



STUDENT PRIVACY

Considerations Regarding Student Privacy Concerns in K-12 Schools

UNDERSTANDING PRIVACY CONCERNS

- **Personally Identifiable Information (PII):** PII refers to any data that can be used to identify an individual. This includes:

- Student names
- Addresses
- Social Security numbers
- Birthdates
- Parent/guardian contact information

[VIDEO: What is PII?](#)

- **Protected Health Information (PHI):** PHI includes any health-related information that can identify a student. This is particularly relevant in boarding schools where health services are provided. Examples include:

- Medical records
- Health insurance information
- Treatment plans

[VIDEO: What is PHI?](#)

- **Camera Use:** Schools must balance security needs with privacy protection when they decide to use cameras on campus. Key considerations include:
 - **Strategic Placement:** Avoid placing cameras in areas where privacy is expected, such as bathrooms, locker rooms, and counseling offices.
 - **Access Control:** Limit access to camera footage to authorized personnel only.
 - **Transparency:** Inform students, staff, and parents about camera usage through clear signage and posted policies.

[VOLT BLOG: School Security Cameras: How to Improve Safety in 2025](#)



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LEGAL FRAMEWORKS AND COMPLIANCE

- **Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA):** FERPA protects the privacy of student education records. Key points include:
 - **Parental Rights:** Parents have the right to access and request amendments to their child's education records.
 - **Consent:** Schools must obtain written consent from parents before disclosing PII from education records, except under certain permitted circumstances.

[VIDEO: What is FERPA?](#)

- **Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA):** HIPAA protects the privacy of health information. In schools, this applies to:
 - **School Health Services:** Any health information collected by school health services must be protected under HIPAA.
 - **Disclosure:** Schools must obtain consent before sharing PHI, except in cases of an emergency or when required by law.

[HIPAA & FERPA: Key Considerations for School-Based Health Centers](#)

- **Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA):** COPPA regulates the collection of personal information from children under the age of 13 by online services. Schools must ensure:
 - **Parental Consent:** Obtain parental consent before collecting, using, or disclosing personal information from students under 13.
 - **Data Security:** Implement measures to protect the collected data from unauthorized access and breaches.

[NBC NEWS: "These are the things we need to be talking about as a way to help our teenagers, not restricting their access to information."](#)



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BEST PRACTICES FOR PRIVACY PROTECTION

- **Data Security Measures:** Implement robust data security measures to protect PII and PHI, including:
 - Encrypting sensitive data both in transit and at rest.
 - Restricting access to sensitive data to authorized personnel only.
 - Conducting regular audits to ensure compliance with privacy policies and to identify potential vulnerabilities.
- **Privacy Policies:** Develop and enforce comprehensive privacy policies, including:
 - Providing clear guidelines on the collection, use, and disclosure of PII and PHI.
 - Training staff on privacy policies and data protection practices.
 - Establishing procedures for responding to data breaches and privacy incidents.
- **Educate the School Community:** Develop a privacy awareness and safety culture, including:
 - Communicating privacy policies and best practices to students, staff, and parents regularly.
 - Encouraging feedback and addressing concerns related to privacy.
 - Conducting workshops and training sessions on privacy protection and data security.

[Student Privacy Compass: The Educators Guide to Student Data Privacy](#)

[VIDEO: Student Privacy 101: Privacy Defined](#)



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ADDRESSING PRIVACY CONCERNS

- **Student and Parent Engagement:** Engage students and parents in discussions about privacy.

Key considerations:

- Conducting surveys to gather feedback on privacy concerns and preferences.
- Hosting meetings to discuss privacy policies, conduct trainings, and address any concerns.
- Providing resources and support to help students and parents understand their privacy rights.

- **Continuous Improvement:** Focus on continuously improving privacy practices. This may include:

- Reviewing and updating privacy policies regularly to reflect changes in the laws and to improve best practices.
- Investing in technology upgrades to enhance data security and privacy protection.
- Collaborating with privacy experts and organizations to stay informed about emerging privacy issues and solutions.



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