



STATE OF INDIANA

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October 27, 2026

Re: Complaint 26-FC-195
Terence Jent (Complainant) v.
Manchester Community Schools (Respondents)

This advisory opinion is issued in response to the above-referenced complaint filed on May 4, 2026.

A Notice of Complaint, along with a copy of the complaint, was sent to the Respondents on August 5, 2026, requesting a formal response by September 2, 2026. A formal response, submitted by Attorney Scott Pyle, on behalf of the Respondent was received in this office on September 2, 2026.

The complaint alleges that Respondent violated the Access to Public Records Act with it offered only a "viewing" option to the Complainant of the requested material and failed to provide a digital copy.

ANALYSIS

The public policy of APRA states that "[p]roviding persons with information is an essential function of a representative government and an integral part of the routine duties of public officials and employees, whose duty it is to provide the information." Indiana Code (IC) 5-14-3-1.

Respondent is a public agency for purposes of APRA; and therefore, subject to the requirements. IC 5-14-3-2(s). As a result, unless an exception applies, any person has the right to inspect and copy Respondent's public records during regular business hours. IC 5-14- 3-3(a).

On March 23, 2026, Complainant hand delivered a request under APRA to Respondent requesting a copy of surveillance footage involving his daughter from March 19, 2026.

On March 23, 2026, the request was acknowledged by Respondent with a time-stamped receipt from the Superintendent's Office.

On March 26, 2026, Respondent offered to Complainant that he could view the footage at the administrative office, but that it would not be releasing a digital copy to him.

Respondent has continued to preserve the footage and offer Complainant the opportunity to view it at Complainant's convenience. As evidenced by Respondent communication to Complainant on April 27, 2026 and May 7, 2026.

APRA under IC 5-14-3-4(a) provides:

(a) The following public records are excepted from section 3 of this chapter and may not be disclosed by a public agency, unless access to the records is specifically required by a state or federal statute or is ordered by a court under the rules of discovery:

(1) Those declared confidential by state statute.

(2) Those declared confidential by rule adopted by a public agency under specific authority to classify public records as confidential granted to the public agency by statute.

(3) Those required to be kept confidential by federal law....

FERPA is a federal statute that classifies student educational records as confidential, with limited exceptions. Indiana also restricts educational records as confidential. IC 20-33-7-3(b).

On March 26, 2026, Respondent provided the Complainant an opportunity to review the video as provided by FERPA regulations and school policy. Complainant chose not to do so.

This office has previously addressed a substantially similar issue in *Opinion of the Public Access Counselor 14-FC-272*, which was quoted extensively and followed recently on July 31, 2026, *Opinion of the Public Access Counselor 25-FC-386*. There, the Complainant sought access to school surveillance video depicting an altercation involving a group of students that occurred on a school bus. The school denied access based upon its obligations under FERPA and Indiana's student-record confidentiality law. This office recognized that this position by a school is "sound and well-reasoned" and supports a legitimate argument for withholding the surveillance video. *14-FC-272 & 25-FC-286*. This office ultimately concluded that the school did not violate APRA in both of those opinions.

This office has advised schools that allowing parents to view video footage is a "worthy interpretation of FERPA." *Op. 14-FC-272*.

Additional information regarding photos and videos of students under FERPA

can be found here: [FAQs on Photos and Videos under FERPA | Protecting Student Privacy](#).

CONCLUSION

This office finds that the Respondent did not violate APRA as alleged in the complaint.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Brittney A. Long". The signature is stylized with a large, looped "B" and a long, sweeping underline.

Brittney A. Long
Public Access Counsel