Paul Mitchell The School Merrillville

STUDENT RIGHT OF ACCESS AND RECORD RETENTION POLICY

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) sets a limit on the disclosure of personally identifiable information from school records and defines the rights of students to review and request changes to the records. FERPA generally gives postsecondary students the rights to:

- Review their education records,
- Seek to amend inaccurate information in their records, and
- Provide consent for the disclosure of their records.

Students (or parents or guardians, if the student is a dependent minor) are guaranteed access to their school records, with a staff member present, within 30 days from the date of the request.

GENERAL RELEASE OF INFORMATION

Except under the special conditions described in this policy, a student must provide written consent before the school may disclose personally identifiable information from the student's education records. The written consent must:

- State the purpose of the disclosure,
- Specify the records that may be disclosed,
- Identify the party or class of parties to whom the disclosure may be made, and
- Be signed and dated.

FERPA DISCLOSURES TO PARENTS

While the rights under FERPA have transferred from a student's parents to the student when the student attends a postsecondary institution, FERPA does permit a school to disclose a student's education records to his or her parents if the student is a dependent student under IRS rules.

Note that the IRS definition of a dependent is quite different from that of a dependent student for Financial Student Aid (FSA) purposes. For IRS purposes, students are dependent if they are listed as dependents on their parent's income tax returns. (If the student is a dependent as defined by the IRS, disclosure may be made to either parent, regardless of which parent claims the student as a dependent.)

A school may disclose information from a student's education records to parents in the case of a health or safety emergency that involves the student, without needing the student's consent.

A school may let parents of students under age 21 know when the student has violated any law or policy concerning the use or possession of alcohol or a controlled substance.

A school official may share with parents information that is based on that official's personal knowledge or observation and that is not based on information contained in an education record.

RELEASE OF INFORMATION TO REGULATORY AGENCIES

Disclosures may be made to authorized representatives of the U.S. Department of Education for audit, evaluation, and enforcement purposes. "Authorized representatives" include employees of the Department, such as employees of the Office of Federal Student Aid, the Office of Postsecondary Education, the Office for Civil Rights, and the National Center for Education Statistics, as well as firms under contract to the Department to perform certain administrative functions or studies.

In addition, disclosure may be made if it is in connection with financial aid that the student has received or applied for. Such a disclosure may only be made if the student's information is needed to determine the amount of the aid, the conditions for the aid, or the student's eligibility for the aid, or to enforce the terms or conditions of the aid.

Paul Mitchell The School Merrillville provides and permits access to student and other school records as required for any accreditation process initiated by the school or by the National Accrediting Commission of Career Arts and Sciences (NACCAS), or in response to a directive of said Commission.

DISCLOSURES IN RESPONSE TO SUBPOENAS OR COURT ORDERS

FERPA permits schools to disclose education records, without the student's consent, to comply with a lawfully issued subpoena or court order.

In most cases, the school must make a reasonable effort to notify the student who is the subject of the subpoena or court order before complying, so the student may seek protective action. However, the school does not have to notify the student if the court or issuing agency has prohibited such disclosure.

The school may also disclose information from education records, without the consent or knowledge of the student, to representatives of the U.S. Department of Justice in response to an ex parte order issued in connection with the investigation of crimes of terrorism.

DISCLOSURES FOR OTHER REASONS

There are two FERPA provisions concerning the release of records relating to a crime of violence. One concerns the release to the victim of any outcome involving an alleged crime of violence (34 CFR 34 CFR 99.31[a][13]). A separate provision permits a school to disclose to anyone the final results of any disciplinary hearing against an alleged perpetrator of a crime of violence where that student was found in violation of the school's rules or policies with respect to such crime or offense (34 CFR 99.31[a][14]).

DIRECTORY INFORMATION

Paul Mitchell The School Merrillville does not publish "directory information" on any student.

RECORD MAINTENANCE

All requests for releases of information are maintained in the student's file as long as the educational records themselves are kept. Student records are maintained for a minimum of six (6) years for withdrawal students; transcripts of graduates are kept indefinitely.

AMENDMENT TO STUDENT RECORDS

Students have the right to seek an amendment to their school records. To seek an amendment, students must meet with the school director and bring any supporting documentation to show that the record is incorrect.

A parent or eligible student may file a written complaint with the Family Policy Compliance Office regarding an alleged violation under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act. The Office's address is: Family Policy Compliance Office, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW., Washington, DC 20202.