

# **Claiborne County Schools ~~ Parents Right to Know**

## **PARENTAL NOTIFICATION**

### **Under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA)**

The Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) as amended in Dec. 2015 by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) makes it clear that Congress expects local educational agencies (LEAs) and schools receiving federal funds to ensure that parents are actively involved and knowledgeable about their schools and their children's education. The law requires schools to give parents many different kinds of information and notices in a uniform and understandable format and, to the extent practicable, in a language that the parents can understand. Listed below are some of these required notices that must be made to parents by school districts or individual public schools.

### **Teacher Qualifications and Highly Effective Teachers**

At the beginning of each year, an LEA shall notify parents that they may request, and the LEA will provide, information regarding whether professionals are highly effective, including the qualifications of the student's teachers and paraprofessionals. This includes information about whether the student's teacher:

- 1) has met state qualification and licensing criteria for the grade levels and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction;
- 2) is teaching under emergency or other provisional status through which state qualification or licensing criteria have been waived;
- 3) is teaching in the field of discipline not of the certification of the teacher; and
- 4) is teaching alongside paraprofessionals and, if so, the paraprofessional's qualifications [ESSA § 1112(e)(1)(A)].

### **Student Privacy**

Districts must give parents annual notice at the beginning of the school year of the specific or approximate dates during the school year when the following activities are scheduled or expected to be scheduled:

- activities involving the collection, disclosure, or use of personal student information for the purpose of marketing or selling that information;
- administration of surveys containing request for certain types of sensitive information; and

- any nonemergency, invasive physical examination that is required as a condition of attendance, administered by the school, scheduled in advance, and not necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of student.

A district must develop and adopt policies regarding the rights of parents to inspect:

- third-party surveys before they are administered or distributed to students;
- measures to protect student privacy when surveys ask for certain sensitive information;
- any instructional materials;
- administration of physical examinations or screening of students;
- collection, disclosure, or use of personal information from students for the purpose of marketing or selling that information; and
- the parental right to inspect any instrument used to collect personal information before it is distributed to students.

Districts must give parents annual notice of an adoption or continued use of such policies and within a reasonable period of time after any substantive change in such policies [20 U.S.C. 1232g].

### **Public Release of Student Directory Information**

Under the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), an LEA must provide notice to parents of the types of student information that it releases publicly. This type of student information, commonly referred to as “directory information,” includes such items as names, addresses, and telephone numbers and is information generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if disclosed. The notice must include an explanation of a parent’s right to request that the information not be disclosed without prior written consent.

Additionally, ESSA requires that parents be notified that the school routinely discloses names, addresses, and telephone numbers to military recruiters upon request, subject to a parent’s request not to disclose such information without written consent [§8025].

A single notice provided through a mailing, student handbook, or other method that is reasonably calculated to inform parents of the above information is sufficient to satisfy the parental notification requirements of both FERPA and ESSA. The notification must advise the parent of how to opt out of the public, nonconsensual disclosure of directory information and the method and timeline within which to do so [20 U.S.C. 1232g] [ESEA §8025].

### **Military Recruiter Access to Student Information**

Districts receiving federal education funds must notify parents of secondary school students that they have a right to request their child’s name, address, and telephone number not be released to a military recruiter without their prior written consent. Districts must comply with any such requests [ESEA §8528(a)(2)(B)].

## **Parent and Family Engagement**

A district receiving Title I funds must develop jointly with, agree on with, and distribute to, parents and family members of participating children a written district-level parent and family engagement policy. Each school served under Title I must also develop jointly with, agree on with, and distribute to, parents and family members of participating children a written school-level parent and family engagement policy. If an individual school or district has a parent and family engagement policy that applies to all, it may amend the policy to meet the requirements under the ESEA [*ESEA Title I, Part A, §1116(a)(2)*] [*20 U.S.C. §6318(b); (c)*].

Parents shall be notified of the policy in an understandable and uniform format and, to the extent practicable, provided in a language the parents can understand. Such policy shall be made available to the local community and updated periodically to meet the changing needs of parents and the school [*ESEA Title I, Part A, §1116(b)(1)*].

Schools must:

- hold at least one annual meeting for Title I parents;
- offer a flexible number of meetings;
- involve parents and families in an ongoing manner in the planning, review, and improvement of Title I programs;
- provide Title I parents and families with timely information about the programs, a description and explanation of the curriculum, forms of academic assessment and expected levels of student proficiency;
- if requested, provide opportunities for regular meetings to discuss decisions related to the education of their children; and
- develop a school-parent compact that outlines the responsibilities of each party for improved student academic achievement [*ESEA Title I, Part A, §1116(c)*].

## **Report Cards on Statewide Academic Assessment**

Each school district that receives Title I, Part A funds must prepare and disseminate an annual report card. Generally, the state or district must include on its report card information about public schools related to student achievement, accountability, teacher qualifications and other required information, as well as any other information that the state or district deems relevant.

These report cards must be concise and presented in an understandable and uniform format accessible to persons with disabilities and, to the extent practicable, provided in a language that parents can understand. In Tennessee, **these requirements are met through the state's report card** [*ESEA Title I, Part A, §1111(h)(1) and (h)(2)*].

## **Achievement on State Assessment**

All schools must provide to parents, teachers, and principals the individual student interpretive, descriptive, and diagnostic reports, which allow specific academic needs to be understood and addressed, and include information on the student's achievement on academic assessments aligned with state academic achievement standards [*ESEA §1111(b)(2)(B)(x)*].

### **National Assessment of Education Progress**

Districts, schools, and students may voluntarily participate in the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). Parents of children selected to participate in any NAEP assessment must be informed before the assessment is administered that their child may be excused from participation for any reason, is not required to finish any assessment, and is not required to answer any test question. A district must make reasonable efforts to inform parents and the public about their right to access all assessment data (except personally identifiable information), questions, and current assessment instruments [*ESEA Title VI, Part C, §411(c)(1); (d)(1)– (2)*].

### **School-wide Programs**

An eligible school operating a school-wide program shall make the comprehensive plan available to the LEA, parents, and the public. The information contained in such plan shall be in an understandable and uniform format and, to the extent practicable, provided in a language that the parents can understand [*20 U.S.C. §6314*] [*ESEA Title I, Part A, §1114*].

### **English Learner Programs**

A school district that uses federal funds to provide a language instruction education program for English learners must no later than 30 days after the beginning of the school year inform the parents of each child identified for participation or participating in such a program:

- the reasons for the identification of the child as an English learner;
- the child's level of English proficiency;
- how that level was determined and the status of the child's academic achievement;
- methods of instruction used in the program in which their child is participating and methods of instruction used in other available programs;
- how the program will meet the educational strengths and needs of their child;
- how the program will specifically help their child learn English and meet age-appropriate academic achievement standards for grade promotion and graduation;
- the specific exit requirements for the program;
- in the case of a child with a disability, how the program meets the child's IEP objectives; and
- information about parental rights detailing the right of parents to have their child immediately removed from such program upon their request and the options that parents have to decline to enroll their child in such program or to choose another available program or method of instruction.

For a child not identified as an English learner prior to the beginning of the school year, the district must notify parents within the first two weeks of the child being placed in such a program [*ESEA Title I, Part A, §1112*].

## **Homeless Children**

To be eligible for McKinney-Vento funds, the school must provide written notice at the time any child seeks enrollment in the school, and at least twice annually while the child is enrolled in the school, to the parent or guardian or unaccompanied youth that, shall be signed by the parent or guardian or unaccompanied youth; that sets forth the general rights provided; and specifically states:

### **The choice of schools homeless children are eligible to attend;**

- that no homeless child is required to attend a separate school for homeless children;
- that homeless children shall be provided comparable services, including transportation services, educational services, and meals; and
- that homeless children should not be stigmatized by school personnel.

If the district sends a homeless child to a school other than the school of origin or the school requested by the parent or guardian, the district must provide the parents a written explanation for, including notice of the right to appeal, the decision. The information must also be provided whenever a dispute arises over school selection [*ESSA Title IX, Part C, §722(g)(3)(B)*].

Each LEA liaison for homeless children and youth shall ensure the parents or guardians of homeless children and youth are informed of the educational and related opportunities available to their children and are provided with meaningful opportunities to participate in the education of their children [*ESSA Title IX, Part C, §722(g)(6)(A)(iv)*].

Public notice of the educational rights of homeless children and youths is disseminated where such children and youths receive services under the McKinney-Vento Act, such as schools, family shelters, and soup kitchens [*ESSA Title X, Part C, §722(g)(6)(A)(v)*].

## **21st Century Community Learning Centers**

A program or activity funded as part of a 21st Century Community Learning Center providing before and after school activities to advance student academic achievement must undergo periodic evaluation to assess its progress toward achieving its goal of providing high-quality opportunities for academic enrichment. The results of evaluations shall be made available to the public upon request, with public notice of such availability provided [*ESEA §4205(b)(2)*].

## **Waiver Request**

If a school district requests the U.S. Secretary of Education to waive any provision or regulation of the ESEA, it must provide notice and information about the waiver to the public in the manner in which is customarily provides public notice [20 U.S.C. §7861(b)(3)(B)] [ESEA Title IX, Part D, §8401(b)(3)(B)(ii)].

## **STATE STATUTORY RIGHTS OF PARENTS AND STUDENTS**

**Chapter 644 of the Public Acts of 2016** requires the department to annually compile a list of state laws related to the rights of students and their parents or legal guardians. This document includes a summary of the state laws that provide explicit rights to parents, legal guardians, or students and does not include all the legal protections and privileges afforded to students and their parents or legal guardians.

**T.C.A. § 49-1-704.** Parents and guardians have the right to inspect and review their children's education records maintained by the school. Parents and guardians have the right to request student data specific to their children's educational records. Local Education Associations (LEAs) shall provide parents or guardians with a copy of their children's educational records upon request.

**T.C.A. § 49-1-705.** Students shall not have to provide data to their school or LEA on their political affiliation; religion; voting history; and firearms ownership.

**T.C.A. § 49-1-706.** Parents must provide written consent prior to a state agency or educational institution collecting any individual student biometric data, student data relative to analysis of facial expressions, EEG brain wave patterns, skin conductance, galvanic skin response, heart-rate variability, pulse, blood volume, posture, and eye-tracking.

**T.C.A. § 49-1-1106.** Parents or other caretakers of children in the care of a child care program certified by the department of education shall be permitted to visit and inspect the facilities and observe the methods for the care of their children at any time during which the children are in the care of the program and, except those records of other children and their parents or caretakers, shall further be permitted to inspect any records of the program that are not privileged, or are not

otherwise confidential, as provided by law or regulation, and the parents' or caretakers' access for these purposes shall not be purposely denied by the program.

**T.C.A. § 49-2-124.** Parents may refuse to consent to the administration of a psychotropic medication to a student or to a mental health screening, evaluation, testing or examination of a child or student.

**T.C.A. § 49-2-129.** No school administrator, teacher, or other employee of an LEA shall require a student or the student's parent to provide information on firearm ownership by the student's family. No school administrator or other employee of an LEA shall require a teacher or other school employee to provide information on firearm ownership by the teacher or school employee. Any information on firearm ownership that is voluntarily provided by a student, parent, teacher, or LEA employee shall not be the basis for adverse disciplinary action against a student or adverse employment action against a teacher or LEA employee.

**T.C.A. § 49-2-211.** Every LEA shall have a policy that allows a parent or legal guardian access to review all surveys, analyses or evaluations, prior to being administered to the parent or legal guardian's child. The policy shall enable a parent or legal guardian to opt their student out of participating in a survey, analysis, or evaluation. The policy shall require a parent, legal guardian or student, in the case of students eighteen (18) years of age or older, to provide written consent before the collection of individual student biometric data. The LEA shall also disclose to the parent or legal guardian of the student the purpose for the survey, analysis, or evaluation materials as well as who will have access to the results.

**T.C.A. § 49-3-310.** No board of education of any public school system shall require any pupil or parent to purchase any textbook or instructional materials except in cases where the pupil or parent damages, loses or defaces the textbook or instructional materials either through willful intent or neglect. Parents or pupils may voluntarily purchase textbooks and instructional materials.

**T.C.A. § 49-5-1003.** Educators shall not disclose information about students obtained in the course of professional service, unless disclosure serves a compelling professional purpose or is required by law.

**T.C.A. § 49-6-901.** A copy of a student's report card shall be furnished by the LEA to the parent or parents of the student.

**T.C.A. § 49-6-902.** Any parent who does not have custody of a child, or in the case of parents having joint custody of a child, the parent not residing with the child, or in the case of a child in the custody of a legal guardian, both parents, may request in writing that a copy of the child's report card, notice of school attendance, names of teachers, class schedules, standardized test scores and any other records customarily available to parents be furnished directly to the noncustodial or nonresident parent.

**T.C.A. § 49-6-1004.** A period of silence of approximately one (1) minute shall be maintained at the beginning of each school day. A teacher shall not indicate or suggest to the students any action to be taken by them during this time. Students may voluntarily participate in prayer and no teacher or other school authority may prescribe the form or content of any prayer. Nonsectarian and non-proselytizing voluntary benedictions, invocations or prayers that are initiated and given by a student may be permitted during school-related non-compulsory student assemblies, school-related student sporting events and school-related commencement ceremonies.

**T.C.A. § 49-6-1031.** No school shall permit a student to become a member or participate in any activities of a club or organization if the parent or legal guardian of such student has tendered a written communication prohibiting such student from such membership or participation. In order to be valid, the written communication shall be signed and dated by the parent or legal guardian.

**T.C.A. § 49-6-1305.** LEAs shall notify parents or legal guardians of students whom the LEA anticipates will be present for family life instruction in sex education that: The LEA is using a family life curriculum that meets the requirements of state law; and The parent or legal guardian shall have the right to examine the grade level instructional materials and confer with the student's instructor, school counselor or principal, as designated by the LEA, regarding any or all portions of family life. A parent or guardian who wishes to excuse a student from any or all portions of family life shall submit a request, in writing, to the student's instructor, school counselor, or principal. A student who is excused from any or all portions of family life shall not be penalized for grading purposes if the student satisfactorily performs alternative health lessons.

**T.C.A. § 49-6-1306.** A parent or legal guardian of a student enrolled in family life may file a complaint with the director of schools if the parent or legal guardian believes that a teacher, instructor, or representative of an organization has not complied with the requirements of that law.

If a student receives instruction by an instructor or organization that promotes gateway sexual activity or demonstrates sexual activity, then the parent or legal guardian shall have a cause of action against that instructor or organization for actual damages plus reasonable attorney's fees and court costs (this does not apply to instruction from teachers employed by the LEA).

**T.C.A. § 49-6-1504.** Upon the expulsion of a student charged with a violent felony or violent felony delinquency, or a student convicted, adjudicated, or that admits guilt in court with respect to a violent felony or felony delinquency, the director of schools shall immediately give written or actual notice to the parent or guardian and the student of the right to appeal the decision to expel or remand the student to an alternative school. All appeals shall be filed, orally or in writing, within five (5) days after receipt of the notice and may be filed by the parent or guardian, the student, or any person holding a teaching license who is employed by the school system if requested by the student.

**T.C.A. § 49-6-1506.** A student or student's parent may request in writing within five (5) days after receipt of written notice of a disciplinary hearing by the disciplinary hearing authority that the hearing be conducted as an open meeting.

**T.C.A. § 49-6-1601.** Principals or other designated persons shall provide to parents or legal guardians all school information and records relevant to any reports of alleged abuse or sexual abuse, if requested by the parent or legal guardian; provided, that the information is edited to protect the confidentiality of the identity of the person who made the report, any other person whose life or safety may be endangered by the disclosure and any information made confidential pursuant to federal law or § 10-7-504(a)(4).

**T.C.A. § 49-6-1802.** An LEA shall treat a student's voluntary expression of a religious viewpoint, if any, on an otherwise permissible subject in the same manner in which the LEA treats a student's voluntary expression of a secular or other viewpoint on an otherwise permissible subject and may not discriminate against the student based on a religious viewpoint, if any, expressed by the student on an otherwise permissible subject.

**T.C.A. § 49-6-1804.** Students may express their written beliefs about religion in homework, artwork, and other written and oral assignments free from discrimination based on the religious content of the student's submissions. Homework and classroom assignments shall be judged by ordinary academic standards of substance and relevance and against other legitimate academic concerns identified by the LEA. Students may not be penalized or rewarded based on the religious content of the student's work.

**T.C.A. § 49-6-1805.** Students may organize religious student groups, religious clubs, "see you at the pole" gatherings, or other religious gatherings before, during, and after school to the same extent that students are permitted to organize other non-curricular student activities and groups. Religious groups shall be given the same access to school facilities for assembling as is given to other non-curricular groups without discrimination based on the religious content of the students' expression. If student groups that meet for nonreligious activities are permitted to advertise or announce meetings of their groups, then the LEA may not discriminate against groups that meet for prayer or other religious speech. An LEA may disclaim school sponsorship of non-curricular groups and events in a manner that neither favors nor disfavors groups that meet to engage in expressions of faith or religious speech.

**T.C.A. § 49-6-2211.** Every student shall be permitted to take any textbook or instructional materials specifically issued to the student home for the purpose of studying the textbook or instructional materials.

**T.C.A. § 49-6-2904.** Students have the right to voluntarily pray in a public school, express religious viewpoints in a public school, speak to and attempt to share religious viewpoints with other students in a public school, possess or distribute religious literature in a public school, and to be absent to observe religious holidays and participate in other religious practices. The participation in these activities must be in accordance with LEA policies.

**T.C.A. § 49-6-3001.** A parent or guardian may withdraw a child from a public school for a good substantial reason; provided, that within thirty (30) days the parent or person having legal custody of the child places the child in a public school designated by the local board of education or in a non-public school.

A parent or guardian who believes that a child is not ready to attend school at the designated age of mandatory attendance may make application to the principal of the public school that the child would attend for a one (1) semester or one (1) year deferral in required attendance.

A person designated as a caregiver with the power of attorney for care of a minor child pursuant to title 34, chapter 6, part 3 shall have the right to enroll the minor child in the LEA serving the area where the caregiver resides. The LEA shall allow a caregiver with a properly executed power of attorney for care of a minor child, pursuant to title 34, chapter 6, part 3, to enroll the minor child, but may require documentation of the minor child's residence with a caregiver or documentation or other verification of the validity of the stated hardship prior to enrollment. Except where limited by federal law, the caregiver shall be assigned the rights, duties and responsibilities that would otherwise be assigned to the parent, legal guardian or legal custodian pursuant to this title. If at any time the parent or legal guardian disagrees with the decision of the caregiver or chooses to make any educational decisions for the minor child, then the parent must revoke the power of attorney and provide the LEA written documentation of the revocation.

**T.C.A. § 49-6-3109. Unlawful discrimination.** No person shall be refused admission into or be excluded from any public school in this state on account of race, creed, color, sex or national origin. No student shall be assigned or compelled to attend any school on account of race, creed, color or national origin, or for the purpose of achieving equality in attendance or increased attendance or reduced attendance, at any school, of persons of one (1) or more particular races, creeds, colors or national origins. LEAs may assign a pupil in the manner requested or authorized by the pupil's parents or guardian.

**T.C.A. § 49-6-3201.** Parents or legal guardians who are dissatisfied with the school assignment of the student may, within ten (10) days, make a written application to the board for a hearing before the board as to the reasonableness of the assignment and ask for a transfer to another school.

**T.C.A. § 49-6-4213.** Students shall be advised in writing at the time of their enrollment in a school that they are subject to the testing for the presence of drugs in the student's body. Notice to each student shall include grounds for testing, the procedures that will be followed and possible penalties. Students shall be advised of their right to refuse to undergo drug testing and the consequences of refusal. A parent of the student or a person legally responsible for the student shall be notified before any drug test is administered to the student. If an LEA adopts a policy permitting random drug testing of students in voluntary extracurricular activities, then, prior to a student participating in an extracurricular activity, the LEA shall notify the parents and guardians of any such student that the student may be subjected to random drug testing. A parent

or guardian of a student participating in a volunteer extracurricular activity shall provide written consent for random drug testing prior to the student participating in the voluntary extracurricular activity. The principal or school counselor of the school in which a student who tests positive in a drug testing program is enrolled shall provide referral information to the student and to the student's parents or guardian. The information shall include information on inpatient, outpatient and community-based drug and alcohol treatment programs.

**T.C.A. § 49-6-4404.** Within forty-eight (48) hours of the imposition of corporal punishment of a pupil within the special school district, the pupil shall have the right to be examined by a physician to determine if the punishment was excessive. In any case in which the punishment is excessive, the pupil shall have the same civil and criminal remedies as any other pupil in the public schools.

**T.C.A. § 49-6-5001.** Children must be immunized against diseases identified by the Commissioner of Health prior to attendance at any school, nursery school, kindergarten, pre-school or child care facility. Parents or guardian of children are responsible for having their children immunized. Parents or guardians may file with school authorities a statement that the immunization and other preventive measures conflict with the parents' or guardians' religious tenets and practices, affirmed under the penalties of perjury. Parents may not provide a statement of waiver from immunizations during an epidemic or immediate threat of an epidemic. No child shall be denied admission to any school or school facility if the child has not been immunized due to medical reasons if the child has a written statement from the child's doctor excusing the child from the immunization. No child or youth determined to be homeless shall be denied admission to any school or school facility if the child or youth has not yet been immunized or is unable to produce immunization records due to being homeless.

**T.C.A. § 49-6-5005** Parents and guardians shall be provided with information about meningococcal disease and the effectiveness of vaccination against meningococcal disease at the beginning of every school year by the LEA.

**T.C.A. § 49-6-6007** Students and parents must be able to access information about state mandated tests and tests mandated by the LEA that shall be administered in the upcoming school year on the LEA website.

**T.C.A. § 49-6-7002** Parents or guardians may meet at least two (2) times per year with appropriate faculty members to discuss any pertinent problems or other matters of concern regarding the development and education of the student of the parent or guardian.

**T.C.A. § 49-6-7003.** A parent or legal guardian is entitled to review all teaching materials, instructional materials, and other teaching aids used in the classroom of the parent or legal guardian's child; and to review tests that are developed by and graded by a teacher of the parent or legal guardian's child. LEAs shall make all teaching materials, including handouts readily available for review upon request by the parents or legal guardians.

**T.C.A. § 49-10-103.** Children with disabilities shall receive the benefits of a free public education appropriate to their needs.

**T.C.A. § 49-10-306.** Any child receiving special education or special education related services outside the school district in which the child would normally attend public school and any parent or guardian of the child, shall continue to have all civil and other rights that the child would have if receiving like education or related services within the subdivision or school district where the child would normally attend public school.

**T.C.A. § 49-10-1304.** If school personnel impose isolation restraints or isolation on a student in an emergency situation, the student's parent or guardian shall be notified, orally or by written or printed communication, the same day the isolation or restraint was used. School personnel shall be held harmless for failure to notify if reasonable effort has been made to notify the student's parent or guardian.

**T.C.A. § 49-10-1305.** A child may be administered a chemical restraint for therapeutic purposes under the direction of a physician and with the child's parent or guardian's consent to administer such chemical restraint.

**T.C.A. § 49-13-140.** All records of a public charter school shall be open for personal inspection and duplication by any citizen of this state to the same extent that records of public schools operated by an LEA are open.

**T.C.A. § 49-16-206.** Families with students enrolled in virtual school shall be provided instructional materials by the virtual school. The virtual school shall also ensure student materials and access to necessary technology used for school work through a physical computer lab that is available to the student through regularly scheduled times.

**FOR PARENTS OF STUDENTS WITH IEP's**

[TRANSITION BILL OF RIGHTS](#)