



DISPOSITION OF
STUDENT RECORDS

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PROCEDURE

Introduction

Procedures governing disposition of student records depend upon:

1. The requirements of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974.
 - A. State requirements regarding the disposition of all School District records, including student records.
 - B. Special Seattle School District needs resulting from the obligation to meet government regulations and legal requirements related to them.
 - C. Needs of individual buildings, including the need to dispose of a backlog of Records.

2. The basic principles governing the disposition of student records are:
 - A. All personally identifiable information about students that is maintained by Seattle School District personnel is to some degree confidential and may not be disclosed to unauthorized persons either intentionally or unintentionally except as provided in the School District records manual and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974.
 - B. Although student records are subject to privacy regulations, they are also public records. This does not mean the public has access to them but that the public, through state government, has the right to control their disposition. It also means that the records are the property of the School District and as such subject to state control.
 - C. Student records serve the purposes of and have value for schools, students, parents, the District, and the state, not only while students attend school but for a significant period of time after they leave school.
 - D. Personally identifiable student records include, in addition to forms, letters, reports, and other written documents, such items as pictures, tapes, or films.



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- E. The need to retain student records for a specified period of time depends upon the purpose for which they are intended and the degree to which they have lasting value for either the school, the student, the parents, the District, or the state:
- F. State regulations governing the disposition of student records have the force of law.

Identification

NOTE: The retention periods given below are those required by the state except for those marked "District Requirement," which means that the District has the need for a longer retention period than that prescribed by the state.

See the records management schedule issued by the student records office.

1. **STUDENT PERMANENT RECORD**

- A. Definition - The official record of the student's school history and academic achievement.
- B. Explanation
 - (1) The Student Permanent Record includes the Elementary Permanent Record Card, the Middle School Permanent Record Card or Transcript, and the Senior' High School Transcript, whether handwritten or produced by data processing. (Also, any former junior high school records.)
 - (2) Sometime during the 1920s, the District began the use of permanent record cards. Prior to that time, records of student achievement were often kept in ledger form and are, in many cases, the only permanent record available in the District.
 - (3) Currently the permanent records of most former students are on file in the Student Records Office. That data is the official records, not the copies in the schools.
- C. Retention periods - permanent records are to be kept by the District according to instructions for their disposition provided by the state.



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All permanent records--elementary, middle school, previous junior high school, high school or special programs--regardless of their form are to be retained securely in the school or program building until they are forwarded to the Student Records Office. See appropriate section of this procedure for disposition of records at specific school levels.

D. Disposition - Directions for disposition of records by:

(1) Elementary schools

- (a) Student is promoted to a middle school

Mark card, "Promoted to School_____, 6-15-05," or similar wording, and transmit or deliver by secure means to the indicated school.

- (b) Student transfers to another school in Seattle School District

Mark card, "Transferred to School_____, 4-10-05," and transmit or deliver by secure means to that school.

- (c) Student moves and the record is requested from another school district

Mark card, "Record Sent to School_____ [District], [address], 4-10-05," send copy of card and retain card until sent to the student records office.

- (d) Student moves and destination is unknown

Mark card, "Moved To Unknown Address, 4-10-05," and retain until sent to the Student Records Office.

- (e) Elementary schools retain records for three years. All records over three years are sent to the student records office.

(2) Middle and high schools

- (a) Handwritten transcripts still in buildings

[1] If student is still in school, arrange with data processing to transfer the data to the computer file.



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- [2] If student is not in school, retain record for three years, then send to the student records office.
- (b) Pre-1930 permanent records in ledger or other forms and never microfilmed.
Retain in building until sent to the student records office.
- (c) Computerized transcripts
 - [1] The actual data on tape or disk are to be retained indefinitely or until transferred to student records. .
 - [2] Hard copy transcripts should be retained in the building according to the retention schedule of cumulative records. It is also advisable to maintain a copy in residual records.
 - [3] Middle schools retain records for three years. All records over three years are sent to the student records office.
 - [4] High schools retain records for five years. All records over five years are sent to the student records office.

2. **STUDENT CUMULATIVE RECORD**

- A. Definition - records of continuous and current significant and concrete information directly related to the student's enrollment status and developmental progress during school enrollment.
- B. Explanation - although the "student folder" is often thought of as the cumulative record, some cumulative records may be filed elsewhere and not all information in the folder should be considered as part of the cumulative record. (refer to definition, above.)
 - (1) The cumulative record includes at least the following:
 - (a) Health records.
 - (b) Documents related to student placement, enrollment, or transfer.
 - (c) Standardized test results if not included in the permanent record.
 - (d) Individual mental, psychological, and proficiency test results.
 - (e) Attendance records.



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- (f) Records of disciplinary action (suspensions, hearings, etc.).
- (g) Records noting honors received.
- (h) Records of participation in activities including interscholastic athletics.
- (i) Work experience.
- (j) Record of access to or transmittal of records.
- (k) The student data sheet.
- (l) Racial identification forms.
- (m) Formal reports/comments by school personnel/professional District personnel.
- (n) Handwritten copies of computerized secondary transcripts.

- (2) In determining whether a record should be classified as a part of the cumulative record, reference should be made to the other record classifications noted below, particularly the Confidential Record and Transitory Records.

C. Retention Periods - Student cumulative records are kept for:

- (1) Five (5) years after graduation from senior high school or -five (5) years after discontinuance of high school enrollment, or
- (2) Three (3) years after discontinuance of enrollment in elementary, middle, or previous junior high school, or
- (3) Until a Cumulative Record or a portion thereof is deleted as a result of a parental request, or a student request if the student is 18 years of age, or
- (4) Until a Cumulative Record or a portion thereof is deemed to be inaccurate, misleading, or inappropriate and would be deleted upon the request of a parent or an adult student.

D. Disposition - With exceptions indicated below, the types of cumulative records listed under Chapter XIII, Section B, Item 2, in the Student Records Manual should follow the student from kindergarten through 12th grade.

- (1) A cumulative record deleted as inaccurate, misleading, or inappropriate may be destroyed at will unless the parent or the student has submitted a prior request to examine it.



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- (2) When Cumulative Records are transmitted from one school to another or from one school level to another, any such records that are rendered inappropriate because of the student's transfer and any records that have no continuing value for personnel of the new school, the student, the student's parents, the District, and the state may be destroyed. (see instructions elsewhere in this procedure.)

3. **CONFIDENTIAL RECORDS**

A. Definition - Confidential reports or information provided District personnel by non-District agencies or private practitioners.

- (1) A confidential, written communication to a school staff member from a non-District person or agency does not become a student record unless it is shared with someone. Similarly, an oral communication from a non-District person or agency does not become a student record until the content of the communication is written and then shared. Therefore, a confidential communication may be received, noted, and returned or destroyed under provisions outlined for professional work products and non-records. The practice of not entering confidential data into the record is recommended.

- (2) Parents and adult students (age 18 or over) have the right to examine confidential records.

B. Explanation - insofar as feasible, confidential records should not be included in the cumulative record, should be filed as securely as possible, and should be disclosed only on a strict "need to know" basis

C. Retention Periods - Confidential records are kept:

- (1) For five (5) years from graduation or withdrawal from senior high school, or
- (2) For three (3) years after withdrawal from elementary, middle, or previous junior high school, or
- (3) Until a confidential record or a portion thereof is deleted as a result of a parental request, or a student request if the student has attained 18 years of age, or



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(4) Until a cumulative record or a portion thereof is deemed to be inaccurate, misleading, or inappropriate and would be deleted upon the request of a parent or an adult student.

D. Disposition - Generally, confidential records should be kept in secure confidential files and may be destroyed at the end of the prescribed retention period. (See instructions elsewhere in this procedure.)

Confidential records deemed inaccurate, 'misleading, or inappropriate may be destroyed at will.

4. **SPECIAL HANDICAPPED AND GIFTED STUDENT RECORDS**

A. Definition - Reports and other documentation used in the assessment and placement of handicapped and gifted students.

B. Explanation - records in this category are those maintained by the department of Special Education regarding the assessment and placement of handicapped students and by the office of counseling/psychological and social work services regarding the assessment of gifted students and by the student placement office regarding the placement of gifted students.

(1) Copies of records of Special Education students or gifted students placed in the "student folder" in regular school buildings become part of the student's cumulative record.

(2) Assessment records of gifted students currently maintained by individual schools having gifted programs are to be considered under this category and should be maintained separate and apart from regular student records.

C. Retention periods - Records regarding special handicapped students and gifted students are kept for:

(1) Five (5) years after the need for Special Education or Gifted placement has ended (example: a student is in Special Education, grades 1 through 4, but placed in a regular program thereafter retain records until the student completes the 9th grade.), or



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- (2) Five (5) years after withdrawal or graduation, or
- (3) Students who continue in school until age 21, five (5) years after attainment of age 21.

NOTE: Special Education Records: Records of all students who have been in Special Education since September 1, 1972, should be retained until specific direction regarding disposition is provided by the District. (District Requirement.)

D. Disposition - Records may be destroyed per the retention schedule outlined above.

- (1) Records deemed to be inaccurate, misleading, or inappropriate, may be destroyed at will.
- (2) Special Education records should be destroyed as soon as possible after the end of the retention period with the exception of records regarding Special Education placement subsequent to September 1, 1972 (see 5.c(2) on Page 8).

5. **SPECIAL PURPOSE RECORDS**

- A. Definition - Student records maintained by such District offices and personnel as Student Placement, Special Education, Bilingual Programs, Health Services, And Security, and disclosed to other District personnel only on a "need to know" basis.
- B. Explanation - This classification of records generally consists of a variety of special purpose information.

Generally, copies of these records distributed to schools or programs become part of the cumulative student record.

C. Retention Periods

- (1) Special purpose records are kept for:
 - (a) Five (5) years after the last service is provided examples:
 - [1] Five (5) years after the Bilingual service is no longer required.



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[2] Five (5) years after the last student placement activity.

[3] Five (5) years after the last psychological evaluation.

(b) Five (5) years after graduation or withdrawal.

(c) Five years after attainment of age 21.

(2) IMPORTANT NOTE: The following records are to be kept until District direction regarding their disposition is provided:

(a) Student placement records of student transfers subsequent to September 1, 1971 that affect desegregation; records regarding Special Education placement subsequent to September 1, 1972; records regarding suspension, expulsion, or disciplinary transfer subsequent to September, 1976; and records of Seattle Plan placements subsequent to April 5, 1978.

(b) Student support services records regarding Special Education assessment subsequent to September 1, 1972 and records of the assessment of gifted students subsequent to September 1,

(c) All Bilingual Records (District Requirement).

D. Disposition - Records may be destroyed per the retention schedule outlined above and in accordance with instructions provided for destruction of records. See instructions elsewhere in this procedure.

NOTE: Records deemed inaccurate, misleading, or inappropriate may be destroyed at will subject to requirements for destruction. Careful attention should be given to the IMPORTANT NOTE in this section 5.C.(2).

6. STUDENT DISCIPLINE RECORDS

A. Definition - Records of individual disciplinary actions maintained in compliance with requirements of the federal department of education, including the data submitted to and tabulated by data processing, any personally identifiable reports resulting there from, and any basic disciplinary records from which the reporting process is generated.



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- B. Explanation - These records are very important not only to ensure District compliance with federal reporting requirements but to provide data for possible federal or District assessments of disciplinary practices in schools.
- C. Retention Periods - Records of disciplinary actions taken:
- (1) Prior to September 1, 1975, may be disposed of in accordance with the retention period for cumulative records.
 - (2) Subsequent to September 1, 1975, are to be retained until District direction is provided regarding their disposition. (District requirement.)
- D. Disposition - Records may be destroyed per the retention schedule outlined above and in accordance with instructions provided for destruction of records. (see instructions elsewhere in this procedure.)

NOTE: Records deemed inaccurate, misleading, or inappropriate, may be destroyed at will subject to requirements for destruction. Careful attention should be given to the IMPORTANT NOTE elsewhere in this procedure 5.C.(2).

7. **TRANSITORY STUDENT RECORDS**

- A. Definition - Records that are useful for only a limited time and have no lasting importance for students, parents, school personnel, the District, or the state.
- B. Explanation - Examples of Transitory records might be:
- (1) Duplicate attendance cards.
 - (2) Locator cards.
 - (3) Notes such as, "Please dismiss Mary at 2:00 today for a dentist appointment," or "What is the correct spelling of Boris Wojciechowski's name?"
 - (4) Hall passes or individual "cut slips."
 - (5) Duplicates of records in other categories.



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(6) "One-shot" bulletins, notices, or reports.

- C. Retention Period - For as long as the record has value for the school, the student, the parents, the District, or the state care is to be exercised in determining that such records are, in fact, transitory.
- D. Disposition - Transitory records may be destroyed when they have no further value or when deemed to be inaccurate, misleading, or inappropriate, subject to the requirements for destroying records which are identified elsewhere in this procedure.

8. **RESIDUAL STUDENT RECORDS**

- A. Definition - Records maintained in schools after students have left, serving primarily as a locator system.
- B. Explanation - With the highly mobile population of Seattle students, the practice of keeping minimal residual records showing the known or anticipated school destination of withdrawn students is very useful, even beyond the required period of retention.
- C. Retention Period - Until disposition is approved at the District administrative level.
- D. Disposition - Residual records may be destroyed with District authorization and in accordance with requirements for destruction of records, identified elsewhere in this procedure.

9. **COMPUTERIZED DATA PROCESSING RECORDS**

- A. Definition - All student information that has been collected and stored in a computer storage device, or which is directly accessible via a computer terminal.
- B. Explanation - Generally the" type of information in the data processing files is the same kind of information maintained in the schools in one form or another. The present permanent record for secondary students is actually in the form of computerized data. For the most part, other data processing data should be categorized under one or more of the classifications listed above.



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- C. Retention periods - Since data processing records may be placed in one of the categories listed above, they are subject to the applicable retention schedules.
 - D. Disposition - as outlined in applicable categories, above.
10. **PROFESSIONAL WORK PRODUCTS AND OTHER "NON-RECORDS"** (H38.09)
- A. Definitions - (See the Student Records Manual) Records in this category are not considered to be student records, in that they are kept by individual District employees for their sole use and no other person is given access to them.
 - B. Explanation - examples of professional work products and non-records are:
 - (1) Personal notes and files of District personnel.
 - (2) Certain records maintained by counselors, and the District Security Office.
 - C. Retention Period - None.
 - D. Disposition - None prescribed. District personnel have a professional obligation to dispose of such "non-records" in the most secure manner possible in order to preserve the privacy of the subject students.

Procedures

Destruction Of Student Records

- 1. Periodic, Large Scale Destruction of Records
 - A. After exercising care that prescribed retention schedules have been met, box all records to be destroyed.
 - B. Complete a transmittal form (obtainable from the Student Records Office).
 - C. Close and seal each container of records and mark plainly:

To: STUDENT RECORDS

From:



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- D. Send the transmittal to student records, requesting pick-up of a stated number of containers of student records for destruction.
- E. A District truck will pick up the records, deliver them to Student Records to be destroyed in accordance with prescribed state procedures.

2. Incidental destruction of individual records

- A. A Realistic Approach - Given the great number and variety of individual student records and the need to discard such records on a day-to-day basis, it is impossible to provide a destruction method that will cover every case. It is also clear that every scrap of paper bearing a student's name cannot be packaged and sent to student records for destruction. Therefore, the following guidelines are provided to assist building and office personnel in making proper and practical decisions.
- B. General Guidelines - For the destruction of records other than by the student records office.
 - (1) Remove personal identification - A record ceases to be a student record when all personal identification is removed. Therefore, the right of privacy can be preserved by removing the personal identification in a manner that would reasonably prevent reassembling of the record.
 - (2) Directory Information - Records consisting entirely of directory information (See D28.00) are less sensitive than those containing other personally identifiable information, and may therefore be discarded in regular building wastes.
 - (3) Shredding - Shredding of records is an acceptable means of destruction. Therefore, individual records may be hand shredded to reasonably prevent reassembling, then placed in regular waste.
 - (4) Collection of Materials - Building personnel might wish to keep a file drawer or other container for records to be destroyed, then periodically send the collection to Student Records for destruction.



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- (5) Security - Generally, the security and care with which records are destroyed will be determined by the degree to which the records are important and confidential. Remember, the highly personal and confidential communication thrown in the waste basket intact may end up where someone else could find it.

Former code(s): H38.13, H15.13