

PUBLIC NOTICE

Notification of Rights under FERPA For Elementary and Secondary Institutions

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents and students over 18 years of age or enters a postsecondary educational institution at any age ("eligible students") certain rights with respect to the student's education records. They are:

- (1) The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 calendar days of the day the District receives a request for access. Parents or eligible students should submit to the school principal [or appropriate school official] a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The principal will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.
- (2) The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights. Parents or eligible students may ask the Sumter School District to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights. They should write the school principal, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it is inaccurate or misleading.

If the District decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the District will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.

- (3) The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent the FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent. One exception which permits disclosure without consent is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the District as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the School Board; a person or company with whom the District has contracted to perform a special task (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); or a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an educational record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.

Upon request, the District discloses educational records without consent to officials of another school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll.

- (4) The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the District to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA are:

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202

What Information is Released Without Parent or Eligible Student Permission?

The Sumter County Public Schools reserve the right to release the following “directory information” without prior permission of the parent:

The student’s name, address, telephone number, electronic mail, photograph, date and place of birth, major field of study, dates of attendance, grade level, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height of members of athletic teams, degrees, honors, and awards received, and the most recent educational agency or institution attended. Student ID number, user ID, or other unique personal identifier used to communicate in electronic systems that cannot be used to access education records without a PIN, password, etc. (A student’s SSN, in whole or in part, cannot be used for this purpose.)

(Note: Occasionally the Sumter School District may take photographs or videos of students and post student - produced work online for public recognition. Local media may utilize photographs, videos and/or student work or with the school’s permission, visit the school campus to photograph or video students.)

Military recruiters may request three directory information categories of secondary school students: names, addresses and telephone listings.

The parent may refuse to permit the designation of any or all of the above categories as directory information with respect to their child by notifying the principal in writing within ten calendar days from the beginning of school or within ten calendar days from the enrollment date of the affected school year. Parents and students may not, by opting out of Directory Information, refuse to wear or display a student identification card or badge. Lists of students will not be released except by School Board action.

In the preparation of cases for prosecution under the Compulsory School Attendance: Child Welfare Law, the Department of Student Services is authorized to release pertinent data in interpretive form to the State Attorney’s Office, to the Division of Youth Services, to Social and Economic Services, and to the Circuit Juvenile Division without parental consent. In cases of child abuse, school officials are authorized, and mandated by Florida Statute, to report same to the Department of Children and Families and to provide them with the necessary information to pursue such complaints.