

# Private vs. public information - important to know

Information...what is private? What is public? The following information is provided to raise awareness about data privacy practices regarding student information.

## Privacy rights

Education records are classified as private data on individuals by state law and are accessible only to the student's parent/guardian or a student who is at least 18 years old. The school district may not disclose private records or their contents except as summary data without the prior written consent of the parent/guardian or the eligible student. In some cases, private records may not be accessible to parents/guardians. State law provides that certain information in a student's education records be accessible only to that student and to the parent/guardian under special circumstances, if at all.

## Directory information

What is directory information?

Directory information includes the student's name, address, telephone number, email address, photograph, date and place of birth, major field of study, attendance dates, grade level, enrollment status, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height of athletic team members, degrees, honors and awards received, the most recent educational agency or institution attended by the student, photographs of students taking part in officially recognized activities, sports and academic or nonacademic classes or programs and other similar information.

Note: Directory information does not include information about a student's religion, race, color, disability, social position or nationality.

## Is directory information public?

Yes. A school district may disclose this information from a student's education records. However, if a parent/guardian or student chooses, the information will not be released without prior written consent except to school officials as provided under federal law.

## Disclosure of data to military recruitment officers

The school district will release names, addresses and home telephone numbers of secondary students to military recruiting officers within 60 days after the request date unless a parent/guardian or eligible student has refused in writing the release of this data to military recruiters. Data released under this provision may be used only to provide student information about military service, state and federal veterans' education benefits and other career and educational opportunities the military provides.

## Do I have to release data to military recruitment officers?

A parent/guardian or eligible student has the right to refuse the release of directory information to military recruiting officers and must notify the Mankato Area Public Schools' director of human resources in writing by September 15 of each year. The written notification must include the names of the student and parent/guardian, home address, grade level, school, parent's legal relationship to student and the information that should not be released to military recruiters without prior consent. Keep in mind that refusal to release the information does not affect the school district's release of directory information to the rest of the public, including military recruiting officers. To make any directory information about a student private, follow the procedures under "How do I make directory information private?"

## How do I make directory information private?

A parent/guardian or eligible student must submit a written request that includes the student's name, home address, school, parent's legal relationship and specific category or categories of directory information that should remain private to the building principal within 30 days after the date of the last publication notice. If parents/guardians do not want their child's or eligible student's directory information released to military recruiting officers, the school district must be notified that the directory information should not be released to any member of the public, including military recruiting officers.

## How do I obtain nondisclosures of directory information?

A written notice from the parent/guardian or eligible student should be sent to the district's director of human resources and must include the student's name, home address, school presently attended by student, parent's legal relationship to student (if applicable), specific categories of directory information not to be made public without prior written consent, which shall be applicable for that school year.

For more information about public information guidelines, contact John Lustig, director of administrative services, at 507-387-3017. Written correspondence may be sent to Lustig at 10 Civic Center Plaza, Mankato, MN 56001.