

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 centralization of 32 actions involving the PowerSchool customer data security breach, along with related actions, in the Southern District of California. The Panel finds common factual questions concerning the breach, data security practices, and notification procedures, and assigns coordinated or consolidated pretrial proceedings to Judge Roger T. Benitez.

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; 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 moved under 28 U.S.C. § 1407 to centralize 32 related actions pending in three federal districts, along with related actions identified by the parties, for coordinated or consolidated pretrial proceedings.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	Under 28 U.S.C. § 1407, centralization is appropriate when actions pending in different federal districts involve one or more common questions of fact and transfer will promote the convenience of parties and witnesses and the just and efficient conduct of the litigation.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	Transfer order under 28 U.S.C. § 1407; limited to multidistrict-litigation centralization and transferee-district selection.
PARTIES	Plaintiffs in the Western District of Missouri J.J. action listed on Schedule A v. PowerSchool Holdings, Inc., PowerSchool Group LLC

TOPICS

class actions civil procedure consumer protection negligence breach of contract

PRACTICE AREAS

civil procedure multidistrict litigation data privacy consumer protection

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether the related actions involve common questions of fact warranting centralization under 28 U.S.C. § 1407.
2. Whether centralization would serve the convenience of the parties and witnesses and promote the just and efficient conduct of the litigation.
3. Which federal district should serve as the transferee district for coordinated or consolidated pretrial proceedings.

HOLDINGS

1. The actions involve common questions of fact because they arise from the same PowerSchool cybersecurity incident and present overlapping factual issues concerning how and when the breach occurred, the adequacy of PowerSchool's data-security practices, and notification of breach victims.
2. The Southern District of California was an appropriate transferee district because a potential tag-along action and related state-court litigation were pending there, and the district offered efficient coordination of the proceedings under the supervision of an experienced multidistrict-litigation judge.

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)

“IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED that actions listed on Schedule A are transferred to the Southern District of California and, with the consent of that court, assigned to the Honorable Roger T. Benitez for coordinated or consolidated pretrial proceedings.” (at 3)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

The actions arise from a cybersecurity incident involving unauthorized access to PowerSchool's Student Information System, which schools use to store personal information of current and former students and staff. Plaintiffs include students, students' guardians, and school staff seeking overlapping nationwide and statewide class actions. The cases assert virtually identical claims involving negligence, breach of contract, and unjust enrichment, and discovery will address the breach, PowerSchool's data-security practices, and notification of affected individuals.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

The Panel considered the centralization motion, the parties' written submissions, and a hearing session. It determined that the actions involved common questions of fact and ordered the actions listed on Schedule A transferred to the Southern District of California, with that court's consent, for coordinated or consolidated pretrial proceedings before Judge Roger T. Benitez.

DISPOSITION

other

REMAND INSTRUCTIONS

The actions listed on Schedule A are transferred to the Southern District of California and, with that court's consent, assigned to the Honorable 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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