

District of Columbia
Office of the State Superintendent of Education



Office of the State Superintendent

March 25, 2015

Dear students and families:

We are contacting you because on February 24, 2015, the District of Columbia Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) inadvertently released personally identifiable student data in response to a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request. The disclosed data includes student names, dates of birth, grade levels, gender, race, ethnicity, English Language Learner classification, non-public attendance, special education status, school of attendance, reason for suspension/expulsion, dates of suspension/expulsion, truancy status, removal to an alternative setting, and unique student identifiers. Social security numbers were not part of the data.

Once OSSE identified this situation on Monday, March 23, we immediately took the following steps to protect your child's data:

- Issued a Notice of Remediation to the FOIA requestor instructing them to cease and desist all use of the inadvertently disclosed data.
- Reported the issue to the Executive Office of the Mayor, and the U.S. Department of Education.
- Established a dedicated hotline, (202) 481-3400, and email address, osse.studentprivacy@dc.gov, to contact if you would like further information.
- Launched a thorough review of the agency's data response process to ensure there are no further incidents of this nature.

In addition, we will be working with the deputy mayor for education and other education agencies in the District as part of a task force that will engage data privacy experts to ensure that DC becomes a leader in protecting student data privacy.

Please know that I recognize the serious and troubling nature of this breach. I apologize for this situation, and want to assure you that improving our security procedures will be one of my top priorities in my first weeks and months as State Superintendent of Education.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this situation, or if you would like more information about the records concerning your student that were disclosed, you can contact our hotline at (202) 481-3400, or email us at osse.studentprivacy@dc.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Hanseul Kang", written over a large, stylized letter "S".

Hanseul Kang
State Superintendent of Education