

MEMORANDUM REGARDING THE CONFIDENTIALITY OF STUDENT RECORDS

As members of the Rochester Area School District education community, we are entrusted with various personal information concerning students that is to be used and maintained in fulfilling our respective roles. It is the expectation of the Rochester Area School District that all persons entrusted with such information respect and preserve the confidentiality of student-related information that is received in the capacity of a school employee or volunteer.

There are a number of state and federal laws, including the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), the Individuals With Disabilities Education Act and the No Child Left Behind Act, which establish parental and student rights with regard to educational records. Generally, those statutes establish that personally identifiable information relating to a student is confidential and, with certain exceptions, may not be disclosed or disseminated by school officials without parental authorization. Personally identifiable information includes information such as students' grades, attendance history, discipline, health records, standardized test scores, evaluations, IEP's and special education status.

In addition to restricting the dissemination of education records without consent, FERPA and IDEA prohibits the disclosure of personally identifiable information by other means. Disclosure means any access to or the release, transfer, or other communication of personally identifiable information contained in education records to any party, by any means, including oral, written, or electronic communication. Thus, you must carefully avoid the disclosure of personally identifiable information about students.

Confidential student information should not be disclosed to members of the public. Such information should not be shared with family members or friends. Similarly, when working in the presence or vicinity of members of the public, you must be cognizant not to openly discuss student information. Confidential student information may be shared with other school personnel, but only if those persons have a legitimate educational interest or need for that information. Thus, confidential student information should not be the subject matter of idle conversation among colleagues or discussed with other volunteers or school employees that do not have any educational involvement with the child.

The district takes the issue of confidentiality of student information very seriously. If you have any questions as to whether information about a student should be kept confidential, you should err on the side of nondisclosure in light of the expansive protections of student data under state and federal laws as outlined above and seek the guidance of the building principal.

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I, _____ (print name), hereby acknowledge receipt of the foregoing memorandum regarding the confidentiality of student records.

Date

Signature