

# Guidance for Research Involving FERPA and PPRA

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## 1. What is FERPA?

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (34 CFR Part 99) is a federal law that governs access to and protects the privacy of student education records. FERPA regulations apply to all schools that receive funds under any applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education. FERPA regulates the disclosure of personally identifiable information from education records in all public elementary and secondary schools, intermediate or state education agencies, and any public or private



administrators; health staff; counselors; attorneys; clerical staff; board members; members of committees and disciplinary boards; and a contractor, volunteer or other party to whom the school has outsourced institutional services or functions.

- **Student** Any individual who is or has been in attendance at an educational institution and regarding whom the institution maintains education records.

#### **4. When does PPRA require written authorization for research?**

Researchers must obtain written informed consent from written consent from parents or legal guardians for research on students involving surveys, psychiatric evaluation, testing, or treatment, psychological evaluation, testing, or treatment, in which the primary aim is to collect “protected information” concerning one or more of the following. These requirements are applicable even when only anonymized or deidentified data are collected:

- Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or student’s parent
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