

Families' Privacy Rights

Parents and students have privacy rights that must be respected within the school system.

- ▶ In Canada, all organizations are accountable for their privacy practices.
- ▶ Legally, they have to follow appropriate privacy standards, and they must respond if complaints are made.

Privacy is about organizations taking reasonable steps for collecting, using, sharing, and protecting personal information – which means information that can identify you, which you might not want to be public.

Privacy laws are meant to balance the rights of individuals to have their personal information protected, and the need for organizations to have personal information in order to provide services. For example:

- ▶ Schools need to collect, use, and share certain student and family personal information so they can provide education programs and services.
- ▶ Schools are also accountable for carefully using and protecting that information.

Parent and Student Rights

- ▶ You have the right to ask your school for a copy of their privacy policies.
- ▶ You can ask what the school does to protect your information, and how the school decides who can see it.
- ▶ Only people who need to see personal information should have access to it.
- ▶ Schools should only collect information they need. If you want to know what information the school collects about your family, you can ask.
- ▶ Schools should have clear and thorough procedures to keep your information safe.
- ▶ If you have serious concerns about the use of your information, talk to the school.
 - There might be good reasons why information is being collected. The school might be doing everything it can to protect information.
 - If you don't feel that's the case, speak up.
 - If your child is attending a public school, contact the school district. If your child attends a First Nation school, talk to the School Governing Authority.
 - Ultimately, families can contact a Privacy Commissioner if they can't resolve a privacy concern. The Commissioner has the authority to investigate concerns.
- ▶ In BC, the Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner (OIPC) is responsible for complaints about provincially regulated schools.
- ▶ For schools that are regulated by the federal government, the Office of the Privacy Commissioner of Canada (OPC) is responsible.
- ▶ You can talk to your community representatives to find out more about what authority applies.

Protecting Information is Best Done In Partnership

- ▶ It is best when schools and families work together to share and protect data in the best ways possible.
- ▶ With increasing online threats, everyone can help keep data and information in the hands of those who need it, and out of the hands of people who want to do harm.
- ▶ Talk to your school if you want to know more about how you can help keep information secure.