




Illinois State Board of Education

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Darren Reisberg
Chairman

Dr. Carmen I. Ayala
State Superintendent of Education

TO: The Honorable William E. Brady, Senate Minority Leader
The Honorable Jim Durkin, House Minority Leader
The Honorable Don Harmon, Senate President
The Honorable Michael J. Madigan, Speaker of the House

FROM: Dr. Carmen I. Ayala 
State Superintendent of Education

DATE: June 23, 2020

SUBJECT: Annual Security Breach Report for 2020

The Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) respectfully submits this report to the General Assembly in order to fulfill the requirements of 815 ILCS 530/25 which states that any State agency that has submitted a report regarding security breaches must submit an annual report listing all breaches of security of the system data or written materials and corrective measure that have been taken to prevent future breaches.

ISBE noted the following breach incidents in FY2020, which were properly reported at the time of the breach.

- On September 18, 2019, an Agency employee failed to follow adequate security protocols before performing a password reset resulting in one educator being allowed access to another educator's ELIS account information. The educator was able to view the other educator's first name, last name, Illinois Educator Identification Number (IEIN), birthdate, email address, mailing address and phone number. As soon as Agency management was made aware of the error, system logon passwords to both Educator's ELIS accounts were changed.

To limit exposure in the future, the employee involved was immediately retrained on proper security procedures that must be followed when resetting access to an educator's ELIS account. The department director conducted retraining on September 25, 2019 for the entire call center staff at ISBE.

- On September 23, 2019, an Agency employee was notified that approximately 30 accounts may have duplicate IEIN numbers where an educator could view information related to another educator's IEIN. The information was initially considered a security incident, as ISBE believed that the information accessible did not contain personal information. On Tuesday, September 24, 2019, ISBE management learned that 18 of the accounts identified contained personal information submitted by the educator (e.g. a college transcript containing a social security number) in the "images" section of the educator licensure file. The Agency was able to determine this information was not accessed by the educator with duplicate access; however, since there was an opportunity for access, ISBE considered this a breach of personal information.

ISBE implemented controls to identify the IEIN number duplications and correct the issue to ensure this error does not occur again.

- On November 13, 2019, the Agency determined that a file containing the social security number of 31 previous ISBE employees was sent to an ISBE contractor, Maximus. This error was immediately recognized and the person responsible called the vendor. At ISBE's direction, the two recipients of the email immediately deleted the email and also removed from their deleted file. While it does not appear that the information was viewed, the agency considers this a breach and is therefore reporting the incident.

To limit our exposure in the future, all ISBE employees were retrained on the Identity Protection Policy in January 2020. All new employees are trained as a part of their onboarding process.

- On June 2, 2020, the Agency determined in 2010 an educator's transcript (Educator A) was manually scanned into another educator's licensure file (Educator B) unintentionally. Due to the scanning error, Educator B was able to view the transcript containing the social security number of Educator A. Educator B viewed the transcript and notified ISBE of the error on June 2, 2020. ISBE staff immediately removed the transcript from the Educator B's licensure file. While the Agency is unsure if Educator B viewed Educator A's social security number, the Agency knows Educator B accessed the transcript with personal information. The agency considered this a breach and therefore reported the incident.

The error in question occurred in 2010, and since that time, ISBE's Educator Licensure department has updated its licensure system and scanning software. Staff will also receive additional training to reiterate the importance of accuracy and verification in their scanning processes.

As always, ISBE is committed to the security of data it maintains as well as the data collected on behalf of the agency.

cc: The Honorable JB Pritzker, Governor
Secretary of the Senate
Clerk of the House
Legislative Research Unit
State Government Report Center