

## **RSU #63**

- a. NEPN/NSBA Code:** **JRA-R**
- b. Title:** **Student Educational Records & Information-  
Administrative Procedure  
Policy Committee**
- c. Author:**
- d. Replaces Policy:**
- e. Date Approved:** **01/25/2016 RSU #63**
- f. Previously Approved:** **07/23/2007**
- g. Policy Expiration:** **Review as Needed**
- h. Responsible for Review:** **Director of Curriculum & Instruction/Director  
of Special Services/Policy Committee**
- i. Date Reviewed:** **01/04/2016 Director of Curriculum & Instruction  
01/04/2016 Director of Special Services  
01/04/2016 Policy Committee**
- j. References:**
  - Legal Reference:** **20 USC § 1232g; 34 C.F.R. Part 99  
U.S.C. § 7908  
20-A M.R.S.A. § 6001, 6001-B  
Me. Dept. of Ed. Rules, Ch. 101, 125  
Maine State Archives, Rules for Disposition  
of Local Governmental Records (Schedule L)**
  - Cross Referenced Policies:** **JRA – Student Educational Records &  
Information  
JRA-E Student Educational Records &  
Information – Notification of  
under FERPA  
KDB- Public’s Right To Know (FOAA)**

### **k. Narrative:**

This administrative procedure is intended to assist administrators and school staff in complying with the requirements of federal and state statutes and regulations concerning student education records and information, including special education requirements.

### **I. Definitions**

The following definitions apply to terms used in this procedure.

- A.** “Act” means the federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (20 U.S.C. §1232g).
- B.** “Directory information” means the following information contained in an education record of a student: name, participation and grade level of students in officially recognized activities and sports, height and weight of student athletes, dates of attendance in the school unit, and honors and awards received.

- C.** “Eligible student” means a student who has attained 18 years of age who has not been judged by a court of competent jurisdiction to be so severely impaired that the student is unable to make decisions or exercise judgment on his/her own behalf. When a student attains the age of 18, all rights accorded to parents concerning education records transfer to the eligible student.
- D.** “Parent” means parent, regardless of divorce or separation, a legal guardian or individual acting as a parent or guardian, provided there shall be a presumption that a parent has the authority to exercise the rights governing such matters unless a divorce, separation, custody or legally binding instrument exists that specifically revokes such rights.
- E.** “Education Record” means information or data that directly relates to a student and is maintained by the school unit in any medium, including but not limited to handwriting, print, computer media, video or audio tape, microfilm and microfiche. Records of instructional, supervisory and administrative personnel, and personnel who support these individuals, which are in the sole possession of the maker thereof and which are not accessible or revealed to any other person except a temporary substitute for the person who made the record, are excluded from this definition.
- F.** “Student” includes any individual with respect to whom the school unit maintains education records.

## **II. Notification**

Parents and eligible students shall be provided with notice of their rights under FERPA and other applicable federal and state laws and regulations concerning education records at the beginning of each school year or upon enrollment if a student enrolls after the start of the school year. RSU #63 may provide notice through any of the following means:

- 1. Mailing to students’ homes;
- 2. Distribution to students to take home;
- 3. Publication in student handbooks; and
- 4. Publication in newsletters or other materials distributed to each parent/ eligible student.

## **III. Access to Policy and Administrative Procedures**

RSU #63’s policy on Student Education Records and Student Information shall be posted in each school. In addition, school administrators shall provide copies of this administrative procedure to parents/eligible students upon request.

## **IV. Inspection and Review of Education Records**

Parents/eligible students may review and inspect their educational records by the following procedure:

- A.** The parent/eligible student must make a written request to the Superintendent, building administrator, or Director of Special Services to review the records.
- B.** The Superintendent, building administrator, or Director of Special Services will comply with the request without unnecessary delay and within a reasonable period of time, but in no case more than 45 days after it received the request. Compliance will occur before any IEP Team meeting regarding an Individualized Education Program or any due process hearing relating to the identification, evaluation, or placement of the student.
- C.** The Superintendent, building administrator, or Director of Special Services may deny a request for access to or copies of the student's education records if there is reasonable doubt as to the legality of the parent-child relationship. Access will be withheld until a determination of legal right to access can be established.

Parents/eligible students may also request to review the following:

- A.** RSU #63's list of types and locations of all records and titles of officials responsible for the records; and
- B.** RSU #63's record of disclosures of personally identifiable information (see following section).

#### **V. Requests to Amend Education Records**

Parents/eligible students may ask RSU #63 to amend education records they believe are inaccurate, misleading, or in violation of the student's privacy rights as follows:

- A.** The parent/eligible student must make a written request to the Superintendent, building administrator, or Director of Special Services to amend the education record. The request must clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it is inaccurate or misleading.
- B.** The Superintendent, building administrator, or Director of Special Services shall, within thirty (30) days after receipt of the request, either amend the record in accordance with the request or inform the parent/eligible student of its refusal to amend the record and inform the parent/eligible student of their right to request a hearing.
- C.** If the parent/eligible student requests a hearing, it shall be held within thirty (30) days from RSU #63's receipt of the written request. The parent/eligible student shall be given advance notice of the date, place, and time of the hearing. The

Superintendent shall designate an individual to conduct the hearing. This individual may be an employee of RSU #63 so long as he/she does not have a direct interest in the outcome of the hearing. The parent/eligible student shall be afforded a full and fair opportunity to present evidence relevant to the issues raised and may be assisted or represented by individuals of his/her choice at his/her own expense, including an attorney.

- D. RSU #63 shall make its decision in writing within thirty (30) days of the hearing. The decision of the school shall include a summary of the evidence and the reasons for the decision.
- E. If, as a result of the hearing, RSU #63 decides that the information is inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the privacy rights of the student, it shall amend the education records of the student accordingly and so inform the parent/eligible student in writing.
- F. If, as a result of the hearing, RSU #63 decides that the information is not inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the privacy rights of the student, it shall inform the parent/eligible student of their right to include a statement in the student's education record about the contested information and/or setting forth any reasons for disagreeing with the decision of RSU #63.
- G. Any statement placed in the student's education record under the preceding paragraph shall be maintained as long as the record or contested portion is maintained by RSU #63. If the education records of the student or the contested portion is disclosed by the School Department to any party, the explanation shall also be disclosed.

## VI. Disclosure of Education Records

All disclosures of education records will be made in compliance with federal and state statutes and regulations. RSU #63 will maintain a record of disclosures of personally identifiable information from the education records of a student. Such records do not include disclosures to the parents/eligible student, disclosures made pursuant to written consent of the parents/eligible student, disclosures to school officials, or disclosures of directory information. RSU #63 will not disclose any personally identifiable information from the education records of a student without the prior written consent of the parent/eligible student. The written consent shall include a specification of the records that may be disclosed, the purpose(s) of the disclosure(s), and the identity of the party or parties to whom the disclosure(s) may be made.

There are several exceptions to the requirement to obtain prior written consent before disclosing education records as follows:

- A. **Directory Information.** RSU #63 may make directory information (as described in the Definitions section) public at its discretion unless a parent/eligible student

has notified the Superintendent in writing by August 15<sup>th</sup> or within thirty (30) days of enrollment, whichever is later.

RSU #63 may disclose directory information about former students without the consent of the parent/eligible student.

- B. School Officials with Legitimate Educational Interests.** Education records may be disclosed to school officials with a “legitimate educational interest.” A school official has a legitimate educational interest if he/she needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his/her professional responsibility. School officials include persons employed by RSU #63 as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and the school unit’s designated law enforcement unit personnel, if any); members of the Board of Education; persons or companies with whom RSU #63 has contracted to provide specific services (such as attorneys, auditors, medical consultants, evaluators or therapists); and parents, students or volunteers serving on an official committee (such as a disciplinary or grievance committee) or assisting a school official in performing his/her professional responsibilities.
- C. Other School Units.** Under Maine law (20-A M.R.S.A. § 6001-B), RSU #63 is required to send a student’s education records to a school unit to which a student applies for transfer, including disciplinary records, attendance records, special education records, and health records. Consent is not required for the transfer of these records, except for confidential health records.

At the request of the Superintendent of the school unit where a student seeks admission, the student's current or former school administrators shall provide, in a timely fashion, an oral or written report to the Superintendent indicating whether the student has been expelled or suspended or is the subject of an expulsion or suspension proceeding.
- D. Other Entities/Individuals.** Education records may be disclosed to other governmental entities, agencies, and individuals as specifically permitted by FERPA and the accompanying regulations.
- E. Information on the Internet.** Under Maine law (20-A M.R.S.A. § 6001), RSU #63 shall not publish on the Internet any information that identifies a student, including but not limited the student’s full name, photograph, personal biography, e-mail address, home address, date of birth, social security number and parents’ names, without written parental consent.

## **VII. Waiver of Confidentiality Rights**

A parent/eligible student may waive any of his/her rights regarding confidentiality of educational records, but any such a waiver must be in writing and signed by the parent/eligible student. The school may not require that a parent/eligible student waive

his or her rights. Any waiver may be revoked with respect to actions occurring after the revocation. If a parent executes a waiver, that waiver may be revoked by the student any time after he/she becomes an eligible student.

#### **VIII. Fees for Copying Records**

There shall be no charge to search for or retrieve education records of a student. RSU #63 shall provide copies of education records to parents/eligible students upon request, in accordance with policy KDB. Parents/eligible students who are unable to receive e-mail records should contact the Superintendent if they are unable to pay for the copying of essential education records. There will be no charge to search for or to retrieve the education records of a student.

#### **IX. Maintenance and Destruction of Education Records**

RSU #63 shall maintain accurate and up-to-date education records as required by federal and state statutes and regulations.

- A.** Records shall be maintained by personnel who are knowledgeable about the applicable confidentiality. All records shall be safeguarded from unauthorized access. Student records must be kept in fireproof storage at the school or a duplicate set kept off-site.
- B.** The high school transcripts of all former students shall be kept in perpetuity by the school unit within which the high school attended by the student is located. A permanent record of a special education student's name, address, phone number, grades, attendance record, classes attended, and grade and year completed shall be maintained without time limitations. All other records will be maintained in accordance with Maine State Rules for Disposition of Local Governmental Records (Schedule L).
- C.** RSU #63 shall not destroy any education record if there is any outstanding request to inspect or review such records.
- D.** Records of access to education records shall be retained as long as the records themselves.
- E.** RSU #63 shall inform parents of students with disabilities when education records are no longer needed to provide educational services to the student or to demonstrate that the school has provided the student with a free appropriate public education as required by law. At that point, the records may be turned over to parents/eligible student upon their request, or destroyed in accordance with the parent's request or school unit procedures.

## **X. Complaints**

The United States Department of Education maintains an office that handles complaints about alleged violations of FERPA by local school units. Complaints regarding violations of rights accorded parents/eligible students may be submitted in writing to:

Family Policy Compliance Office  
Department of Education  
400 Maryland Avenue, S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20202