



WHAT IS THE FERPA WAIVER

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) is a Federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. The law applies to all high schools and colleges that receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education.

Under the terms of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), parents can review letters of recommendation and accompanying forms after the student enrolls at a postsecondary institution and only if that institution saves the documents post-enrollment. The right transfers to the student once he/she turns 18 or attends a school beyond the high school level.

For more information regarding the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), click [here](#).

Why should you consider waiving your right of access?

Waiving your right lets colleges know that you will never try to read your recommendations. That in turn reassures colleges that your recommenders have provided support that is candid and truthful.

While you are free to respond as you wish, if you choose not to waive your right, some recommenders may decline your request, and some colleges may disregard letters submitted on your behalf.

Remember, even if you retain your right of access, you still won't be able to view any recommendations until after you have been admitted to and enrolled in a college. In other words, FERPA does not give you the right to inspect recommendations before they are sent to your colleges.

How might you encounter the FERPA Waiver during the college application process?

When you request an official transcript or recommendation letter from the Fairview Counseling Office, you must provide a signature at the bottom of the request forms that authorizes the school to release all requested records covered under FERPA.

When you apply to a college that uses its own online or paper application, you will be prompted to provide a signature to waive the FERPA within the application process.

When you apply to a college that uses the Common Application, you are prompted to provide an electronic signature to waive the FERPA. This occurs after you have completed the Education page of the Common Application AND you have added at least one college to your Common Application account. Once these steps are completed, click on the "Assign Recommenders" tab to access the FERPA Waiver. For students at Naviance schools like Fairview, the FERPA section locks as soon as the applicants match their Common App and Naviance accounts.

NOTE: This statement is correct as of January, 2014.