



Office of the Chief Information Officer
200 E. Grand Avenue
Des Moines, Iowa 50309

To the Office of the Chief Information Officer of the State of Iowa:

As one of the major employers and only higher education institution in the county, we are writing in support of the Mahaska County application regarding the OCIO Invitation to Qualify for a Broadband Intervention Zone to address local unserved and underserved areas.

William Penn University is one of the county's largest employers with over 270 employees — the majority of whom reside in the rural communities of Mahaska county. As a rural business, reliable fast broadband is important for the regular operations of the college. As an institution, we seek to attract and retain professionals from across the country to help promote our school's mission. These potential community members are making choices about whether to settle in southeast Iowa with their families — robust broadband is a key consideration for these people who recognize as we do the impacts on quality of life: education and professional development, health, safety, recreation, and spousal employment. Attracting a technology workforce is particularly challenging when considering both our rural location and competition with tech companies nationwide, while the city of Oskaloosa itself has been fortunate to have such access. The same cannot be said about rural Mahaska County residents. This poses issues for not only students but their family members who may desire to do some work at home.

Apart from our direct business needs, we also recognize that the vitality of William Penn University is closely linked with the vitality of our hometown. For this reason, we take our role as an anchor institution seriously and are committed to collaborating with other community organizations to address local economic and quality of life issues. The county supervisors and Oskaloosa leaders have indicated the importance of exceptional internet access to effectively compete for employees, students, and in a competitive business environment.

We believe that equitable access to robust broadband will be transformative to our rural community. Please accept our thanks for your interest and support on behalf of rural Iowans and their access to robust broadband.

Sincerely,



John EE Ottosson
President



OSKALOOSA COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

ENGAGING ALL STUDENTS TO EMBRACE THE POWER OF LEARNING

Office of Chief Information Officer
200 E. Grand Avenue
Des Moines, Iowa 50309

March 30, 2023

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing to share my support of the Mahaska County request to be a Broadband Intervention Zone. While the city of Oskaloosa and a few smaller nearby cities enjoy reasonable access, the rest of Mahaska County does not.

The rural areas of Mahaska County need internet technology and are currently underserved. Our rural students are increasingly dependent on fast internet services for the ability to complete their assignments at home and to receive important announcements from the school district.

In all cases, the speed of broadband internet is an essential element for success. I urge the Office of the Chief Information Officer to favorably view the application from Mahaska County as a Broadband Intervention Zone.

Sincerely,

Mike Fisher
Superintendent



1800 N. Third Street
Oskaloosa, Iowa 52577



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