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No Student Data Exposed in State Vendor's Suspected Data Breach

NASHVILLE, Tenn. – *August 30, 2019* – The Tennessee Higher Education Commission (THEC) announced today that no student information was compromised when unauthorized server access occurred on a state vendor's system last month.

"Immediately after determining a possible breach had occurred, our agency, working with the website vendor and the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation (TBI), launched an inquiry focused on ensuring the privacy of Tennessee students," said THEC Executive Director Mike Krause. "We are, of course, relieved that the inquiry indicated no student data was taken, and want to thank the TBI, the Attorney General and the state's Strategic Technology Solutions team for their assistance throughout this process."

On July 17, Graduation Alliance, the state vendor that provides data and web-hosting support for CollegeforTN.org, notified THEC that unauthorized access may have happened due to unusual server traffic. The data housed on the impacted servers contained some Tennessee student information, but did not include any Social Security numbers, financial, driver's license, or health information.

After receiving notification from the vendor, THEC began a collaborative investigation in concert with all state agency stakeholders and the vendor.

Upon completion of the forensic investigation, conclusive results indicate that no student information was exposed and that a technical breach of the data did not occur.

Students may resume use of the CollegeforTN.org website for college and career planning in September. THEC has established a toll-free number that students and parents may call 800-342-1663 for additional information.

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About the Tennessee Higher Education Commission

The Tennessee Higher Education Commission was created in 1967 by the Tennessee General Assembly. The Commission develops, implements, and evaluates postsecondary education policies and programs in Tennessee while coordinating the state's systems of higher education, and is relentlessly focused on increasing the number of Tennesseans with a postsecondary credential.