LaSTEM Summit on October 17 at the Cajundome Convention Center in Lafayette.

Educators interested in presenting at the LaSTEM Summit should apply by **March 14**.

Please contact LaSTEM@laregents.edu with questions.

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Computer Science Listening Sessions

- Thank you to everyone who attended. The recommendations were brought directly to the Computer Science Education Advisory Commission and were very well received.
- The Department engaged with individual stakeholders in **34** of the 64 parishes in the state.
- We will hold more sessions in the future.
- The next meeting of the Commission will be held May 3rd.

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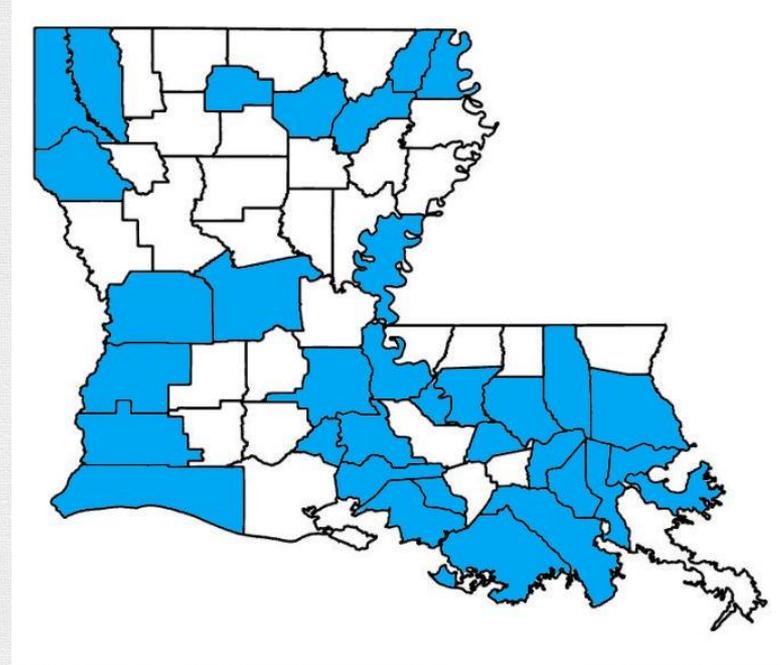
Updated Assessment Technology Guidance

The updated Technology specifications for testing will be released next week. The new guidance will not have many changes from last year. The biggest take-away will be the inclusion of new operating system and the sunsetting of operating systems which are end-of-life

The specifications will also include updated ELPT headset pricing; however schools will need to purchase directly from the vendors.

OET Letter On Funding

In January, the Office of Educational Technology (OET) at the U.S. Department of Education issued a [Dear Colleague Letter (DCL)](#) to show how school leaders and districts can use federal education funds to sustain the edtech and digital learning investments made during the pandemic.

The DCL provides examples of how funds under Titles I through IV of ESEA, as amended by the ESSA and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), may support the use of technology to improve instruction and student outcomes.
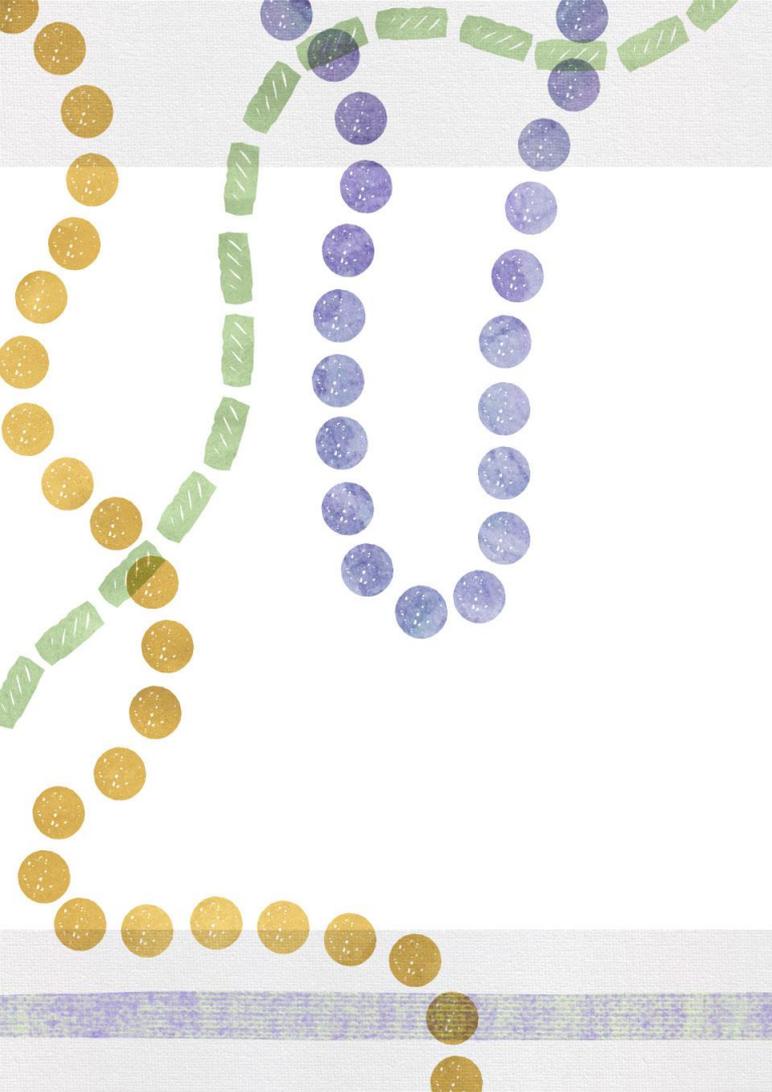
Cybersecurity

K12 Cybersecurity Report from CISA

The Cybersecurity & Infrastructure Security Agency ("CISA") has developed and released a suite of cybersecurity resources and new report in January entitled Protecting Our Future: Partnering to Safeguard K-12 Organizations from Cybersecurity Threats.

The report highlights recommendations, the growth in cyber attacks on schools and funding challenges faced by schools for protecting their infrastructure.

K12 Cybersecurity Report from CISA

FIGURE 1: NUMBER OF PUBLICLY-DISCLOSED K-12 INCIDENTS BY INCIDENT TYPE: 2016-2021
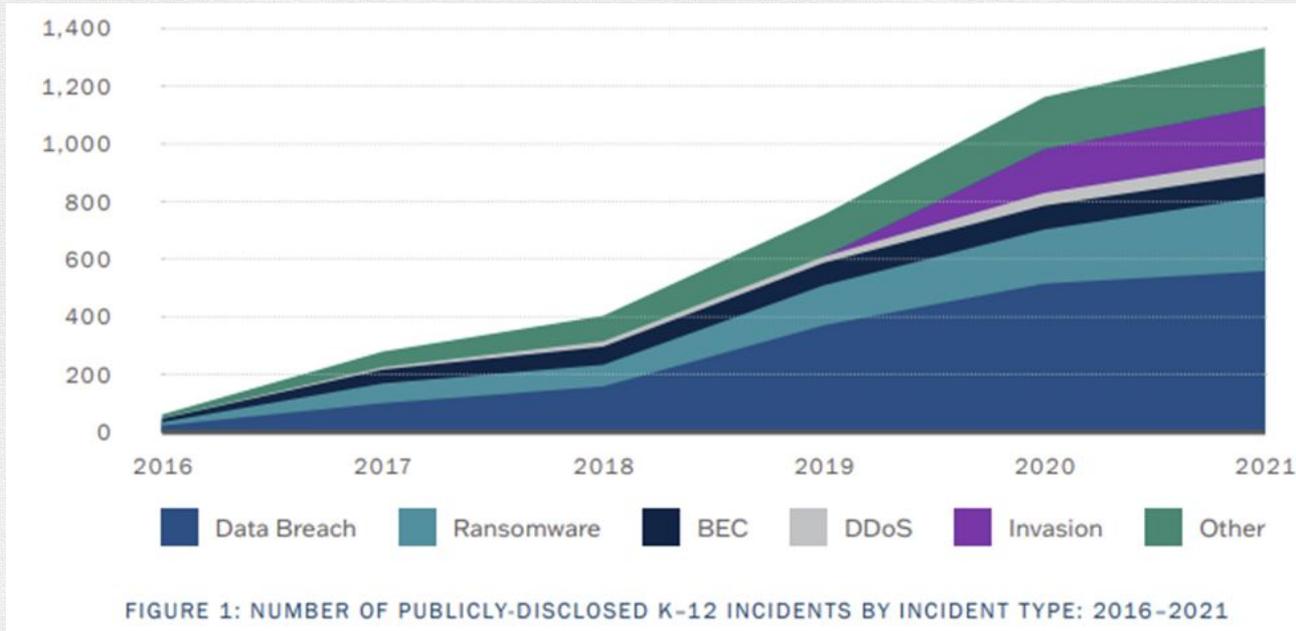
The reports highlights the increasing risks faced by K-12, noted by this chart depicting the number of attacks on schools from 2016 through 2021.

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K12 Cybersecurity Report Recommendations

Within the report CISA recommended the following six priority steps that schools should take to reduce cybersecurity risks:

1. Implement multi-factor authentication (MFA)
2. Prioritize patch management.
3. Perform and test backups.
4. Minimize exposure to common attacks (e.g. RDP to servers).
5. Develop and exercise a cyber incident response plan that leverages the NIST Cybersecurity Framework (CSF).
6. Create a training and awareness campaign at all levels.

In addition to the steps above, prioritize further near-term investments in alignment with the full list of CISA's Cybersecurity Performance Goals (CPGs).

K12 Cybersecurity Report Funding

The report recognizes many schools have limited, if any, dedicated cybersecurity funding and recommends the need for additional resources while suggesting the following:

1. Work with your State to leverage the State and Local Cybersecurity Grant Program ("SLCGP") and consider leveraging the Homeland Security Grant Program ("HSGP") that dedicates 7.5% of its funds to support critical cybersecurity infrastructure. Notably, this recommendation references the FCC's call for comments (DA 22-1315) on the use of E-rate funds to support advanced firewalls.
2. Utilize free or low-cost services to make near-term improvements (see Appendix 1 of the report).
3. Ask more of technology providers. Schools should demand that educational technology products have critical security controls enabled for admin accounts at no additional cost.
4. Minimize security risks by eliminating or reducing on-premise systems in favor of more secure and resilient cloud-based systems.

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ESXiArgs Ransomware

CISA and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) released a joint Cybersecurity Advisory, ESXiArgs Ransomware Virtual Machine Recovery Guidance

Malicious cyber actors are exploiting the vulnerability CVE-2021-21974 to gain access to unpatched VMWare ESXi servers and deploy ESXiArgs ransomware. The ransomware encrypts the configuration files on ESXi servers rendering virtual machines unusable.

CVE-2021-21974 affects the following systems:

- ESXi versions 7.x prior to ESXi70U1c-17325551
- ESXi versions 6.7.x prior to ESXi670-202102401-SG
- ESXi versions 6.5.x prior to ESXi650-202102101-SG

A patch has been available since February 23, 2021. It is recommended that the patch be applied to affected systems as soon as possible. Any system that was left unpatched should be scanned for signs of compromise.

CISA has created and released an ESXiArgs recovery script at https://github.com/cisagov/ESXiArgs-Recover. CISA and FBI encourage organizations that have fallen victim to ESXiArgs ransomware to consider using the script to attempt to recover their files.

CISA also recommends organizations reference the CISA/MS-ISAC Joint Ransomware Guide for defensive best practices and incident response guidance. https://www.cisa.gov/stopransomware/ransomware-guide
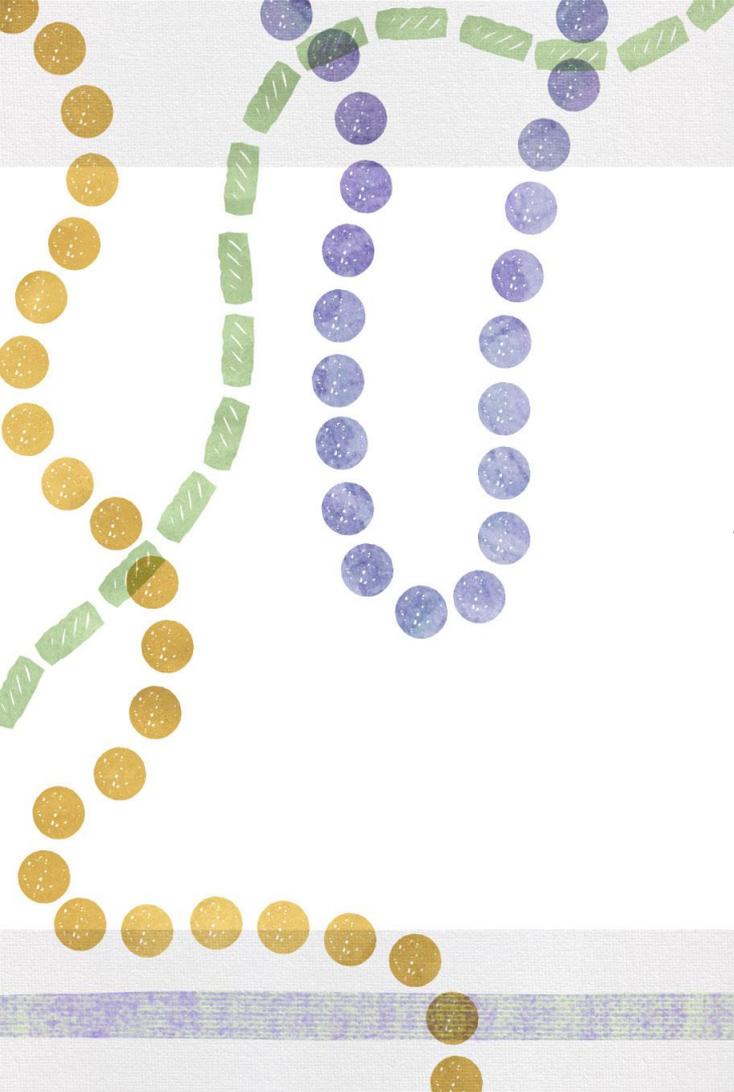
E-Rate,
Affordable Connectivity Program
and
Emergency Connectivity Fund

FY 2023 Application Window

The FY 2023 Form 471 application opened on Wednesday, January 18, 2023 and will close on Tuesday, March 28, 2023, at 11:59 p.m. EDT.

USAC is already reviewing applications, so if you can get them in early, you can be funded ahead of the new school year.

FCC Cybersecurity Comments

Applicants and service providers are reminded that initial comments on the FCC's current cybersecurity initiative (see DA 22-1315) are due February 13th, with reply comments due March 30th. At a minimum, interested parties wishing to support E-rate eligibility for advanced firewalls and/or other cybersecurity products and services, should consider filing FCC Express Comments as early in the FY 2023 application cycle as possible.   Support for the NYS cybersecurity comments would be appreciated.

E-Rate Important Dates and Reminders

- Upcoming Form 486 Deadlines for FY 2022
    - Feb 10 - Wave 26
    - Feb 17 - Wave 27
    - Feb 24 - Wave 28
- **February 13 -** Comments due on requests to allow the use of E-rate funds for advanced or next generation firewalls and/or other network security services (DA 22 1315). Reply comments are due March 30th.
- **February 16 -** FCC Open Meeting on NPRM on improvements to E-Rate Program related to Tribal applicants.
- **February 28 - Last possible date to file a Form 470 for FY 2023** in order to: (a) meet the 28-day posting period; (b) close the bidding process and select the winning bidder(s); (c) sign any necessary contract(s); and (d) file the Form 471 application(s), all on the last day of the application window..
- **March 28 -** Closing of the FY 2023 application window at 10:59 CST/11:59 p.m. EDT.

Reminders and Other Information

2022-2023 Education Technology Webinar and Office Hours

Slides from each meeting will be posted on the Educational Technology Leaders website. Recordings are available on request. A complete calendar of LDOE events can be found on the Louisiana Believes website.

Monthly Call Dates
January 12, 2023
February 9, 2023
March 9, 2023
April 13, 2023
May 11, 2023
June - Meet at LaCUE TLS
July - No Call

Office Hours Dates
February 23, 2023

Time:	9:00 AM - 10:00 AM
Webinar Link	https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/575223228?pwd=NDNlN01SS3c0Rk4wV25aNkZhTEc2Zz09
Phone Number	1-301-715-8592
Meeting ID	Meeting ID: 575 223 228 Password: 2020-202!

Thank you for joining today's call.

Schedules, access links, and information for the Department's webinars can be found in the LDOE Weekly Newsletter and LDOE School System Support Calendar.

Helpful Links

- A+PEL PD for Educators
- LACUE
- Louisiana Believes Homepage
- School Improvement Library

Support Toolboxes

- Teacher
- System
- Principal
- Counselor
- Education Technology Staff

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Reminders and Repeats

Reminder: Technology Contacts

- To ensure continuous and effective communication, Educational Technology is requesting updated contact information for Education Technology leaders and IT leaders for school systems.
- Submit this form to update contact information.

Contact digitallearning@la.gov with questions.

Cyber.org Technology Grant Program

Cyber.org's technology grant program is designed to support teachers and qualified extracurricular programs to provide cyber education to K-12 students across the United States. While grant applications can be submitted continuously throughout the year, the Spring application period's deadline is **March 15**, and awards will be given in April.

Please contact digitallearning@la.gov with questions.