



**STUDENT  
PRIVACY  
COMPASS**

**Privacy & Pandemics:**

**Video Classrooms**

# Does FERPA allow video conferencing?



- When teaching online, you can use video conferencing tools that meet the **school official exception** to FERPA's consent requirement.
- Tools developed for general audiences or workplaces were likely not designed with student privacy laws in mind.
  - Your first step should be to check if your school has a preferred/pre-vetted tool, or a contract in place with the tool you'd like to use.
- Note, the presence of others (such as a parent) in the background is *not* a violation of student privacy rights—but generally, be wary of sharing student PII during class sessions.

# What about recording?



- Before recording a class session, consider why you are recording, and whether the reason to record is worth the privacy risks
- Potential privacy risks:
  - If students are on screen and in the recording - the recording is a window into their personal lives as they learn from home.
  - PII shared during the lesson - which is protected by FERPA - would now be stored, potentially replicable, and redisclosure of the recording will be difficult to reign in.
  - Students “chatting” amongst themselves may share sensitive information - are you storing that chat log?

# Recordings & Privacy 101



- Ask your school about policies about video recording policies: how long will the recording be stored? Where will it be saved? Is there a process for deleting it?
- Be transparent and let students know that they are being recorded when they are, how long the recording will be stored, who has access to the recording, and think about allowing students to opt-out of attending a live recording.
- When recording:
  - Consider recording **only** the presentation portion
  - Ensure the recording only records the lecturer/host, not student videos, names, or chat log
  - Avoid recording classroom discussions with students
- Remind students and parents that recordings (or any screenshots from recordings) are not to be shared; consider having them sign an agreement that they will keep the videos confidential.

# Video Conferencing Best Practices



- Use administrative controls to protect your video classroom
- Don't *require* students to have their cameras on throughout the lesson
  - Consider your students circumstances. Some may have limited internet access. Some may not have access to a private room for learning.
- Consider developing “rules of engagement”
- Develop alternative options for students with limited access

For more, check out [CoSN](#) and the [Department of Ed's](#) resources as well as our recent webinar.

Video Conferencing Tools in the Age of Remote Learning: Privacy Considerations for New Technologies



STUDENT PRIVACY POLICY OFFICE  
FERPA and Virtual Learning Related Resources  
March 2020

