

VALLEY STREAM UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT TWENTY-FOUR

RETENTION OF DISTRICT OWNED RECORDS AND MATERIALS REGULATION

Policy 3450

The Board of Education recognizes the importance of maintaining required records and related materials for the efficient operation of the School District. It is the policy of the Board of Education to inform members of the public about the administration and operation of the public schools in accordance with the Freedom of Information Law of the State of New York.

The Superintendent of Schools shall develop regulations ensuring compliance with the Freedom of Information Law and setting forth the procedures to be followed to obtain access to district records and submit such regulations to the Board for approval. Such regulations shall address ensuring applicable confidentiality and security of School District information. The Superintendent shall designate, with Board of Education approval, a Records Access and Records Management Officer, pursuant to law.

Retention and Destruction of Records

The Board of Education hereby adopts the Records Retention and Disposition Schedule LGS-1 issued pursuant to Article 57-A of the Arts and Cultural Affairs Law, which contains the legal minimum retention periods for School District records. In accordance with Article 57-A, the School District will dispose of only those records described in the schedule after they have met the minimum retention periods set forth in the schedule. The School District will dispose of only those records that do not have sufficient administrative, fiscal, legal or historical value to merit retention beyond the established legal minimum periods. The School District will ensure that records retention requirements are incorporated into any plan and process for design, redesign, or substantial enhancement any information system utilized by the School District.

The manner of destruction will be determined by the format of the record (i.e., paper, digital, etc.). In addition, destruction will be appropriately documented.

Litigation-Hold

The Superintendent will establish procedures in the event that the School District is served with legal papers. The Superintendent will communicate with applicable parties, including the School District attorney and the records management official, to ensure that, when appropriate, a litigation-hold is properly implemented. The litigation-hold is intended to prevent the destruction or disposal of records that may need to be produced as part of discovery. It is the intention of the Board of Education to comply with applicable rules and regulations regarding the retention and/or production of necessary documents, data, files, etc. The Board of Education directs the Superintendent to institute such procedures to implement this policy.

VALLEY STREAM UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT TWENTY-FOUR

RETENTION OF DISTRICT OWNED RECORDS AND MATERIALS REGULATION

Policy 3450

The Superintendent or their designee, with assistance from the Records Management Officer, shall be responsible for developing and disseminating department-specific retention schedules and guidance to staff, as necessary, to ensure adherence to this policy.

Cross-ref: 6165, Computer Resources and Data Management

Ref: Public Officers Law §§ 84 *et seq.* (Freedom of Information Law); 87(3)(c)
Education Law §2116
Arts and Cultural Affairs Law §57.11
Arts and Cultural Affairs Law Article 57-A (Local Government Records Law)
Federal Rules of Civil Procedure, 16, 26
8 NYCRR §185.15 (8 NYCRR Appendix L) - Records Retention and Disposition
Schedule LGS-1 for New York Local Government Records

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The following comprises the rules and regulations relating to the inspection and production of school district records:

I. Designation of Officers

1. The Records Access Officer shall be the Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum. They shall:
 - receive requests for records of the Board of Education and make such records available for inspection or copying when such requests are granted;
 - ensure that School District information that is not permitted to be released is not released (see section IV. Records Exempted from Public Access, below); and
 - compile and maintain a detailed current list by subject matter, of all records in the possession of the Board of Education, whether or not available to the public.
2. The Superintendent of Schools, with the Board's approval, shall designate a Records Management Officer for the School District. The Records Management Officer will develop and oversee a program for the orderly and efficient management of district records, including maintenance of information security as it pertains to release of district records. The Records Management Officer shall ensure proper documentation of the destruction of records, in accordance with the schedule.

II. Definition of Records

1. A record is defined as any information kept, held, filed, produced or reproduced by, with or for the School District in any physical form whatsoever, including but not limited to reports, statements, examinations, memoranda, opinions, folders, files, books, manuals, pamphlets, forms, papers, designs, drawings, maps, photos, letters, microfilms, computer tapes or disks, rules, regulations or codes.
2. The Records Access Officer will have the responsibility for compiling the following records:
 - a. a record of the final vote of each member of the Board on any proceeding or matter on which the member votes;
 - b. a record setting forth the name, school or office address, title and salary of every officer or employee of the School District; and
 - c. a reasonably detailed current list by subject matter of all records in possession of the district, whether or not available for public inspection and copying.
3. No record for which there is a pending request for access may be destroyed.

VALLEY STREAM UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT TWENTY-FOUR

RETENTION OF DISTRICT OWNED RECORDS AND MATERIALS REGULATION

Policy 3450

However, nothing in these regulations shall require the School District to prepare any record not possessed or maintained by it except the records specified in II (2), above.

III. Access to Records

1. Time and place records may be inspected: Records may be requested from, and inspected or copied at, the Office of the Records Access Officer, at a time to be determined by the Records Access Officer.
2. Fees: The fee for documents up to 9 x 14 inches is 25 cents per page. For documents larger than 9 x 14 inches, tape or cassette records, or computer printouts, the cost will be based on the cost of reproduction or program utilized. Fees are subject to periodic review and change. However, no fee shall be charged for records sent via e-mail, the search for or inspection of records, certification of documents, or copies of documents which have been printed or reproduced for distribution to the public. The number of such copies given to any one organization or individual may be limited, in the discretion of the Records Access Officer.
3. Procedures: Requests to inspect or secure copies of records shall be submitted in writing, either in person, by mail or via e-mail, to the Records Access Officer.
4. All requests for information shall be responded to within five business days of receipt of the request. If the request cannot be fulfilled within five business days, the Records Access Officer shall acknowledge receipt of the request and provide the approximate date when the request will be granted or denied.
5. If a request cannot be granted within 20 business days from the date of acknowledgement of the request, the district must state in writing both the reason the request cannot be granted within 20 business days, and a date certain within a reasonable period when it will be granted depending on the circumstances of the request.
6. Denial of Access: When a request for access to a public record is denied, the Records Access Officer shall indicate in writing the reasons for such denial, and the right to appeal.
7. Appeal: An applicant denied access to a public record may file an appeal by delivering a copy of the request and a copy of the denial to the Superintendent within 30 days after the denial from which such appeal is taken.
8. The applicant and the New York State Committee on Open Government will be informed of the Superintendent's determination in writing within 10 business days of receipt of an appeal. The Superintendent shall transmit to the Committee on Open Government photocopies of all appeals and determinations.

IV. Records Exempted from Public Access

The provisions of this regulation relating to information available for public inspection and copying shall not apply to records that:

RETENTION OF DISTRICT OWNED RECORDS
AND MATERIALS REGULATION

Policy 3450

1. are specifically exempted from disclosure by state and/or federal statute;
2. if disclosed would constitute an unwarranted invasion of personal privacy;
3. if disclosed would impair present or imminent contract awards or collective bargaining negotiations;
4. are confidentially disclosed to the Board and compiled and maintained for the regulation of commercial enterprise, including trade secrets, or for the grant or review of a license;
5. are compiled for law enforcement purposes and which, if disclosed, would:
 - a. interfere with law enforcement investigations or judicial proceedings;
 - b. deprive a person of a right to a fair trial or impartial adjudication;
 - c. identify a confidential source or disclose confidential techniques or procedures, except routine techniques or procedures; or
 - d. reveal criminal investigative techniques or procedures, except routine techniques and procedures;
6. records which if disclosed would endanger the life or safety of any person;
7. records which are interagency or intra-agency communications, except to the extent that such materials consist of:
 - a. statistical or factual tabulations or data;
 - b. instructions to staff which affect the public;
 - c. final Board of Education policy determinations; or
 - d. external audits, including but not limited to audits performed by the comptroller and the federal government;
8. records which are examination questions or answers that are requested prior to the final administration of such questions;
9. records which if disclosed would jeopardize the School District's capacity to guarantee the security of its information technology assets (which encompasses both the system and the infrastructure).

V. Prevention of Unwarranted Invasion of Privacy

To prevent an unwarranted invasion of personal privacy, the Records Access Officer may redact identifying details when records are made available. An unwarranted invasion of personal privacy includes but shall not be limited to:

1. disclosure of confidential personal matters reported to the Board of Education which are not relevant or essential to the ordinary work of the Board of Education;

RETENTION OF DISTRICT OWNED RECORDS
AND MATERIALS REGULATION

Policy 3450

2. disclosure of employment, medical or credit histories or personal references of applicants for employment, unless the applicant has provided a written release permitting such disclosures;
3. sale or release of lists of names and addresses in the possession of the Board of Education if such lists would be used for private, commercial or fund-raising purposes;
4. disclosure of information of a personal nature when disclosure would result in economic or personal hardship to the subject party and such records are not relevant or essential to the ordinary work of the Board of Education; or
5. disclosure of items involving the medical or personal records of a client or patient in a hospital or medical facility.

Unless otherwise deniable, disclosure shall not be construed to constitute an unwarranted invasion of privacy when identifying details are redacted, when the person to whom records pertain consents in writing to disclosure, or when upon representing reasonable proof of identity, a person seeks access to records pertaining to him or her.

VI. Listing of Records

Pursuant to Section 87(3)(c) of the Public Officers Law, the current records retention schedule for school districts, published by the Commissioner of Education, shall serve as the list by subject matter of all records in the possession of the School District, whether or not available under the law. The Superintendent or his/her designee, in consultation with the Records Management Officer, shall develop and disseminate department-specific guidance so that staff can implement this policy and regulation.

VII. Litigation-Hold

The Superintendent will designate a "Discovery Team", comprised of the school attorney, Director of Technology and Data, the Records Access and Records Management Officers and other personnel as needed. The Discovery Team will convene in the event that litigation is commenced to plan to respond to the request for records. The Superintendent, with assistance from the Director of Technology and Data, will ensure that measures are put in place to preserve applicable record.