



STATE OF ALABAMA
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



Eric G. Mackey, Ed.D.
 State Superintendent of Education

January 8, 2025

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MEMORANDUM

TO: City and County Superintendents of Education

FROM: Eric G. Mackey *EGM*
 State Superintendent of Education

RE: PowerSchool Cybersecurity Incident

Yesterday afternoon (January 7, 2025) the Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE) was notified by its student information system vendor, PowerSchool, that on December 28, 2024, PowerSchool identified a cybersecurity incident where unauthorized access occurred via its community support portal, PowerSource. According to PowerSchool, the breach was traced to a compromised credential granting access to certain customer data in the PowerSchool-managed student information system. This data breach was a direct attack on PowerSchool internationally and was not a cyberattack directed at the ALSDE or any Alabama school system.

According to the company, they immediately launched cybersecurity response protocols, including involving law enforcement and third-party experts. PowerSchool stated that the incident has been contained, with no evidence of malware or ongoing unauthorized activity, and PowerSchool continues normal operations. The compromised credentials were deactivated and the affected portal was secured. This was not a denial-of-service attack. The data accessed primarily included information related to families and educators, such as names and addresses, depending on the school district.

Social Security Numbers were not involved for any Alabama students or teachers because we do not collect that information to be stored in the Student Information System. Some medical and grade information for students may have been impacted. PowerSchool assures that the data was deleted and not shared or made public, with reasonable assurances from the threat actor confirming its deletion. No operational disruptions occurred. PowerSchool will offer credit monitoring and identity protection services to those whose sensitive data was compromised. This may or may not include clients in Alabama because, again, we do not collect or store the most sensitive personal data like Social Security Numbers.

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To prevent future incidents, PowerSchool advises that it has reinforced its password policies and continues to invest in cybersecurity defenses. Customers have been assured that the breach was contained, and PowerSchool will provide a communications package to help schools inform their communities. A finalized forensic report is expected by January 17, 2025.

School system technology directors have been notified. In addition, the ALSDE is offering technical assistance to systems as to how to review their own data logs. Technology directors should contact their regional support person or Mrs. Stacy Royster for additional support if needed.

As for legally required notice, the ALSDE has notified the state Office of Information Technology and the Attorney General's Office and will work with local school systems regarding any notices that they may need to provide.

Superintendents should contact Mr. Chuck Marcum or myself with any questions. Media inquiries may be directed to Dr. Michael Sibley.

See below a sample communication statement that you may choose to utilize in communicating to parents or the media:

[School District Name] was notified on January 7, 2025, of a recent cybersecurity incident involving PowerSchool, a widely used education software provider that provides our district's student information system. On December 28, 2024, PowerSchool identified unauthorized access to certain customer information through its PowerSource portal. The company has assured us that the incident is contained, and there is no evidence of ongoing unauthorized activity or operational disruptions. Affected data may include sensitive personal information such as names, addresses, and email addresses. Social security numbers were not involved. PowerSchool has implemented enhanced security measures, deactivated the compromised credentials, and is offering credit monitoring and identity protection services for certain impacted individuals. [School District Name] is working closely with PowerSchool to communicate with families, educators, and stakeholders. For additional information, please contact [insert contact information].

EGM:LAK

cc: Alabama State Board of Education Members
Technology Directors

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