

For Immediate Release

Federal Bureau of Investigation releases Public Service Announcement recommending engagement with consortiums providing support & resources to safeguard student information

Washington, DC, 13 September, 2018--- Today, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) takes a leadership position in the area of student privacy in its Public Service Announcement (PSA) entitled **Education Technologies: Data Collection And Unsecured Systems Could Pose Risks To Students**. This guidance document outlines cybersecurity issues as *‘the US school systems’ rapid growth of education technologies (EdTech) and widespread collection of student data, could have privacy and safety implications if compromised or exploited’*. It provides a series of recommendations based on their research which included engaging A4L’s Student Data Privacy Consortium (SDPC) leadership.

The major FBI recommendation is *“For districts seeking assistance, there are numerous online resources, consortiums, and organizations available that can provide support on data protection matters and cybersecurity best practices.”*

With half of the country with statewide Alliances, the Student Data Privacy Consortium (SDPC) is an unique collaborative of schools, districts, regional, territories and state agencies, policy makers, trade organizations and marketplace providers addressing real-world, adaptable, and implementable solutions to growing data privacy concerns. The Consortium also leverages work done by numerous partner organizations but focuses on issues being faced by “on-the-ground” practitioners. Some of the FBI recommendations – which the SDPC are directly addressing – include schools, parents and families to;

- Research existing student and child privacy protections of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), the Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA), the Children’s Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA), and state laws as they apply to EdTech services.
- Discuss with their local districts about what and how EdTech technologies and programs are used in their schools including the types of data that are collected including, but are not limited to:
 - personally identifiable information (PII);
 - biometric data;
 - academic progress;
 - behavioral, disciplinary, and medical information;
 - Web browsing history;
 - students’ geolocation;
 - IP addresses used by students; and
 - classroom activities.
- Conduct research on parent coalition and information-sharing organizations which are available online for those looking for support and additional resources.
- Research school-related cyber breaches which can further inform families of student data vulnerabilities.

For more information on the SDPC, please go to <https://privacy.A4L.org>

###

About the Student Data Privacy Consortium (SDPC)

The Student Data Privacy Consortium (SDPC) is a Special Interest Group (SIG) of the Access 4 Learning (A4L) Community. The SDPC is designed to address the day-to-day, real-world multi-faceted issues that schools, states, territories and vendors face when protecting learner information. SDPC's vision is to develop common activities, artifacts, templates, tools and effective practices that can be leveraged through a unique collaborative of end users and marketplace providers working together. For more information, please go to: <https://privacy.A4L.org>

About the Access 4 Learning Community

There is no other global community made up of educational policymakers, marketplace product and service providers and the customers they serve, collaborating daily to address real word learning information and resource issues. The Access 4 Learning (A4L) Community, previously the SIF Association, is a unique, non-profit collaboration collectively addressing all aspects of learning information management and access to support learning. The A4L Community is "Powered by SIF" Specifications as its major technical tool to allow for this management and access simply, securely and in a scalable, standard way regardless of the platform hosting those applications. The Access 4 Learning Community has united these education technology end users and providers in an unprecedented effort to give teachers more time to do what they do best: teach. For further information, visit <https://www.A4L.org>