



FERPA - Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act.

Your Right to See Your Child's School Records

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) is a federal law that protects your child's school records and gives parents the right to:

- See their child's education records
- Request copies
- Ask for corrections if something is wrong
- Control who can access private student information

FERPA applies to all public schools and most private schools that receive federal funds.

When Should Parents Use FERPA?

Use FERPA when you want records about YOUR child, such as:

- Discipline reports or referrals
- Attendance records
- Grades and transcripts
- Special education records (IEP/504 evaluations, plans)
- Behavior logs
- Counseling notes (some may be limited)
- Communications in your child's file
- Incident reports involving your child

If your question is about your child, start with FERPA.

If your question is about district programs, emails, contracts, or training, use a Public Records Request instead.

What Counts as an Education Record?

FERPA applies to records that are:

- Kept by the school...
- And directly related to a student

Common examples include: grades, discipline records, attendance records, special education records, and student ID numbers.

What FERPA Requires Schools to Do

Schools must allow parents to:

- 1) Inspect and review education records:** Parents have the right to review records about their child.
- 2) Control who receives private records:** Schools generally must have written permission before releasing a student's education records.
- 3) Request corrections:** Parents can request corrections to records they believe are inaccurate or misleading.

When Can a School Share Information Without Consent?

FERPA allows limited sharing without parent permission in specific cases, including:

- School officials with a legitimate educational interest
- Health or safety emergencies
- Directory Information (unless a parent opts out)

Quick “Do This” Steps for Parents

Step 1: Ask in writing: Email is best and be sure to keep it short and simple.

Step 2: Ask for the records: Say what you want (discipline records, attendance, evaluations, etc.)

Step 3: Ask for a timeline: Request an estimated date for when you'll receive the records.

Step 4: Save everything: Keep the email chain and take screenshots if needed.

FERPA Template #1 - Request to Review Your Child's Records (Simple)

Subject: FERPA Request – Records for [Child's Name]

Dear [Principal / School Office / Records Clerk],

I am the parent/guardian of [Child's Name], DOB [DOB], who attends [School Name].

Under **FERPA**, I am requesting the opportunity to inspect and review my child's education records.

Please provide copies (electronic is fine) of the following records:

- [Example: discipline records and referrals]
- [Example: attendance reports]
- [Example: teacher notes or incident reports related to ____]

Please confirm receipt of this request and let me know the expected timeline for response.

Thank you,
[Your Name]
[Phone number optional]

FERPA Template #2 - Request to Correct a Record (If Something Is Wrong)

Subject: FERPA Request – Correction of Record for [Child's Name]

Dear [Principal / Records Clerk],

I am requesting a correction to my child's education record under **FERPA**, because this record is inaccurate or misleading.

The record I am requesting to be corrected is:

- [Title/date of record]

The information that is inaccurate is:

- [Explain briefly]

The correction I am requesting is:

- [What you want corrected/added]

Please confirm receipt of this request and provide the next steps.

Thank you,
[Your Name]

What If the School Delays or Does Not Comply?

1) Follow up in writing: "I am following up to confirm receipt of my FERPA request submitted on [DATE]. Please provide an estimated timeline for response."

2) Ask for a written reason: "If you are denying access to any records, please explain why in writing."

3) Use public accountability tools if needed: If the district refuses to cooperate, you can:

- Take the issue to the superintendent
- Address it during public comment
- Document everything and pursue escalation options

If the district still refuses - filing a federal complaint is an option

If a district continues to refuse to provide your child's records, you can file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education for a FERPA violation. **This is not a lawsuit.** It is a formal complaint process.

Before filing, make sure you have:

- Your original written FERPA request
- The district's response (or proof they ignored you)
- Dates and names
- Any denial language or refusal to provide records

What to include in your complaint

Keep it short and factual:

- What records you requested
- When you requested them
- How the school responded (or didn't)
- Why you believe the district violated FERPA
- Copies/screenshots of emails

Where to File

You can file a FERPA complaint with the U.S. Department of Education.

<https://studentprivacy.ed.gov/file-a-complaint>

If you're being told "we can't share that," remember:

FERPA is the law that gives *YOU* the right to see your child's records.