

Student Confidentiality and Privacy Policies

Eckerd Connects | Academy (ECA) maintains the confidentiality and privacy of all student records and personal information. This policy outlines the procedures and guidelines to protect student information in compliance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and other applicable federal and state laws.

Definitions

- **Personally Identifiable Information (PII):** Information that can be used to identify, contact, or locate an individual, either on its own or when combined with other accessible data. Examples include full name, email address, date of birth, and student ID number.
- **Education Records:** Records that contain information directly related to a student and are maintained by ECA or by a party acting on its behalf. These records include grades, transcripts, class lists, student course schedules, and disciplinary records.
- **Protected Health Information (PHI):** A subset of PII that includes identifiable health information.

Policy

General Practices

Confidential Handling: ECA processes all student information, whether written, oral, or electronic, confidentially. Discussions about student information are limited to professional settings and are conducted professionally.

Minimum Necessary Standard: Staff limits the amount of information disclosed to the minimum necessary to achieve the intended purpose.

Student Information Release: ECA requires written consent from the student (if over 18) or the student's parent/guardian (if under 18) before disclosing any education records to third parties. Exceptions are made for disclosures permitted by law, such as to school officials with legitimate educational interests or in response to a subpoena.

FERPA Compliance: ECA adheres to FERPA regulations, which provide students the right to access their education records, seek to amend inaccuracies, and have some control over the disclosure of personally identifiable information from these records.
Specific Guidelines

Access to Records: Students and parents/guardians can request to inspect and review education records. ECA provides access within 45 days of receiving a written request.

Amendment Requests: Students or parents/guardians may request the amendment of records they believe are inaccurate or misleading. ECA considers the request and informs the requester of its decision. If the request is denied, the student or parent/guardian has the right to a hearing.

Consent for Release: A Student Information Release Form must be completed to authorize the release of student information. This form ensures compliance with FERPA.

Notification of Privacy Rights: ECA provides students and parents/guardians with a Notice of Privacy Practices during the admission process. This notice is also prominently posted in the administration building.

Data Protection and Security

Physical Security: All printed student information must be stored in a locked, secure location when not in use. Staff working from home offices must follow the same confidentiality guidelines as in the main office.

Electronic Security: ECA employs robust security measures to protect electronic records, including the use of passwords and encryption. The use of USB flash drives is prohibited unless prior approval is obtained from the Chief Information Officer.

Data Breaches: In the event of a data breach, staff must immediately notify the Chief of Staff/General Counsel and the Chief Financial Officer. The Organizational Privacy Officer will conduct a risk assessment and make necessary notifications if required.

Accountability

Staff Training: All staff members must review this confidentiality policy and sign an acknowledgment form during their orientation.

Compliance Monitoring: Local directors ensure compliance with this policy. The Risk Management Department is accountable for the development, revision, distribution, and maintenance of this policy.