

STUDENT RECORDS

The Board of Education recognizes its legal responsibility to maintain the confidentiality of student records. The procedures for ensuring the confidentiality of student records shall be consistent with state and federal law, including the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA) and its implementing regulations.

The Board also recognizes its responsibility to ensure the orderly retention and disposition of the district's student records in accordance with Schedule ED-1 as adopted by the Board in policy 1120.

The District will use reasonable methods to provide access to student educational records only to those authorized under the law and to authenticate the identity of the requestor. The district will document requests for and release of records, and retain the documentation in accordance with law. Furthermore, pursuant to Chapter 56 of the Laws of 2014, the district will execute agreements with third-party contractors who collect, process, store, organize, manage or analyze student personally identifiable information (PII) to ensure that the contractors comply with the law in using appropriate means to safeguard the data.

The Superintendent of Schools shall be responsible for ensuring that all requirements under law and the Commissioner's regulations are carried out by the district.

Annual Notification

Within the first three weeks of each school year, the Somers Central School District will publish a notification that informs parents, guardians and eligible students currently in attendance of their rights under FERPA and New York State Law and the procedures for exercising those rights. A 'Parents' Bill of Rights for Data Privacy and Security' will be posted on the district website and included in any agreements with third-party contractors.(see 5500-E.6) This notice and Bill of Rights may be published in a newspaper, handbook or other school bulletin or publication. This notice and Bill of Rights will also be provided to parents, guardians, and eligible students who enroll during the school year.

The notice and Parents' Bill of Rights will include a statement that the parent/guardian or eligible student has a right to:

1. inspect and review the student's education records;
2. request that records be amended to ensure that they are not inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights;
3. consent to disclosure of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent; and
4. file a complaint with the United States Department of Education alleging failure of the district to comply with FERPA and its regulations; and/or file a complaint regarding a possible data breach by a third party contractor with the district and/or the New York State Education Department's Chief Privacy Officer for failure to comply with state law.

In addition, the annual notice and Parents' Bill of Rights will inform parents/guardians and eligible students:

1. that it is the district's policy to disclose personally identifiable information from student records, without consent, to other school officials within the district whom the district has determined to have legitimate educational interests. For purposes of this policy, a school official is a person employed by the district as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel; a member of the Board of Education; a person or company with whom the district has contracted to perform a special task (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); or a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official performing his or her tasks. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review a student record in order to fulfill her or her professional responsibilities.
2. that, upon request, the district will disclose education records without consent to officials of another school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll.
3. of the procedure for exercising the right to inspect, review and request amendment of student records.
4. that the district will provide information as a supplement to the 'Parents' Bill of Rights' about third parties with which the district contracts that use or have access to personally identifiable student data.

The district will provide translations of this notice, where necessary, to parents, guardians and eligible students in their native language or dominant mode of communication.

Directory Information

The district has the option under FERPA of designating certain categories of student information as "directory information." The Board directs that "directory information" include a student's name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, major course of study, participation in school activities or sports, weight and height if a member of an athletic team, dates of attendance, degrees and awards received, most recent school attended, photograph and e-mail address.

Once the proper FERPA notification is given by the district, a parent/guardian or eligible student will have 14 days to notify the district of any objections they have to any of the "directory information" designations. If no objection is received, the district may release this information without prior approval of the parent/guardian or eligible student for the release.

The district may elect to combine both the annual notice of rights under FERPA and the annual notice of "directory information" designations into one notice.

Cross-ref: 1120, School District Records
4321, Programs for Students with Disabilities
5170, Student Attendance Accounting
5460, Suspected Child Abuse and Maltreatment

Ref: Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, 20 USC 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99
Education Law §§ 2(13); 225; 301
Public Officers Law §87(2)(a)
Arts and Cultural Affairs Law, Article 57-A (Local Government Records Law)
8 NYCRR 185.12 (Appendix I) Records Retention and Disposition, Schedule ED-I for
Use by School Districts and BOCES
Parents' Bill of Rights for Data Privacy and Security, July 29, 2014:
<http://www.p12.nysed.gov/docs/parents-bill-of-rights.pdf>

Adoption date: November 22, 1993

Revised: November 15, 1999

Revised: December 9, 2014

Revised: June 9, 2015