

School Law Matters

JULY 30, 2014



A NEWSLETTER FROM THE LAW FIRM OF FERRARA, FIORENZA, LARRISON, BARRETT & REITZ, P.C.

Route to: Board Personnel Instruction PPS Business Other: _____

SPECIAL ALERT

New Guidance from SED on “Parents Bill of Rights for Data Privacy and Security” Now Available

As we reported last week, the Common Core Implementation Reform Act of 2014 requires school districts and BOCES to publish a “Parents Bill of Rights for Data Privacy and Security” on their websites. The guidance we were hoping to receive from the New York State Education Dept. (NYSED) was finally published last night. The guidance can be accessed at <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/docs/parents-bill-of-rights.pdf>.

Based on this new information, we are recommending to our clients that they immediately publish a bill of rights or revise their currently published bill of rights to include the following information:

1. A student’s personally identifiable information (PII) cannot be sold or released by the District/BOCES for any commercial or marketing purposes.
2. Parents have the right to inspect and review the complete contents of their child’s education record including any student data stored or maintained by the District/BOCES. This right of inspection is consistent with the requirements of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). In addition to the right of inspection of the educational record, Education Law §2-d provides a specific right for parents to inspect or receive copies of any data in the student’s educational record. NYSED will develop policies and procedures pertaining to this right some time in the future.
3. State and federal laws protect the confidentiality of PII, and safeguards associated with industry standards and best practices, including, but not limited to, encryption, firewalls, and password protection, must be in place when data is stored or transferred.
4. A complete list of all student data elements collected by the State is available for public review at <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/irs/sirs/documentation/NYSEDstudentData.xlsx>, or parents may obtain a copy of this list by writing to the Office of Information & Reporting Services, New York State Education Department, Room 863 EBA, 89 Washington Avenue, Albany, NY 12234.
5. Parents have the right to file complaints with the District/BOCES about possible privacy breaches of student data by the District’s/BOCES’ third-party contractors or their employees, officers, or assignees, or with NYSED. Complaints regarding student data breaches should be directed to _____, <<title>>, _____ District/BOCES, <<address>>. Phone: _____ email: _____. Complaints to NYSED should be directed in writing to the Chief Privacy Officer, New York State Education Department, 89 Washington Avenue, Albany NY 12234, email to CPO@mail.nysed.gov. The complaint process is under development and will be established through regulations to be proposed by NYSED’s Chief Privacy Officer, who has not yet been appointed.

For purposes of further ensuring confidentiality and security of student data — as well as the security of personally-identifiable teacher or principal data — the Parents’ Bill of Rights (above) and the following supplemental information must be included in each contract that a school district or BOCES enters into with a third-party contractor with access to this information:

1. the exclusive purposes for which the student data, or teacher or principal data, will be used;
2. how the third party contractor will ensure that the subcontractors, persons or entities that the third party contractor will share the student data or teacher or principal data with, if any, will abide by data protection and security requirements;
3. when the agreement with the third party contractor expires and what happens to the student data or teacher or principal data upon expiration of the agreement;
4. if and how a parent, student, eligible student, teacher or principal may challenge the accuracy of the student data or teacher or principal data that is collected; and
5. where the student data or teacher or principal data will be stored (described in such a manner as to protect data security), and the security protections taken to ensure such data will be protected, including whether such data will be encrypted.

If you have any questions regarding the foregoing or need any assistance with respect to complying with this new law, do not hesitate to contact Michael Dodd of our office.