



# LITTLE ROCK SCHOOL DISTRICT

BOARD OF EDUCATION

810 W. Markham Street - Little Rock, AR 72201 • [www.LRSD.org](http://www.LRSD.org)

Dr. Jermall Wright, Superintendent

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December 15, 2022

To LRSD Stakeholders,

I know all of you have a lot of questions about the recent data security incident experienced by LRSD, especially about how the District handled this event and the transparency of our actions. These are fair questions, and you deserve to hear directly from the District's leadership.

Let me begin by stating unequivocally that LRSD's goals were to resolve this incident quickly and with minimal impact to the students, teachers, and public. We have a number of crisis response plans for different situations, including for security incidents. In this case, we immediately implemented the plan which called for us to engage cyber firms and legal teams with expertise in these situations. We felt confident in our outside experts' ability to support LRSD in resolving the issue and achieving our goals.

Under the advice of these advisors, we were told to minimize the public messaging regarding the incident, as it could cause drastic and harmful actions by the Threat Actors (TAs). LRSD specifically asked about Freedom of Information Act requirements and was advised by inside and outside counsel that the FOIA specifically carved out exceptions for certain documents to this law for ransomware types of attacks:

The FOIA exempts from disclosure "[r]ecords containing measures, procedures, instructions, or related data used to cause a computer or a computer system or network, including telecommunication networks or applications thereon, to perform security functions, including, but not limited to, passwords, personal identification numbers, transaction authorization mechanisms, and other means of preventing access to computers, computer systems or networks, or any data residing therein (ACA25-19-105(b)(11));

ACA 6-15-1304 notes that "records or other information upon disclosure could reasonably be expected to be detrimental to the public safety, including *without limitation* records or other information concerning emergency or security plans, school safety plans, risk assessments, studies, measures, or concerning *systems*" are exempt from disclosure [emphasis added].

These FOIA exemptions did not provide a clear path to permit us to meet in private. During our meeting on November 21, the Board specifically addressed data emergency and security plans, as well as the security of our IT systems. Besides potentially causing the perpetrators to act irrationally, (which could include releasing and/or selling personal data of stakeholders and negatively impacting the negotiation process), these discussions could have also provided valuable information for others to attack our systems. Because of these risks, we felt it was imperative to hold this meeting in private. We will be seeking an opinion from the Attorney General and exploring options to ensure we are not faced with only two bad choices (i.e., putting our district at risk or not adhering to the state's public meeting laws) should we face a similar situation in the future.

LRSD is committed to providing transparency in our governance, but in this unprecedented case that transparency would have created significant risks for students, teachers, or the general public. I am keenly aware that the private meeting held on November 21st eroded public trust. Based on all the guidance we were given from a number of experts in this field, we were as transparent as we could be without incurring additional risks. And moving forward,

as we complete our investigation into what occurred in this incident and make sure our systems and networks are as secure as they can be, we will provide information to you about what happened, what we did, and what we are doing. But just as we could not share every detail in the past, we cannot share everything about our activities without potentially putting students, parents, teachers, and the LRSD IT system at risk.

As of today, we can report that a final agreement has been executed. We cannot share the details of this agreement, but we are in the process of retrieving the data that was taken from our system. Once we have confirmation that this process is complete, we will contact every individual whose data may have been compromised and will provide credit monitoring/identity theft services to these individuals. As a precautionary measure, we will also provide these same services to every current LRSD employee. LRSD employees will be receiving information by U.S. mail in the coming days to subscribe to credit and identity theft monitoring services.

As was reported to our staff earlier this week, LRSD has been reconnected to eSchool and eFinance after addressing the most serious issues. Although eSchool and eFinance systems were never compromised in the data security incident, the state disconnected us to keep these systems protected and uncompromised while we worked to secure our network. We have a six-month plan to continue running a series of tests and improving vulnerabilities in our network so the next several months will continue to be critical for LRSD.

I can assure you that LRSD has released all of the major facts it currently can. But there will always be some facts that we cannot share with the public because the release of those facts could jeopardize or impair the security, confidence, and integrity of our school district, its parents, students, employees, administration, and the school's IT systems and networks.

I can commit to providing additional information about this event when the release of this information does not pose additional risks. LRSD will continue to work with you and our entire community to build a strong and protective educational environment. Thank you for your patience and understanding.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Greg Adams". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent "G" and "A".

Greg Adams  
Little Rock School District Board President