



# HERTFORD COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

HCPS, serving as a cornerstone of our community, will prepare graduates who are ready to meet the global challenges of education, career, and life.

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701 North Martin Street • P.O. Box 158 • Winton, North Carolina 27986 • Phone (252)358-1761 • FAX (252) 358-4745

Dear HCPS Staff,

We want to keep you informed of a recent update related to the PowerSchool data breach that occurred in late 2024 and was reported in January of this year. Recently several schools and North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) employees across the state received messages from threat actors claiming to possess data from that breach. We have been informed that several Canadian school districts have received similar messages as well.

Based on the current status of the investigation, we believe that the threat actors have access to the same data tables that were originally compromised. These data tables include student and staff names, contact information, social security numbers (limited student social security numbers), birthdays, medical notes, passwords (limited), and parent/guardian information.

NCDPI has already notified appropriate law enforcement agencies, who are actively investigating this incident.

## **IMMEDIATE ACTIONS REQUIRED IF YOU RECEIVE CONTACT FROM THREAT ACTORS:**

- **Do not open any links.** Do not click any links in suspicious messages or open suspicious attachments.
- **Do not reply or engage with the threat actors.** State law prohibits interaction with these individuals (N.C.G.S. 143-800).
- **Report the message immediately.** Send to NCDPI's Cybersecurity Team at [k12cybersecteam@dpi.nc.gov](mailto:k12cybersecteam@dpi.nc.gov)

***IMPORTANT REMINDER:*** PowerSchool has taken full responsibility for this data breach. There was nothing that NCDPI or any North Carolina public schools could have done to prevent this incident.

## **Support Services Available**

We understand that this is a concerning update in the PowerSchool SIS data breach incident, and we are committed to ensuring that Hertford County Public Schools' staff is fully informed of the robust support services in place to help protect your personal information.

- PowerSchool has extended their contract with Experian to offer identity protection and credit monitoring services through July 1, 2025 for all affected students and educators, however NCDPI is advocating for a significantly longer enrollment window so that all impacted users have enough time to enroll in the protection services provided by PowerSchool.

- Affected individuals can enroll in identity protection and credit monitoring at no cost to themselves <https://www.powerschool.com/security/sis-incident/notice-of-united-states-data-breach/>  
Services include:
  - Two years of complimentary identity protection for all students and educators affected
  - Two years of complimentary credit monitoring for all adult students and educators affected
- These services are available regardless of whether an individual's Social Security number was compromised.
- Additional protection: Impacted users can [freeze their identity for free](https://ncdoj.gov/protecting-consumers/protecting-your-identity/free-security-freeze/) through the North Carolina Department of Justice. <https://ncdoj.gov/protecting-consumers/protecting-your-identity/free-security-freeze/>

As we continue to work through this incident, we are committed to supporting you, as well as our students and families with care and transparency. Thank you for your continued commitment to our students and communities.

Sincerely,

Dr. Jesse J. Pratt

Superintendent