

LAWS IN THE DIGITAL CLASSROOM CHEAT SHEET

As teachers move their classes online, it is important to consider how schools protect student information and student privacy, as well as the intellectual property rights of content creators. Below is a cheat sheet of the most prominent laws educators, schools, and districts should know & understand.

Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

This 1974 law gives parents the right to access, review, and dispute information held by schools and other educational institutions. It also prevents students' "directory" information from being shared by these institutions without parental consent.

There is no such thing as a "FERPA-compliant" edtech tool. There is no "seal of approval" for FERPA. Schools and other educational institutions hold the responsibility for protecting the private information of their students and communicating with families about what kinds of information is being shared with third parties.

Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA)

COPPA requires parental permission for children to use websites and apps that collect information from anyone under 13.

This means that schools must not only alert families, but receive parental permission when using technologies that collect information such as emails, names, age, gender, etc... from students under 13.

One important thing to consider and search for in a company's privacy policy is what happens to data once a company is sold. To see a list of companies that have pledge to protect student privacy go to: <http://studentprivacypledge.org>

Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA)

CIPA requires entities like schools and libraries to protect children (minors younger than eighteen) from content that is obscene, child pornography, or harmful to minors.

Schools should consider CIPA if they are sending devices home with students. While school and library networks are filtered by law, what does this law look like on a school-issued device being used from home? What line should a district draw?

CIPA can be misapplied through blocking access to sites like social media, YouTube or games. It can also be used to justify monitoring student activity online, even when they are at home.

Copyright Law

Despite some misconceptions, copyright laws apply to teachers, though there are some small allowances. Teachers can share copyrighted material in small amounts with their students, but photocopying an entire book is outside of these allowances, as is reading a book aloud and recording it for later listening. Permission can be obtained directly from the author or publisher in some cases.

Use of copyrighted material in the classroom generally falls under fair use, a gray area of copyright law. Read more about fair use here: <https://www.copyright.gov/fair-use/more-info.html>.

This table has been modified from my book, Digital and Media Literacy in the Age of the Internet: Practical Classroom Applications.

<http://bit.ly/digitalmedialiteracybook>

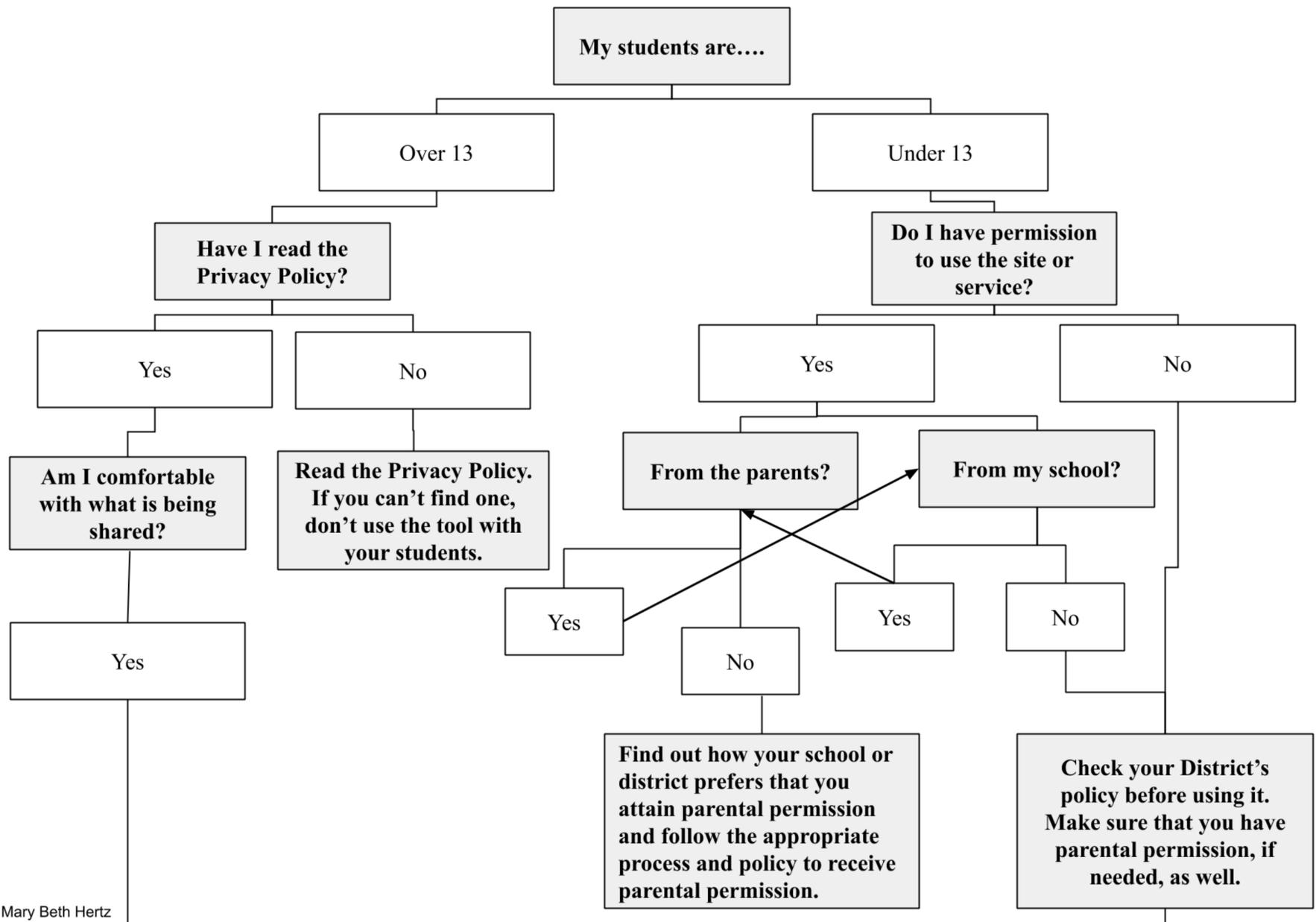
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PROTECTING STUDENT PRIVACY

COPPA in the Classroom: A Guide to Implementing New Technology Tools



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This chart is from my book, *Digital and Media Literacy in the Age of the Internet: Practical Classroom Applications*.

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