

MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Expanding Opportunity and Unleashing Potential

OFFICE OF THE GENERAL COUNSEL

December 23, 2024

Via Electronic Mail

Office of the Attorney General
Attn: Security Breach Notification
200 St. Paul Place
Baltimore, MD 21202
Idtheft@oag.state.md.us

Re: Inadvertent Disclosure of Directory
Student Information

To Whom It May Concern:

On behalf of Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS), this letter is submitted as notification of a breach of the security of a system, to the Office of the Attorney General, in accordance with the requirements set forth under MD. State Government Code Ann. § 10-1305.

On Sunday, December 15, 2024, the principal of the Regional Institute for Children and Adolescents (RICA) sent an email to 79 RICA families containing personally identifiable information of students enrolled in RICA, which was intended for RICA staff only. The disclosed information included some student names, birth dates, contact information (parent emails addresses and phone numbers), and student IDs. The information disclosed also included some medical histories, psychological and educational assessment results, and class schedules. Upon realizing the error, the principal promptly disabled the links to the information. On December 18, 2024, MCPS requested that recipients permanently delete the email, along with any information downloaded from it. The process of following up with families to determine whether they have retained, shared, or further distributed this information is currently underway.

Please note, that no financial information or social security numbers were included in the information unintentionally disclosed. MCPS acknowledges that disclosing this information constitutes a breach requiring notification to all affected families. Accordingly, MCPS provided this notification on December 18, 2024. As a result of the information gathered to date, there is no law enforcement involvement at this time.

MCPS is committed to protecting student privacy. Following RICA principal's prompt action to disable the links containing information, MCPS took the following immediate steps to address the breach:

1. MCPS has requested all recipients to permanently delete the email, as well as any information. Additionally, MCPS is in the process of following up with those families to inquire whether they have retained, shared, or further distributed this information.

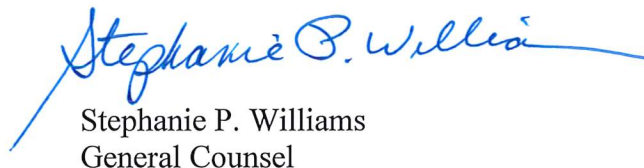
2. With this letter to the Office of the Attorney General, and the required notification to the RICA families, MCPS has reported the breach to state authorities as required by law.
3. While MCPS does not suspect or have reason to believe the action of the principal was anything other than a mistake, MCPS has begun a thorough internal investigation into the matter.

MCPS is also in the process of taking the following measures:

1. MCPS is conducting a detailed internal review of our information management practices, with a focus on RICA. This review will result in improved staff training and stricter protocols to safeguard student data.
2. On December 18, 2024, MCPS sent a letter to all impacted families:
 - a. Notifying them of the breach and expressing regret for the mistake;
 - b. Providing the appropriate MCPS unit contact information for families to call or email with questions, or to request support;
 - c. Providing the toll-free telephone numbers and addresses for the major consumer reporting agencies;
 - d. Providing the toll-free telephone numbers, addresses, and web site addresses for the Federal Trade Commission and the Office of the Attorney General – with a statement that an individual can obtain information from these sources about steps the individual can take to avoid identity theft; and
 - e. Providing families with the action steps MCPS will be taking in the immediate and near future, to protect against the likelihood of similar future breaches as well as reduce the risk of other types of data security breaches.

We will keep you informed if there are any significant developments or updates to the MCPS internal investigation. If you should require additional information, please do not hesitate to contact our office.

Sincerely,



Stephanie P. Williams
General Counsel

Enclosure

Copy to: Dr. Thomas Taylor
Mrs. Stephanie S. Sheron
Dr. Peggy Pugh
Mr. Moran