Merchantville Board of Education 130 South Centre Street Merchantville, NJ 08109	File Code : 6162.5 Proposed : 10/13/2009 Adopted : 10/27/2009 Revised : 04/25/2017 Reviewed : 07/15/2024

Research

The board of education recognizes that educational research can be a valuable tool in identifying and applying strategies to enhance student achievement and in identifying factors that could prevent students from becoming contributing members of society. Surveys among student populations can be an important part of this research.

Students and parents/guardians retain certain rights, however, in the administration of surveys. The board shall ensure a copy of the survey is available for viewing and that prior written consent is obtained from parents/guardians or emancipated students before any survey is administered that is funded in whole or in part by any state or federal source, if the survey (analysis or evaluation) is designed to reveal information on any of the following:

A. Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or the student's parents/guardians;
B. Mental and psychological problems of the student or the student's family;
C. Sex behavior or attitudes;
D. Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior;
E. Critical appraisals of other individuals with whom respondents have close family relationships;
F. Legally recognized privileged or analogous relationships, such as those of lawyers, physicians, or ministers;
G. Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or the student's parent/guardian; or
H. Income (other than that required by law to determine eligibility for participation in a program or for receiving financial assistance under such program).
I. Social security number

Parents/guardians shall be given the opportunity to inspect any survey, analysis or evaluation that solicits information in any of the above areas, including surveys funded by other than state or federal sources. If parents/guardians object to their child's participation in a survey regarding the above matters, the child shall be allowed to opt out. The chief school administrator shall adopt regulation to protect the confidentiality of all survey respondents.

Prior approval of the chief school administrator is required for all other surveys on topics not listed. Anyone seeking approval of a proposed survey must provide the chief school administrator with details of the survey methodology, its specific educational purpose and a description of how results will be disseminated and applied.

For all surveys the identity of the respondent shall remain confidential.

The chief school administrator shall develop regulations to implement this policy that include reasonable timelines for parents/guardians to access and review surveys as prescribed by law, and arrangements to protect student privacy in the administration of a survey.

This policy and the regulations shall be made available to the public at least annually at the beginning of the school year, especially to parents/guardians and to district staff. The public shall be informed within a reasonable period of time if substantive change is made to policy and regulations. The public shall also be informed of specific or approximate dates, if known, when surveys may be administered.

Parent/Guardian Notification

Annual parent/guardian notice shall include an opportunity for the parent/guardian to opt the student out of the following activities:

A. Activities involving the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information collected from students for the purpose of marketing or for selling that information, or otherwise providing that information to others for that purpose;

B. The administration of any third party (non-Department of Education funded) survey containing one or more of the above described nine items of information.

Key Words

Pupil Privacy, Research, Surveys

Legal References

N.J.S.A. 18A 36-34 School surveys, certain, parental consent required before administration
N.J.A.C. 6A 16-1.4(c) District policies and procedures
20 U.S.C. 1232g Family Educational and Privacy Rights Act
20 U.S.C. 1232h Pupil Protection Rights Amendment
20 U.S.C. 6301 et seq Every Student Succeeds Act (Formerly NCLB)

Cross References

1140 - Sample Policy: Distribution of Materials by Pupils and Staff
5020 - Sample Policy: Role of the Parents Guardians
5124 - Sample Policy: Reporting to Parents Guardians
5125 - Sample Policy: Student Records
5141. 3 - Sample Policy: Health Exams, Immunizations
6147.1 - Sample Policy: Evaluation of Individual Student Performance