Barbara Solomon

EDET 650

Fall 2014

October 17, 2014

Internship Proposal

*Background*

PowerSchool is a third party student information system which serves as the primary source and repository for student data in School District 5. Information maintained in PowerSchool extends beyond simple student demographics, attendance, and grade storage. Student data has expanded to include health information, special needs identifiers, socio-economic status, custody orders, parent/abuse alerts, homeless indicators, etc. As a result, Registrars at schools have access to very personal student information.

*Location, Mentor and Topic*

I propose that my internship take place at my place of employment, School District 5 of Lexington and Richland Counties (School District 5), with my project focus being K-12 student data and the legal and ethical application of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). My proposed mentor for this internship is Missy Wall Mitchell, Director of Accountability at School District 5.

My project will be structured in two parts.

Part 1: Evaluation of current FERPA guidelines as they relate directly to K-12 Educational student data systems. Collection and consideration of FERPA interpretations documented by other k-12 school districts across and outside South Carolina.

Part 2: Creation of reference documents and guided professional development which define School District 5’s adherence to the FERPA guidelines at the school Registrar level.

There is an abundance of Federal and private resources which document the FERPA regulations. I am interested in researching FERPA in relation to elementary and secondary ‘student’ data elements are protected from public release. Expanded and documented knowledge on this topic would be beneficial as I execute my responsibilities as Information Systems Data Manager.

*Deliverables*

I will create training materials which outline the district’s policies for student data release (internal and external) so school Registrars remain good stewards of student data. I will undertake the development of instructional materials which will provide school Registrars with an understanding of the application of FERPA regulations as well as expose this target group to the legal ramifications to District 5 if student data is compromised.

Applicable daily practices which serve to safeguard student personal data, caveats and scenarios with timely and relative examples will be incorporated. The material’s examples will focus specifically on the Registrar’s access to student data maintained in PowerSchool. This information would be presented during onsite professional development and reinforced by printed and on-line materials. A long term goal is to promote a standard and auditable adherence to FERPA regulations at every school within the district.