

UNITED STATES JUDICIAL PANEL ON MULTIDISTRICT LITIGATION

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

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

SUMMARY

The Judicial Panel on Multidistrict Litigation orders the centralization of actions arising from the PowerSchool customer data security breach. The Panel transfers the actions listed on Schedule A to the Southern District of California and assigns them to Judge Roger T. Benitez for coordinated or consolidated pretrial proceedings. The order identifies common factual and legal issues, including data-security practices, breach notification, negligence, breach of contract, and unjust enrichment.

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 a Western District of Missouri action moved under 28 U.S.C. § 1407 to centralize 32 related actions concerning a cybersecurity incident. The Panel considered the motion, the parties' positions on the appropriate transferee district, and the papers and hearing session before ordering centralization.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	nonprecedential

TOPICS

- class actions
- civil procedure
- discovery dispute

PRACTICE AREAS

- civil procedure
- consumer protection
- torts
- contracts
- multidistrict litigation

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether the related 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 was a more efficient alternative to multidistrict centralization.

HOLDINGS

1. The actions listed on Schedule A involve common questions of fact and should be centralized for coordinated or consolidated pretrial proceedings.
2. The Southern District of California is an appropriate transferee district for the centralized litigation.
3. Informal coordination was not shown to be the most efficient method for resolving the litigation, so it did not preclude centralization.

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 2)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

The actions arise from an alleged cybersecurity incident involving unauthorized access to PowerSchool's Student Information System, which schools use to store personal information concerning students, former students, and staff. Plaintiffs seek overlapping nationwide and statewide class actions and assert virtually identical claims for negligence, breach of contract, and unjust enrichment. The cases involve common discovery concerning how and when the breach occurred, the adequacy of PowerSchool's data-security practices, and the timing and manner of notice to affected individuals.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

The litigation consisted of 32 actions pending in three federal districts, with 23 additional related actions identified as potential tag-along actions. The Panel granted centralization and transferred the actions listed on Schedule A to the Southern District of California for coordinated or consolidated pretrial proceedings, assigning them with that court's consent to Judge Roger T. Benitez.

DISPOSITION

other

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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