

FERPA

8 WAYS TO ENSURE
YOUR SCHOOL IS
FERPA-COMPLIANT

1 RAISE FERPA AWARENESS

Ensure all employees are aware of FERPA and that it's their duty to comply with its provisions. Explain why FERPA was established, what it aims to do and consequences for noncompliance.

2 CONFIRM THAT FERPA APPLIES TO YOU

FERPA applies to any school that receives federal funding from programs administered by the US Department of Education. This includes virtually all public and charter schools.

3 KNOW THE RIGHTS, PROTECTIONS & EXCEPTIONS

It's the job of every school employee to learn, understand and comply with FERPA. Ensure staff know what's data exists in an education record, the rights to view records and limits for sharing data.

4 CHOOSE COMPLIANT VENDORS

Choose third-party vendors that will comply with FERPA. Revise all existing agreements to ensure the vendor understands their duty to comply. Schools may be liable for the actions of outside vendors.

5 TRAIN ALL SCHOOL EMPLOYEES

Conduct yearly training on FERPA, including the rights it awards and the requirements of the school. FERPA has many forgettable nuances, but unintentional violations still have consequences.

6 IMPLEMENT COMPLIANT POLICIES & PROCEDURES

Implementing FERPA-compliant policies and procedures makes it easier for staff to comply too. For example: shred all old papers, develop a data breach response plan, prohibit emailing private data.

7 ENCRYPT FILES & EMAILS

Encrypted files and emails cannot be accessed without the decryption key, adding an extra layer of protection for school employees whose property, including computers and tablets, is lost or stolen.

8 IMPLEMENT OTHER PREVENTION TOOLS

Ensure there are tools in place that help the entire school comply with FERPA guidelines. For example: compliance-monitoring mechanisms and case management software.