



# **FERPA Rights Infographics for Parents & Adult Students**

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**The Family  
Educational  
Rights & Privacy  
Act**  
*Parent Guide*

**FERPA** is a federal law that requires confidentiality of student information and protects student privacy by giving parents several important rights regarding their child's **educational records**.



**Educational records** are information **directly relating** to a student and maintained by the school, such as grades, standardized test scores, attendance, disciplinary history, and special needs history.

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## **FERPA provides parents three important rights**

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### **Access Right**

This right allows parents to inspect their child's educational records held by a school district. This is an important right because it allows parents to see what information a school is collecting and whether that information is accurate.

### **Correction Right**

This right allows parents to request an amendment to their child's educational records if they feel the records are **inaccurate, misleading, or a violation of privacy**. This is an important right because children's educational records could affect their future, such as with college admissions or special needs placement.

### **Opt-Out Right**

This right allows parents to **opt-out** of schools sharing **directory information** in most circumstances with third parties. A school may share this info **until** it receives a written opt-out notice from a parent. This is an important right because some third parties may use this information to **personally identify** you or your child in order to market goods and services.

**Directory  
Info**

**Directory information** is a type of **educational record** that may include your child's name, address, telephone number, birth date, height, weight, and participation in official school extracurricular activities. Under FERPA, a school must tell parents **each year** what it classifies as directory information.

## Exercising Your FERPA Rights

Step  
1

Call the principal's office to find out the name and contact information of the school's *records custodian*.

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Step  
2

Write a letter to the records custodian. Check below to see what you should include in your letter.

**Tip!** *Always include your child's name, your name, and your contact information for how & where the records custodian can best reach you.*

### Access Right

If you wish to inspect your child's records, your letter should include:

- Statement that you are requesting to inspect and review your child's records under FERPA
- A request that the records custodian send you a copy of your child's educational records.\* Note that the records custodian must respond within 45 days of your request

\*Instead of sending you a copy, some schools may set up a time and place for you to inspect the records in person

### Correction Right

If you believe your child's educational records are inaccurate, misleading, or a violation of privacy, you may seek to **amend** these records. You **cannot** amend a grade, opinion, or substantive decision made about your child. Your letter should include:

- The record(s) you are seeking to amend
- The reason you are seeking to amend the record(s)
- How the record(s) should be amended

### Opt-Out Right

If you do not want your child's **directory information** to be shared with third parties (in most circumstances), your letter should include:

- Statement that you do not consent to the disclosure of your child's directory information

Schools may provide an opt-out form or set an opt-out notice deadline each year. Call the principal's office to find out if there is a required form or a deadline date!



A school may **reject** your amendment request, but you will have a right to a hearing, where a decision will be made based **solely** on the evidence provided at the hearing. If the rejection is upheld at the hearing, you may insert a statement in the records explaining why you believe the records to be inaccurate, misleading, or a violation of privacy.

## The Family Educational Rights & Privacy Act

Age 18+  
Student Guide

**FERPA** is a federal law that requires confidentiality of student information and protects student privacy by giving students 18 years and older several important rights regarding their **educational records**.



**Educational records** are information **directly relating** to a student and maintained by the school, such as grades, standardized test scores, attendance, disciplinary history, and special needs history.

### FERPA provides adult students three important rights

#### Access Right

This right allows adult students to inspect their educational records held by a school district. This is an important right because it allows adult students to see what information a school is collecting about them and whether that information is accurate.

#### Correction Right

This right allows adult students to request an amendment to their educational records if they feel the records are **inaccurate, misleading**, or a **violation of privacy**. This is an important right because students' educational records could affect their future, such as with college admissions or special needs placement.

#### Opt-Out Right

This right allows adult students to **opt-out** of schools sharing **directory information** in most circumstances with third parties. A school may share this info **until** it receives a written opt-out notice from the adult student. This is an important right because some third parties may use this information to **personally identify** the adult student in order to market goods and services.

Directory  
Info

**Directory information** is a type of **educational record** that may include a student's name, address, telephone number, birth date, height, weight, and participation in official school extracurricular activities. Under FERPA, a school must tell adult students **each year** what it classifies as directory information.

## Exercising Your FERPA Rights

Step  
1

Call the principal's office to find out the name and contact information of your school's *records custodian*.

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Step  
2

Write a letter to the records custodian. Check below to see what you should include in your letter.

**Tip!** *Always include your name and your contact information for how & where the records custodian can best reach you.*

### Access Right

If you wish to inspect your educational records, your letter should include:

- Statement that you are requesting to inspect and review your educational records under FERPA
- A request that the records custodian send you a copy of your educational records.\*  
Note that the records custodian must respond within 45 days of your request

\*Instead of sending you a copy, some schools may set up a time and place for you to inspect the records in person

### Correction Right

If you believe your educational records are inaccurate, misleading, or a violation of privacy, you may seek to **amend** these records. You **cannot** amend a grade, opinion, or substantive decision made about you. Your letter should include:

- The record(s) you are seeking to amend
- The reason you are seeking to amend the record(s)
- How the record(s) should be amended

### Opt-Out Right

If you do not want your **directory information** to be shared with third parties (in most circumstances), your letter should include:

- Statement that you do not consent to the disclosure of your directory information

Schools may provide an opt-out form or set an opt-out notice deadline each year. Call the principal's office to find out if there is a required form or a deadline date!



A school may **reject** your amendment request, but you will have a right to a hearing, where a decision will be made based **solely** on the evidence provided at the hearing. If the rejection is upheld at the hearing, you may insert a statement in the records explaining why you believe the records to be inaccurate, misleading, or a violation of privacy.

## Bibliography & Additional Resources

The materials in the packet were adapted from and/or informed by the following resources & materials:

- U.S. Department of Education, *Laws & Guidance, FERPA*
  - <http://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa/index.html?src=rn>
  - <http://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/reg/ferpa/index.html>
- Consortium for School Networking (CoSN)
  - <http://www.cosn.org/focus-areas/leadership-vision/protecting-privacy>
- FERPA | SHERPA
  - <http://ferpasherpa.org/p-s.html>