

District Policy & Regulations

BOARD OF EDUCATION COLUMBUS SCHOOL DISTRICT

OPERATIONS
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PUBLIC RECORDS

The Board of Education recognizes its responsibility to maintain the public records of this District and to make such records available for inspection and reproduction.

The public records of this District include any writing created or kept by the District, its Board, officers, or employees to the extent such writings are within the definition of public records under applicable law.

Any person may make an oral or written request for any public records of the District. Subject to applicable legal restrictions and the consideration of the public policy interests involved, any person may inspect, copy, or receive copies of the public record requested. The District shall respond to such requests within five (5) working days after receipt unless otherwise agreed to in accordance with the public records law.

A resident may purchase copies of the District's public records upon payment of a fee. The fee shall be \$0.25 per page. Additionally, other fees may be charged as provided for by § 19.35(3), Wis. Stats. No public record may be removed from the office in which it is maintained except by a Board member or employee in the course of the performance of his/her duties.

The District Administrator is hereby designated as the Records Custodian of the District. The Records Custodian may delegate any of the functions of the records custodian to non-represented professional staff employed by the District as he/she sees fit. In the event that any record requested contains information that implicates the privacy of reputational interests of the of the District Administrator, then the President of the Board of Education shall act as the Records Custodian.

The District Administrator shall cause a notice to be posted that complies with Wis. Stat. § 19.34. The District Administrator shall cause a list of positions that constitute a local public office within the meaning of Wis. Stat. § 19.34(1) to be created, and shall update the list whenever a new position that constitutes a local public office is created. The notice shall also indicate that the fee for receiving a copy of a public record is \$0.25 per page, in addition to any other applicable fees. The notice shall also state what types of information are not subject to disclosure under Wis. Stat. § 19.36 (10) and (11).

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The Records Custodian shall provide notice of a decision to disclose a record as required by Wis. Stat. § 19.356. Because Wis. Stat. § 19.356 requires notice based upon the manner in which a record was obtained or the circumstances under which it was created, the District Administrator shall cause records that trigger a notice of disclosure to be clearly identified in some manner. Additionally, the Record Custodian may, in his or her sole discretion, provide notice of a decision to disclose a record even where notice is not required by statute. Where the Record Custodian decides to provide notice as a matter of discretion, the notice shall clearly so state.

The record custodian is encouraged to consult with legal counsel before deciding to permit or deny access to any public record.

19.21, 19.31-39, 118.125, 120.13 (12), Wis. Stats.

APPROVED: 08/27/98

REVISED: 04/08/02, 10/03/06

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ACCESS TO PUBLIC RECORDS NOTICE

The Columbus School District and all subunits under it shall prominently display and make available for inspect and copying at the school district office at 200 West School Street, Columbus, Wisconsin, the notice listed below. The notice shall also be provided to all employees of the school district entrusted with records subject to the legal custodian's supervision.

The Columbus School District which consists of the City of Columbus, and Towns of Columbus, Hampden, Otsego, and Fountain Prairie in Columbia County; the Towns of Elba, Calamus, Portland, and Lowell in Dodge County; and Bristol and York in Dane County, gives notice to the public and employees as follows:

That it is a common school district operated by the electors of the school district and a school board, officers, committees, and administrators as provided by law.

That the legal custodian of all records of said school district and all subunits under it is the District Administrator. The legal custodian is vested with full legal power to render decisions and to carry out the duties of the school district and its school board under the public records and property law. The designated deputies in the absence of the Superintendent are the Director of Instruction and the Business Administrator.

That the public may obtain information and access to records of said school district and all subunits under it, make requests for records of, obtain copies of records during regular office hours at the district office, 200 West School Street, Columbus, WI 53925 between the hours of 8:00 A.M. and 4:00 P.M. on all days other than holidays, Saturdays, and Sundays.

A requester shall be charged a fee for the cost of copying and locating records as follows:

- 1) *The fee for photocopying shall be .25 for each side of a page. The legal custodian of records or his/her designee may waive the fee in the interests of the District.*
- 2) *If the form of a written record does not permit copying, the actual and necessary cost of photographing and photographic processing shall be charged.*
- 3) *The actual full cost of providing a copy of other records not in printed form on paper, such as films, computer printouts and audio or videotapes shall be charged.*
- 4) *If mailing or shipping is necessary, the actual cost thereof shall also be charged.*

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- 5) *There shall be no charge for locating a record unless the actual cost exceeds \$50.00 in which case the entire actual cost shall be imposed upon the requester.*
- 6) *The legal custodian of records or his/her designee shall estimate the cost of all applicable fees and may require a cash deposit adequate to assure payment, if such estimates exceeds \$5.00. If the cost to locate a document exceeds \$50.00, the legal custodian may impose a fee for such location that does not exceed the actual, direct, and necessary cost of locating the record.*
- 7) *Elected officials and employees of the District shall not be required to pay for public records they may reasonably require for the proper performance of their official duties.*
- 8) *The legal custodian of records may not sell or rent a record containing an individual's name or address of residence, unless specifically authorized by State law. The collection of fees as outlined above is not a sale or rental under these procedures.*

Any person requesting access to a public record of the school district need not give his/her name or state the reason for his/her request. The request, however, must reasonably describe the requested record and contain a reasonable limitation as to subject matter or length of time covered by the record. While a request may be made orally, in order to be enforceable under the law, a request must be submitted to the legal custodian in writing. As soon as possible, without delay, and in accordance with any statutory timelines regarding notice to the record subject(s), the legal custodian will either fill the request or notify the requester of the decision to deny access, giving the specific reasons for that decision. If the request is in writing, the legal custodian will provide a written statement of reasons for denial and also inform the requester that the decision to deny access is subject to an action for mandamus.

In accordance with Wis. Stat. §19.34(1), the following is a list of the positions of the authority that constitute "local public offices," as defined by the Public Records Law, as amended.

1. School Board members
2. Superintendent
3. Business Administrator
4. Pupil Services/Student Support Administrator
5. Principals
6. Assistant Principal
7. Directors, including Director of Instruction, Activities Director, Community Learning Center Director

(Signed) _____
District Administrator and Legal Custodian of the
Columbus School District Records