Digital Opportunity in South Dakota

What does 'Digital Equity' mean?

Connecting every location with the necessary infrastructure

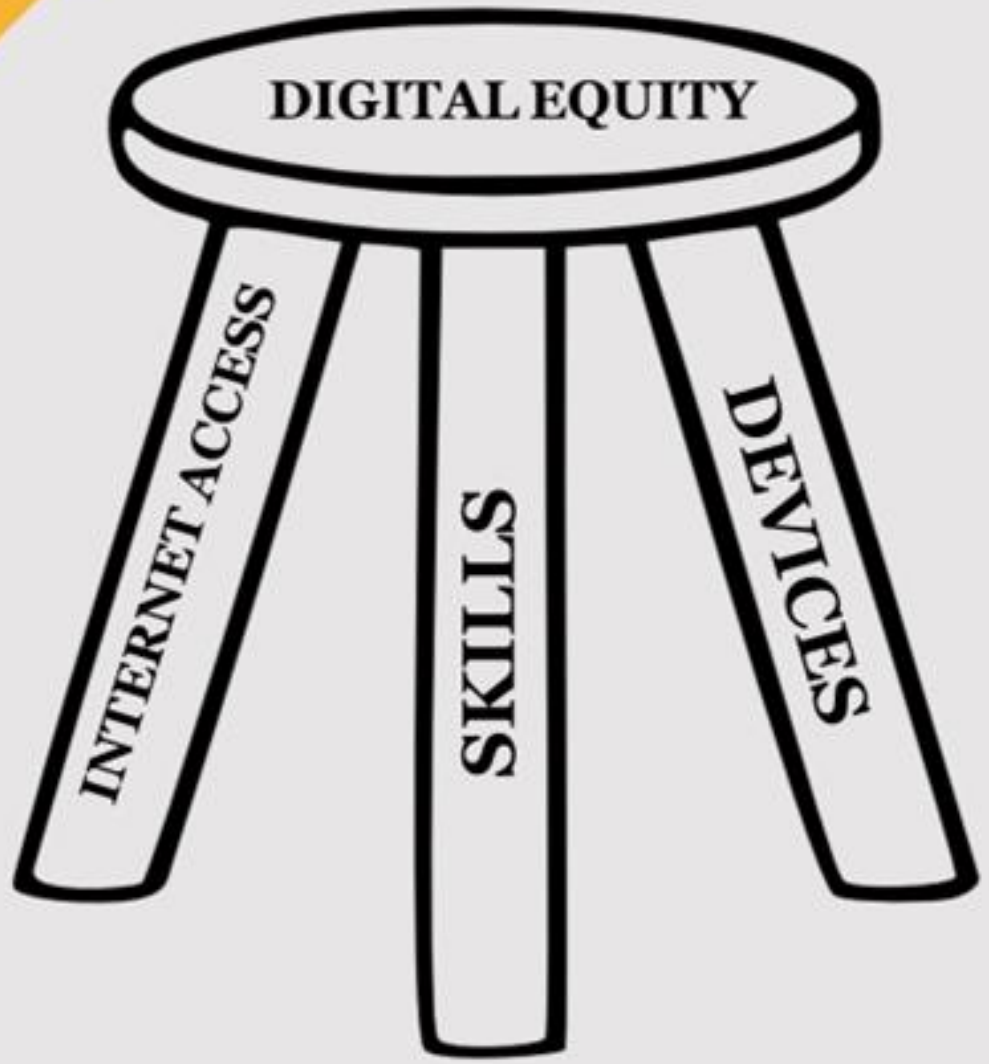
Every location, whether residential, business, or a community anchor institution (CAI) must be connected with the physical infrastructure needed to access high-speed broadband.

Building the necessary skillset and competence

Every citizen must possess the digital skills needed to access high-speed internet, in a meaningful, productive way, while ensuring safety for all.

Ensuring all citizens have access to the appropriate devices

Every citizen has access to the devices needed to access high-speed internet that support the full and meaningful use of broadband.



Pillars of Digital Equity (Source: NTIA)

Digital Equity vs BEAD

Digital Equity Act

- Addresses a combination of affordability and education
- $2.75B made available nationally
  - South Dakota's allocation: ?

Broadband, Equity, Access & Development Program (BEAD)

- Addresses a combination of access and affordability
- $42.45B made available nationally
  - South Dakota's allocation: $207.2 million

Three Funding Sources of Digital Equity

State Digital Equity Planning Grants	Digital Equity Capacity Building Grants	Digital Equity Competitive Grants
$60 million in formula funding	$1.44 billion in formula funding	$1.25 billion

Digital Opportunity Plan

Stakeholder Engagement

- One-on-one meetings with 57 entities representing covered populations
- Three group meetings with about 10 attendees per meeting
- Presentation and open discussion at a Workforce Development Council meeting with 68 attendees
- Interactive session at the South Dakota Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act (WIOA) Partner Symposium with 115 registered attendees
- South Dakota Broadband Summit with 78 registered attendees

What are Covered Populations?

- **Low-income individuals:** Individuals who live in covered households (the income of which for the most recently completed year is not more than 150 percent of an amount equal to the poverty level, as determined by using criteria of poverty established by the Bureau of the Census)
- **Aging individuals:** Individuals 60 and above
- **Incarcerate populations:** Incarcerated individuals, other than individuals who are incarcerated in a Federal correctional facility.
- **Veterans**
- **Individuals with disabilities**
- **Individuals with low literacy and/or language barriers:** Individuals with a language barrier, including individuals who are English learners; and have low levels of literacy.
- **Racial or ethnic minority populations:** Individuals who are members of a racial or ethnic minority group.
- **Rural populations:** Individuals who primarily reside in a rural area.

Vision

Ensure every citizen will have access to affordable, future-proof, high-speed internet, along with the means to utilize it safely and competently.

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Objectives

Objective 1: Improve access to and adoption of affordable high-speed internet

Objective 2: Enhance accessibility of public services online

Objective 3: Increase access to digital literacy curriculums

Objective 4: Increase access to cybersecurity curriculums

Objective 5: Expand access to computing devices for accessing the internet

Strategies

1.1 Subsidize infrastructure deployment in unserved and underserved communities **1.2 Make high-speed internet affordable** **1.3 Increase awareness of the benefits of adopting high-speed internet**
2.1 Improve online services interface **2.2 Increase awareness of MySD Digital Citizen portal**
3.1 Establish digital literacy and training sessions
4.1 Establish cybersecurity curriculums and training sessions
5.1 Expand access to public-use devices **5.2 Make low-cost or free devices available for distribution**

Proposed Activities

- Support the continuation and creation of Digital Equity Coalitions
- Aid in ACP Enrollment events and encourage partners to train staff on the benefit program
- Improve access to workforce services
- Provide digital literacy training to incarcerated populations
- Offer community anchor institutions digital skills and cybersecurity curriculums
- Expand public-use & loaner devices offerings

Important Dates

- December 14th – Submission date for South Dakota's Digital Opportunity Plan
- Early 2024 – Application made available for State Capacity Grants
- Late 2024 – Beginning of implementation of 5-year plan

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