

**BOARD OF EDUCATION**

**Access to District's Public Records**

Full access to the District's *public records* is available to any person as provided in the Illinois Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), this policy, and implementing procedures.

**Freedom of Information Officer**

The Superintendent appoints the Director of Business Services and the Executive Board Secretary as the District's Freedom of Information Officer(s) and are they assigned all the duties and powers of that office as provided in FOIA and this policy. The Superintendent or designee(s) shall report any FOIA requests and the status of the District's response to the Board at each regular Board meeting.

**Definition**

The definition of *public records* for purposes of this policy, is the definition contained in Section 2(c) of FOIA.

**Requesting Records**

A request for inspection and/or copies of public records must be made in writing and may be submitted by personal delivery, mail, telefax, or email directed to the District's Superintendent or Freedom of Information Officer(s). Individuals making a request are not required to state a reason for the request other than to identify when the request is for a commercial purpose or when requesting a fee waiver. All requests for inspection and copying shall immediately be forwarded to the District's Freedom of Information Officer(s) or designee.

**Responding to Requests**

The Freedom of Information Officer(s) shall approve all requests for public records unless:

1. The requested material does not exist;
2. The requested material is exempt from inspection and copying by the Freedom of Information Act; or
3. Complying with the request would be unduly burdensome.

Within 5 business days after receipt of a request for access to a public record, the Freedom of Information Officer(s) shall comply with or deny the request, unless the time for response is extended as specified in Section 3 of FOIA. The Freedom of Information Officer(s) may extend the time for a response for up to 5 business days from the original due date. If an extension is needed, the Freedom of Information Officer(s) shall: (1) notify the person making the request of the reason for the delay, and (2) either inform the person of the date on which a response will be made or agree with the person in writing on a compliance period.

When responding to a request for a record containing both exempt and non-exempt material, the Freedom of Information Officer(s) shall redact exempt material from the record before complying with the request.

**Copying Fees**

Persons making a request for copies of public records must pay any applicable copying fee. The Freedom of Information Officer shall, as needed, recommend a copying fee schedule for the Board's approval. Copying fees, except when fixed by statute, are reasonably calculated to reimburse the District's actual cost for reproducing and certifying public records and for the use, by any person, of its equipment to copy records. No fees shall be charged for the first 50 pages of black and white, letter or legal sized copies. No fee shall be charged for electronic copies other than the actual cost of the recording medium.

**Access**

The inspection and copying of a public record that is the subject of an approved access request is permitted at the District's administrative office during regular business hours, unless other arrangements are made by the Freedom of Information Officer(s).

Many public records are immediately available from the District's website including, but not limited to, a description of the District and the methods for requesting a public record.

**Preserving Public Records**

Public records, including email messages, shall be preserved and cataloged if their retention is required by State or federal law, or they are subject to a retention request by the Board Attorney (e.g. a litigation hold), District auditor, or other individual authorized by the School Board or State or federal law to make such a request.

LEGAL REF: 5ILCS 140/1 et seq.

105 ILCS 5/10-16

Chicago Tribune Company v. Board of Ed. Of the City of Chicago, 773  
N.E.2d 674 (Ill.App. 1 Dist. 2002)

CROSS REF: Student Records 7:340

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