



# New York State School Safety Group 491

## Safe Schools Agenda

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**Route to:**  
\_\_ Superintendent  
\_\_ School Business Off.  
\_\_ Athletic Director  
\_\_ Supt. Bldgs/Grounds  
\_\_ Site Administrators  
\_\_ Transportation Dir.  
\_\_ Lunch Director  
\_\_ Classroom Teachers  
\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_

*A monthly service provided to help you with your efforts to make your school safe for students, staff and the public*

### Respect Student Confidentiality Rights

There has been an increase in liability claims against school districts for violation of students' rights to confidentiality which are guaranteed by federal Law.

The Family Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), enacted in 1974, protect the privacy of student education records as confidential documents. The Act defines education records as all records that schools or education agencies maintain about students, and it applies to all public and private schools that accept federal funds. The act seeks to ensure that information can be released only for specific and legally defined purposes.

FERPA gives parents certain rights with respect to their children's records. These rights transfer to the student when he or she reaches the age of 18 years or attends school beyond high school.

Parents or eligible students have the right to inspect and review the student's records and to request that a school correct records which they believe to be inaccurate or misleading.

Generally, schools must have written permission from the parent or eligible student in order to release any information from a student's education record to other parties.

Exceptions to the non-disclosure rule are:

- \* School officials with legitimate educational interest
- \* Accrediting organizations

- \* Other schools to which a student is transferring
- \* Specified officials for audit or evaluation purposes
- \* Appropriate parties in connection with financial aid to a student
- \* Organizations conducting certain studies for or on behalf of the school
- \* To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena
- \* Appropriate officials in cases of health and safety emergencies
- \* State and local authorities, within a juvenile justice system, pursuant to specific state law.
- \* Directory information, but schools must tell parents and eligible students about directory information and allow parents and eligible students a reasonable amount of time to request that the school not disclose directory information about them.

Schools are required to notify parents and eligible students annually of their rights under FERPA.

It would be prudent to review Board Policy and Regulations implementing FERPA, and to review the requirements of the law with all personnel who deal with student records.

For more details on the law, see <http://www.ed.gov/print/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa/students.html>.

Visit our Website at [www.nysgroup491.com](http://www.nysgroup491.com)

Email: [info@nysgroup491.com](mailto:info@nysgroup491.com)

Program Administrator: Professional Underwriters 1-800-833-8877



## Sports Done Right

*Sports Done Right: A Call to Action on Behalf of Maine's Student-Athletes* is a new report for improving middle and high school sports worth reviewing, and perhaps using as a guideline for assessing local programs. The Select Panel that produced the report was charged with examining and defining healthy interscholastic sports and presenting recommendations to shape the best possible learning environment for student-athletes. The Report is centered on core principles and supporting core practices that describe what a health sports program looks like. The Report also highlights "Out-of-Bounds" factors that predict troubling trends, negative behaviors and attitudes, and policies that should be eliminated.

The Report is an attempt to deal with the negative impact on school sports programs of stories in the national media about fans harassing officials, coaches and student-athletes, coaches' thoughtless handling of their students, and out-of-control parents and fans. The principles also apply to all co-curricular activities that have community representation and entertainment components because they are subject to the same problems and excesses.

*Sports Done Right* is intended to be used by schools and communities to conduct a broad dialogue on the application of the core principles and core practices in their schools, and ultimately signing on to "compacts" that inform and direct their programs.

Highlights of the report and a pdf version of the report can be obtained at <http://www.mcsc.umaine.edu/>.

## REDI for School Emergencies is Now Web Based

REDI is a software system designed to help school districts develop and maintain an emergency management system. We were so impressed with its original version that we endorsed it, and sponsored regional seminars to help bring it to the field. Over 1,000 districts in the United States now use it.

REDI prepares staff for incidents of all types, sizes and uniqueness, providing operational formats for both district-level and individual school responses. It works for districts of all sizes, and conforms to the Incident Command System.

***(Homeland Presidential Directive-5 (HSPD-5) requires K-12 schools to use the National Incident Management System (NIMS) in their planning and response.)***

REDI facilitates comprehensive training, and with the new web based version, makes it easy to keep Fire, Police, Emergency Management and/or State Education partners informed of current plans.

The web-based version of REDI was developed by nationally recognized consultants on safety to better meet the needs of larger school districts with multiple sites and to better enable emergency responders to keep up to date with school data. Public Safety partners are assigned "Read Only" user names/passwords by the district administrator. Contact BOWMAC at (800) 688-5456, or [www.bowmac.com](http://www.bowmac.com).

