

October 13, 2021

Dear Missouri Educators:

On October 12, 2021, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) was made aware that the personally identifiable information (PII) of a few Missouri educators, which was located within the educator certification data available on DESE's website, was potentially compromised. Through a multi-step process, an individual took the records of at least three educators, unencrypted the source code from the webpage, and viewed the social security number (SSN) of those specific educators.

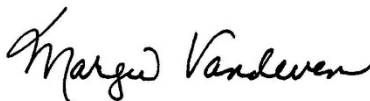
Upon verification of the threat, DESE immediately notified Missouri's Office of Administration Information Technology Services Division (OA-ITSD), and the educator certification search tool was disabled immediately by OA-ITSD. These records were only accessible on an individual basis, and there was no option to decode SSNs for all educators in the system all at once. The state is unaware of any misuse of individual information or even whether information was accessed inappropriately outside of this isolated incident.

The situation is in the early stages of investigation. We are providing notice to you so that you may be aware of what occurred. The state will make a formal announcement detailing this incident later today.

For those educators determined to be impacted by this vulnerability, the state will make every effort to contact you directly as soon as possible to share information about the next steps. In the meantime, please remain vigilant by reviewing account statements and monitoring free credit reports, like those available at AnnualCreditReport.com.

Educators and other stakeholders can visit dese.mo.gov/data-incident to stay informed about this situation and the ongoing investigation.

Sincerely,



Margie Vandeven
Commissioner of Education