

10/8/21

Dear Manhasset School Community,

I am writing to provide you with an update regarding the network disruption incident. As you know, we took our network offline on September 14 when we detected a service disruption. We promptly commenced an investigation, notified law enforcement and the State Education Department's Chief Privacy Officer, and we deployed a team of IT professionals to methodically determine which specific systems were impacted. Our investigation is being completed with tremendous care and is still ongoing.

Fortunately, the District was able to restore data from its backup systems. We continue to make significant progress in our restoration process and our work continues. Late yesterday, we restored file access for most teachers. Importantly, this allows teachers to access lesson plans, materials, and letters of recommendation that they saved on this server.

The network disruption has caused very challenging circumstances for our teachers and students. During this incident, our teachers have continued to focus on providing engaging and rigorous instruction for our students, and for this we are grateful.

As a District we continue to face a confluence of challenges that, as a school community, we could not have imagined just a short time ago. Our resilience throughout these challenges has reinforced our proven ability to get through difficult times such as these.

At this time, we can confirm that we have discovered ransomware in our system and that the malicious actor, or the "threat actor" as this term is referred to in cybersecurity circles, has claimed to have stolen data. We continue to investigate the threat actor's claim. Our District is the victim of a criminal act and we will continue to work with law enforcement and our experts and see this matter through to completion. As many of you are aware, ransomware attacks have been on the rise. Unfortunately, we are one of the latest victims in this growing trend which has targeted other school districts, hospitals, and municipalities, as well as private businesses across the country.

As you know, we continue to take data, security, and privacy very seriously. Please be assured that the District will comply with applicable notification requirements to those who may be affected and we will include further guidance in those notifications.

As soon as appropriate we will continue to share information with you.

Sincerely,

Dr. Gaurav Passi
Acting Superintendent of Schools