

Blue Cross and Blue Shield donate computers to kick off cybersecurity in Nebraska schools

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Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Nebraska recently donated 450 pieces of computer equipment to lay the groundwork for new cybersecurity programs in high schools across the state.

The insurance company partnered with [Nebraska Cybersecurity Network for Education](#) (NCNE) to make the donation, which includes 210 computer desktops and 240 monitors that will be distributed among 196 high schools. Andy Boell, cybersecurity director at NCNE, said the schools will be using the computer equipment as part of an emerging cybersecurity program the organization has been working on for the past couple of years.

NCNE was created in 2023 by 10 educational service units in Nebraska that wanted to reduce cyber risk and enhance cyber resilience for their school districts. Schools are becoming a rising target for cybercriminals and many districts have limited cybersecurity resources to protect against attacks, according to a federal Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency [report](#) published last year.

Boell said NCNE is working with Nebraska universities to create cybersecurity programs in schools, providing both resources for administrators and education for students. The recent computer donation will help launch the effort, he said.

“Most of it is for infrastructure, helping school districts to be as secure as possible,” Boell said. “However, the donation that (Blue Cross and Blue Shield) provided us is setting the foundation so that we can work with additional partners, so that we are able to provide the ability for students to get some hands-on experience in cybersecurity.”

Terrance Steinhart, cybersecurity manager at Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Nebraska, said the donation was made as part of the company’s own cybersecurity program, which has been offering an [internship](#) for students interested in the industry since 2019.

“Our cybersecurity program is always looking for ways to train and engage with the next generation of cybersecurity professionals,” Steinhart said in a Tuesday media release.

“We’re honored to extend this education to high school students and look forward to seeing the impact it will have on the future of the cybersecurity field in Nebraska.”