

PTAC Focus Group Script

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Section I: Introduction

Welcome to the focus group on teacher training for student privacy. My name is _____, and I will be facilitating today's focus group. I have here with me today _____ who will be taking notes. Both of us are with a firm called Quality Information Partners. We are conducting this focus group on behalf of the US Department of Education's Privacy Technical Assistance Center (PTAC). The U.S. Department of Education established PTAC as a "one-stop" resource for education stakeholders to learn about data privacy, confidentiality, and security practices related to student-level longitudinal data systems and other uses of student data. PTAC provides timely information and updated guidance on privacy, confidentiality, and security practices. The primary purpose of this focus group is to gain a better understanding on how teachers currently get trained on student privacy and the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act, also called FERPA, and learn more about teacher preferences for training on this topic. We'd like to explore the question of "If teachers were to receive more training on student privacy and FERPA compliance, what is the best way to do so?" We will be conducting multiple focus groups with teachers to ensure that we get feedback from a diverse range of participants.

Today's session will take approximately 60 to 75 minutes. I will be moderating the session to ensure that each person has a chance to provide input, but please don't hesitate to ask questions as they arise. During today's session, we ask that you answer each question with as much descriptive detail as possible. Please provide specific examples as appropriate to illustrate your opinion or position. While we are going to be recording the information expressed today, the comments that are made will be used in aggregate. The identities of the participants will be kept confidential. We have asked each of you to complete a questionnaire so that we can better understand your background and level of experience. Again, I want to emphasize that this information will not be used to identify you as an individual.

We will prepare a final written report summarizing our findings across all of the focus group sessions, including summary information that can be used to make decisions on how to best meet teacher needs for training on student privacy issues and FERPA.

If there is a question that you do not feel comfortable answering, you do not have to answer or comment. Remember, your participation is voluntary. Are there any questions before we begin?

Before we start with the questions, I would like to spend a few minutes on introductions. Please just state your first name, what you teach, and how long you have been teaching

Section II: Focus Group Questions

Topic: Professional development

1. How many hours per year do you usually spend on professional development?
2. Does your state or district require this training? What is the state requirement, if you know? What is the district requirement, if you know?
3. In what form does that training come? i.e., in person training, webinars, etc.
4. When do you take training? During the school day? On in-service days? After the students go home? Summers?
5. Are there some courses that are particularly memorable because they are more or less helpful? Any examples of a really good or really bad course you have taken?
6. Do you feel that you would benefit from taking more professional development courses to supplement what you are currently taking?
7. In what areas would you like to receive more training? Are there areas in which you receive more training than you feel is necessary to perform your job?
8. When you are selecting professional development courses, which training topics are most important to you? _____ (if you select topics, that is)

Topic: Previous student privacy training

1. Have you had student privacy or FERPA training? If you have had student privacy or FERPA training before, how was it delivered? (e.g. in person, online, video etc.) Did you receive this training individually? Or in a group setting?
2. Was the training you received optional or mandatory? Did you receive this training more than once? If so, how often was it repeated?
3. How long was the course? Did you feel that the length of the training was appropriate?
4. Who delivered the training? (e.g. a fellow teacher, external source)
5. When did you take the training? (e.g. during school/working hours vs. on your own time)
6. Was the training effective? Did you learn what you expected to learn? Has the information been useful to you in your daily work?
7. Were there things you wanted to know that were not included in the training? Have issues come up in your work day that you wish you had learned more about in the privacy training?

8. Do you have a resource to turn to for follow-up answers? Have you used the follow-up resources that are available to you?

Topic: Training preferences

1. When you take professional development training, what is your preferred method of receiving the training? (e.g. instructor led/classroom, live online webinar, self-study)
2. What do you think is the optimal length of time for a course on student privacy and FERPA? Or, how long do you think a course would need to be to cover the topics related to student privacy that you encounter most frequently?
3. What can be done to help you with retention of the information learned? Would you benefit from periodic refresher courses?
4. Can you identify typical or common situations related to student privacy or FERPA that you encounter on a frequent basis? Are you currently trained to ensure that you handle these scenarios appropriately? Let me ask you about a couple of scenarios in particular. For each of these scenarios, please comment on whether you have received specific training covering the scenario:
 5. A. Granting access to education records to a non-custodial parent.
 6. B. How to email information to parents
 7. C. Social media for students and educational purposes
 8. D. An IEP or accommodations for a student with disabilities
 9. Other
10. Have you experienced challenging scenarios related to student privacy for which you feel you need additional education or information?
11. What would motivate you to take professional development courses on student privacy on your own personal time?

Educational Technology

1. Do you use online educational resources in your classroom? Does your district encourage that?
2. Do you need to seek approval to use or download online educational resources? If you had to seek approval, what was the approval process?
3. Before you used the online educational resource or downloaded the application, did you read the Terms of Service or privacy policy?
4. Do you feel your district or school has clear guidelines on how and when to use online resources in your classroom?

Section III: Closing Remarks

Thank you for taking the time to participate in today's focus group. Several additional focus groups are being conducted with different groups of educators. Once all of the focus groups have been completed, the data collected from all groups will be analyzed, and the findings will be summarized. The results will

be provided to the Department of Education to guide future efforts to develop teacher education on student privacy. If you have any questions about student privacy or FERPA, we can provide you with additional information.