

RIDGEWOOD PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Ridgewood, New Jersey

August, 2019

Dear Parent/Guardian,

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) is a federal law that protects the privacy of student information records. The law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education.

FERPA gives parents, guardians, or students over the age of 18, certain rights with respect to the student's education records.

- Parents or guardians have the right to inspect and review the student's education record maintained by the school within 45 days of the request.
- Parents or guardians have the right to request that a school correct records which they believe to be inaccurate or misleading or otherwise in violation of a student's privacy rights.

If you wish to inspect your child's records, or if you believe information in your child's record is misleading and you would like to request an amendment, please contact Dr. Jean Schoenlank at 201-670-2740. If you are requesting an amendment, you must specify in writing the specific part of the record you would like changed and why it is inaccurate or misleading. We will notify you of the decision in a reasonable period of time. If we decide not to amend the record, you have the right to request a hearing. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided with the determination, if we decide not to change the record.

Furthermore, schools must generally have written permission from a parent or guardian in order to release personally identifiable information from a student's record. However, FERPA allows schools to disclose those records, without consent, to the following parties under the following conditions:

- School officials with legitimate educational interest;*
- Other schools to which the student is transferring
- Specified officials for audit or evaluation purposes;
- Appropriate parties in connection with financial aid to a student
- Organizations conducting certain studies for or on behalf of the school
- Accrediting organizations
- To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena
- Appropriate officials in cases of health and safety emergencies; and
- State and local authorities, within a juvenile justice system, pursuant to specific State law.

*A school official is a person employed by the School as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the Board; a person or company with whom the School has contracted to perform a special task (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist). A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.

Schools may also disclose, without consent, “directory” information that includes a student’s name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, honors and awards, and dates of attendance. For example, this information is often provided as part of a school directory, sports activity sheets or to the village recreation programs.

If you wish to “opt out” of the directory and not have the information provided without your written consent, or if you have any questions, please contact Dr. Jean Schoenlank at 201-670-2740. Such a request to “opt out” must be made in writing by September 20, 2019.

For additional information or to file a complaint, contact:

Family Policy Compliance Officer
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202-5920