

Student Records

Content and Custody of Records - Student education records may contain, but will not necessarily be limited to, the following information: Identifying data; academic work completed; level of achievement (grades, standardized achievement test scores); attendance data; scores on standardized intelligence, aptitude, and psychological tests; interest inventory results; health data; family background information; teacher and/or counselor reports; and verified reports of serious or recurring behavior patterns.

Student records should contain only factual, responsible, and documented information about the child. They should not contain unsubstantiated opinions or language which tends to "categorize" students.

The Administrative Director is the official custodian of the records of students.

All requests for inspection and review of educational records, and requests for copies of student records, as well as disclosure of personally identifiable information, except as provided by law, shall be maintained as a part of each individual's record. The request/inspection record shall be made available to the parent/guardian or eligible student upon requesting accordance with the following requirements.

Access to Records - A parent/guardian shall have access to the student's education files; however, if the student is 18 years or older, the student may inspect his/her own records and his written permission shall be necessary in order for his/her parent or guardian to inspect them, except in the instance where the child is declared to be legally incompetent or the student is a lawful dependent of his/her parent/guardian.

The Administrative Director may request other certificated personnel to assist in answering any questions parents/guardians may have regarding interpretation of the records.

In all cases where access to student education information is requested, except where otherwise provided by law or this policy, a written request to see the files must be made by the parents/guardian or student.

The Administrative Director, upon receipt of a written request will provide access to view the records and set a date and time for the inspection and review. In no case will the date set be more than three working days after the request has been made. The parent, guardian, or student shall examine the student's file in the presence of the Administrative Director or other person(s) as designated.

The record itself shall not be taken from the school building. However, upon request, one copy of the records will be provided within a reasonable time to the parents/guardian or student at no expense to them.

Challenge Regarding Material in Records - If the parent/guardian or student (18 years of age or older), challenges any part of the record in writing, the Administrative Director should review the part of the record challenged and may in mutual agreement with the parents/guardian, destroy or delete or add the information under question within 10 days of receipt of challenge. If the Administrative Director does not agree regarding the challenge, the parents/guardian—or student (18 years of age or older) may request a hearing, the procedure for which shall be:

1. Requests for hearing shall be presented to the Administrative Director.

2. The hearing shall be held within 45 days after receipt of the request. Notice of the date, place and time of the hearing will be forwarded to the eligible student or parents/guardian by registered mail.

3. The hearing will be conducted by the NW BOCES Board.

4. The parents/guardian or student shall be afforded full and fair opportunity to present evidence relevant to the issues and may be assisted or represented by individuals at his or her own expense including an attorney. The NW BOCES Board shall make its decision in writing within 10 days following the conclusion of the hearing and shall notify the student, parents/guardian of that decision by registered mail, and of their right to place in the records a statement commenting upon the information in the records and setting forth any reason for disagreement.

5. The decision of the NW BOCES Board shall be based solely upon the evidence and the reasons for the decision.

6. Any explanation placed in the records shall be maintained as a part of the records as long as the record itself is maintained by the NW BOCES. If the records of the student or the contested portion is disclosed by the school to any party, the explanation shall be disclosed to that party.

Destruction and Retention of Educational Records

The NW BOCES shall inform the parents/guardian or student if age 18 or older, when personally identifiable information collected, maintained or used is no longer needed to provide educational services to the child and will be destroyed. Notices to parents/guardian will be delivered to the last known address. The NW BOCES shall maintain records for seven calendar years after the student's dismissal from the program. It will be the responsibility of the student and parents/guardian to keep NW BOCES informed of their current address.

Disclosure to Certain Agencies and Individuals without Written Consent

The NW BOCES will disclose personally identifiable information from records of a student without written consent of the parent of the student, guardian, or eligible student only to respond to a lawfully issued court order or subpoena or:

1. NW BOCES school employees who have legitimate educational interest in the information. Personnel permitted access to the records will include teachers, Nurse Supervisor, the School Counselor/School Social Worker, therapists, the Administrative Director, Behavior Specialist, Residential Supervisor, and Program Director/Principal. For the purpose of this policy, "legitimate educational interest" is interpreted as meaning the interest of any certificated individual charged with the responsibility for providing educational programs or services, or auxiliary services to the individual student.

2. Authorized personnel of the student's home school district and the student's Department of Family Services caseworker are authorized to access the student's case plan.

3. Authorities named in the "Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act" and accompanying federal regulations. These include the comptroller general of the United States, Secretary for Education, state education authorities, and authorities investigating emergencies involving health and safety of students.

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Disclosure of Directory Information

The NW BOCES may disclose directory information without written consent of the parent, eligible student, or guardian. The parent, eligible student or guardian has the right to refuse to permit the designation of any or all of the categories of information provided refusal is received in writing in the office of the Administrative Director of the school where the student is in attendance no later than September 7, or the following Monday if September 7 is a Saturday or Sunday.

Directory information which may be released may include the student's name, date and place of birth, major field of study, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height of members of athletic teams, dates of attendance, degrees and awards received, the most recent and previous education agency or institution attended by the student, and other similar information.

Annual Notification of Rights

The NW BOCES, at the beginning of each year, will notify the parents or guardian of each child at NW BOCES and eligible students, of their rights to inspect their records and of the Board policy governing student records.

Copies of this policy and the accompanying regulation will be available at the NW BOCES administration office.

Legal Reference

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (PL 93-380); 41 Fed. Reg. 9062 (3/2/76); Federal Register, Part II, #99.36 (6/17/76).