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Jessica Cook
Principal
Shawsheen Valley Technical High School
100 Cook St.
Billerica MA 01821

September 14, 2026

Via Email and U.S. Mail

Re: [REDACTED] – PPRA Violation

Dear Principal Cook,

I represent [REDACTED], mother of [REDACTED], who is a [REDACTED] at Shawsheen Valley Technical High School (SVTHS). I write to notify you that SVTHS recently violated federal law by administering a survey to students that asked sensitive and inappropriate questions regarding their gender identity. We are filing a formal legal complaint with the federal Department of Education and demand that SVTHS remedy this situation by immediately ceasing any surveys that inquire about student gender identity without prior parental consent.

Facts

On Tuesday, September 2, [REDACTED] was given a survey by her chemistry teacher, Ms. Joudrey. This survey was entitled “Student Questionnaire – Joudrey.” The second and third questions on the questionnaire asked, “What pronouns would you like me to use in this class (She/her, he/him, they/them)?” and “Is there any situation that you would like me to use different pronouns than what you listed in Q #2? Explain.” When [REDACTED] took this survey home with her, her mother [REDACTED] saw it and immediately emailed you to ask for an explanation of why her daughter would be asked personal questions relating to gender identity without her prior knowledge or consent. [REDACTED] was especially disturbed because she had previously complained about a very similar survey about pronouns given to [REDACTED] during her freshman year and had been told that it would not happen again. Not only do such surveys delve into the sensitive topic of gender identity, but they also imply that there may be situations where SVTHS may conceal a student’s identity from parents.

Since distributing the survey, Ms. Joudrey has followed up with [REDACTED] multiple times to ask that she turn the completed form in. [REDACTED] believed and continues to believe that she is required to complete this survey.

Applicable Law

The Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA), codified at 20 U.S.C. § 1232h, is a federal law which requires all K-12 schools that receive federal funding to provide notice to



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parents of any surveys administered to students that will cover sensitive topics relating to students, including:

1. Political affiliations;
2. Mental and psychological problems of the student or the student's family;
3. Sex behaviors and attitudes;
4. Illegal, antisocial, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior;
5. Critical appraisals of other individuals with whom respondents have close family relationships;
6. Legally recognized privileged or analogous relationships, such as those of lawyers, physicians and ministers;
7. Religious practices, affiliations or beliefs of the student or the student's parents; or
8. Income (other than that required by law to determine eligibility for participation in a program or for receiving financial assistance under such program.)¹

When a school requires students to receive such a survey, parental consent must be obtained before the survey can be administered to any minor student.² A school that violates the PPRA may lose federal funding.³

Analysis

It is clear that by administering this required survey to [REDACTED] and her classmates without parental consent, SVTHS violated the PPRA. Questions about pronouns implicate students' feelings and beliefs about their biological sex and gender identity.⁴ This would qualify as a question regarding "sex behaviors and attitudes." In addition, since students' struggles with gender identity are often linked to gender dysphoria, a diagnosable mental health issue, questions about gender identity could also reveal information concerning a student's mental and psychological problems. Finally, since many students and families have strong religious beliefs regarding gender identity, asking these kinds of questions could reveal such beliefs. Since parents were not even notified of this survey in advance, much less asked to provide consent for their children to participate, the administration of this survey violated the PPRA.

Conclusion and Demand

To remedy this violation, we demand that SVTHS commit in writing to notify parents regarding all future surveys that ask about pronouns or other questions related to gender identity and obtain parental consent before administering such surveys to students. We are attaching the

¹ 20 U.S.C. § 1232h(c)(2)(A).

² 20 U.S.C. § 1232h(b); *see* Letter to Chief State School Officers and Superintendents, U.S Department of Education, Aug. 26, 2026, available at:

https://studentprivacy.ed.gov/sites/default/files/resource_document/file/SPPO%20Back%20to%20School%20DCL_August2026_Final508.pdf.

³ 34 CFR § 98.10.

⁴ *See* Compl. at ¶¶ 55-61, Dkt. no. 1, *U.S. v. Unified Sch. Dist. No. 500*, No. 2:26-cv-02519 (D. Kan. Sept. 1, 2026).



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complaint that we are concurrently filing with the Department of Education's Student Privacy Policy Office. We look forward to a prompt resolution of this matter.

Very truly yours,

Sam Whiting
Legal Counsel, MLLC

cc: Superintendent Anthony McIntosh, tmcintosh@shawtech.org