IPC requests feedback on draft Digital Privacy Charter for Ontario Schools

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Ontario schools are increasingly using technology to facilitate teaching, student learning, and record-keeping. Accordingly, the Information and Privacy Commissioner of Ontario (IPC) has developed a draft Digital Privacy Charter for Ontario Schools (Digital Charter) that the IPC says codifies current and emerging best privacy practices in the digital landscape. The IPC requests school boards and other interested parties to provide feedback on the Digital Charter through a survey, and to forward any questions to its office.

The Digital Charter sets out 12 key commitments that can be voluntarily adopted by school boards, including one to "[Inform] students, parents, and guardians of significant privacy breaches in a timely way and [to respond] promptly to help mitigate any negative impacts." The goal of the commitments is to ensure that students' personal information is protected, empower students to understand and exercise their privacy and access rights, and encourage ongoing learning and awareness about privacy. The commitments are informed by the requirements for school boards under the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*.

The IPC will encourage school boards to adopt the Digital Charter, as doing so "will demonstrate a strong, province-wide promise to protect our students' digital privacy, support accountability and transparency, and strengthen trust in Ontario's schools". The IPC is also soliciting school board officials who are interested in adopting the Digital Charter early.

Reach out to our Cybersecurity, Privacy & Data Protection and Education groups regarding any questions, and to discuss how adopting the Digital Charter may affect your institution.

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