



Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA):

The option to restrict the release of directory information about your student

The Issaquah School District needs to honor families' privacy while meeting its obligation to share education-related information with the community. The annual Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) notification and opt-out process—described in this form—helps schools balance these interests.

FERPA is a federal law that allows school districts to disclose students' "directory information" to anyone, without consent, as long as the district annually notifies parents and allows them the chance to opt out. FERPA defines "directory information" as information contained in a student's education record that generally would not be considered harmful or invasive to privacy if disclosed. The law allows school districts to determine and notify parents of its exact definition of such directory information.

The Issaquah School District defines student directory information as: Full name, address, phone number, photograph/image, date and place of birth, participation in school activities and sports, weight and height of members of athletic teams, dates of school attendance, diplomas and awards, and schools attended.

Under FERPA, if you do **NOT** want the Issaquah School District to release this directory information about your student, *you must make a request in writing and send it to your school principal by September 15 each year.* A sample FERPA opt-out letter is at www.issaquah.wednet.edu/district/legal/FERPA.aspx.

What happens if you write the FERPA opt-out letter? The Issaquah School District and its schools will **not** release your students' directory information in any publications that reach beyond the schoolhouse or to any outside organization. This means, for example, that your student will **not** be included in the school yearbook, PTSA newsletters, school directories, photos or videos on District websites, social media, event and athletic programs, award listings in local media, or school newspapers. Essentially, the District will **not** provide any information that validates your student's identity or enrollment in its schools.

What happens if you do not write the letter? The Issaquah School District and its schools will release your student's directory information in publications and to outside organizations to promote non-commercial, education-related news, achievements, and activities. This material may be viewed by others. This includes using your child's name and photo/image on the District's websites, social media, and in newsletters, yearbooks, and athletic/event programs. Without seeking parent/guardian consent, schools could allow, for example: the Issaquah Schools Foundation to use film from your student's class to highlight a program during its annual luncheon; local newspapers to run a picture of your student's class engaged in a learning activity; or a local non-profit to publicize your student's name for participating in a school fund-raiser that benefited the organization.

Please note: Even for students with no FERPA opt-out letter on record, District employees will exercise their best judgment when releasing directory information and seek parent/guardian permission for situations that would generally be considered outside of the realm of typical school-related activities or news. Also, the District cannot control the release of certain directory information—such as photographs/images or names—when students participate in school events open to the general public.

More information about your rights under FERPA is available online at www.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa/index.html.