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Mark R. Garrett, Superintendent

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Parents and Staff,

On Tuesday, January 7, 2025, PowerSchool alerted Henderson County Public Schools and the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) to a cybersecurity incident impacting student and teacher data across their global client base. This incident was not isolated to North Carolina. PowerSchool is a student information system (SIS) that has been in use in North Carolina since 2013. Henderson County Public Schools is required to use PowerSchool as its SIS, so the information of many Henderson County Public Schools students and staff is maintained by PowerSchool.

On December 28, 2024, PowerSchool became aware of a cybersecurity incident that began on December 19, 2024, involving unauthorized access to student and teacher data. The data breach occurred when the credentials of a PowerSchool contract employee were compromised. PowerSchool has shared that the threat has been contained and that the compromised data was not shared and has been destroyed. PowerSchool is working with law enforcement to monitor the dark web for any data exposure.

PowerSchool has indicated that it is not experiencing any operational disruptions and continues to provide services. Protecting student and educator data is a top priority for our school system, and we are taking this matter very seriously. We regularly test the integrity of our network and conduct employee training to ensure our data remains secure. With that said, it is important to stress that Henderson County Public Schools was not responsible for this breach.

In the coming days, impacted students and staff should receive direct notification from PowerSchool concerning whether their data was involved in the security breach, and what means are being provided to protect against potential identity theft. NCDPI and Henderson County Public Schools are committed to protecting our students and staff, and we are actively advocating for each of them as we navigate this situation with PowerSchool.

Thank you for your support.