Minnesota Student Privacy and Virtual School Meetings

In the school setting, the Federal Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act protect student data from being shared unnecessarily or without a student’s, parent’s, or guardian’s consent. As Individualized Education Program (IEP) and 504 Plan teams conduct virtual meetings, here are some questions to consider regarding data privacy for you and your child.

Policies
- What is the school district’s official FERPA and/or data privacy policy?
- What is the school district’s technology policy and related rules?

Privacy
- What steps are being taken by the school to ensure that discussions that occur during the meeting remain private?
- What steps are being taken by the school to secure my child's data so that it is not accessed by hackers or other parents?

Meetings
- How will IEP/504 meetings and other meetings related to my child be conducted?
- What rules apply to the recording of meetings that occur using the online platform?
- What steps are being taken by the district to protect my child's right to data privacy during and after these meetings?

Documents
- When and how will I and other team attendees be provided relevant documentation?
- How do I share documents with the team?
- What forms or permissions need to be completed to include an individual of my choosing to participate in and receive documentation about the meeting?
- Will I be provided with a copy of any written consent requested of my 18-year-old or older child?

What should I be aware of?
- What additional steps can I, as a parent, take to assist in protecting my child's data privacy?
- If I do not have a computer or internet access, how do I participate in these meetings and receive documents in a timely fashion?

After reviewing these questions, share your concerns regarding data privacy with your child’s IEP or 504 team. For additional information, contact PACER Center at (952) 838-9000 or PACER@PACER.org.