

SUBJECT: RIGHT OF STAFF TO EXPRESS VIEWS; CONFIDENTIALITY OF DISTRICT INFORMATION

In addition to being employees of the District, all staff are citizens of the community, and as such, retain their constitutional rights to speak and write on issues of public interest and concern.

District staff must recognize that they are entrusted with confidential information regarding students and other District matters which may not be subject to public disclosure. Even the perception that District employees have publicly disclosed such information may irreparably harm the relationship between the District and its students and parents or between colleagues in the District.

It is impossible to list all of the sensitive information which should not be disclosed by District employees. However, in order to avoid inadvertent disclosure of confidential information or other improper communications, we ask all staff to adhere to the following guidelines:

1. With the exception of normal communication with a student's parent or guardian about their child, do not release any information about students, including any student records without prior approval.
2. Internal documents (memos, directives, meeting summaries, etc.) are not intended for public distribution, and may contain confidential information, thoughts, recommendations or personal information. These documents are created as part of employment and should only be released with prior approval.
3. When taking a public position on an issue involving the District, unless specifically authorized in advance, do not indicate that you are representing the District or its official position in any given matter.
4. If a staff member has any doubt as to whether information or documents should be released, he/she should ask his/or her supervisor or administrator for guidance.

Under New York State Law - the Freedom of Information Law (FOIL) - many of the documents of the school district are subject to public disclosure. There is a specified procedure for any member of the public (including, of course, an employee of the District) to request documents that are available. If a staff member has received a request for a document that he/she has not been authorized to release, the staff member can refer the individual to the District Office where a FOIA request can be made.

It is the policy of the Board of Education to provide all appropriate public disclosure of documents and information, while at the same time vigorously protecting the confidentiality of student records and the privacy of our students and staff.

Adopted 6/25/2002

Revised: 4/09/2019

Reviewed by Superintendent & Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources on 5/11/2023 with no recommended changes; reviewed & approved by BOE on 6/27/2023