

February 11, 2015

Position Statement: Student Data Privacy

Businesses that want access to student data for both administrative applications and for personalized instruction are proliferating.

Almost every school contracts with some online business to provide parent access to their students' attendance, grades, etc. Having parent access is good but a lot of data is being shared through these service providers.

In addition, more and more digital courses are offered, online schools as well as providers of individual courses. Some student data is handed over to them by parents, students, or schools and some student data is created in the process of the online coursework.

Possession of our students' data is a marketable asset to third party vendors who offer services and keeping student data secure is difficult once it is in the hands of the third party service providers.

Legislation motivated by *inordinate* fear, may be too restrictive and hamper schools' ability to provide personalized instruction, education accountability, education research, and parental access to their own student's information.

Therefore, Utah PTA supports safeguards to student data privacy that are balanced with the need to provide data for personalized instruction, assessment, and education research.

We also encourage online education service providers and online instruction providers to sign the *K-12 School Service Provider Pledge to Safeguard Student Privacy** or a similar pledge of student data privacy.

We also support legislation and rules of the Utah State Board of Education to require contracts between the USOE, or any public schools, and third party service or instruction providers to contain comprehensive safeguards to student data privacy, including: using data for educational purposes only, prohibiting the sale of student data, and prohibiting its use for advertising.

We further encourage public schools to provide information to parents regarding the collection and use of student data, to notify parents of any change to data privacy policy, to allow parent access to and correction of student data, and to notify parents immediately when a data breach is identified.

We also encourage Utah PTA and its local affiliates to educate parents about student data privacy, including how they can better protect their children and, in particular, the aspects of student data that should not be shared.

*See <http://studentprivacypledge.org>