



# Illinois State Board of Education

100 North First Street • Springfield, Illinois 62777-0001  
www.isbe.net

Gery J. Chico  
Chairman

Christopher A. Koch, Ed.D.  
State Superintendent of Education

## ***Fact Sheet: Student Data Privacy Protection***

*Division of Public Information, Illinois State Board of Education*

The purposes of student data collection are many, with the overall goal of bettering Illinois education at all levels. The Illinois State Board of Education works diligently to ensure student data is kept private. Access to student data is very limited and strictly monitored, with security protocols in place to ensure privacy.

### **Student data collected by ISBE:**

- Student demographics – name, date of birth, race/ethnicity
- Program participation – i.e. English Language Learner (ELL), Career and Technical Education (CTE)
- Grades/Test Scores
- Disciplinary incidents
- Disability information
- Social security numbers are **NOT** collected

### **Why the data is collected by ISBE**

Student data is collected so ISBE can aggregate the data for purposes of public reporting, such as the Illinois Report Card and the Consolidated State Performance Report. The ultimate goal of student data collection, outside of mandated reporting, is to track student progress and improve access to high quality learning resources for each child.

Student disability information is collected to ensure districts are providing students with the accommodations necessary to provide access to a general education curriculum.

ISBE does **NOT** send any student-level data, or data that could identify an individual student, to the federal government. ISBE also does **NOT** sell data to third parties. We only share data for educational purposes if proper legal and security controls are in place. The PARCC and Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortia will **NOT** provide student-level data to the U.S. Department of Education, but rather only school-level data with no personally identifiable information.

### **Who can access the data:**

- School district personnel authorized by the district superintendent
- ISBE personnel with appropriate security credentials and training on student privacy laws
- ISBE contractors whose function requires access to the data and whose contracts specifically explain the contractor's responsibility to maintain the security of the data
- Researchers who obtain permission to access the data through ISBE's research review process and who enter a data sharing agreement indicating how the data will be used and protected

## **How we protect student privacy**

Security protocols ensure that only authorized users have access. The data is protected under stringent data security and privacy laws, including the two substantial laws that govern our work: the federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and the Illinois School Student Records Act (ISSRA). We are meticulous in ensuring we follow these laws carefully.

### **Family and Educational Rights Privacy Act (FERPA)**

FERPA allows parents to have rights to their child's education records and works to protect student privacy. Schools must have written permission from parents in order to release any information on the student's record except in specific, limited circumstances laid out in the law. Schools do not need consent to disclose directory information such as student names, phone numbers, addresses, dates and places of birth, awards and attendance records. Although, schools must notify parents of the right to opt out of the disclosure, and provide a reasonable amount of time to request that the school not disclose student information.

FERPA regulations were amended in 2012 to clarify the circumstances under which SEAs and LEAs are specifically permitted to disclose protected information to outside entities that are authorized under FERPA to carry out audits/evaluations of State or federally funded education programs.

### **Illinois School Student Records Act (ISSRA)**

ISSRA protects the rights of students and parents to obtain student educational records, both temporary and permanent. It is also in place to provide a process whereby parents may seek to correct record inaccuracies and to ensure the privacy of records is upheld. No educational records can be released without written consent of the student (if 18) or a parent/legal guardian except in specific, limited circumstances laid out in the law.

Student records may include information such as academic transcripts, attendance, birth dates, addresses, accident and health reports, participation records, and honors/awards from the student's academic career.

In accordance with FERPA and ISSRA, security protocols are in place to protect student privacy not only under the current Illinois State Board of Education administration, but future ISBE administrations as well. Responsibility for protecting the students we serve through existing privacy laws and security measures will remain in place now and in the future.

## **Resources**

- [ISBE's Data Analysis and Accountability webpage: Site includes a link to Data Access and Use Policy and Procedures, instructions for researchers requesting access, and resources for data collection.](#)
- [ISBE's FERPA webpage: Site includes information on FERPA and a link to more detailed FERPA regulations](#)
- [Illinois General Assembly's ILCS webpage: Site includes legislative details on ISSRA](#)