
FERPA FAMILY GUIDE FOR COLLEGE STUDENTS

Understanding student privacy rights for families

INTRODUCTION TO FERPA



WHAT IS FERPA?

FERPA Overview

FERPA is a federal law protecting the privacy of student education records since 1974.

Student Rights Under FERPA

Students have the right to access, amend, and control disclosure of their education records.

Impact on Families

College students gain control over records; parents lose automatic access, ensuring student privacy.



WHEN DO FERPA RIGHTS TRANSFER?

FERPA Rights Transfer Criteria

FERPA rights transfer to students at age 18 or upon enrollment in postsecondary education, promoting student privacy and autonomy.

Student Control Over Records

Eligible students gain full control over their academic records, restricting parental access without written consent.

Exceptions to Rights Transfer

Parents may retain access if student is tax dependent or during health and safety emergencies.

Preparing for Communication Changes

Understanding FERPA helps families adjust to new communication and access protocols in college life.

UNDERSTANDING EDUCATION RECORDS



WHAT ARE EDUCATION RECORDS?

Definition of Education Records

Education records include grades, transcripts, schedules, disciplinary files, and financial aid information directly related to students.

Formats of Records

These records may be stored as paper documents, electronic files, or emails maintained by educational institutions or their agents.

FERPA Rights and Protection

FERPA grants students rights to access, amend, and control who views their education records, ensuring confidentiality and integrity.

Family Access Considerations

Family members need student permission to access records, preserving student privacy and security of academic information.



CAN PARENTS SEE RECORDS?

FERPA Privacy Basics

Parents cannot access student education records without written consent under FERPA, ensuring student privacy.

Exceptions to Access

Parents may access records if the student is a tax-dependent or in health and safety emergencies.

Family Communication

Families should discuss FERPA scenarios and consider signing release forms for better communication.

FERPA AND DIRECTORY INFORMATION



WHAT IS DIRECTORY INFORMATION?

Definition of Directory Information

Directory information includes basic student details colleges may disclose unless the student opts out.

Student Rights and Privacy

Students can restrict release of directory information especially for privacy or safety concerns.

Institutional Policy Variations

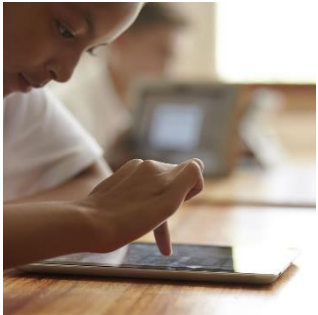
Each college defines directory information differently and students should review policies carefully.

COMMON MISUNDERSTANDINGS



Parental Access to Grades

Parents need written consent from students to access their academic grades under FERPA regulations.



School Notification Limits

Schools typically communicate directly with students, not parents, regarding academic or disciplinary issues.



Importance of Education

Families should educate themselves on FERPA and discuss information sharing to avoid confusion and frustration.

SUPPORTING YOUR STUDENT



TIPS FOR FAMILIES

Understanding FERPA Rights

Families should understand FERPA to respect students' privacy and know when to encourage release forms.

Promoting Open Communication

Encourage honest conversations about privacy and expectations to foster trust between students and families.

Supporting Student Independence

Guide students to manage their responsibilities while respecting boundaries to nurture autonomy and growth.

FERPA COMPLIANCE AND FINAL THOUGHTS



WHAT SCHOOLS MUST DO

Record Disclosure Management

Schools are required to maintain records of all disclosures of student information for accountability and transparency.

Privacy and Information Security

Schools must ensure student information is shared only under authorized conditions to protect privacy.

Family Advocacy and Awareness

Families should understand school obligations to advocate for students and ensure FERPA rights are respected.



QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

Access to Student Grades

Parents can access student grades only if a FERPA release form is signed by the student.

Support for Struggling Students

Encourage students to use campus resources; FERPA permits disclosure in emergencies or for tax-dependent students.

Financial Aid Information Access

Parents may view financial aid details with student consent or if claiming them as a tax-dependent.

Nazareth University FERPA Permission to Release Form

If a student wishes to grant access to a parent or 3rd party, a [Permission to Disclose Education Records](#) form must be completed for each person being granted permission.