



UHCS Policy File Code:	3570
Monitored:	X
Mandated:	
Other Reasons:	X

**SCHOOL RECORDS AND REPORTS**

The operation of a school results in the generation of numerous documents and official records. These must be maintained in compliance with the NJ Open Public Records Act and other laws and regulations. Members of the public have the right under law to inspect and copy (with certain exceptions) the public records of the school.

The school plans to preserve these records by (1) appointing the business administrator as records custodian, (2) periodically reviewing records retention with the Executive Director and the school Board of Trustees or a committee thereof, and (3) retaining records according to the schedule for educational institutions promulgated by NJDARM (NJ Division of Archives & Records Management). A partial schedule, for key classes of records, is shown at the end of this policy.

Availability to the Public

For the protection of the public interest, the Board of Trustees believes that members of the community have a right to inspect, copy or examine school records, with certain exemptions as specifically described in statute. Any limitations on this right shall be construed in favor of the public’s right to access. Requests for school records shall be submitted to the records custodian (or designee) in writing on the appropriate form. The custodian shall reply to all requests promptly and shall grant access or deny the request as soon as possible, but within seven days, provided that the record is currently available and not in storage or archived.

The custodian shall permit school records to be inspected, examined or copied during the hours that the school office is open. Immediate access ordinarily must be granted for budgets, bills, and contracts. Copies may be made at fees not to exceed those set by statute. Anonymous requests for government records are permitted by law. If an anonymous request is made and the estimated cost of producing copies exceeds \$5.00, a deposit may be required. Anonymous requests for personal information will not be fulfilled.

Access shall be granted in the medium requested or some other meaningful medium, unless the request is for a record in a medium not routinely used by the school; not routinely developed or maintained by the school; or requiring a substantial amount of manipulation or programming of information technology. In these cases, the Board of Trustees may add a special reasonable charge. The custodian shall ensure that statements are prominently posted in school offices that describe the specific terms of the public’s right to appeal a denial of access and procedures for filing an appeal.

Records Exempted from Public Access

Records exempted by law include: security and emergency response procedures; purchase, lease or acquisition of real property; pending or anticipated litigation; reports of investigations in progress; matters for which disclosure would impair the right to receive federal funds; pending negotiations toward a

collective bargaining agreement; most personnel and pension records of an individual; questions and answer keys (for personnel or academic examinations and job interviews); records concerning individual pupils and staff, their home addresses and telephone numbers (unless waived by the individual); reports and recommendations that involve unwarranted invasion of privacy; medical and psychological records. The records custodian will keep confidential and edit out information in records that disclose social security numbers, credit card information and drivers' license numbers.

### Record Retention

Record retention periods in conformance with state and federal codes, regulations, and statutes of limitation may be accessed through the New Jersey Division of Archives and Records Management (NJ DARM) in the School School Records Retention and Disposition Schedule located at <http://www.state.nj.us/state/darm/links/retention.html#eds>. The records custodian will ensure that records are retained and appropriately stored in accordance with state and federal statute and regulation. A partial schedule of retention periods for pertinent school record categories is listed below (Note: the School School Records Retention and Disposition Schedule should be consulted before any record is destroyed).

### Partial Record Retention Schedule

1. Financial records: 7 (seven) years
2. Agendas and minutes: Permanent for originals; 1 year for copies
3. Resolutions of the school Board of Trustees: Permanent
4. Administrative policy and advisory statements: Permanent
5. Correspondence, including emails: 3 (three) years for general external correspondence; one year for internal correspondence
6. Official public meeting notice: 3 (three) years
7. Legal notice in newspaper: 7 (seven) years
8. Publisher's affidavits: 10 (ten) years
9. Audio recordings of school Board of Trustees meetings: 45 (forty-five) days or until summary or verbatim transcripts have been approved as minutes
10. Master publications file of school newsletters, yearbooks, student handbooks, etc.: Permanent
11. School monitoring file (with school monitoring annual plan): Permanent
12. Internal monitoring guide and action plan: 14 (fourteen) years
13. Academic master plan (updated every seven years): Permanent
14. Support file for the academic master plan, including school evaluations: 10 (ten) years.
15. Fall and statistical report file: 5 (five) years
16. Settlements (original): Permanent
17. Agency copy of routine settlements: 3 (three) years after final settlement

*School District Retention Schedule: Active Records – Administration*, can be found at NJ DARM School School Records Retention and Disposition Schedule reference number M7000101-999. For all other items the school will consult *NJ DARM School District Records Retention and Disposition Schedule* for retention and disposal information.

### Implementation

The Executive Director shall periodically review the work of the records custodian with the school Board of Trustees or a committee thereof, to ensure that necessary steps are being taken to gather, record, disseminate, copy, store and ultimately to destroy school School records in accordance with applicable laws. Particular attention shall be paid to implementing the public's right to access records and to protecting from

public access those records specifically exempted by law. If deemed necessary, the Board of Trustees will adopt additional rules, regulations and procedures to implement this policy.

**Board of Trustees Approval Date: 12/15/2009**