

Confidentiality Training

Newburyport Public Schools

Confidentiality of Student Records

- FERPA (Family Education Rights and privacy Act of 1974)
 - FERPA is a federal privacy law that affords parents the right to:
 - Have access to their children's education records
 - Seek to have the records amended
 - Consent to the disclosure of personally identifiable information from education records, except as provided by law.

Who can access records

- A student's parent or legal guardian; an eligible student (a student who is fourteen (14) years old **or** a student who has entered the ninth (9th) grade or an agency legally authorized to act on behalf of the student in place of or in conjunction with the father, mother, or legal guardian.

Confidentiality continued

- All student records maintained in the school must be private and secure. Computerized systems should be electronically secure.
- The laws and regulations that address student record confidentiality can be reviewed online:
 - <http://www.doe.mass.edu/lawsregs/603cmr23.html?section=all>
 - <https://malegislature.gov/Laws/GeneralLaws/PartI/TitleXII/Chapter71/Section34H>

Importance of Confidentiality

- It is essential that the information contained in student records is private and confidential.
- Generally, schools must have written permission form the parent or the student to release any information from a student's record. There are some exceptions for this, such as sharing information to another school to which a student is transferring.
- As school employees, we are regularly privy to confidential information about students and families. The disclosure of such information is strictly prohibited.

Helpful Hints

- Do:
 - Think about the dignity and privacy of each student and family with whom you work.
 - Think about your surroundings when you are discussing a student
 - Safeguard your documents and emails
- Don't:
 - Discuss students with other students or in public areas
 - Leave records unsecured
 - Share sensitive information in emails