



**Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) Policy**  
**SOP Reference: 95-3**

**This policy must be posted on the Student Bulletin Board.** An abbreviated FERPA policy will be posted on the school's Consumer Information web page under Privacy of Student Records Family- Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). It also will be distributed to the campuses to be posted on the ground and online appropriate bulletin board. The FERPA Policy is to be reviewed annually.

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99) is a Federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. The law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education.

FERPA gives parents certain rights with respect to their children's education records. These rights transfer to the student when he or she reaches the age of 18 or attends a school beyond the high school level. Students to whom the rights have transferred are "eligible students."

- Parents or eligible students have the right to inspect and review the student's education records maintained by the school. Schools are not required to provide copies of records unless, for reasons such as great distance, it is impossible for parents or eligible students to review the records. Schools may charge a fee for copies.
- Parents or eligible students have the right to request that a school correct records which they believe to be inaccurate or misleading. If the school (Valley College) decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student then has the right to a formal hearing. After the hearing, if the school still decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student has the right to place a statement with the record setting forth his or her view about the contested information.
- Generally, schools must have written permission from the parent or eligible student in order to release any information from a student's education record. However, FERPA allows schools to disclose those records, without consent, to the following parties or under the following conditions (34 CFR § 99.31):
  - School officials with legitimate educational interest;
  - Other schools to which a student is transferring;
  - Specified officials for audit or evaluation purposes;
  - Appropriate parties in connection with financial aid to a student;
  - Organizations conducting certain studies for or on behalf of the school;
  - Accrediting organizations;
  - To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena;
  - Appropriate officials in cases of health and safety emergencies; and
  - State and local authorities, within a juvenile justice system, pursuant to specific State law.

Schools may disclose, without consent, "directory" information such as a student's full name, major/minor (program), academic honors, degree/certificate awarded, dates attended (start date, date degree conferred and/or withdrawal date), full time status, address, phone number, email address. Schools must tell parents and eligible students about directory information and allow parents and eligible students a reasonable amount of time to request that the school not disclose directory information about them. Schools must notify parents and eligible

students annually of their rights under FERPA. The actual means of notification (special letter, inclusion in the student handbook, or newspaper article) is left to the discretion of each school.

Prior to releasing information, the faculty/staff member must review the student's file to confirm that the student signed a FERPA Release Form (AD-19). **The following student information cannot be released:** social security number (whole or in part), date of birth, student ID number, class schedule/roster, grades, GPA (term or cumulative), transcript, citizenship, gender, ethnicity, religious preference, daily class schedule (even to local police/authorities) and parent's address, unless written consent has been received. The student's GPA may be released if the student has indicated such on the FERPA Release form. This should be limited to the Placement Services department and for the purpose of the student's career development/job search. Classroom instructors should not release GPA or course grades. The exception would be if the student has indicated that they have a Support Specialist who has completed the required Support Specialist Release.

### **Copying Records**

Parents or eligible students have the right to inspect and review the student's education records maintained by the school. Schools are not required to provide copies of records unless, for reasons such as great distance or the student/parent is otherwise incapable of inspecting the records in person, Schools may charge a fee for copies as long as it does not effectively prevent the student from exercising his or her right to inspect the records. Valley College requests that the student or parent (of a student under the age of 18) submit a request in writing before records may be released. The College may accept an electronic request.

**Student transcript:** A student transcript is part of the student's academic record. Hence, it is required that the school provides a copy of the transcript if requested. However, this transcript does not need to be an official copy of the academic transcript. The college is not required to provide more than one copy of the unofficial transcript. The school is not required to send a copy of the education records to a third party, such as a prospective employer or another school. Nothing prevents the college from indicating that the transcript is an unofficial copy. If the student has defaulted on his or financial obligations, the college may indicate that on the academic transcript. (Handwritten notification is fine.)

For additional information, you may contact:  
Family Policy Compliance Office  
U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Avenue, SW,  
Washington, D.C. 20202-8520  
1-800-USA-LEARN (1-800-872-5327) (voice)  
Individuals who use TDD may call 1-800-437-0833