

Student Records

Maintenance of School Student Records

STUDENTS

The District maintains two (2) sets of school records for each student – a permanent record and a cumulative record.

The permanent record will include:

- Basic identifying information
- Academic work completed (transcripts)
- Level of achievement (grades, standardized achievement tests)
- Immunization records (per § 20-5-406, MCA)
- Attendance record
- Statewide student identifier assigned by the Office of Public Instruction

Each student's permanent file, as defined by the board of public education, must be permanently kept in a secure location.

The cumulative record may include:

- Intelligence and aptitude scores
- Psychological reports
- Participation in extracurricular activities
- Honors and awards
- Teacher anecdotal records
- Verified reports or information from non-educational persons
- Verified information of clear relevance to the student's education
- Information pertaining to release of this record
- Disciplinary information
- Camera footage only for those students directly involved in an incident

Information in the permanent record will indicate authorship and date and will be maintained in perpetuity for every student who has been enrolled in the District. Cumulative records will be maintained for eight (8) years after the student graduates or permanently leaves the District. Cumulative records which may be of continued assistance to a student with disabilities, who graduates or permanently withdraws from the District, may, after five (5) years, be transferred to the parents or to the student if the student has succeeded to the rights of the parents.

The building principal will be responsible for maintenance, retention, or destruction of a student's permanent or cumulative records, in accordance with District procedure established by the Superintendent.

Access to Student Records

The District will grant access to student records as follows:

1. District or any District employee will not release, disclose, or grant access to information found in any student record except under the conditions set forth in this document.
2. The parents of a student under eighteen (18) years of age will be entitled to inspect and copy information in the child's school records. Such requests will be made in writing and directed to the records custodian. A parent of any student is allowed to view the camera footage, but is not permitted to receive a copy unless the parents of the other involved students provide consent. Consent from parents of students in the background is not required. Access to the records will be granted within fifteen (15) days of the District's receipt of such request.

Where the parents are divorced or separated, both will be permitted to inspect and copy the student's school records, unless a court order indicates otherwise. The District will send copies of the following to both parents at either one's request, unless a court order indicates otherwise:

- a. Academic progress reports or records;
- b. Health reports;
- c. Notices of parent-teacher conferences;
- d. School calendars distributed to parents/guardians; and
- e. Notices about open houses and other major school events, including student-parent interaction.

Once a student reaches 18 years of age or attends a postsecondary institution, all rights formerly given to parents under FERPA transfer to the student.

Access will not be granted to the parent or the student to confidential letters and recommendations concerning admission to a post-secondary educational institution, applications for employment, or receipt of an honor or award, if the student has waived his or her right of access after being advised of his or her right to obtain the names of all persons making such confidential letters or statements.

3. The District may grant access to or release information from student records without prior written consent to school officials with a legitimate educational interest in the information. A school official is a person employed by the District in an administrative, supervisory, academic, or support staff position (including, but not limited to administrators, teachers, counselors, paraprofessionals, coaches, and bus drivers), and the board of trustees. A school official may also include a volunteer or contractor not employed by the District but who performs an educational service or function for which the District would otherwise use its

own employees and who is under the direct control of the District with respect to the use and maintenance of personally identifying information from education records, or such other third parties under contract with the District to provide professional services related to the District's educational mission, including, but not limited to, attorneys and auditors. A school official has a legitimate educational interest in student education information when the official needs the information in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibilities for the District. Access by school officials to student education information will be restricted to that portion of a student's records necessary for the school official to perform or accomplish their official or professional duties.

4. The District may grant access to or release information from student records without parental consent or notification to any person, for the purpose of research, statistical reporting, or planning, provided that no student or parent can be identified from the information released, and the person to whom the information is released signs an affidavit agreeing to comply with all applicable statutes and rules pertaining to school student records.
5. The District may grant release of a child's education records to child welfare agencies without the prior written consent of the parents.
6. The District will grant access to or release information from a student's records pursuant to a court order, upon receipt of such order, of its terms, the nature and substance of the information proposed to be released, and an opportunity to inspect and copy such records and to challenge their contents.
7. The District will grant access to or release information from any student record, as specifically required by federal or state statute.
8. The District will grant access to or release information from student records to any person possessing a written, dated consent, signed by the parent or eligible student, with particularity as to whom the records may be released, the information or record to be released, and reason for the release. One (1) copy of the consent form will be kept in the records, and one (1) copy will be mailed to the parent or eligible student by the Superintendent. Whenever the District requests consent to release certain records, the records custodian will inform the parent or eligible student of the right to limit such consent to specific portions of information in the records.
9. The District may release student records to the superintendent or an official with similar responsibilities in a school in which the student has enrolled or intends to enroll, upon written request from such official. School officials may also include those listed in #3 above.
10. Prior to release of any records or information under items 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9, above, the District will provide prompt written notice to the parents or eligible student of this intended action. This notification will include a statement concerning the nature and substance of the records to be released and the right to inspect, copy, and challenge the contents.
11. The District may release student records or information in connection with an emergency, without parental consent, if the knowledge of such information is necessary to protect the health or safety of the student or other persons. The records custodian will make this

decision, taking into consideration the nature of the emergency, the seriousness of the threat to the health and safety of the student or other persons, the need for such records to meet the emergency, and whether the persons to whom such records are released are in a position to deal with the emergency. The District will notify the parents or eligible student, as soon as possible, of the information released, date of the release, the person, agency, or organization to whom the release was made, and the purpose of the release.

12. The District may disclose, without parental consent, student records or information to the youth court and law enforcement authorities, pertaining to violations of the Montana Youth Court Act or criminal laws by the student.
13. The District will comply with an *ex parte* order requiring it to permit the U.S. Attorney General or designee to have access to a student's school records without notice to or consent of the student's parent(s)/guardian(s).
14. The District charges a nominal fee for copying information in the student's records. No parent or student will be precluded from copying information because of financial hardship.
15. A record of all releases of information from student records (including all instances of access granted, whether or not records were copied) will be kept and maintained as part of such records. This record will be maintained for the life of the student record and will be accessible only to the parent or eligible student, records custodian, or other person. The record of release will include:
 - a. Information released or made accessible.
 - b. Name and signature of the records custodian.
 - c. Name and position of the person obtaining the release or access.
 - d. Date of release or grant of access.
 - e. Copy of any consent to such release.

Directory Information

The District may release certain directory information regarding students, except that parents may prohibit such a release. Directory information will be limited to:

Student's name
Address
Telephone listing
Electronic mail address
Photograph (including electronic version)
Date and place of birth
Major field of study
Dates of attendance
Grade level
Enrollment status (e.g., undergraduate or graduate; full-time or part-time)
Participation in officially recognized activities and sports
Weight and height of members of athletic teams

Degrees
Honors and awards received
Most recent educational agency or institution attended

The notification to parents and students concerning school records will inform them of their right to object to the release of directory information.

Military Recruiters/Institutions of Higher Education

Pursuant to federal law, the District is required to release the names, addresses, and telephone numbers of all high school students to military recruiters and institutions of higher education upon request. The notification to parents and students concerning school records will inform them of their right to object to the release of this information.

Student Record Challenges

The parents may challenge the accuracy, relevancy, or propriety of the records, except: (1) grades, and (2) references to expulsions or out-of-school suspensions, if the challenge is made when the student's school records are being forwarded to another school. They have the right to request a hearing at which each party has:

- The right to present evidence and to call witnesses;
- The right to cross-examine witnesses;
- The right to counsel;
- The right to a written statement of any decision and the reasons therefor;
- The right to appeal an adverse decision to an administrative tribunal or official, to be established or designated by the State Board.

The parents may insert a written statement of reasonable length describing their position on disputed information. The school will include the statement in any release of the information in dispute.

Legal Reference:	Family Education Rights and Privacy Act, 20 U.S.C. § 1232g (2011); 34 C.F.R. 99 (2011)
	§ 20-5-201, MCA Duties and sanctions
	§ 40-4-225, MCA Access to records by parent
	§ 41-5-215, MCA Youth court and department records – notification of school
	10.55.909, ARM Student records

Procedure History:

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