

STUDENT SURVEYS AND PRIVACY: PARENT NOTIFICATION THE PROTECTION OF PUPIL RIGHTS AMENDMENT (PPRA)

The Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA) is a federal law that affords definite rights to parents of minor students in relation to surveys that ask questions of a personal nature. The law requires that schools obtain written consent from parents before minor students are required to participate in any U.S. Department of Education (US DOE) funded survey or evaluation that reveals information concerning the following protected areas:

1. political affiliations or beliefs of the student or the student's parent;
2. mental and psychological problems of the student or the student's family;
3. sexual behavior or attitudes;
4. illegal, antisocial, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior;
5. critical appraisals of other individuals with whom respondents have close family relationships;
6. legally recognized privileged or analogous relationships, such as those of lawyers, physicians, and ministers;
7. religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or student's parent; or
8. income (other than that required by law to determine eligibility for participation in a program or for receiving financial assistance under such program).

The District School Board of Pasco County, which receives funds from the US DOE, will comply with the requirements of PPRA for the collection and reporting of certain information by means of student surveys, as well as the requirements to protect student privacy.

The District School Board of Pasco County participates in the Florida Youth Survey (FYS). The FYS is administered on an annual basis by the district in conjunction with the Florida Departments of Education and Health. FYS collects and reports information relative to student attitudes and behaviors on topics such as school safety, substance use, and the prevalence of risky attitudes or behaviors, particularly with respect to alcohol and drug abuse. In addition, the surveys collect information on general health practices and human sexuality. The information is collected by survey anonymously on a sampling basis, and no personally identifiable information is obtained from or reported on any individual student.

Participation in FYS surveys is voluntary. No student shall be required to participate in such a survey if the student, or the student's parent/guardian if the student is a minor, objects to participation. A parent must provide written notification to opt out of survey participation.

If, however, a survey soliciting protected area information is funded in whole or in part by any program administered by the United States Department of Education [USDOE], prior written consent will be obtained from the parent.

PPRA affords parents certain rights; these include the right to:

1. consent before students are required to submit to a survey that concerns one or more of the "protected areas" if the survey is funded by a program of the US DOE.
2. receive notice and an opportunity to opt a student out of survey participation.
3. inspect, upon request, and before administration will use, the protected information student surveys and related materials.

These rights transfer from the parents to a student who is 18 years of age or in an emancipated minor under Florida State.