

Sample Language for LEAs Communicating with Community and External Stakeholders

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Welcome back to [school name]! As we begin the new school year, we wanted to take this opportunity to share with you our student privacy policies and practices to demonstrate our commitment to protecting your child's personal information. You can find our school's/district's student privacy policies and procedures here [link to policies] (if applicable: and our list of approved educational technology tools here [link to list]).

Our school/district collects student data including scores on tests and assignments, report card grades, student attendance, demographics, information on special needs, graduation and remediation rates, and disciplinary actions. This data is used to [insert purposes of student data collection, use, and sharing, e.g., determine eligibility for support services, help educators and school leaders understand what factors contribute to student success, and to personalize instruction to improve achievement]. While schools and school districts have always collected student data, the creation, storage, and analysis of this information are now largely conducted digitally.

Our school/district believes that student data should be used as a tool to improve student learning and success by informing, engaging, and empowering students, parents, educators, and policymakers. We believe that limited student data should only be shared for a legitimate educational purpose and that there should be clear, publicly available rules and guidelines for how student data is collected, used, safeguarded, and destroyed.

[If applicable: Our district's student privacy policy details the strict procedures and security mechanisms in place to protect digital student data and is available for you to review here: [link to policy]. The policy ensures only authorized individuals with a legitimate educational interest can access personally identifiable information about your child to successfully fulfill their responsibilities.]

In addition to data the school/district collects, your child's educator(s) may use online learning tools and applications that also collect and use data. Please be aware that federal laws like the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and state laws protect student privacy and give parents certain rights related to their child's data. [If applicable: We carefully vet all tools and applications used in the classroom, and they must comply with federal student privacy laws

governing data collection, use, and maintenance. You may be asked to sign a consent form for your child to use certain tools if we are unable to verify that the tool meets our student privacy obligations.] [If applicable: Educators are only allowed to use education technology tools with students when that education technology company has signed a privacy-protective contract with our district or the educator has gotten your written consent for an approved tool that lacks a contract, which is often the case for many free tools.]

[If applicable: We encourage you to review our district's student privacy policy online at [insert url] to understand how we work to keep your student's data and their privacy protected.] We also encourage you to do the same with technologies you use or are considering to assist with your child's learning.

If you have any questions or concerns, please visit [insert url] or contact the district's [insert party responsible for student privacy, e.g., Chief Information Officer] [insert name] at [insert email/phone number].

Thank you and we look forward to a successful school year.

Kind Regards,
[insert signature]

Credit: Student Privacy Compass