**Research In Schools:**

**FERPA and PPRA**

**Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act**

FERPA affords students and/or their parents (if minor) certain rights concerning their educational records. These include the right to review and inspect their educational records, the right to seek to have their educational records amended, and the right to have some control over the disclosure of information from their educational records.

If your research involves conducting research in schools and it is or will be funded from the US Department of Education, there are other considerations to think about before submitting your IRB application. See inside this brochure to review these guidelines.

**Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA)**

The PPRA applies to programs that receive funding from the U.S. Department of Education (ED). PPRA is intended to protect the rights of parents and students in two ways:

- It seeks to ensure that schools and contractors make instructional materials available for inspection by parents if those materials will be used in connection with an ED-funded survey, analysis, or evaluation in which their children participate; and

- It seeks to ensure that schools and contractors obtain written parental consent before minor students are required to participate in any ED-funded survey, analysis, or evaluation that reveals certain information.

Parents or students who believe their rights under PPRA may have been violated may file a complaint with ED by writing the Family Policy Compliance Office. Complaints must contain specific allegations of fact giving reasonable cause to believe that a violation of PPRA occurred.
Research Directly Funded by Department of Education

No student will be required, as part of any research project, to submit without prior consent, to surveys, psychiatric examination, testing, or treatment, or psychological examination, testing, or treatment, in which the primary purpose is to reveal information concerning one or more of the following:

- Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or the student’s parent.
- Mental or psychological problems of the student or the student’s family.
- Sex behavior or attitudes.
- Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior.
- Critical appraisals of other individuals with whom respondents have close family relationships.
- Legally recognized privileged or analogous relationships, such as those of lawyers, physicians, and ministers.
- Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or the student’s parent.
- Income (other than that required by law to determine eligibility for participation in a program or for receiving financial assistance under such program).

Research Conducted in U.S. Department of Education Funded School

For certain types of research projects not directly funded by the U.S. Department of Education, but conducted in a school that receives funding, schools are required to develop and adopt policies in conjunction with parents regarding the following:

- The right of a parent of a student to inspect, upon the request of the parent, a survey created by a third party before the survey is administered or distributed by a school to a student.
- Any applicable procedures for granting a request by a parent for reasonable access to such survey within a reasonable period of time after the request is received.
- Arrangements to protect student privacy that are provided by the agency in the event of the administration or distribution of a survey to a student containing one or more of the following items (including the right of a parent to inspect, upon the request of the parent, any survey containing one or more of such items):
  - Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or the student’s parent.
  - Mental or psychological problems of the student or the student’s family.
  - Sex behavior or attitudes.
  - Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior.
  - Critical appraisals of other individuals with whom respondents have close family relationships.
  - Legally recognized privileged or analogous relationships, such as those of lawyers, physicians, and ministers.
  - Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or the student’s parent.
  - Income (other than that required by law to determine eligibility for participation in a program or for receiving financial assistance under such program).
- The right of a parent of a student to inspect, upon the request of the parent, any instrument used as part of the educational curriculum for the student.
- Any applicable procedures for granting a request by a parent for reasonable access to instructional material received.
- The administration of physical examinations or screenings that the school or agency may administer to a student.
- The collection, disclosure, or use of personal information collected from students for the purpose of marketing or for selling that information (or otherwise providing that information to others for that purpose), including arrangements to protect student privacy that are provided by the agency in the event of such collection, disclosure, or use.
- The right of a parent of a student to inspect, upon the request of the parent, any instrument used in the collection of personal information before the instrument is administered or distributed to a student.
- Any applicable procedures for granting a request by a parent for reasonable access to such instrument within a reasonable period of time after the request is received.

If you will be conducting research in an institution that receives funding from the Department of Education, verification from the school that they comply with these rules is required before final IRB approval can be issued. A template to document this is available on the IRB website.