Ontario

Ministry of Public and Business Service Delivery and Procurement
Strategy, Artificial Intelligence, Data
Artificial Intelligence Division

Implementation Guidance for School Boards

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Update on June 9, 2026:

Expectations for timing of implementation: The regulation comes into effect on July 1, 2026 and establishes a new requirement for school boards.

Boards are expected to establish a process and send out notices for classes in the 2026-27 school year, when operationally feasible.

The process should be fully implemented with notices distributed at the commencement of each class/semester in accordance with the regulation as of the 2027-28 school year, and each subsequent year.

Other updates to the guidance include:

- Clarification that the provided notice templates are samples for school boards to reference as they create a notice format that works for their own circumstance.

An added section that provides a summary of the amendment addressing cyber security risk related to records prepared or collected under the *Enhancing Digital Security and Trust Act, 2024* (EDSTA).

Purpose

This guidance is released to help school boards comply with regulation **O. Reg 52/26** under the Enhancing Digital Security and Trust Act, 2024 (EDSTA). This regulation will be in effect as of July 1, 2026.

Audience

This guidance applies to **all school boards in Ontario**.

New notice requirements under EDSTA for school boards

Under the new regulation, the school board must provide a plain language notice to parents/caregivers or the student (depending on their age), if a child or youth's personal digital information is shared with a third-party software application used by the school board.

This requirement applies if the software is **either**:

- used to carry out duties under the *Education Act*; or
- purchased or procured by school board for use by teachers/students/administrative staff.

This Notice is intended to increase transparency on what tools children and youth are using in the classroom, and what personal information those tools are collecting.

New notice requirements do not impact a school board's ability to decide appropriate third-party applications for student use, or require school boards to provide parents/caregivers the option to opt their child/student out of using third-party applications.

Notices can be bundled together for multiple software applications. For example, if a teacher uses Google Slides, Google Docs and Google Maps, a single notice can be issued, disclosing which applications are using which information.

Notice Requirements

Notice to **parents/caregivers** must include:

- the specific personal information that will be shared with a third-party owner or operator of a software application;
- the legal authority boards have to be able to share this information [through the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (MFIPPA)* and the *Education Act*];
- why the information needs to be shared;
- name of the software application and the third-party owner or operator;

- contact information of a person who can answer questions, including:
  - title;
  - email;
  - business address;
  - business phone number;
- and a statement explaining the rights of the student and parent/caregiver if they believe the data was improperly collected, used, retained or disclosed.

If a student leaves the school during the school year, parents/caregivers can request from school boards a notice of the information that was shared while the student was enrolled in that same school year.

- To see an example of a plain language notice template for students under 16.

The notice for students aged 16-17 will include the same information but will be directly sent to them instead of the parents/caregivers.

- To see an example of plain language notice templates for students aged 16-17.

When to send a notice

In all cases, a notice should be sent as soon as operationally feasible at the commencement of each school session and/or class when a school board knows that software will be used, this includes during:

- **Regular (day school) programming**: in the current or upcoming academic year (September to June).
- **Continuing education**: including before and after school programs
- **Summer school**: during the summer school period (June-August).

How to send a notice

All notices must be shared in writing in an electronic or physical format, such as:

- email
- mail
- school board website
- a parent portal

This can be sent with other notices such as media release forms or field trip permission slips.

Where to look to understand what personal information a software application will collect

Details about what personal information a software application will require for use, can be found by consulting several resources, including:

- Software application contracts
- Terms of Service for an Application or Software
- Cyber Security Ontario: K-12 Zone | Cyber Security Ontario
- Educational Computing Network of Ontario (ECNO) Vetting of Application Security & Privacy (VASP) service
- Online privacy policies
- Communicating with the software vendors

Know what “personal digital information” includes

The regulation under EDSTA uses the same definition of personal information found under the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*.

This could include, but is not limited to, any the following for an identifiable student:

- Name
- Date of birth

- Age
- Photograph of the student
- Sex
- Sexual oritentation
- Race
- Ethnic origin
- Skin colour
- Religion
- A student's personal beliefs

Health information

- Fingerprints
- Blood type
- Mental and/or Physical Health

School or work information

- Name of school
- Location of school
- Criminal record
- Financial status
- Previous employment

Personal identifiers, when combined with other personal information

- Any number, code or symbol that is only just for one student (for example, a student number) Information that apps or websites collect about a student
- Any information in a computer system (for example, attendance records)
- Academic work or academic information (for example, grades, having an Individual Education Plan)

Contact and location details

- Home address
- Phone number
- Email address

Communication

- Any private information sent or received (for example, emails or text messages)
- What other people think or say about a student
- Photos or videos for any school purpose

Send notice on behalf of subcontractors

School boards must provide notice whenever a student under 18’s personal information is being disclosed to third-party operators. For example, a student transportation service is a consortium serving 3 school boards. The consortium hires a transportation company to plan bus routes and transport students. The transportation company uses Google Sheets to gather and organize student data to plan routes. In this scenario, all 3 school boards must provide notice to parents/ caregivers and/or students including details of all third-party operators involved in the process.

General tips

To complement new notice requirements, school boards should consider the following:

- Formalizing a standard policy and approach to respond to parent/caregiver concerns when it comes to the use of third-party software applications, including considering responses to request to opt-out of use.

- Creating a process to clearly communicate new notice requirements to schools and educators, including clear expectations for them when it comes to compliance. For example, if a teacher introduces a new software application, they must inform the school board so it is aware and can provide the required notice.

Consider additional languages and accessibility needs

School boards should have a process in place to consider sending notices in languages other than English and French that are commonly used by families, as well as other accessible formats as requested.

Use a plain language template

Notice should be in plain language, so it is easy for parents/caregivers and students to understand. For more information about plain language, please refer to the Ontario Style Guide.

Plain language notice sample for students under 16

Dear Parents/ Caregivers,

Digital technologies in educational settings can offer multiple benefits. They can be used to help enable personalized, flexible learning, expand access to resources, boost engagement, support collaboration and inclusivity, and help prepare students for a digital future.

As part of ongoing work to promote and provide enhanced data and privacy protections for children and youth in schools, the Government of Ontario has recently put in place a new regulation under the *Enhancing Digital Security and Trust Act, 2024*, requiring school boards to provide notice to a parent or caregiver anytime their student's personal information is shared with a third-party software application.

This notice is intended to increase transparency on what tools children and youth are using in the classroom, and what personal information those tools are collecting.

This notice will list the third-party applications used in school, explain what personal digital information about **[student's name]** will be shared with each one, and tell you why this information is being shared. Here are the third-party applications that will be used:

- **[Application(s) name]**, provided by **[Company Name]**
  - Sharing **[information types]** for the following purpose: **[for example, what the software is being used for and/or why the information is needed]**
- **[Application(s) name]**, provided by **[Company Name]**
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- **[Application(s) name]**, provided by **[Company Name]**
  - Sharing **[information types]** for the following purpose: **[for example, what the software is being used for and/or why the information is needed]**

The school board has the legal authority to disclosure personal digital information to these applications under the:

- *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (MFIPPA)
- *Education Act*

Also under MFIPPA, you have the right as a parent/caregiver to:

- Request a copy of the personal information used by the company.
- Request corrections to personal information.
- Make a report to the Information and Privacy Commissioner of Ontario (IPC) if you think personal information has been misused.

If you have questions about any of the above, please reach out to us at:

- **[Title of authorized individual]**
- **[Email address]**
- **[Phone number]**
- **[Business address]**

Sincerely,

[school board]

[date]

Plain language notice sample for students aged 16-17

Dear **[student name]**,

Digital technologies in educational settings can offer multiple benefits. They can be used to help enable personalized, flexible learning, expand access to resources, boost engagement, support collaboration and inclusivity, and help prepare students for a digital future.

As part of ongoing work to promote and provide enhanced data and privacy protections for children and youth in schools, the Government of Ontario has recently put in place a new regulation under the *Enhancing Digital Security and Trust Act, 2024*, requiring school boards to provide notice when student personal information is shared with a third-party software application.

This notice is intended to increase transparency on what tools children and youth are using in the classroom, and what personal information those tools are collecting.

This notice will list the third-party applications that will be used in school, explain what personal information about you will be shared with each one, and tell you why this information is being shared. Here are the third-party applications that will be used:

- **[Application(s) name]**, provided by **[Company Name]**
  - Sharing **[information types]** for the following purpose: **[for example, what the software is being used for and/or why the information is needed]**
- **[Application(s) name]**, provided by **[Company Name]**
  - Sharing **[information types]** for the following purpose: **[for example, what the software is being used for and/or why the information is needed]**
- **[Application(s) name]**, provided by **[Company Name]**
  - Sharing **[information types]** for the following purpose: **[for example, what the software is being used for and/or why the information is needed]**

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If you have questions about any of the above, please reach out to us at:

- **[Title of authorized individual]**
- **[Email address]**
- **[Phone number]**
- **[Business address]**

Sincerely,

[school board]

[date]

Protection of Records Prepared or Collected under EDSTA

On April 24, 2026 (Royal Assent), amendments were made to the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (FIPPA) and the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (MFIPPA) that change Ontario's privacy and access to information frameworks.

This section provides a summary of the amendment addressing cyber security risk related to records prepared or collected under the *Enhancing Digital Security and Trust Act*, 2024 (EDSTA).

What has changed

Amendments to FIPPA and MFIPPA have been made to ensure that these Acts do not apply to specified categories of records prepared or collected under the EDSTA. Where the Acts do not apply to a record, the responsive record is excluded from the application of FIPPA or MFIPPA, and is therefore not subject to a right of access under those Acts. This change comes into force July 1, 2026.

Considerations when determining whether a record falls under this exclusion:

Is the responsive record prepared or collected under the EDSTA?

- **If no**, the exclusion does not apply.
- **If the responsive record was prepared or collected under the EDSTA**, does the record contain any of the following information?
    - the names of cyber security points of contact and/or alternates
    - a public sector entity's cyber security maturity assessment (or a summary of assessments)
    - the names of software applications used by school boards (purchased or otherwise acquired that are owned or operated by third parties) that are authorized to access a student's personal information
    - other information the disclosure of which could reasonably be expected to compromise cyber security for a public sector entity
        - **If yes** to any of the above, treat the record as excluded from the scope of FIPPA and MFIPPA.
        - **If no**, the exclusion does not apply. Consider whether other exemptions or exclusions apply to determine whether the record should be disclosed.

Privacy, Security and Records Retention reminder: This exclusion applies to access requests under FIPPA and MFIPPA. It does not remove privacy, security, retention, breach management or reporting obligations that may also apply.

This guidance document does not supersede any legal requirements (including statutory requirements) or legal advice.

Contact Us

For more information, or questions about notice for use of third-party applications, reach out to us at digital.government@ontario.ca.