

UNITED STATES JUDICIAL PANEL ON MULTIDISTRICT LITIGATION

In re: PowerSchool Holdings, Inc., and PowerSchool Group, LLC
Customer Data Security Breach Litigation

In re PowerSchool · No. MDL No. 3149 · Decided April 18, 2025

SUMMARY

The Judicial Panel on Multidistrict Litigation orders the centralization of litigation arising from the PowerSchool customer data security breach. The Panel transfers the listed actions to the Southern District of California and assigns them to Judge Roger T. Benitez for coordinated or consolidated pretrial proceedings under 28 U.S.C. § 1407.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States Judicial Panel on Multidistrict Litigation
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Karen K. Caldwell; Nathaniel M. Gorton; Matthew F. Kennelly; David C. Norton; Dale A. Kimball; Madeline Cox Arleo
JURISDICTION	United States Judicial Panel on Multidistrict Litigation
DECIDED	April 18, 2025
DOCKET	MDL No. 3149
DISPOSITION	other
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Plaintiffs in an action pending in the Western District of Missouri moved under 28 U.S.C. § 1407 to centralize 32 related actions involving the PowerSchool data-security breach for coordinated or consolidated pretrial proceedings.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	The Panel determined whether the actions involved common questions of fact and whether centralization would serve the convenience of the parties and witnesses and promote the just and efficient conduct of the litigation under 28 U.S.C. § 1407.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	unknown

TOPICS

- civil procedure
- class actions
- consumer protection
- commercial litigation

PRACTICE AREAS

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether the related data-breach actions involve common questions of fact warranting centralization under 28 U.S.C. § 1407.
2. Whether centralization in the Southern District of California would serve the convenience of the parties and witnesses and promote the just and efficient conduct of the litigation.
3. Whether informal coordination or transfer under 28 U.S.C. § 1404 would be a more efficient alternative to multidistrict centralization.

HOLDINGS

1. The actions involved common questions of fact concerning the PowerSchool cybersecurity incident, its security practices, and its breach notifications, making centralization appropriate.
2. Informal coordination was not the most efficient method for resolving the litigation because the parties had not provided comparable assurance that potential § 1404 transfers would be uncontested.
3. The Southern District of California was an appropriate transferee district for coordinated or consolidated pretrial proceedings.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“On the basis of the papers filed and the hearing session held, we find that the actions listed on Schedule A involve common questions of fact, and that centralization in the Southern District of California will serve the convenience of the parties and witnesses and promote the just and efficient conduct of this litigation.” (at 1)

“We are not persuaded that informal coordination is the most efficient route to resolving this litigation.” (at 2)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

The actions arise from unauthorized access to PowerSchool's Student Information System, which schools use to store personal information of current and former students and staff. Plaintiffs, including students, guardians, and school staff, seek certification of overlapping nationwide and statewide classes and assert materially identical claims for negligence, breach of contract, and unjust enrichment. Discovery will concern how and when the breach occurred, the adequacy of PowerSchool's data-security practices, and the timing and adequacy of breach notifications.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

The Panel considered 32 actions pending in three districts and was informed of 23 related actions pending in eight additional districts. After reviewing the filed papers and conducting a hearing session, the Panel granted centralization and transferred the actions listed on Schedule A to the Southern District of California, with that court's consent, for assignment to Judge Roger T. Benitez.

DISPOSITION

other

REMAND INSTRUCTIONS

The actions listed on Schedule A were transferred to the Southern District of California and, with that court's consent, assigned to Judge Roger T. Benitez for coordinated or consolidated pretrial proceedings.

CASES CITED

- In re StockX Customer Data Sec. Breach Litig., 412 F. Supp. 3d 1363 (J.P.M.L. 2019)
- In re [24]7.AI, Inc., Customer Data Sec. Breach Litig., 338 F. Supp. 3d 1345 (J.P.M.L. 2018)
- In re Hudson's Bay Co. Customer Data Sec. Breach Litig., 326 F. Supp. 3d 1372 (J.P.M.L. 2018)
- In re Best Buy Co., Cal. Song-Beverly Credit Card Act Litig., 804 F. Supp. 2d 1376 (J.P.M.L. 2011)

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