

STUDENT PRIVACY

It is the intent of the Evansville Community School District to guarantee the personal and family privacy of all students in the District. Within this statement, it is not intended to eliminate the voluntary collection of data from students when such surveys are approved by the administration and completed in accordance with other board policies on research.

These protections apply to all school levels.

I. Privacy Protections for Students and Families

In order to protect the privacy of students within the classroom or group settings and still provide quality educational activities, the following guidelines will be adhered to:

- A. Teachers, counselors, support staff, and volunteers approved to present in the District classrooms will not directly ask or require a student to divulge private information in a classroom setting.
 1. “Private information” shall be defined as any information generally considered private for a student and/or the family. This includes information about a child’s family’s personal: habits, traits, relatives, family preferences, family income or business affairs, religious beliefs, political opinions, physical or mental health status, or patterns of inter-relationships.
 2. At the discretion of the student, personal opinions, feelings, and ideas may be expressed as they relate to the goals of the lesson.
- B. Lessons are to be constructed so that private information is not requested or prompted. Educators are to redirect any divulging of private information back to the original topic.
- C. Any material that is inappropriately biased or derogatory of a certain religion, creed, lifestyle, family/marital status, or ethnic community will not be taught. For further information, see Board guidelines on “Pupil Non-Discrimination”. Materials and examples should be representative of different types/configurations of families, family structures, and family socio-economic status.
- D. Principals, teachers, and other employees shall inform volunteers of this policy in written form when using volunteers to handle confidential student information. Arrangements shall be made to protect student privacy in the event of the administration or distribution of a survey to a student that would reveal information on one or more of the following:
 - Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or the student’s parents/family.
 - Mental health status of the students or the student’s family.
 - Sexual activity.
 - Self-incriminating behavior.
 - Critical appraisals of other individuals with whom students have close family relationships.
 - Legally recognized privileged or analogous relationship.
 - Religious practices, affiliations or beliefs of the student or the student’s parents.
 - Income, other than required by law to determine eligibility for participation in a program or for receiving financial assistance under such a program.

II. Materials Selection

The materials and activities used in school programs will be selected in accordance with Board policy and the following principals:

- A. Materials should be age appropriate. Any materials in doubt should be checked with the appropriate Principal or the District Administrator.
- B. Subject area content for the materials selected will be in accordance with the program/discipline goals and the scope and sequences. “Scope” means the inclusionary factors of a given curriculum, and “sequence” means the order in which something is introduced, applied, or reinforced. In summary, “scope” is what is taught and “sequence” is when it is taught.
- C. Materials shall be available for parental review.

III. Surveys

The provisions of this policy do not apply to written surveys or questionnaires approved by the Principal and the District Administrator in which the student respondent is not identified with the responses and where the purposes are ethical, constructive, and contain privacy protections outlined in Section I above.

IV. Parental Consent

If private information is to be requested of students at any level, written, informed consent shall be based on complete information provided to the parent regarding the process, techniques, and use of the information and the training of the teacher regarding such activities.

A separate consent statement shall be on file prior to initiation of any activity, exercise or study. Where it is probable that specific course assignments might lead toward discussion of topics that might invade privacy, parental awareness will be fostered through meetings, communications, or publications. Parents concerned about any potential violation of this policy should be directed to the Principal of the particular school or may file a complaint under the policies listed below.

Principals shall annually inform District staff and newly hired staff of this policy. Principals shall also notify any volunteers/speakers of this policy prior to presenting in the classroom.

Legal Ref.: Section 118.01(2)(d) Wisconsin Statutes (Educational Goals and Expectations)
118.019 (Human Growth and Development Instruction)
118.15(1)(d)-(f) (Compulsory School Attendance)
PI41, WI Administration Code

Local Ref.: Policy #333.1 – Student Surveys