

Minnesota West Community & Technical College

FERPA FAQs for PSEO Students

What is FERPA? FERPA stands for Federal Family Education Rights and Privacy Act. This is a federal law that protects students and their private information. All PSEO students are granted the same protections under FERPA as Minnesota West's regularly enrolled students - this includes REACH concurrent enrollment and Career and Technical Education students.

What information is protected? Directory information is considered public and can be released without the student's written permission; *however, the student may opt to keep this information confidential.* Directory information at Minnesota West would include: name, address, phone, major field of study, dates of attendance, enrollment status, classification, graduation date, and degrees, honors and awards received. Information not included in the list above is private student information and may not be released outside the college without student's written permission or as otherwise provided in the [Minnesota State Policy on Student Education Records](#).

Does FERPA apply to minors? YES! FERPA offers the same protections to minors and adults students. Parents/guardians of minors are not able to access non-directory information without a signed [Authorization to Release Student Information](#), even if they are paying for the student's education.

What if a student wants to share more information with their parents/guardians or school? The student should fill out an [Authorization to Release Student Information](#), and return it to Student Services at their Minnesota West campus.

What information can be shared with high schools? It depends. High schools may be given information they need for a "legitimate educational purpose." They may not be given additional information beyond what falls under the legitimate educational purpose, the information they are given must be kept confidential, and they must not use the information for anything other than the legitimate educational purpose for which it was intended.

Can students get a copy of their high school transcript from Minnesota West? Yes, students can request to see any information that is a part of their educational record. Minnesota West has 10 days to comply with such requests. Students may be required to pay a fee for some of the information, such as official transcripts. Documents requested from Minnesota West that did not originate at Minnesota West – such as a high school transcript or transcript from another college – will not be official documents.

Is Minnesota West required to comply with commercial requests for student information? Yes. The college has to respond to requests in a "reasonable" amount of time. Only directory information can be supplied, and the commercial entity may be charged for the information according to Minnesota State policies.

What if there is an emergency and someone needs to contact or locate a student who may be on a Minnesota West campus? Minnesota West employees cannot make exceptions to FERPA regulations, even when there is an emergency. If someone needs to contact or locate a student they believe to be on a Minnesota West campus, they should contact Minnesota West, explain the situation, and provide contact information. Minnesota West will attempt to locate the student and relay the message.

Where can I get more information on Minnesota West's policies? View our [Data Privacy policy](#) on the website. This link contains the forms to authorize and withhold release of information.