



Northern Lights Special Education Cooperative

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Confidentiality Federal laws, state laws and local policies require that student confidentiality must be maintained in public schools.

- Confidentiality is the most critical and important aspect of the paraprofessional's job. Abuse of this law is subject to disciplinary actions, including dismissal.
- Both the children and the family have the absolute right to expect that all information will be kept confidential, and made available only to personnel in school who require it to ensure that the rights, health, safety, and physical well-being of the children are safe guarded. In short, anyone who is not included on the child's IEP does not have access to such information.
- Confidentiality must be maintained and protected, and the rights of students to due process, dignity, privacy, and respect must be promoted.

Educators must use the highest standards of discretion and respect the confidentiality of students and their families by keeping the following in mind:

- What you hear here stays here.
- Avoid using names if you are asked about your job.
- Suggest that questions about a student are best directed to the special education teacher.
- Do **not** share other student's names or information regarding their programs with parents during IEP meetings, conferences or informal conversations.
- Information regarding specific students and programs should not be shared in the lunchroom, staff room, office areas, out in the community or any other setting.
- When conferencing or writing confidential information regarding a student or family, be aware of those around you who may be within seeing or hearing distance. Look for a more private place within the school building.
- No matter who asks you a question about a student, if you are unsure whether you should answer, **DON'T**. Remember only staff that has a need to know should be given information about a student.
- Paraprofessionals must support and reinforce teacher techniques, materials and methods. Questions should be directed to the specific teacher privately.
- Promote and protect the rights of students to due process, privacy and dignity.

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