



The Chilliwack School District endeavours to support research initiatives that seek to improve the development of information and literature that will improve educational services. The School District also takes seriously the importance of maintaining personal information privacy when research initiatives involve the sharing of personal information. We therefore only approve research programs involving student information that are permitted under the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* ("FIPPA").

Recently, the School District received a complaint from a member of the public alleging that one of these research initiatives was not fully compliant with FIPPA because the researchers were based outside of Canada. While FIPPA does permit public bodies to participate in projects involving researchers based outside of Canada, public bodies are also required to ensure that certain contractual provisions are in place to ensure the protection of personal information that is shared with researchers. While the School District did have confidentiality terms in place with the researchers in this case, these contractual provisions did not fully satisfy all of the specific requirements under FIPPA.

In order to address this issue we are in the process of developing improved Policy and Administrative Procedures that will help to ensure that any future sharing of information for research purposes is fully compliant with FIPPA. We have also worked with the Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner to respond to privacy concerns, and to ensure that they are addressed.

In the meantime, the School District is providing this notice to the community that between 2005 and 2015 it participated in research with a not for profit group known as Educational And Community Supports, which is a program of the University of Oregon. The research involved the transmission of some student data to researchers in Oregon using a program known as the Positive Behaviour Information System (or PBI-SWIS). The purpose of the research was to further develop a technique known as positive behaviour support for behaviourally challenged students. PBI-SWIS was used to gather information about the type and frequency of school based behavioural interventions on an individual and aggregated basis. Only information pertaining to students receiving behaviour support or intervention was affected. We estimate that the number of students affected was approximately 1000.

We have no information to suggest that any of this research information was used or disclosed for any purpose other than the University research. All information shared with the researchers was stripped of student identifiers immediately upon receipt by the researchers and we have also confirmed with the researchers that all personally identifiable records have been permanently destroyed. The researchers in this case were also bound by contractual obligations of privacy and their operations are overseen by an independent research ethics board to ensure, among other things, that the privacy of affected individuals was protected.

For all of these reasons, the School District believes that the risk of any adverse impact on individual privacy is minimal. However, any individual who has questions about this matter should contact Ms. Tamara Ilersich, Director of HR at tamara_ilersich@sd33.bc.ca for more information.