


To: DCF Area Administrators
Child Placing Agency Directors
Child Welfare Agency Directors
County Departments of Community Programs Directors
County Departments of Human Services Directors
County Departments of Social Services Directors
Group Home Providers
Tribal Social Service/Indian Child Welfare Directors
Private Child Placing Agencies
Residential Care Center Providers
Shelter Care Providers
Tribal Chairpersons

From: Fredi-Ellen Bove 
Administrator

Re: Pupil Records Bill

PURPOSE

The purpose of this memo is to inform educators and child welfare workers across the state about 2016 Wisconsin Act 161, a new state law that promotes information sharing between school and child welfare agencies by allowing child welfare workers to access education records without parental consent.

BACKGROUND

The Department of Children and Families (DCF) and the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) have been working together to improve educational outcomes of children in the child welfare system for several years. One of the critical steps identified for improving educational outcomes is enabling child welfare workers to receive or access timely and accurate educational data on children in the child welfare system, in order to collaborate effectively with educators to promptly identify and support foster children's educational needs. 2015 Wisconsin Act 161 codifies into state law the federal Uninterrupted Scholars Act (Public Law 112-278) enacted in 2013, which created a new provision in the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), allowing child welfare agencies to access education records without parental consent.

INFORMATION SUMMARY

The letter in the attachment is directed to Pupil Services/Special Education Directors and Child Welfare Directors and provides more specifics on the Pupil Records bill and its importance in facilitating information sharing between child welfare agencies and schools.

CENTRAL OFFICE CONTACT: Youth Services Policy Coordinator
(608) 422-6988

MEMO WEB SITE: <http://dcf.wisconsin.gov/cwportal/policy>

Attachment: Letter to Pupil Services/Special Education Directors and Child Welfare Directors