



NJDOE News

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Schools Cannot Require Children's Social Security Information; Acting Commissioner Davy Reminds Superintendents

New Jersey law and administrative code expressly prohibits school districts from requiring parents or guardians to submit children's Social Security information in order to enroll them in school, acting Commissioner of Education Lucille E. Davy reminded all superintendents and administrators today.

In a memo distributed to all districts, Davy said that district and school leaders must:

- Directly remind staff members whose work involved enrollment issues that they cannot ask parents for Social Security numbers when registering children for school.
- Review their web sites to make sure there is no indication that a Social Security number is requested or required as part of enrolling a child, and remove any such references that may be found.
- Review their enrollment and registration forms to make sure there are no spaces labeled to indicate that a Social Security number should be provided, and delete any such references if they are found.

"All children who live in New Jersey are entitled to a public education," acting Commissioner Davy said. "Parents must present proof that they live in the district in order for their children to attend school there, but that proof could be a copy of their lease or even a utility bill in their names mailed to an address within the district. But under state law and regulations, the district cannot require Social Security numbers, tax returns or information relating to citizenship."

"For people who aren't fluent in English the difference between 'required' and 'requested' is often misunderstood," she said. "Information that districts might see as 'optional' could easily be viewed as 'mandatory' by someone new to our education system.

"The simplest way to avoid confusion or the perception of intimidation is to just make sure that people dealing with school enrollments do not ask for Social Security numbers. That is what we are reminding districts to do," Davy said.