

# SAUCON VALLEY SCHOOL DISTRICT

SECTION: PUPILS

TITLE: PARENTAL CUSTODY/ACCESS  
TO INFORMATION

ADOPTED:

REVISED:

## 238. PARENTAL CUSTODY/ACCESS TO INFORMATION

### 1. Purpose

The Saucon Valley School District strives to protect students from emotional stress resulting from parental disagreement over matters involving the school. Recent court decisions and legal opinions have made it clear that school officials must remain neutral toward parents who are separated or divorced. School district personnel will not side with one parent against the other, regardless of the child's residence or guardianship.

A parent who has a court decree which establishes him/her as custodial parent must forward a copy of the document to the school principal to be placed in the child's official school record. In most cases a decree can provide a legal basis for working with one parent to the exclusion of another. If there is a court order barring access of the noncustodial parent, then the school district will advise that parent that no information will be released until the order terminates and will neither confirm nor deny that the child is enrolled in the district.

In the absence of such an order, the parent must be aware that school officials cannot deny either parent access to the child's records and will not normally deny either parent access to his/her child. The school district could not refuse to provide information or refuse to meet with or work with the other parent. However, if a request for access to records is made by a noncustodial parent, the school district will seek to verify the person's identity and notify the custodial parent of the request.

In accordance with PDE BEC 7-90, the district will ask parents to put in writing their request to inspect, review, or copy their child's educational records. This written request must include the requester's name, current address, and the basis upon which s/he claims the right of access to the information. Absent a court order or similar decree, the school district will comply with the request and grant access within forty-five (45) days. If the child is a special education student, however, the school district will comply within thirty (30) days of the request. This response period is not designed to unnecessarily delay parental access, but to allow the school district time to make an informed decision regarding access to the student's records.

<p>2. Authority</p>	<p>Federal law and state regulations require school districts to maintain a list of all persons, other than authorized school officials, and the student's parents, who have requested or obtained access to personally identifiable information contained in the student's educational records or the student's special education records. This list will be made available to the student's parents upon request.</p> <p>The school district, in accordance with PDE recommendation, will not give student enrollment or record information over the phone unless the requesting individual can be verified, and parent permission has been granted.</p> <p>Unless there is explicit consent by the custodial parent, school officials will not knowingly allow the noncustodial parent to take the child off the school premises. The school district's policy is to return the child to the home from which s/he came that morning.</p> <p>Officials of the Saucon Valley School District wish to protect all children from emotionally upsetting situations. Separated and divorced parents are urged to communicate frequently about their child's school experience.</p> <p>It is hoped that ground rules for involvement with the school can be decided amiably outside of the school so that problems are resolved and confrontation in school is reduced.</p>
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