

ARLINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
DEPARTMENT OF STUDENT SERVICES

MEMORANDUM-FYI

August 16, 2010

TO: School PTAs
County Council PTAs
Principals

FROM: Alvin L. Crawley, Ed.D.
Assistant Superintendent

SUBJECT: **Guidelines for School Directories**

Most Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs) with the support of Arlington Public Schools publish school directories on an annual basis. Directories are published as a way for students, their parents, and staff within schools to increase communication and coordination of school activities. Appropriate uses of the school directory include communicating school events, individual or group invitations to special events such as parties or play dates, or student to student communication. The following guidelines should be used when developing school directories.

- 1) The Opt-out form sent to parents in the first day packet includes opt-out information for school directories. Therefore, PTAs do not need to send a separate opt-out form. Upon request, schools will be able to release student directory information to PTA designees electronically. Each school should verify that families who have submitted an opt-out form have been deleted from the list before releasing information to PTAs. The person designated to coordinate directory information obtained from school staff should sign the attached Confidentiality Agreement and return it to the building principal. Principals have additional copies of the agreement form.
- 2) In cases where parents are divorced with separate addresses, and have requested access to school sponsored activities or information, both parents should have the opportunity to be included in this process.
- 3) Directory information should be limited to information approved by the School Board as Directory Information. It is recommended that the directory contain basic information such as the student's name, grade, age, parent's name, address and phone number.
- 3) All directories should contain a disclosure statement that indicates that "this directory shall only be shared with parents, students and school staff. Information contained herein shall not be used for marketing, sales or political purposes." Directory information is generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy.
- 4) Directories should not be shared with groups or individuals outside of the school, or used for marketing or political purposes. Such use may cause PTAs to lose their nonprofit status. Other inappropriate uses of school directories include: communicating community or school incidents; conducting surveys not approved by the school system; and communicating matters that would be perceived as harassment or bullying behaviors.

Your willingness to adhere to the aforementioned guidelines is greatly appreciated. Each school has the capacity to generate an electronic listing of directory information with principal approval. Thank you for providing such a valuable service to our schools. Please feel free to contact my office at 703-228-6060 should your school need assistance in developing the school directory. Best wishes for a great school year.