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Plano ISD Board of Trustees votes to further protect student privacy

Plano, Texas, June 3, 2009—At last night’s meeting of Plano Independent School District’s Board of Trustees, it was unanimously voted to approve a change to policy FL (Local), redefining what part of a student’s record is considered “directory information.” Revisions exclude students’ home addresses, telephone numbers and electronic mail addresses from the district’s definition of directory information.

Plano ISD’s previous FL policy designated all data contained in student records, with the exception of performance data, as directory information, including: the student’s name; home address; telephone listing; electronic mail address; photograph; date and place of birth; major field of study; degrees, honors and awards received; dates of attendance; grade level; enrollment status; most recent educational institution attended; participation in officially recognized activities and sports; and weight and height of members of athletic teams. Parents are given annual notification of directory information through a student/parent policy guide and are given the opportunity to opt out of disclosing this information without prior consent.

Provisions of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and Texas law allow districts to specifically define details contained in student records as directory information. With the policy revision approved last night, student directory information of home addresses, telephone numbers and electronic mail addresses will not be available for sale to third parties or by open records requests.

“This policy revision is in response to reports from parents that companies have been abusing their access to this information and inappropriately associating themselves with Plano ISD in their solicitations. We believe parents will approve of this measure to further protect the privacy of their children,” said Karla Oliver, executive director for government and community relations.

This modification to the policy will not affect school directories prepared annually by campus Parent Teacher Associations. PTAs, with support from the district’s PTA liaison, maintain their own information release forms for directories and other projects requiring parent signature. Additionally, the district is still required to provide military recruiters and institutions of higher learning with the name, address or telephone number of a secondary student upon request, unless the parent has requested that information not be disclosed without their prior written consent.

The Plano Independent School District (Plano ISD) – <http://www.pisd.edu/> – endeavors to foster the highest level of student learning. The mission of Plano ISD is to provide an excellent education for all students. Plano ISD is located 20 miles north of Dallas, Texas and serves the residents of approximately 100 square miles in southwest Collin County, including 66 square miles in the city of Plano, northern portions of the cities of Dallas and Richardson and parts of the cities of Allen, Parker and Murphy. Plano ISD employs 7,000 faculty and staff members who serve more than 55,000 students in 70 schools and 11 service facilities. Participating in Plano ISD schools enables students to adapt to new learning opportunities throughout their lives, collaborate with, and contribute to, the global community and to be creative and disciplined in their thinking.