



FAQs Related to the APH Quota Funds Annual Census and Parent/Legal Guardian Permissions Requirement

Many questions have been asked about the American Printing House for the Blind (APH) program, and the requirement of Ex Officio Trustees (EOTs) to ensure that Parent/Guardian Permission Forms are signed and maintained in districts or agencies. The Parent/Guardian Permission Forms are required under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). Below are many of your questions with answers to help aid in the understanding of this process.

1) Why is written consent required for the APH Federal Quota program?

- In order to release personally identifiable information (*PII*) for the APH Federal Quota registration purposes, the *PII* must be secured as required by FERPA and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).
- *PII* must be shared from our agency to APH in order to register students for the APH Federal Quota program and we cannot share this *PII* without this required permission.
- Consent to release a child's personal data is required and a law under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), parents/guardians must sign written consent.
- Parents also have the right to refuse the release of data, in this case the student who is blind and visually impaired will not be eligible or registered by the state in which they reside.
- Non-consent to release child's personal data means there will not be APH Federal Quota funds available for that student and the district will be required to purchase educational materials from APH from their own local resource funds.

2) What information will be collected?

- Child's name, birthdate, school district and grade placement.
- Primary reading medium and visual function/visual acuity range.
- The information is not shared outside the APH Census process.

3) What happens to the information collected?

- Wisconsin has two Ex Officio Trustees (EOTs) (Dan Wenzel, WSBVI (Wisconsin School for the Blind and Visually Impaired) Account #222, and Dawn Soto, Statewide and Private/Home School Accounts #223 and #224) of the APH Federal Quota accounts in Wisconsin. It is their job to oversee the APH Federal Quota Census and the expenditure of accounts.
- The EOTs are responsible for submitting accurate student information securely.
- LEAs (Local Education Agency), Special Education Directors, birth to three counties, other agencies and local Teachers of the Blind and Visually Impaired (TVIs) compile the data requested by the APH Federal Quota Census. This data is reported directly to the Wisconsin APH Federal Quota Census Coordinator.
- The registration data is submitted via secure and encrypted file transfer from the LEA (Local Education Agency) or agency directly to the APH Federal Quota Census Coordinator.
- APH utilizes the information for accountability purposes in obtaining US Congressional funds and allocating those funds to the states to support the loans of educational materials.

- The WCBVI Accessible Educational Materials (AEM) team stores the APH Federal Quota data securely so that verification can occur when LEAs, agencies and Teachers of the Blind and Visually Impaired (TVI) submit loan requests.

4) How do I receive the APH parent/guardian permission forms?

- You can download [forms](#) from our WCBVI APH website.

5) How do I submit the APH parent/guardian permission forms?

- To complete this process, when a parent/guardian signature is received, districts **must** retain the **original** document on file in the LEA or agency.

6) Parental signatures are best obtained at annual IEP (Individualized Education Programs) meetings when the reasoning behind them can be thoroughly explained (and the parent is there to sign). This means it might take one year to obtain signatures depending on when the IEPs (Individualized Education Programs) are due. Is this allowable?

- We realize the difficulties of requiring signatures, however it is the responsibility of the LEA or agency.
- States are not given alternatives and only students with parent/guardian permission forms on file in the LEA or agency can be registered on the APH Federal Quota Census.
- Quota eligible students who are not enrolled in the Census will not be eligible to receive Federal Quota materials through the Wisconsin Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired (WCBVI) Accessible Educational Materials (AEM) Center. As always, districts may continue to purchase APH materials for their students who are not on the Federal Quota Census.

7) What if the family doesn't sign the parent/guardian permission form, will my student be able to loan APH Federal Quota materials still?

- No, only students with parental permission to share their personally identifiable information (PII) can be included on the Census.

8) Is APH requiring the signed forms to be filed in a state office? Why can't individual teachers or districts keep track of these themselves?

- Signed permission forms are not kept by APH. APH has given guidance that it is the responsibility of the Ex Officio Trustees in each state to secure and retain permissions. The Wisconsin EOT does not receive these signed permission forms. **Please retain the original in your district office.**

9) What if a student moves? What if my student ages out of the APH system?

- If a student has moved out of your district, please let the APH Census Coordinator know by emailing aphcensus@wcbvi.k12.wi.us.
- If you know the district they have moved to, or if they have moved out of state, please indicate as such.
- If your student ages or graduates out prior to each year's January Census, you do not need to register them. In this case, please email APH Census Coordinator at aphcensus@wcbvi.k12.wi.us. **You may only share student initials, you may not transmit student PII through email!**

10) Can I have the forms in Spanish?

- Yes, absolutely! Please request any other language translation as well.
- Please make requests for forms in other languages to the APH Census Coordinator at aphcensus@wcbvi.k12.wi.us.
- All [available forms](#) are posted on the WCBVI APH website.

11) What happens if my student is their own guardian now?

- If a student is an adult (18 or older) and is his/her own guardian, you do not have to obtain parent permission.
- In this case, if the student is subject to FERPA and IDEA, the student will need to provide permission for release of his/her *personally identifiable information (PII)*. Check the box under “student is own guardian” section of the form and have the student sign the form.

12) Do I need to get this signature from parents/guardians every year?

- No, parent permission forms do not need to be collected annually.
- Once you have secured the parent permission, it is good until FERPA and IDEA no longer apply, until a change in guardianship occurs, or a change in educational placement occurs.

13) What if I test a student in May and they meet APH criteria and I get the FERPA signed by the parent at the IEP meeting, then I can order equipment, correct?

- If your IEP team determines that a child meets WI DPI (Department of Public Instruction) VI (Visual Impairment) (Visual Impairment) eligibility and the team believes that he/she would be eligible for the APH Federal Quota Registry, please have the parents sign the FERPA signature form.
- However, as only Census registered students are eligible to receive materials from APH, your requests cannot be submitted, and orders cannot be filled until students are officially registered (on the next Census date).

14) But these are my student’s things, why would I have to turn them in to you at the Center?

- These APH items are made available to **loan** for qualifying students on the Federal Quota Census program to assist the LEAs and school districts as they provide FAPE (Free Appropriate Public Education) to their students who are blind or visually impaired. They are not owned by individual students or districts, *unless special end of year funds were used for giveaways*.
- These items are made available via the Federal Government to be **loaned** to qualifying students in accordance with the law. See governance below:

From Retention and Disposal Policy of APH Products Purchased with Federal Quota Funds

- APH products purchased with Federal Quota funds remain the property of the respective Federal Quota account and the responsibility of the Ex Officio Trustee.
- Products purchased with Federal Quota funds revert to the inventory of the Federal Quota account when students exit instructional programs or no longer need them.
- It is the responsibility of the Ex Officio Trustee to discard outdated or unusable products purchased with Federal Quota funds.
- In order to better leverage federal funds, products purchased with Federal Quota funds may be loaned to other Federal Quota accounts.

15) Why can you decide how my student gets these things? If it says available through quota funds, then we just get it, right? It’s my student’s money, right?

- Many items are listed as being available on Quota funds and it is the role of the Ex Officio Trustees (EOTs) in each state to determine how to meet the needs of the state. As an Ex Officio Trustee (EOT) of APH, we are “charged with administering the funds allocated to each of our registered students under the Federal Quota Program” (<http://www.aph.org/advisory/#publications-workshops>).
- It is the responsibility of the EOT to determine how those designated quota funds are used to purchase materials to support children and adults in educational programs. APH has many high-cost items available to students, which is very exciting! However, the high costs of these items force the EOTs to create rules and guidelines. Wisconsin has a high-cost loan process, especially for our APH Assistive Technology items. They are loaned for a short-term trial basis and then the LEA must purchase the item.

- Each Quota eligible student, nationwide, is allocated approximately \$420 per annual quota year. The general Federal Quota fund allocated from Congress each year is divided by the number of registered students to determine the per student allocation. This number differs each year and more money is not added to the Congressional allocation if there are more students registered.
- This necessitates that EOTs provide loans and store good working materials which can be re-loaned to other students.

16)Additional questions:

- a) Contact the APH EOT, the APH EOT Assistant and the APH Census Coordinator at aphcensus@wcbvi.k12.wi.us