

RIGHTS OF MASSACHUSETTS YOUTH REGARDING EDUCATION RECORDS

**Prepared by the Mental Health Legal Advisors Committee
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May parents access their child's school records?

Parents have a right to view any academic, scholastic or other records that a school keeps, regardless of the age of their child. In addition, schools must allow students aged 18 or older to access their own records.¹

Are school records confidential?

School records are required to be kept confidential. Any third party who wishes to access a student's records must have written consent from the student or parent, and within that consent the student or parent can specify which part of the records the third party may access.² The school principal is responsible for maintaining all school records under his control, and the superintendent is responsible for maintaining the privacy of school records that are not within the principal's control.³

How can keeping good records help children?

Parents should keep good records when advocating for special education services. While it is the responsibility of the school district to evaluate students and provide services if necessary, the process does not always go smoothly. Keeping written documentation of meetings, conversations, telephone calls and other events can be a very effective way to advocate. Being able to write effective letters is also a valuable skill.⁴

¹ G.L. c. 71, § 34E.

² 603 CMR 23.07(4).

³ 603 CMR 23.05.

⁴ Leslie Said Margolis, *Parent Advocacy: What You Should Do . . . And Not Do*, <http://www.wrightslaw.com/info/advo.do.dont.margolis.htm>.