

Non-custodial Parents? Rights to Their Children?s College Records

40 Rutgers L. Rec. 48 (2012) | [WestLaw](#) | [LexisNexis](#) | [PDF](#)

?In the song ?Gold Digger,? Kanye West laments, ?18 years, 18 years [a]nd on her 18th birthday he found out it wasn't his.? This represents the perception in American society that a parent's legal obligation to support their child ends when the child reaches the age of majority. New Jersey has defined majority to be, ?every person 18 or more years of age shall in all other matters and for all other purposes be deemed to be an adult?? Pennsylvania defines majority as ?either eighteen years of age or when the child graduates from high school, whichever comes later.? Most other states, after the passage of the twenty-sixth amendment to the U.S. Constitution, lowered the age of majority from 21 to 18 as well.

Since in most states the age of majority is 18, for parents who remain married throughout their children's college years, for the most part, there is no legal requirement to contribute to the college expenses of their children. However, people who divorce may end up having to pay a portion of their child's college expenses, even though college students are typically past the age of majority. If a divorced parent is required to contribute to their child's college cost, should they be able to know what courses the student took and what grades they received? This is the question the court was faced with in *Van Brunt v. Van Brunt*."

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