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H.B. 557
135th General Assembly

Bill Analysis

Version: As Introduced

Primary Sponsor: Rep. Mathews

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SUMMARY

- Permits school districts, community schools, and STEM schools to withhold student directory information.

DETAILED ANALYSIS

Release of student directory information

The bill addresses the release of student directory information by school districts, community schools, and STEM schools. In addition to exempting directory information from the Ohio Public Records Law, the bill permits a school district board of education, community school governing authority, or STEM school governing body to choose not to release, or permit access to, any student's directory information.¹

Similar to current law, the bill requires a district board, governing authority, or governing body, if it chooses to release directory information, to impose uniform restrictions on the information's presentation on each type of representative that the information may be released to under federal law. Those representatives include:

- The U.S. armed forces;
- Businesses;
- Industry;
- Charitable institutions;
- Other employers; and

¹ R.C. 149.43(A)(1)(tt), and 3319.321(B)(2)(b), and (c).

- Institutions of higher education.²

Ohio History Connection records for review or custody

Under current law, the Ohio History Connection may not review, or select for its custody, any public student records containing personally identifiable information (PII), except for student directory information, without the written consent of a parent, guardian, or custodian, or, if the student is at least 18 years old, the written consent of the student. The bill removes the exception for student directory information.³

Background

Under continuing law, a school district, community school, or STEM school generally may not release a student's PII without written consent from a parent, guardian, or custodian, or, if the student is at least 18 years old, the student.⁴

One exception to the prohibition against releasing PII is the release of directory information. Although current law permits a district or school to disclose a student's directory information without consent, it requires a district or school to provide students and parents with an annual notice about their rights to withhold directory information. Accordingly, the district or school must withhold a particular student's directory information if the student or parent exercises this right. A district or school can only impose uniform restrictions on the release of directory information on the representatives of the U.S. armed forces, businesses, industry, charitable institutions, other employers, and institutions of higher education.⁵

Continuing law prohibits the release of directory information to any person or group for use in a profit-making plan or activity. It also requires the release of names and addresses that have been requested by a recruiting officer for the U.S. armed forces for any students in grades 10 to 12 whose parents have not submitted a written request against releasing such data.⁶

Continuing law defines "directory information" as a student's name, address, telephone listing, data and place of birth, major field of study, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height of athletes, dates of attendance, date of graduation, and awards received.⁷

² R.C. 3319.321(B)(a). See also the "Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974," 20 United States Code (U.S.C.) 1232q, not in the bill.

³ R.C. 149.381(E)(2).

⁴ R.C. 3319.321.

⁵ R.C. 3319.321(B)(1) and (2) and 20 U.S.C. 1232g(a)(5)(B).

⁶ R.C. 3319.321(A) and (B)(2)(b).

⁷ R.C. 3319.321(B)(1).

HISTORY

Action	Date
Introduced	05-15-24
