

ADMINISTRATIVE RECORDS

Many school district records are public records and are available for inspection by any person at the age of majority at reasonable times during normal business hours. However, certain school documents, such as but not limited to pupil school health records, pupil report cards, supervisory reports on teachers, budget worksheets, and personnel folders, are exempt from disclosure under public records statutes. Access to or release of privileged information, such as pupil or personnel records, shall be governed by appropriate regulations and procedures.

The Superintendent or his/her designee shall be designated as the official custodian of records for the St. Mary Parish School Board. Maintenance of all records shall include proper procedures to protect the safety, security, and confidentiality of records. Official records of the school district shall not leave the school or district premises except for official school business.

Any person may request in writing, a time to see such public records at a mutual, agreeable time with the office of the Superintendent and such time and place will be mutually stipulated during normal working hours. Any request to view records shall clearly state the specific records desired.

Notwithstanding any other provisions of law or rules or regulations to the contrary, a School Board member and any other person authorized pursuant to written policy of the School Board shall have the right to examine any or all records of the school system except school employee records relative to evaluations, observations, formal complaints, and grievances. However, the School Board, upon *majority vote of the total School Board membership*, shall have the right to examine any or all records of the school system. Should an employee's personnel file be accessed by the School Board, the employee whose file was so accessed shall receive written notice of such action, and the individual School Board members shall maintain the confidentiality of any documents in the file so accessed.

EMPLOYEES' SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBERS

Except as required by applicable law, regulation, or policy of the Louisiana Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE), the School Board shall not use the social security number of a teacher or school employee as a means of identification for such teacher or employee. The teacher or employee shall not be required to include or provide his/her social security number on any form or other written document unless:

1. A social security number is required by any applicable law, regulation or policy of BESE; or
2. The form or written document is required for employment, retirement, application for leave or an individualized education plan.

The School Board or any school official or employee shall not provide access to any form or document on which the social security number of a teacher or school employee appears to any person other than the following:

1. Any official or employee of the school at which the teacher or school employee works, the School Board, or the Louisiana Department of Education, when such access is necessary for the performance of the duties and responsibilities of the official or employee.
2. Any person authorized to have such access by the teacher or school employee.

PRESERVATION OF RECORDS

All persons and public bodies having custody or control of any public record, other than permanent records required by existing law to be kept for all time, shall exercise diligence and care in preserving the public record for the period or periods of time specified for such public records in formal records retention schedules developed and approved by the state archivist and director of the division of archives, records management, and history of the Louisiana Secretary of State. In all instances in which a formal retention schedule has not been executed, such public records shall be preserved and maintained for a period of at least three (3) years from the date on which the public record was made. However, when copies of an original record exist, the original alone shall be kept; when only duplicate copies of a record exist, only one (1) copy of the duplicate copies shall be required to be kept. When an appropriate form of the microphotographic process has been utilized to record, file, and otherwise preserve such public records, with microforms produced in compliance with statutory provisions, the microforms shall be deemed originals in themselves, and disposition of original documents which have been microphotographically preserved and of duplicates and other copies thereof shall proceed in accordance with state law.

All existing records or records hereafter accumulated by the School Board, which participates in federal programs or receive federal grants, may be destroyed after three (3) years from the date on which the records were made in those cases where this provision is not superseded by guidelines for the operative federal program or grant requiring longer retention periods for the records in question; provided that these records shall not be destroyed in any case where litigation with reference thereto is pending, or until the appropriate state or federal audits have been conducted.

DUPLICATION OF RECORDS

Copies of school district records may be requested at any time. The School Board shall require any person making the request to reimburse the School Board for the actual fees and costs incurred prior to providing any document, record, or item, unless the person is exempted from providing reimbursement. Duplication of documents that are not public records shall not be permitted.

Persons making requests for duplication of records shall be encouraged to submit such requests in writing to expedite accurate processing of their requests. Requests should be sufficiently detailed to identify the documents sought to be copied. Questions regarding the appropriateness of having certain pieces of information duplicated shall be referred to the Superintendent and/or his/her designees for determination, and, if necessary, to the School Board's attorney.

Costs associated with duplication of records shall include not only charges for copying, but also staff time involved in locating, retrieving, and duplicating, as well as any other costs or special service charge that may be incurred in the process of duplication. Costs for duplicating records shall be paid in advance, whenever possible. A schedule of fees used to calculate costs associated with duplication of records shall be set by the School Board, and posted where it can be readily accessed by the public.

DISPOSAL OF RECORDS

Records that have met their retention periods may be disposed of. Before disposal, the Superintendent or his/her designee shall ascertain if any of the records scheduled for disposal requires further retention or are required for pending or threatened litigation. The Superintendent or designee shall consult with the School Board's attorney to determine if there are any legal holds on records that are involved in state or federal investigations and/or litigation and that would require the records to be retained for a longer duration.

Once disposal has been determined, the School Board shall dispose of records in a manner commensurate with the level of confidentiality the record requires.

The Superintendent or his/her designee shall develop and maintain regulations and procedures for the management of electronic records, such as e-mail, software, and microfilm, to include the retention, access, and disposition requirements.

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Ref: La. Rev. Stat. Ann. "13:5112.1, 17:81, 17:93, 17:196, 17:230, 17:232, 17:415, 17:440, 44:1, 44:4, 44:31, 44:32, 44:36; Board minutes, 2-8-24.