



Digital Equity Newsletter

February 2024

Welcome to Literacy Minnesota's newest monthly newsletter – One Network. This newsletter is an overview of the digital equity services offered by organizations like Literacy Minnesota and resources for those wanting to know more about digital equity. To see previous issues of this newsletter, visit this link: <https://www.literacymn.org/digital-equity-navigation>

For more information contact Frances Bates at fbates@literacymn.org.

Covered within this issue:

- **Community Bulletin**
 - The Affordable Connectivity Program Wind Down and Next Steps
 - Upcoming Event
- **Staff Bios - Updated**
- **Digital Literacy Services - Updated**
 - Northstar Digital Literacy Program
 - Digital Equity and Navigation
 - Trainings and Workshops
- **Other Minnesota Initiatives**
- **Glossary - Updated**
- **Resources**



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700 Raymond Avenue Suite 180, Saint Paul, MN 55114

Mission: To share the power of learning through education, community building and advocacy.

Community Bulletin



The **Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP)** was a Federal Communications Commission (FCC) benefit program that helped ensure that households could afford the broadband they need for work, school, healthcare and more. This program was started in December 2021 and just recently ended on February 7th due to loss of funding.

It provided a discount of up to \$30 per month toward internet services. Households on qualifying Tribal lands received up to \$75 per month. Eligible households could also receive a one-time discount of up to \$100 to purchase a laptop, desktop computer, or tablet from participating providers if they contribute more than \$10 and less than \$50 toward the purchase price.

With the program winding down you might have some questions. Below you can find helpful details about what will happen if you already are using ACP services and some next steps.

ACP Wind-Down

- Households who have applied, been approved, and are receiving the monthly internet discount before February 8th will continue to receive their ACP benefit until ACP funds run out, as long as the household remains enrolled in the program.
- After the ACP funds run out (projected in April 2024), households participating in the ACP will no longer receive the ACP discounts.
- During the ACP wind-down period, ACP households will receive notices from their internet company about the impact of the end of the benefit on how the household's bill and service.
- ACP households may also switch their internet plans without penalty.
- Households can visit the ACP website for more information or call the ACP Support Center at 877-384-2575 for questions about their benefits.

Next Steps

There is talk about finding other funding opportunities to have a different program for the same services, but nothing has been solidified. For now, many organizations including Literacy Minnesota are turning to Comcast's Internet Essentials program. To find out more about this see the next section.

Resources

Website: <https://www.fcc.gov/acp>

Help Sheet: https://www.fcc.gov/sites/default/files/ACP_Wind-down_Fact_Sheet_Final.pdf

Video: <https://youtu.be/qvFzyA5AzIU>

NDIA tips: <https://www.digitalinclusion.org/affordable-connectivity-program-transition/>

internet» essentials

FROM COMCAST

Since 2011, **Internet Essentials** has connected a cumulative total of more than 10 million people from low-income families to the Internet at home. You can get speeds up to 50 Mbps for only \$9.95/month – good for online learning, working from home, video calling, and other essentials.

Comcast designed Internet Essentials as a holistic solution that includes:

- **Awareness & Training:** We work with a network of partners to offer free in-person, online, and printed digital literacy training materials and classes.
- **Low-Cost & Free Service:** We provide low-cost, high-speed broadband to low-income households across our service area. Customers can choose between two speeds of service: 50/10 Mbps for \$9.95 + tax or 100/10 Mbps for \$29.95 + tax.
- **Equipment:** Internet Essentials customers can purchase a new, heavily subsidized and discounted computer for less than \$150 through our partnership with Dell Technologies, Inc.

Lift Zones

The best way Comcast has found to get people the services they need is through what they call Lift Zones. A Lift Zone is a facility primarily designed to help provide low-income students with a safe, clean space to participate in distance learning during the day or to do homework before or after school. However, adults, seniors, and veterans can also use the site for remote work, to look for or apply for a job, or learn digital skills.

Resources

Internet Essentials Website: <https://apply.internetessentials.com/>

Xfinity: <https://www.xfinity.com/learn/internet-service/internet-essentials>

Comcast: <https://corporate.comcast.com/impact/digital-equity/internet-essentials>

Lift Zones: <https://corporate.comcast.com/impact/digital-equity/lift-zones>

Informational Event

With the end of ACP Literacy Minnesota wanted to put on a resource event to help the community learn what else is out there. Event details below.

When: Last week in March, official date will be posted in next month's newsletter

Where: 553 Fairview Ave N, Saint Paul, MN 55104

Event description: Want to learn about low-cost internet and technology services in the Twin Cities? – Come check out this FREE event put on by Literacy Minnesota and Goodwill-Easter Seals. It will have training sessions by Comcast on their Internet Essentials program, resource tables from local organizations, snacks, and prizes.

If you are interested in being a vendor at this event, please send an email to fbates@literacymn.org by the end of February.

Meet Our TEQuity Team

Digital Equity



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Learn more about the team and the rest of our amazing staff by exploring the link below.
<https://www.literacymn.org/staff-board>

Our Digital Literacy Services

Digital equity requires access to devices, an internet connection, and digital skills. Below you can find how Literacy Minnesota is helping provide those services.

<https://www.literacymn.org/digitalliteracy>

Northstar Digital Literacy



The Northstar program assesses digital skills and provides classroom curriculum and self-directed online learning.

Website: <https://www.digitalliteracyassessment.org/>

Digital Equity and Navigation

Digital Navigators mentor individuals in using technology and help with getting low-cost internet. For more information on our services contact Susan at swbrandt@literacymn.org.

<https://www.literacymn.org/digital-equity-navigation>



Midway Location: 553 Fairview Ave N, Saint Paul, MN 55104

The Midway digital literacy lab at Goodwill-Easter Seals is open 10am to 3pm on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Manee is there the whole time and Nick is there in the afternoons.

Minneapolis Location: 627 W Broadway Ave, Minneapolis, MN 55411

Katey works at the Minneapolis campus facilitating computer labs and Northstar digital literacy classes.

Trainings and Workshops

We offer an assortment of programming for instructors that focus on digital literacy.

<https://www.literacymn.org/digital-literacy-trainings-workshops>

Other Initiatives in Minnesota

Neighborhood House



Their Digital Inclusion team supports individuals and families in getting low-cost devices, high-speed internet connection in the home, and digital literacy skills.

Address: 179 Robie St E, Saint Paul, MN 55107

Website: <https://neighborhoodhousemn.org/>

Lyndale Neighborhood Association



The Lyndale Education Program serves the residents of Horn Towers with literacy, language, and career skills. Created the ELDES curriculum to help address digital literacy gaps in English learners.

Address: 3537 Nicollet Ave, Minneapolis, MN 55408

Website: <https://lyndale.org/>

PCs for People



This is a nonprofit social enterprise working to get low-cost quality computers and internet into the homes of individuals, families, and nonprofits with low income.

Main location: 1481 Marshall Ave, Saint Paul, MN 55104

Recycling Center: 2492 Doswell Ave, Saint Paul, MN 55108

Website: <https://www.pcsforpeople.org/>

Office of Broadband Development



Helping Minnesotans understand broadband options available and work together to improve availability and use of high-speed broadband services.

Address: 180 5th St E, Saint Paul, MN 55101

Website: <https://mn.gov/deed/programs-services/broadband/>

Check out this newsletter's resource section on our website to see more local organizations.

<https://www.literacymn.org/one-network-newsletter-resources>

Glossary



App (Application)

Unit of downloadable software that performs a specific function. Some are available for free while others come with a cost.

Browser

A software application (such as Google Chrome, Safari, Internet Explorer, or Mozilla Firefox) that allows users to access the Internet.

Digital Equity

A condition in which all individuals and communities have the information technology capacity needed for full participation in our society, democracy and economy. Sometimes called TEQuity/Tech Equity which is the shortening of technology equity.

Digital Literacy

The ability and knowledge needed to access and operate internet-connected devices, to successfully use commonly available software, and to navigate and utilize online resources in order to effectively communicate and complete social and work-related tasks in a virtual space.

Digital Navigators

Trusted guides who assist community members in internet adoption and the use of computing devices. Digital navigation services include ongoing assistance with affordable internet access, device acquisition, technical skills, and application support.

Email

A system (such as Google Gmail, Microsoft Outlook, and Yahoo! Mail) that allows the user to transmit messages electronically.

Internet

An electronic communications network that connects computer networks and organizational computer facilities around the world.

Network

A system that connects two or more computing devices for transmitting and sharing information.

Search Engine

Programs (such as Google, Bing, and Yahoo!) that allow you to find specific information online.

Server

A type of computer that is equipped with software and hardware to offer services to other computers connected to it.

Wi-Fi

A wireless networking technology that allows devices such as computers, smartphones, and other equipment (printers and video cameras) to interface with the Internet.

Resources

General

Connectivity Blueprint:

Digital Equity Roadmap for Ramsey County and Saint Paul

Connectivity Blueprint

<https://www.ramseycounty.us/your-government/projects-initiatives/ramsey-connected-computer-internet-resources/connectivity-blueprint>



Digital Equity Act

<https://www.digitalequityact.org/>



National Collaborative for Digital Equity (NCDE)

<https://www.digitalequity.us/>



National Digital Inclusion Alliance (NDIA)

<https://www.digitalinclusion.org/>

Glossary Sources

- <https://www.cisco.com/>
- <https://www.spiceworks.com/>
- <https://study.com/>
- <https://thecenterfordigitalequity.org/>
- <https://www.techtarget.com/>
- <https://www.vocabulary.com/>

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COMCAST

More information here: <https://www.literacymn.org/digital-equity-navigation#one-network-newsletter>

Join the mailing list here: <https://www.literacymn.org/one-network-signup>

Questions, comments, or concerns? - Contact Frances Bates at fbates@literacymn.org.



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