



CELINA PATTON  
*Chief of Student Services*

1201 Main Street, Suite 300, Columbia, SC 29201

## MEMORANDUM

TO: School Leaders  
FROM: Celina Patton, Chief of Student Services  
DATE: March 23, 2020  
RE: Family Educational Right and Privacy Act (FERPA)

The Family Educational Right and Privacy Act (FERPA) is a federal law that protects the privacy of student education records and Personally Identifiable Information (PII). The Charter Institute at Erskine encourages its schools to review internal processes and practices in place to ensure the alignment of FERPA requirements as most our schools are transitioning from traditional brick and mortar practices to virtual platforms.

The following is additional information that the school should consider when holding phone conferences and meetings with parents and students via virtual platforms:

Training Staff on compliant FERPA procedures when working in the home environment to include the following:

- Wear Headsets while speaking to students and parents;
- Utilize a closed off room when talking to students and parents;
- Secure instructional and personal identifiable information away from family members;
- Do not leave your computer screen on when student information is on the screen and lock screens when you are away from the computer;
- Use secure wireless networks;
- Use password encrypted electronic files when sending information to staff, parents, and students that contains any student PII;
- Do not share usernames and passwords ;
- Confirm that you are speaking to the parent or legal guardian when calling a home, ensure the information aligns with PowerSchool records;
- Use caution when utilizing social media to instruct students, ensure you do not include student specific information in live or recorded sessions.

Additionally, in the event of an outbreak among your students and staff, please ensure you follow the guidance from the US Department of Education regarding FERPA and the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19):

[https://studentprivacy.ed.gov/sites/default/files/resource\\_document/file/FERPA%20and%20Coronavirus%20Frequently%20Asked%20Questions.pdf](https://studentprivacy.ed.gov/sites/default/files/resource_document/file/FERPA%20and%20Coronavirus%20Frequently%20Asked%20Questions.pdf)

If you have additional questions, you may contact me ([sped504@erskinecharters.org](mailto:sped504@erskinecharters.org)).