

FERPA INFORMATION FOR PARENTS

One of the most significant changes a parent experiences in sending a son or daughter to college is the difference in privacy standards for educational records at a college/university. Bay de Noc Community College has a long history and tradition of protecting student privacy. Additionally, Bay College is subject to a federal law called the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (also called FERPA or the Buckley Amendment) that sets privacy standards for student educational records and requires institutions to publish a compliance statement, including a statement of related institutional policies. Bay College policies on student records and FERPA are available on line or through the Office of the Registrar.

Frequently Asked Questions about FERPA

Q. Why do I have limited access to my son or daughter's college records especially when I am paying the bills?

- A. Under FERPA, the access rights that parents and legal guardians had in the elementary and secondary school setting are transferred to students, once a student has turned eighteen, or is attending any post secondary educational institution. Parents can be given access to their son or daughter's records if the student authorizes the permission in writing or in connection with the student's application for or receipt of financial aid.

Q. How can I find out my student's grades?

- A. The best approach is to ask your son or daughter directly. Communicating with young adults can be a challenge. They're not always as forthcoming as we would like. The college years, however, are a period of remarkable growth and maturation. The ability and willingness of students to share information and insights usually grows, especially as they acquire the confidence that comes with assuming greater responsibility for their own lives.

Q. Is there a single waiver that my son or daughter can sign so I can have access to all of their records or are there separate waivers for different offices?

- A. Bay College does not have a single waiver that a student can sign to give a parent access to their records. In carrying out their assigned responsibilities, many offices at Bay College collect and maintain information about students. Only two offices have records on all students. The Registrar's Office maintains information pertaining to a student's enrollment (registration) and official academic record. The Business Office maintains information about charges assessed and payments made to a student's account. If you desire access to certain information, we recommend that you ask your son or daughter to provide permission to the office that is handling a particular matter.

Q. What records does FERPA cover?

- A. The privacy protection FERPA gives to students is very broad. With limited exceptions, the FERPA regulations give privacy protection to all students'

“education records.” Education records are defined as “those records that are directly related to a student and are maintained by an educational agency or institution or by a party acting for the agency or institution.” Examples of student records entitled to FERPA privacy protection are grade reports and transcripts.

Q. Will I be notified if my son or daughter is placed on academic probation?

A. No. Information about grades and academic standing is sent directly to students. You can, of course, ask your child to keep you informed about his/her academic performance.

Q. Will I be notified if my son or daughter is hurt or in danger?

A. If we learn of an emergency involving one of our students, we will attempt to notify the student’s parents. Hospitals and police agencies will also follow their own notification protocols.

Q. I’ve seen press reports about a new FERPA provision allowing notice to parents when a student violates alcohol or drug laws. What position has Bay College taken on this new rule?

A. FERPA regulations authorize – but do not require – disclosure to parents of “the student’s violation of any Federal, State, or local law, or of any rule or policy of the institution, governing the use or possession of alcohol or a controlled substance.” Bay College has not changed its privacy policy to permit such disclosure.

Q. Where can I find out more information about FERPA?

A. FERPA is enforced by the U.S. Department of Education. The Department maintains a FERPA website (with links to FERPA regulations) at:
<http://www.ed.gov/offices/om/fpco/ferpa/parents.html>

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