Cyberattack takes down LA Unified operations. Schools will open on Tuesday

September 6 2022, by Howard Blume

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A cyberattack brought down the computer systems of the Los Angeles Unified School District over the weekend, but officials said late Monday night that schools would open as scheduled Tuesday morning.

The attack took the district's website offline, eliminated access to email

and reportedly affected systems that teachers use to post lessons and take attendance.

"Since the identification of the incident, which is likely criminal in nature, we continue to assess the situation with law enforcement agencies," the district stated in a release. "While the investigation continues, Los Angeles Unified has swiftly implemented a response protocol to mitigate districtwide disruptions, including access to email, computer systems and applications."

Officials said they are working around the clock to solve the problem before Tuesday morning, when school resumes after the Labor Day holiday.

"Business operations may be delayed or modified," the district stated. However, "based on a preliminary analysis of critical business systems, employee healthcare and payroll are not impacted. Nor has the cyber incident impacted safety and emergency mechanisms in place at schools."

Federal officials are helping the district investigate and respond.

"The White House brought together the Department of Education, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and the Department of Homeland Security's Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) to provide rapid, incident response support to Los Angeles Unified, building on the immediate support by local law enforcement agencies," the district announcement said.

Until late Monday night, no information from the district indicated what was causing the problems. By that time, teachers, parents and students were posting all over social media about technical issues.

In recent times, hackers have targeted businesses and public agencies, including schools—seeking ransom or simply to cause mayhem. A notable local attack targeted the Newhall school system in 2020.

The nation's second-largest [school](#) system has had a few major internal computer fails—especially related to intended upgrades. In one instance, the payroll system malfunctioned, resulting in underpayments and overpayments that took years to resolve. In another episode, a new student information system made students' academic records and class schedules unavailable.

Before the nature of the attack was made clear, a post on the local Parents Supporting Teachers Facebook page suggested making the best of the situation:

"LAUSD staff who thought they'd get some work done today are forced to relax due to a districtwide outage. Enjoy it!"

Parents and teachers reported a variety of problems on social media.

"Apparently everyone I've talked to/texted with says when they try to log on they are being instructed to change their Google password, saying it's outdated… then when they do, it locks them out," one person reported.

A teacher posted: "Everything that requires an lausd log-[in] is down for the count!!"

Other staff members also reported, referring to the Schoology system that is integral to posting and receiving assignments:

"My computer was logged into both schoology and my drive (before outage) and I have access. I can't get into other sites and I'm not logging out for fear of being locked out."

Another teacher had been planning to catch up on Monday: "Confession... I didn't finish my lesson plans. The only good thing is that I have my Teacher guides downloaded, and all my slides."

Said another: "EVERYTHING is on Google Drive. This is very frustrating. Praying my drive is restored!"

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