

Department of Education & Early Development

Office of the Commissioner

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February 25, 2011

To Families of Alaska Public School Students:

Alaska law requires government agencies that collect personal information to notify you if your information is lost or stolen. The Department of Education & Early Development collects and maintains a variety of personal information pertaining to Alaska's public school students.

The department experienced a recent theft of electronic equipment. This theft has unfortunately resulted in the release of some of your personal information to an unauthorized third party. The information taken includes your name, date of birth, and student identification number. Other information contained in the file includes school district affiliation, school affiliation, gender, race/ethnicity, disability status, grade level, test scores and enrollment information. A full list of data elements can be provided upon request.

The stolen electronic equipment contained information about:

- 12,099 students in grades 10-12, in all 54 districts, who participated in the state High School Graduation Qualifying Examination in April 2010;
- 76,868 students in grades 3-10, in all 54 districts, who participated in the state Standards Based Assessments in April 2010;
- 279 students with disabilities from the Northwest Arctic School District in the school year 2006-2007;
- 269 students with disabilities from the Fairbanks North Star Borough School District in the school year 2006-2007;
- 4 students with disabilities from the Delta/Greely School District in the school year 2002-2003.

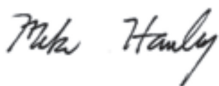
The electronic information is not stored in an easily recognizable universal format and therefore accessing the individual information would be problematic for anyone trying to utilize the data. Also, many of the element names are in abbreviated form and do not fully describe the information contained within.

We believe that it is highly unlikely that this information will be used in an inappropriate way. Your Social Security number, the key piece of personal information required for identity theft, was not disclosed. However, the records compromised did contain your district student identification number and the Alaska Student Identification Number. The department does not believe that unauthorized access to a student's identification number creates any real risk of identity theft or future unauthorized access to your personal information. However, if you would like to have your Alaska Student Identification Number reassigned, the department will gladly do so.

I apologize on behalf of the Department of Education & Early Development for this breach of security. We have taken steps to ensure that this situation is avoided in the future. We take the protection of your personal information seriously, and are constantly working on procedures and protocols to ensure your information is protected against unauthorized access.

If you have any questions or would like to request reassignment of a student identification number, please contact the department at (907) 465-8727.

Sincerely,



Mike Hanley
Commissioner