

Come visit with ICN staff at the Illinois Computing Educators (ICE) Conference, 2/27 through 3/1, at Pheasant Run Resort in St. Charles, Illinois.

E-rate Information

We have added an E-rate Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) document to our website.

Current E-rate information, as well as the FAQs can be found by [clicking here](#).

Please contact your local RTC office if you have questions.

Request for Information & Public Comment

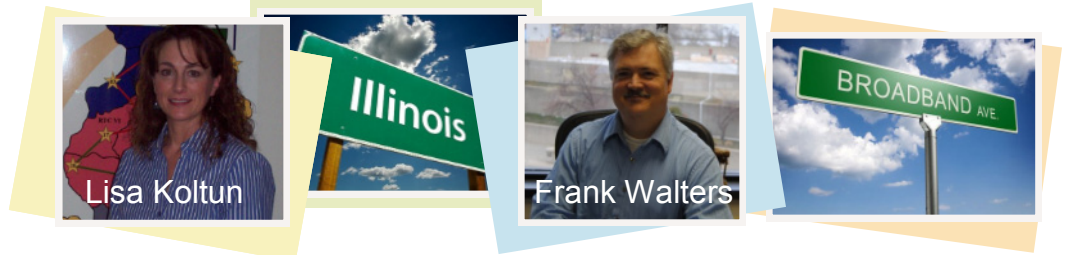


CMS will issue a Request for Information (RFI) and a Request for Public Comment within the next several weeks. The purpose of these two initiatives is to solicit feedback from interested parties on our plans to issue a Request for Proposal (RFP) to select a sales and marketing partner for commercial sales of the network. Responses are welcome from all constituents of Illinois, including service providers, community anchor institutions, businesses and residents.

The Request for Information (RFI) will seek input from prospective sales and marketing partners on the business arrangement between a selected partner and CMS and specifically how they would suggest that the selected partner would enhance broadband availability in Illinois focusing on underserved communities and promoting economic development in these areas. Following input to the RFI, CMS expects to release a RFP to select a sales and marketing partner capable of meeting these goals. The sales/marketing partner will have exclusive responsibility for selling/marketing ICN broadband capacity to wholesale and retail service providers in Illinois.

The Request for Public Comment will encourage all Illinois stakeholders to provide input into the process. Prospective sales and marketing partners should respond to the RFI. All other stakeholders and interested parties should respond to the Request for Public Comment.

The RFI can be accessed by registering with the Illinois Procurement Bulletin at www.purchase.state.il.us and the Request for Public Comment is available at www.illinois.net. The deadline for responses is March 15, 2013.



Meet our Staff - Behind the Scenes with IBOP

Together, **Frank Walters** and **Lisa Koltun** bring more than 45 years LAN, WAN and general IT and network experience to their current role as designers of the overall fiber network. Lisa and Frank have been involved with the IBOP project since the initial design.

Long before the BTOP grant offering, Lisa and Frank pursued dark fiber as a way to significantly lower ICN operational costs while raising bandwidth availability for customers. They were ahead of the curve and in a good position to contribute their knowledge and research to the grant response.

Frank and Lisa also designed the overall fiber network, developed the network maps, and created and executed several of the procurements that resulted in our network equipment selection.

In addition to these duties, Frank and Lisa are a part of ICN's Network Services group responsible for the overall health of the network, new equipment integration, managing BGP, egress and the network's twelve providers.

Community Anchor Institution “Mount Olive School District”

Mr. Patrick Murphy, Superintendent of Schools in Mt. Olive, Illinois was kind enough to spend a few minutes talking to us about how he is using the expanded bandwidth that the IBOP project has brought to his school district.

The Mt. Olive School District, an historic ICN customer, resides in one building and educates approximately 500 students ranging in age from pre-school through twelfth grade. They have an outstanding academic foundation and now have the backbone in place to “give the students a chance to be connected to the world.”

Mt. Olive had a severe need for more bandwidth as their single T1 was becoming increasingly bogged down trying to deliver more technology to the classrooms. Mt. Olive has smart boards in each classroom and a computer per every two students. Their intent is to have a computer for each student in the near future. Before the ICN was expanded and able to bring increased bandwidth to Mt. Olive, they were unable to stream video or deliver virtual classes to more than one student at a time without stressing the network.

Mr. Murphy began exploring options and spoke with his ICN Regional Technology Center representative who explained the network’s plans for his area. Even though the build out was eighteen months away, Patrick decided he wanted to be in on the opportunity from the beginning. The cost was great for a small district in a rural area. The ICN was able to bring him the increased bandwidth he needed in a timely fashion and he “appreciates the way the ICN managed the process” and stayed on top of the build out and all of the contractors and details that went into bringing him the bandwidth he needed. His school is now able to participate in the Illinois Virtual Schools (IVS) classes that they could not formerly offer to more than one student at a time. The build-out is “working exactly as they had hoped”.

They had an opportunity to test or pilot their intended functionality when they brought 40 teachers with laptops to the building for an in-service in early January. Each teacher connected to one of two wireless routers in the building and they didn’t experience a single problem. Mt. Olive’s backbone is now in place and they look forward to encouraging more opportunities for streaming video and virtual classroom studies for years to come!

