

**Statement on Behalf of Higher Education
on Release of the National Strategy to Secure Cyberspace**

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Introduction

Hello, I'm Mark Luker, EDUCAUSE Vice President. I'm here today to express the support of U.S. higher education for the National Strategy to Secure Cyberspace. American colleges and universities play an important role in cybersecurity. We educate the next generations of IT leadership, invent new technologies, and operate many of the world's most powerful computers and networks.

The Higher Education Sector

American higher education comprises over 4,000, degree-granting institutions, including public and private universities, research institutes, liberal arts colleges, community colleges, teaching hospitals, and more. The IT systems on a typical campus support administrative functions, financial transactions, research, distributed learning, remote access to libraries, and Internet service for students in residence halls, all in a decentralized management structure.

Most IT leaders in higher education participate in EDUCAUSE, a nonprofit association of nearly 1,900 colleges, universities, education organizations, and corporations. Many large research institutions also belong to Internet2, which focuses on advanced networking technologies. Over the past 25 years, members of EDUCAUSE and Internet2 have been responsible for many of the major advances in campus networking and the Internet. The higher education plan for the National Strategy is the joint work of an EDUCAUSE/Internet2 Task Force for Computer and Network Security.

Why Cyberspace Security is Important to Higher Education

Colleges and universities have long been responsible for protecting sensitive student, clinical, research, and financial information. They are now shifting much of their teaching and research onto the Internet. This promises great improvements in access and opportunity, but only in an environment of security and trust. Higher education needs systems that are always available, that protect the integrity and the confidentiality of information, and that properly manage authentication and authorization. We need secure systems for our own work, and to minimize potential threats to the systems of others.

Higher Education's Commitment to Improving Cyberspace Security

Earlier this year the American Council on Education and other national leaders in higher education pledged in a *Framework for Action* to dramatically improve their support for cybersecurity. To help deliver on this pledge, EDUCAUSE is now completing a series of workshops funded by the National Science Foundation to draft a cybersecurity action plan for higher education.

These workshops are describing effective practices and policies for campus IT security, as well as identifying the fundamental principles of respect for open scholarship and constitutionally guaranteed individual freedoms that must be a part of any security solution. The results will be distributed throughout the higher education community as guides for improving campus IT security today and providing professional development in national and regional conferences for tomorrow. Evaluating and refining the strategy for higher education will be an ongoing process.

In another important development, Indiana University is establishing a Research and Education Networking Information Analysis and Sharing Center, or "REN-ISAC," as part of the national infrastructure for sharing threats and warnings being coordinated by the National Infrastructure Protection Center. This will provide a more systematic way to share such information within higher education, and also to obtain timely warnings from others including the federal government.

Conclusion

In summary, higher education plays a critical role in cybersecurity for the United States. We have organized to address this issue on a national scale, with the endorsement of our top national leaders. We are well positioned to work with the federal government and with other sectors on both traditional and innovative solutions.

The open, innovative values of higher education are, in the end, those of the nation. The advanced computer networks of higher education represent the emerging systems of the future. We know that successful security solutions in higher education can serve as models for the nation at large.