



OFFICE OF THE
INFORMATION &
PRIVACY COMMISSIONER
for British Columbia
Protecting privacy. Promoting transparency.

June 24, 2014

The following letter was sent to the BC School Superintendents Association, the BC School Trustees Association and the BC Teachers Federation

Disclosure of student personal information to BCTF representatives—OIPC File No. F14-58129

I am writing in regards to the June 20, 2014 amendment to an Essential Services Order of the Labour Relations Board. The amendment provides for the disclosure of class lists and student grades by school district administrators to local BCTF representatives for the purpose of enabling teachers to confirm or vary final grades.

In light of recent breaches of student personal information it is important that School Districts, the BCTF, and teachers understand their obligations under the *Freedom of Information and Protection Privacy Act* (“FIPPA”) to take reasonable security measures to protect personal information in their custody; in this instance the sensitive personal information of grade 10 and 11 students.

Student personal information must be securely transported and stored while in the custody of School Districts, BCTF representatives and teachers, and should not be left unattended during transit. If this personal information is to be distributed via portable storage media, such as a portable hard drive or USB flash drive, FIPPA requires that the information be encrypted.

This student personal information is only authorized to be disclosed to the minimum number of individuals necessary to meet the requirements of the Essential Services Order, and both School Districts and the BCTF should have a plan in place ensure that distribution of the information to classroom teachers is undertaken in a secure manner.

My office is available to assist all parties in this process as needed. Please contact me if you have any further questions on this matter.

Sincerely,

ORIGINAL SIGNED BY

Elizabeth Denham
Information and Privacy Commissioner
for British Columbia

pc: Rob Wood, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Education