

Student Record Policy

Philosophy:

Students and their parents entrust the Champion Christian School, a ministry of the Christian Family & Children's Center, with their personal information with the expectation that this information will be used to serve the needs of the students effectively and efficiently. Champion Christian School maintains and uses personal information for a variety of educational purposes while students are in school. To protect the privacy of the students and their families, the Christian Family & Children's Center and Champion Christian School staff are legally and ethically responsible for safeguarding student information. Champion Christian School also has the responsibility to accurately report student progress to others who have a documented need for the information.

It is to define this balance that the Christian Family and Children's Center for Champion Christian School has developed these guidelines, policies and procedures. They are based on Federal, State and National guidelines, particularly FERPA (Federal Education Record Policy Act). Champion Christian School is not required to follow the FERPA guidelines, but have developed policies that follow these guidelines essentially the same.

Definitions:

Notification refers to Champion Christian School's responsibility to inform parents, guardians, or students who are over eighteen of the legal basis for compiling data and the limited circumstances under which records can be released or disclosed.

Disclosure refers to access, release, or transfer of personal information about individuals.

Informed consent involves providing a written account of why personal information is requested and how it will be used. In general, parents should have the option, without a penalty, of agreeing or declining to provide the information an education agency or school requests. However, certain information is required by Champion Christian School, and parents must provide the information in order for their children to be enrolled. Parents' agreement must be based on an understandable explanation of how the information will be used. Once a parent's informed consent is given for a particular purpose or set of purposes, the information cannot be "re-disclosed" - used by a third party - except as originally indicated.

Protected Education Records

Education records are defined as information:

- Directly related to a student, specifically any information recorded in any way, including, but not limited to, handwritten, print, computer media, video or audio tape, film, microfilm, and microfiche.
- Maintained by education agencies or institutions, or by parties acting for the agency or institutions (e.g., special education schools and health or social services institutions)
- Family information, such as name and address of the student, parent or guardian, emergency contact information, date of birth, number of siblings, date and place of birth.
- Personal information, such as an identification code, social security number, picture, or list of personal characteristics that would make it easy to identify a student.
- Grades, test scores, courses taken, academic specializations and activities, and official letters about a student's status in school.
- Test records, answer sheets (including written responses to performance assessments and portfolios), and records of individualized education programs.
- Special education records and Discovery Program (NILD) records.
- Disciplinary records established and maintained by school officials.
- Medical and health records that Champion Christian School collects and maintains under the guidance of the local public district nursing staff.
- Documentation of schools attended, courses taken, attendance, awards conferred, and degrees earned.
- Video tape recordings of individuals or groups of students.

Non-Protected Records

Some information about students is not considered an education record and *is not subject to access or disclosure rules*:

- Handwritten notes by teachers, supervisors, school counselors, and administrators, which may be used by substitute teachers or other replacement personnel.
- Records created by law enforcement units of schools or education agencies that are maintained separately from education records.
- Employment records about a student who is employed by a school, education agency or institution.
- Information obtained about individuals after they are no longer students.

Education Record

An *education record* is a compilation of records, files, documents, and other materials that contain information directly related to a

student and maintained by education agencies. A record means any information recorded in any way, including, but not limited to, handwritten, print, computer media, video or audio tape, film, microfilm, and microfiche. An education record, sometimes referred to as a student record, may include a variety of details about a student such as the date of birth, date of enrollment, bus route, immunization history, achievement test scores and grades, enrollment and attendance, awards, degrees achieved, and special education plans and evaluations. Personal notes by teachers or other staff that are not meant to be shared are not part of an education record. A record of a student may be maintained in more than one location within an agency or school (e.g., enrollment record in the school's administrative office and health information in the school health clinic).

Confidentiality

Confidentiality refers to your obligation not to disclose or transmit information to unauthorized parties. This access extends to the Christian Family & Children's Center and Champion Christian School staff who work directly with the students, agency representatives who serve as evaluators or auditors, or individuals who act on behalf of authorized education officials.

Parent or Eligible Student

Parents may review, request amendment to, and release education records. A parent means a natural or adoptive parent, a legal guardian, or an individual acting as a parent in the absence of the parent or guardian. These rights transfer to eligible students when they reach eighteen or when they attend a post-secondary education institution. However, parents can still have access if the eligible student is a dependent for tax purposes.

I. General Principles Recognized Records

A. Information Privacy Principle - Personal information should be acquired, disclosed, and use only in ways that respect an individual's privacy.

B. Information Integrity Principle - Personal information should not be improperly altered or destroyed.

C. Information Quality Principle - Personal information should be accurate, timely, complete, and relevant for the purpose for which it is provided and used.

II. Principles for Users of Personal Information

A. Acquisition Principle - Information users should: 1) assess the impact on privacy in deciding whether to acquire, disclose, or use personal information; and 2) acquire and keep only information reasonably expected to support current or planned activities.

B. Notice Principle - Information users who collect personal information directly from the individual should provide adequate, relevant information about: 1) why they are collecting the information; 2) what the information is expected to be used for; 3) what steps will be taken to protect its confidentiality, integrity, and quality; 4) the consequences of providing or withholding information; if applicable.

C. Protection Principle - Information users should use appropriate technical and managerial controls to protect the confidentiality and integrity of personal information.

D. Fairness Principle - Information users should not use personal information in ways that are incompatible with the individual's understanding of how it will be used, unless there is a compelling public interest for such use.

E. Education Principle - Information users should educate themselves and the public about how information privacy can be maintained.

Directory Information

Directory information is the portion of the education record that would not generally be considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if disclosed. These generally include a student's name and school activities, family members' names, addresses, and telephone numbers. The biographical materials found in school yearbooks, video tapes and pictures of students, participation in various extracurricular activities, the degrees and rewards received, and the names of previous schools attended. The height and weight of athletes may also be included as directory information.

School officials can distribute the information to anyone who requests it inside or outside the school, at their discretion.

Annual Notification

The Champion Christian School administrative team will give annual notification to parents and eligible students of their rights to

review education records and to request corrections of records they perceive to be inaccurate. *See CCS SRP 1*

The annual notification will inform parents they have the right to:

1. Inspect and review their child's record.
2. Seek to amend the record if they believe the record to be inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of their child's rights.
3. Consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information in the record, with certain exception, as indicated.
4. File a complaint with the Christian Family & Children's Center Board of Directors regarding failures to comply with the requirements of this policy.

Parents' access to records is limited to information about their own child. In cases where an education record contains information about more than one child, the information must be separated so that parents do not have access to the records of any child other than their own.

In the case that a parent is a staff member at the Center, they may not access these records themselves. All information regarding their children must be given by the Principal or Supervisor of the program.

Parents & Eligible Students May Inspect and Review Education Records

Champion Christian School also grants records inspection and review rights to eligible students who are over eighteen or who have graduated from high school and are attending a post secondary education institution. A student under eighteen who is still in high school but is also taking college courses has access to records held by the college, but access rights to records held by the high school still belong to the parents. Parents who claim students as dependents for income tax purposes may be given access to school records, even if the rights under this policy have transferred to the students.

Parents and eligible students may request an explanation or interpretation of their education records. Champion Christian School will respond to requests to review education records within forty-five days of the inquiry. If parents or eligible students believe a record is inaccurate or misleading, they may petition for the record to be amended or changed. Champion Christian School will decide within forty-five days if the request to change the record is consistent with Champion Christian School's own assessment of the record's accuracy. Champion Christian School will not destroy records if there is an outstanding request to inspect or review them.

If a request to amend records is denied, the applicant can subsequently appeal the decision in a hearing conducted by the ICV Christian Family & Children's Center Board of Directors. After the hearing, a parent or eligible student who continues to disagree with the contents of a record can insert an explanation of the objection into the official record, and that explanation must remain with the record as long as it is held by Champion Christian School.

Parents or legal guardians have equal rights to review an education record unless there is evidence of a court order or law revoking these rights. The law grants parent rights to foster parents acting on behalf of the child. Champion Christian School may require parents to verify their relationship with a child before providing access to records.

Restricted Release of Information without Prior Consent

Without consent of the parent or eligible student, education records can be disclosed only to school officials designated as having a "legitimate educational interest." Champion Christian School defines the legitimacy of an educational interest, to include situations where officials need to review education records to fulfill their professional responsibilities. This includes access to records by teachers, counselors, and administrators who routinely work with students. The following lists some example situations in which legitimate educational interest prevails:

1. To perform education or discipline-related tasks in connection with a student.
2. To provide services to a student or student's family such as emergency health care, counseling, or school or job placement.
3. To perform administrative or other educational responsibilities prescribed by the ICV Christian Family & Children's Center.

A school official and legitimate educational interest.

1. A school administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff (including health or medical staff or law enforcement unit personnel).
2. A school board member with an authorized reason to review a record.
3. A person or company with whom the district or parent has contracted to perform a special task (e.g., an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist).
4. A parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school

official in performing required tasks.

Because these officials, acting on behalf of students, have a need-to-know, they can usually access information without seeking consent.

Disclosure of information to an individual or agency outside the school, child's house, school district, or state education agency-a third party-generally is not allowed without prior consent of a parent. Records disclosure without consent of the parent is permissible for the following individuals and organizations:

1. Officials in another school, school system, or post-secondary education institution where the student intends to enroll. Such releases must be reported to the parent or eligible student unless the release either is initiated by one of them or is specified by local policy.
2. The U.S. Secretary of Education, authorized representatives of the Comptroller General of the United States, and state and designated local education authorities.
3. Institutions to which students apply to receive financial aid to determine eligibility, amount of aid, conditions of aid award, and enforcement of award terms and conditions.
4. Accrediting organizations to carry out their functions. Release is allowed to accrediting organizations only if the resulting studies do not identify any particular student and if all personal identification is destroyed.
5. Organizations conducting studies on behalf of education agencies or institutions, including those that develop or administer tests, administer student aid programs, or evaluate programs for improving instruction.
6. Agencies in the state's juvenile justice system and in response to court orders or subpoenas, as specified in the state's laws.
7. Appropriate parties in a health or safety emergency.
8. State and local officials or authorities if specifically required by a state law that was adopted before November 19, 1974.

When a record is disclosed in the types of situations indicated above, the originating agency must note in the record the names of the parties who received the information and explanation of the legitimate educational interest under which the record was disclosed in the student file.

Champion Christian School requires that anyone obtain consent from the parent if they plan to collect routine and general information from students concerning:

1. Political affiliation.
2. Mental and psychological problems.
3. Sexual behavior and attitudes.
4. Illegal or self-incriminating behavior.
5. Critical assessments of other individuals or family members.
6. Privileged information given to lawyers, physicians, or ministers.
7. Income (other than what is required by law for program eligibility).

Champion Christian School must give parents the right to review and consent before their children participate in surveys (other than simple classroom related), research, or evaluations, the law does not require that parents be given copies of the surveys or data collection documents.

Special Education Records

Parents of children with disabilities must have the opportunity to inspect all education records associated with the special services their children receive. In particular, they must have access to state or local records pertaining to the identification, evaluation, and education placement of their child and services their child receives. This would include the Discovery (NILD) Program.

Thus, state or local records about the identification, evaluation, and educational placement of their children and the provision of free and appropriate education services may be reviewed by parents and eligible students. This includes cumulative files with any medical or psychological assessment records that are created by specialists outside the school but kept within the school files.

When uncertainty occurs about when and with whom information should be shared, individuals in schools should act with caution and understand that their fundamental obligation is to maintain confidentiality. School personnel should never share with another individual - even a professional - more than is necessary to benefit the student.

Drug Prevention and Treatment Records

The Department of Health and Human Services confidentiality regulations apply to records of any patient, even a minor student in school, who receives treatment from a federally assisted program. Under the law, patients include students who receive counseling

because they are children of alcoholics or drug abusers.

The confidentiality rules, known at 42 CFR, apply to assessment, diagnosis, counseling, group counseling, treatment, or referral for treatment in most programs in which students participate, including programs sponsored by public and many private schools. They forbid the release of any information without a patient's consent, even when the patient is a student in school and under eighteen years of age.

Students are required to consent to parent access to records as a condition of receiving diagnostic, treatment, or referral services.

Social Security Numbers as Student Identification Codes

Requests for social security numbers must be accompanied by the following notice: Any federal, state, or local government agency which requests an individual to disclose his social security account number will inform that individual whether that disclosure is mandatory or voluntary, by what statutory or other authority such number is solicited, and what uses will be made of it.

Assigning and Using Unique Identification Codes

Champion Christian School, school districts, and state education agencies cannot release the social security numbers of students because this is considered personal information.

Achievement Testing

CCS administers annual achievement tests each spring to students. These tests help monitor student and school progress and are an extremely helpful resource. Parents who do not want their children to participate need to call the school office to set up a meeting with administration.

Reasons for Collecting Student Data

Usually, data are collected because they are:

1. Required by laws or regulations.
2. Used to promote the efficiency and effectiveness of the agency.
3. Used to aid in the placement of students.
4. Needed for accountability and funding decisions.
5. Used to determine student progress and student needs.

Champion Christian School uses data for administrative purposes in five major ways:

1. Operations
2. Instruction
3. Management
4. Research and evaluation
5. Accountability

Champion Christian School, local school districts and state education agencies may need student data for the following major administrative purposes:

A. *Operations* - Schools need data to ensure the efficiency of their day-to-day functioning. For example, Champion Christian School must maintain attendance records, handle students' health problems, and operate transportation and food service programs. Personally identifiable data are needed for such operations.

B. *Instruction* - Teachers and other staff members also need student-level information to ensure that students receive appropriate instruction and services. For example, teachers need to know how to contact parents, and they need information about a student's previous educational experiences and special needs to help plan instruction. Staff need to know what courses students have taken in order to plan their educational programs. Personally identifiable data, thus, are needed for instructional decisions.

C. *Management* - Schools, districts, and state education agencies use data about students to assist in the planning and scheduling of educational programs and the distribution of resources (e.g., fiscal, staffing, and materials). Management functions generally do not require personally identifiable information. However, data should be maintained at a specific-enough level that required distinctions (e.g., how many children qualify for certain programs) can be made.

D. *Research and Evaluation* - Schools, school districts, and state education agencies conduct analyses of program effectiveness, the success of subgroups of students, and changes in achievement over time to identify effective instructional strategies and to promote school improvement activities. This data may or may not be personally identifiable.

E. *Accountability* - Answering the questions of parents, policymakers, and other participants in the education enterprise about students' accomplishments and the effectiveness of schools has become an important function of data collected by schools. Reporting functions generally do not require personally identifiable data. However, some personally identifiable data are needed in order to carry out longitudinal analyses that may be crucial in assessing a program's effectiveness.

Efficient maintenance of data about individual students allows data needed for one purpose to be used for other appropriate purposes. However, the uses must be justified under existing policies, and data providers should be informed of these uses. For example, information about a student's home language collected for required aggregate federal reporting could also be used in the evaluation of a school's language programs. In these instances, personally identifiable information that is used for the analyses cannot be publicly released without written approval from the parents.

Classifying Data Elements and Record Sensitivity

Entries into a student record are classified into the following categories:

1. *Directory information* (subject to public release).
2. *Transcript information* (will be released in a student's transcript if he or she transfers to another district or applies to post secondary education institution).
3. *Supplemental* (all the other information collected, e.g., bus route and class schedule). This can be noted for each data element in a data dictionary for an automated student information system. For paper records, there may be a notation accompanying the item on the collection form.

It is a good idea to classify each data element according to the type of staff member who may have access.

The policy may also specify whether data is considered a part of directory information, the education record or transcript information, or the supplemental record for use only within the school or agency. The written policy may also note that certain types of data are not considered a part of the education record and are not subject to inspection by the student or parents (e.g., personal notes maintained by a teacher or a substitute in a location separate from the official education records, or personal notes written by a school counselor that are not shared with anyone else).

Requesting High School Transcripts

High School Transcripts can be requested beginning student's junior year for personal request or a request to send to an outside agency. They may be released with the permission of the parent or guardian if a child is under 18 years of age. If a student or past student is 18 years of age or older, the request for forwarding of transcripts must be made by the student themselves. Verbal and telephone requests cannot be honored. Faxed and e-mail requests will be accepted if payment and arrangements have been made.

The following requirements must be met to obtain the transcripts:

1. The request must be in writing (electronic requests that can be validated will be accepted). Please allow at least two week's notice for when they are needed.
2. The request must include the following data:
 - *Student's name when enrolled in CCS
 - *Date of birth
 - *Social security number
 - *Year and school from which student graduated or withdrew
 - *Signature and address to which the transcript is to be mailed
 - *Transcript processing fee (if applicable)
 - *Copy of picture ID
 - *Notice if the transcript needs to be official or not

Assigning and Using Unique Identification Codes

Champion Christian School, school districts, and state education agencies cannot release the social security numbers of students because this is considered personal information.

How Long Should Data Be Maintained?

It is a good idea to include in a written data policy an indication of which data elements will be expunged from education records and when they will be deleted.

Contractors or vendors acting on behalf of the agency or school to perform specified duties may be allowed access to those records

they need to perform such duties.

Management Responsibilities

Student files are unlocked in the morning and re-locked at the end of the school day, and managed by the secretary. Any staff member must sign out/in a student file with the secretary or program head. Files must be the custody of the staff member signing them out. Files need to be returned by the end of the day and may not be taken out of the building.

Discovery Program files are managed by the Discovery staff and supervised by the Program Principals.

Christian Conciliation

By enrolling your student in Champion Christian School and signing the financial contract, you are agreeing to abide by the policies and procedures outlined in the parent and student handbooks. The parties to this agreement are Christians and believe that the Bible commands them to make every effort to live in peace and to resolve disputes with each other in private or within the Christian church (see Matthew 18:15-20; 1 Corinthians 6:1-8). Therefore, the parties agree that any claim or dispute arising from or related to this agreement shall be settled by biblically based mediation and, if necessary, legally binding arbitration in accordance with the *Rules of Procedure for Christian Conciliation* of the Institute for Christian Conciliation, a division of Peacemaker(r) Ministries. Judgment upon an arbitration decision may be entered in any court otherwise having jurisdiction. The parties understand that these methods shall be the sole remedy for any controversy or claim arising out of this agreement and expressly waive their right to file a lawsuit in any civil court against one another for such disputes, except to enforce an arbitration decision. You may find out more about this process by contacting Peacemaker Ministries at www.hispeace.org or at Peacemakers Ministries, 1537 Ave D., Suite 352, Billings, MT 59102 - (406) 256-1583. You may also get more information from the Financial offices of the Center.

Legitimate Educational Interests

Constitutes legitimate educational interest might include wording such as the following:

A school official is determined to have legitimate educational interest if the information requested is (1) necessary for that official to perform appropriate tasks that are specified in his or her position description or by a contract agreement; (2) used within the context of official agency or school business and not for purposes extraneous to the official's areas of responsibility or to the agency or school; (3) relevant to the accomplishment of some task or to a determination about the student; and (4) consistent with the purposes for which the data are maintained.

School officials are informed that having access to education records or the information within the records does not constitute authority to share this information with anyone not given access through the written policy.

Training Agency Staff

Staff members should be informed about what is considered appropriate and inappropriate access to the data and use of the information within the records. For instance, a staff member may have a legitimate access right to a student's education record for making placement decisions. That same staff member may not have a right to view the records of other students for whom he or she does not have responsibilities.

Staff should not leave education record files opened on their desks or showing on their computers when they step away from their desks.

Staff members can discuss the education record of a student in front of someone the parent has brought along, such as a language interpreter or a friend who sits in when the parent review the record, if the parent signs a consent form.

If teachers' or counselors' notes are not maintained in the education record of the student and are not shared with anyone else, it is not considered part of the education record.

If a person is granted the legal status of an emancipated minor, that individual has access to his or her own record.

Handling a Parent's Request - (See CCS SRP 4)

Parents must submit a written request to review their child's education record. When you receive a written request, verify the requester's identification as soon as possible.

Managing the Review

The Program Principal will manage the review of records by a parent. The management role would include:

1. Explaining the laws and regulations that safeguard the confidentiality of the information (distribute copy of records policy).
2. Verifying the identification of the requester (through the use of an identification with bearer's photograph).

3. Staying with the parent during the review to make sure the parent understands the contents of the record.
 4. Making sure the complete record is returned after the review.
 5. Answering questions about the policies and procedures regarding the review.
 6. Referring the parent to the appropriate resources if a parent has further questions about the contents of the record.
- At the end of the review, the parents must sign a form, (CCS SRP 5), indicating that they have reviewed the record.

Parents may bring another person (e.g., an interpreter, a trusted friend, or an attorney) to review the record. The Principal member managing the review should:

1. Explain the laws and regulations that safeguard the confidentiality of the education records, and the penalties to the agency or school of unauthorized disclosure.
2. Ask the parent to sign a consent form, (CCS SRP 6), to allow the accompanying person access to the record.
3. Ask the accompanying person to sign an affidavit of non-disclosure, (CCS SRP 6).

Managing the Hearing Procedures

Champion Christian School will notify the parents, as soon as feasible and reasonably in advance, of the date, location, and time of the hearing. The hearing must be presided over by someone who is considered a disinterested third party; this person may be a Christian Family & Children's Center or Champion Christian School employee. The parents must be allowed to present evidence relevant to the issues raised in the original request to amend the record. The parents may be assisted by other individuals such as an attorney.

When a decision is made about challenged content by the administrator, Champion Christian School should document the evidence presented in the hearing and reasons for the decision. The decision should be based solely on the evidence presented in the hearing.

If the decision of the hearing is that the challenged information is not inaccurate, not misleading, or not in violation of the student's rights, Champion Christian School staff must notify the parent. This notification must inform the parents that they have a right to place in the record a statement commenting on the challenged information or a statement setting forth reasons for disagreeing with the decision that the record when it is transferred to another entity in the future.

If the decision is that the challenged information is inaccurate, misleading, or in violation of the student's rights, the record must be appropriately amended and Champion Christian School must notify the parent, in writing, that the record has been amended. If the information is maintained in portions of the record located in more than one place at Champion Christian School, then information in all locations should be corrected.

If a parent makes information about a student public, Champion Christian School officials must continue to keep that piece of information confidential, unless there is a compelling reason to address publically the issue a parent has discussed.

A school official does not have to release a record of a student to his or her family lawyer unless there is a prior written consent from the parent.

When student records are transmitted electronically, confidentiality must be protected both by the sender and receiver of information.

Types of Information Release

Generally, information requests about one or more individuals can be categorized as *non-personally identifiable* information or *personally identifiable* information. Release of non-personally identifiable data is generally allowed.

Misuse of Information by Non-Intended or Secondary Users

When data is released to individuals or groups outside the agency, the recipients should be required to sign an affidavit stating that they will use the data in a way consistent with that described in their requests, and not to transfer or re-release that data to another individual or organization.

Document the Release

Agencies or schools should maintain records of access, retrieval, or release of records, including the names of persons retrieving records and the purposes for each release, and should maintain a list of personnel authorized to have access to the file.

Definition of an Education Record

Education records include a range of information about a student that is maintained in schools in any recorded way, such as handwritten, print computer media, video or audio tape, film, microfilm, and microfiche. Examples are:

1. Date and place of birth, parent(s) and/or guardian addresses, and where parents can be contacted in emergencies;

2. Grades, test scores, courses taken, academic specializations and activities, and official letters regarding a student's status in school;
3. Special education records and Discovery Program (NILD) records.
4. Disciplinary records;
5. Medical and health records that the school creates or collects and maintains;
6. Documentation of attendance, schools attended, courses taken, awards conferred, and degrees earned;
7. Personal information such as a student's identification code, social security number, picture, or other information that would make it easy to identify or locate a student.

Personal notes made by teachers and other school officials that are not shared with others are not considered education records. Additionally, law enforcement records created and maintained by a school or district's law enforcement unit are not education records.

Once a child enters adulthood (defined as past 18 years old or in college) they have access to their own records.