

## EDUCATION RECORDS

### I. Purpose

The Board of Education recognizes its obligation to maintain the confidentiality of student education records and to grant parents/guardians and eligible students access to those records in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act.

### II. Definitions and Designations

- A. Records Access Officer: The District's Records Access Officer is the Clerk of the Board:

Clerk of the Board  
929 York Street  
Utica, NY 13502  
315 792-2079

- B. Parent: The term "Parent" includes natural parent, a guardian or an individual acting as parent or guardian in the absence of the student's parent or guardian.

- B. Eligible Student: The term "Eligible Student" means a student who has reached age 18 or is attending post-secondary school.

- C. Education Records: The term "Education Records" includes records, files, documents and other materials which contain information directly related to a student and are maintained by the District or a person acting on behalf of the District.

Education Records may exist in any form, including but not limited to print, computer media, video or audiotape, film, microfilm, microfiche and other materials which contain confidential information directly related to a student and which are maintained by the District or a party acting on behalf of the District. Education records do not include:

1. Certain Records in the Sole Possession of the Maker: Records made by instructional, supervisory, administrative personnel or ancillary educational personnel which are in the sole possession of the maker and which are not accessible or revealed to any other person except a substitute for the maker of the record;
2. Employee Records: Records maintained solely with respect to a person's status as an employee rather than as a student;
3. Certain Medical & Psychological Records: Medical and psychological treatment records of an eligible student are not education records if they

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are maintained and used only in connection with treatment of the eligible student and disclosed only to individuals providing the treatment, including treatment providers in the student's school.

4. Post Enrollment Records: Records that only contain information about an individual after he/she is no longer a student at the District (for example, records of alumni activities);

- D. Directory Information: The District designates the following information as Directory Information: student's name, parent's name, address, date and place of birth, telephone number, email address, major field of study, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height of members of athletic teams, dates of attendance, degrees, and awards received, most recent previous educational agency attended by student, photograph, and video images of students engaged in routine activities when those images are not records of the district's law enforcement unit.

III. Rights of Parents and Eligible Students:

- A. Each parent of a student has the rights described in this policy, unless the District has been provided with evidence that there is a court order, statute or legally binding document related to such matters as divorce, separation or custody that specifically revokes these rights.
- B. When a student becomes an eligible student (18 or attending a post-secondary school) all rights accorded to parents and consent required of parents, transfer from the parents to the eligible student. However, the District does not require the consent of the eligible student:
  1. To disclose the education record to the parent if the eligible student is claimed by the parent as a dependent for tax purposes.
  2. To disclose the education record to appropriate parties in connection with a health or safety emergency if knowledge of the information is necessary to protect the health or safety of the student or other individuals.
  3. A school official may generally share with a parent information that is based on that official's personal knowledge or observation of the student.

IV. Confidentiality of Education Records:

- A. The District will not release education records, including personally identifiable information contained in Education Records, except:

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1. Written Consent: The District may release the information, if prior to the release of information, the District receives written consent from the parent. The written consent must specify the information to be released, the reason for the release, and to whom the information may be released. The District will give the parent or student a copy of the information released, if requested by the parent.
2. Directory Information: The District may release Directory Information if the District has properly circulated its annual FERPA notification to parents of students in attendance and eligible students in attendance, unless the parent or eligible student has submitted Regulation 7240.4 restricting the District's ability to release this information.
3. Military Recruiters: The District will disclose to requesting military recruiters the names, addresses and telephone numbers of juniors and seniors, unless the parent or eligible student has submitted Regulation 7240.4 prohibiting such release.
4. School Officials with a legitimate educational interest: The District may release the information to other school officials, including teachers within the District who have a legitimate educational interest in the information. The District will use reasonable methods to ensure that school officials have access only to the education records in which the school officials have a legitimate educational interest.
  - A school official is: A person employed by the District as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member, including health or medical staff; a person elected to the School Board; a person or company employed by or under contract to the District to perform a special task, such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist; a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or who is assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official may be a contractor, consultant, volunteer or other party to whom the District has outsourced instructional services and functions if that individual or entity is performing services district employees otherwise perform (is not selling products or services), is under the direct control of the district with respect to the use and maintenance of the education records and is restricted from re-disclosing the education records except as permitted by FERPA.
  - A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official is: Performing a task that is specified in his or her position description or by a contract agreement; performing a task related to a student's education; performing a task related to the discipline of a student;

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providing a service or benefit relating to the student or student's family, such as health care, counseling, job placement, or financial aid; or maintaining the safety and security of the campus.

- The District receives services from the Madison-Oneida BOCES Regional Information Center and its vendors in accordance with FERPA. A request for a complete list of current vendors may be submitted to the Records Access Officer.
5. Student seeks to enroll in a different school: The District may release student records to officials of other schools in which the student seeks or intends to enroll, provided that the student's parents are notified of the transfer, receive a copy of the record if desired, and have an opportunity for a hearing to challenge the content of the record.
  6. Certain State and Federal Officials: The District may release information to authorized officials of the Comptroller General of the United States, the Attorney General of the United States, the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education or certain State and Local Educational authorities.
  7. Financial Aid: The District may release information to appropriate parties in connection with a student's application for or receipt of financial aid.
  8. Authorized organizations performing studies: The District may release information to organizations conducting studies for or on behalf of the District to develop, validate or administer predictive tests, administer student aid programs or improve instruction, provided that appropriate safeguards are implemented in accordance with federal regulations.
  9. Accrediting Organizations: The District may release information to authorized accrediting organizations to carry out their accrediting functions.
  10. Court Order or Subpoena: The District may release information pursuant to a valid court order or subpoena, provided that the District makes a reasonable effort to notify the affected parent or eligible student of the court order or subpoena in advance of the release of the information (except that in certain cases, such as in the case of certain subpoenas issued under the U.S. Patriot Act, the court order or subpoena may require release of information without advance notice to the parents).
  11. Victim of Specified Crimes: In certain instances, the District may release to the victim of a specified crime, the final results of a disciplinary proceeding commenced against the alleged perpetrator, provided that the

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release conforms to the requirements of 34 CFR 99.39. The final results may only include the name of the student, the offense committed and the sanction imposed by the District.

12. Information Concerning Registered Sex Offenders: The District may release information provided to it under 42 USC 14071 and the applicable Federal Guidelines.
13. Child Welfare Agencies: The District may release information to an agency caseworker or other representative of a State or local child welfare agency, or tribal organization who has the right to access a student's case plan and when the agency or organization is legally responsible for the child's care and protection to provide accurate information about a child's education history and needs to make informed placement recommendations to the court.
14. Release in connection with an emergency necessary to protect health or safety: The District may release information to appropriate parties in connection with an emergency if the release is necessary to protect the health or safety of the student or other persons. The District will consider the following criteria when determining whether the information should be disclosed:
  - The seriousness of the threat to the health of the student or other individuals;
  - The need for the information to meet the emergency;
  - Whether the parties to whom the information is disclosed are in a position to deal with the emergency;
  - The extent to which time is of the essence in dealing with the emergency.

The District will record the articulable and significant threat that formed the basis for the disclosure and the parties to whom the information was disclosed

- B. If the District discloses student records to a third party as permitted by this policy, the District will:
  1. Advise the third party of its duty to refrain from redisclosing the information and of its obligation to maintain the confidentiality of the information in accordance with the *Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act*.

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2. If possible, attach to the disclosed record the following statement: “This document contains personal information from a student’s education records. It is protected by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (20 U.S.C. 1232g) and may not be re-released without consent of the parent or eligible student.”

#### V. Requests to Inspect Education Records:

- A. Request: A parent who is interested in inspecting the student’s education record must submit his/her request to the Records Access Officer between the hours of 9 am and 3 pm on any school day. Requests should be submitted in writing, on a form provided by the District (Regulation 7240.1). Copies of the form are available in the office of the Records Access Officer. If a parent makes an oral request for access to the education record during a school conference, the District may provide the parent access to the education record even though it has not received the request in writing. The District shall take appropriate steps to verify the identity of parents or eligible students who submit requests to inspect and review an education record and verify the individual’s authority to do so.
- B. Response: Within forty-five days of his/her receipt of a request for inspection, the Records Access Officer must provide the parent/guardian with an opportunity to inspect and review his or her child’s education records or advise the person making the request, the records specified in the request are not available for inspection.
  1. Records Available: If the records are available for inspection, the Records Access Officer will advise the requestor when and where the record will be available for inspection. If the records contain information about more than one student, the Records Access Officer will remove from the copy of the records shown to the requester, any information which in his/her judgment would constitute an unwarranted invasion of personal privacy of any party (other than the student for whom the inspection has been requested).
  2. Records Not Available: If the records are not available for inspection, the Records Access Officer will note the reason for the unavailability on the request form and will return a copy of the request form to the requesting party.
  3. Explanation of Records: The Records Access Officer will respond to reasonable requests for explanations and interpretations of the records.
  4. Copying Fee: The fee for copies of records is twenty-five cents per page, which is required to be paid at the time the copy is requested. The District

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will waive the fee if the fee effectively denies the parent an opportunity to inspect and review the education record.

5. Maintaining a record of requests: The Records Access Officer shall keep with the education record of each student, a record of all individuals, agencies or organizations which have requested or obtained access to the student's record (Regulation 7240.2) and a record of all re-disclosures it has authorized.
  - The record will indicate the parties who requested or received the information and the legitimate interest the party had in the information.
  - The District does not have to keep this record if the requester is the parent or eligible student, a school official with a legitimate educational interest in the information, a party with written consent from the parent or eligible student, a party seeking directory information, or a party seeking information through certain subpoenas or court orders where the issuing court or agency has ordered that the existence or the contents of the subpoena or information not be disclosed.

VI. Request to Amend Education Records:

- A. If a Parent believes the education records relating to the student contain information that is inaccurate, misleading, or in violation of the student's rights of privacy, he or she may ask the educational agency or institution to amend the record.
  1. The request shall be directed to the Records Access Officer during regular business hours on the prescribed form. Copies of the form are available in the Superintendent's office or the office of the Records Access Officer. (See Regulation No. 7240.3).
  2. The request shall identify, in writing, the record or records which the Parent believes to be inaccurate, misleading or otherwise in violation of the student's rights of privacy, with a statement of the reasons for the challenge to the record.
- B. The Records Access Officer will make a written response to the request to amend an education record within twenty days of his/her receipt of the request. The response will indicate whether the Records Access Officer:

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1. Finds that the record in question is inaccurate, misleading or an invasion of the student's rights of privacy and that the record will be amended as requested, or
  2. Finds that there is an insufficient basis to amend the record in question. If the Records Access Officer finds that there is an insufficient basis to amend the record in question, he/she will notify in writing the requesting party of the opportunity for a hearing and will provide the requesting party with a form to request the hearing.
- C. Through informal meetings with the Parents, the settlement of a dispute regarding content of education records is encouraged.
- VII. Request for Hearing:
- A. Request: If a parent disagrees with the Records Access Officer's finding that there is an insufficient basis to amend the education record the parent may request a hearing. The request must be submitted to the Superintendent within ten days of the parent's receipt of the Records Access Officer's decision, on a form provided by the District. The hearing will be conducted within ten days of the Superintendent's receipt of the request for a hearing.
  - B. Notice: The District will mail a hearing notice to the requesting party reasonably in advance of the hearing. The hearing notice will include the date, time and place of the hearing.
  - C. Hearing: The Hearing will be conducted by the Superintendent (or by another person designated by the Superintendent who does not have a direct interest in the outcome of the hearing). During the hearing, the requesting party may be represented by an individual or individuals (including an attorney) at his/her own expense. The requesting party will have a full and fair opportunity to present relevant evidence.
  - D. Decision: The Superintendent (or designee) will submit a written decision within ten days after completion of the hearing. The decision must be based solely on the evidence presented at the hearing, and must include a summary of the evidence and the reasons for the decision.
    1. If the Superintendent (or designee) finds that the record should be amended, he/she will amend the record and will inform the parent of the amendment in writing.
    2. If the Superintendent (or designee) finds that the record should not be amended, he/she will inform the parent in writing of the right to place a statement in the record commenting on the contested information and/or

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stating why he/she disagrees with the decision of the District. The District will maintain the statement with the contested part of the record for as long as the record is maintained and will disclose the statement whenever it discloses the portion of the record to which the statement relates.

VIII. Notification of Rights:

- A. The District shall annually disseminate a notice to parents and eligible students of their rights relative to education records. The notice will allow parents at least thirty days to ask the District not to disclose some or all of the directory information. (See Regulation No. 7240.4).
- B. Parents and eligible students have the right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures to comply with FERPA. Written complaints may be filed with: The Family Policy Compliance Office, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20202-5920.

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Utica City School District

Legal Ref: The Federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, 20 U.S.C. 1232; 34 CFR 99; October 9, 2002 Joint Memorandum from Secretary of Education Rod Paige and Secretary of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld; February 7, 2003 Memorandum to Superintendent's from LeRoy S. Rooker, Director of the Family Policy Compliance Office, US Dept. of Education; Uninterrupted Scholars Act, 8 NYCRR 121.12(b)

Adopted: 07/01/10

Revised: 07/31/12, 06/23/20