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State superintendent, White House national cyber director host roundtable on cybersecurity in Wisconsin schools

Dr. Jill Underly, Harry Coker, Jr. discuss strengthening partnerships and building resilience to stop cyber threats

SUN PRAIRIE – State Superintendent Dr. Jill Underly welcomed White House National Cyber Director Harry Coker, Jr. and dozens of education, public library and cybersecurity leaders across the state during a roundtable on cybersecurity on Thursday at Sun Prairie Public Library.

The roundtable discussion centered around the importance of being proactive in protecting school district infrastructure from cyber threats.

“In today’s world, it is absolutely critical that our school districts and libraries maintain the safety of their systems, and protect student and family information,” Dr. Underly said. “As I heard today, one of the biggest challenges for our districts is overcoming barriers that may be standing in the way, like the cost of keeping hardware and software updated with small technology budgets.

“There are so many great resources available to help our schools be proactive and protect their systems, and I was honored to join our partners today to hear how our state can help address emerging cyber threats.”

Attendees shared current challenges they face in protecting their districts’ systems, and how free resources from [the federal](#) and [state governments](#) can help protect students, staff, and communities from cyber threats. Photos from the event [can be found on Dr. Underly’s Facebook page](#).

“It is absolutely necessary that we shift the bulk of the responsibility off the shoulders of school district and library administrators and onto organizations that are best positioned to reduce risk,” White House National Cyber Director Harry Coker, Jr. said. “This shift of responsibility is exactly what the Biden-Harris Administration’s National Cybersecurity Strategy calls for, and it’s what our office is working every day to implement.

“So today, we’re here in Wisconsin to bring together the resources of the federal government and our partners. We are here to help – help direct those on the front lines of defending our schools and libraries

(more)

and the digital systems that underpin them – to resources that can provide protection in the short-term, and help alleviate the larger challenges that put you at risk in the long-term.”

The Office of the National Cyber Director, established in 2021, advises the president on cybersecurity policy and strategy and is a component of the Executive Office of the President at The White House. Additional information on ONCD’s priority of improving K-12 cybersecurity [can be found on its website](#).

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