

Wisconsin Records Retention Schedule for School Districts

—Covers both hard copy and electronic records—

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Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction
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Wisconsin Records Retention Schedule for School Districts

Introduction

School districts accumulate thousands of pages of records every year—records that soon become obsolete. Questions arise frequently regarding records retention, destruction, and the interpretation of statutes relating to transfer of records. In response to requests for assistance, the state superintendent has revamped this document to examine the issues of records retention and development of strategies for handling records common to all school districts. **The retention periods listed cover both hard copy and electronic records.**

Section 19.21(6) provides statutory guidance for the policy development, retention, transfer, and destruction of school district records. A school district, except a first class city school district, may provide for the destruction of obsolete school records. Prior to any such destruction, at least 60 days' notice in writing of such destruction shall be given to the Wisconsin State Historical Society, which shall preserve any records it determines to be of historical interest. The Wisconsin State Historical Society may, upon application, waive the notice. The period of time a school district record shall be kept before destruction shall be not less than the current year plus six years unless a shorter period of time is fixed by the Public Records Board under s. 16.61(3)(e) and except as provided under sub. (7). This section does not apply to pupil records under s. 118.125.

Section 19.21(6) of the Wisconsin statutes states the following:

- School districts may provide for the destruction of obsolete school records except for pupil records under s. 118.125. However, prior to any destruction, at least 60 days' written notice must be given to the Wisconsin State Historical Society. The prior notice requirement enables the preservation of school records determined by the Wisconsin State Historical Society to be of historical interest. The Wisconsin State Historical Society may waive the notice requirement.
- The period of time a school district record must be kept before destruction must not be less than seven (7) years, unless a shorter period of time is fixed by the Public Records Board.
- This Wisconsin School District Records Retention Schedule (WSDRRS) provides recommended retention periods for records common to all school districts, denotes records of historical importance, and describes a process for transfer of records to the Wisconsin State Historical Society as well as a procedure whereby the Wisconsin State Historical Society may waive the notice requirement.

School districts that adopt the WSDRRS will find the retention, destruction, and transfer of records to the Wisconsin State Historical Society more manageable.

Adoption of the WSDRRS will:

- Enable disposal of some records in less time than the seven years generally required by the statutes;
- Provide guidance regarding those school district records that should be preserved locally or are of interest to the Wisconsin State Historical Society; and
- Eliminate paperwork for both the school district and the Wisconsin State Historical Society.

District Options: The Schedule serves as a guidepost against which to check the individual needs of each school district. A school district may adopt the entire Schedule, individual sections, or a modified version. The Public Records Board along with the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction recommends that school districts adopt the WSDRRS and submit the Notification Form to the Wisconsin State Historical Society.

Retention of records applies to both hard copy and electronic formats. Additional information about electronic records is covered in **Section 7, Electronic Records** of this document.

To Adopt the Schedule

School districts are advised to adopt the Schedule even though they may not have all the records listed in it. A school district may adopt the entire schedule, individual sections, or a modified version. A school district may develop a Schedule with different retention periods from those listed. For records to be retained less than seven years, the school district may not adopt a retention period shorter than that indicated in the Schedule without the approval of the Public Records Board. A new Schedule, or list of modifications, must be sent with the Notification Form. Specific school district records can be listed in **Section 6, Miscellaneous Records**. An adopted Schedule becomes the district's policy on record retention, destruction, and local preservation and/or transfer of records to the Wisconsin State Historical Society.

Date Adopted By School District:

Date First Issued:

Revised Date:

1.0 Administrative Records

| 1.1.0 School Board Records | | Retention Period* | Historical Value** | Suggested Keeper of the Records |
|----------------------------|--|--|--------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1.1.1 | School Board Meeting Minutes and Agenda Packets *** | Permanent | X | District Administrator |
| 1.1.2 | School Board Committee Meeting Minutes | Permanent | X | District Administrator |
| 1.1.3 | Citizens Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes | 3 years | X | Administrative Staff Designee |
| 1.1.4 | Management Team Meeting Minutes | 3 years | | District Administrator |
| 1.1.5 | Reports to the School Board | 3 years | X | District Administrator |
| 1.1.6 | School Board Policies and Procedures | Until superseded | X | District Administrator |
| 1.1.7 | School Board Correspondence | 3 years | | District Administrator |
| 1.1.8 | Management Guidelines | Until superseded | X | District Administrator |
| 1.1.9 | Legal Opinions | 7 years | X | Requester |
| 1.1.10 | Notice of Meetings | 7 years | | District Administrator |
| 1.1.11 | Petitions | 7 years | X | District Administrator |
| 1.1.12 | Referendum Results | Permanent | X | Business Office |
| 1.1.13 | Complaints to the School Board | 3 years | | District Administrator |
| 1.1.14 | Newsletters/Bulletins | 1 year | X | Author |
| 1.1.15 | Special Project Studies/Reports/Strategic Plans/Task Force Reports | 3 years | X | Author |
| 1.1.16 | Management Correspondence/Memos | 1 year, unless subject to complaint, or lawsuit, or is a record type that requires longer retention. | | Author |
| 1.1.17 | Election Notices | 2 years following the elections | | Business Office |
| 1.1.18 | Election Petitions | 2 years following the elections | | Business Office |
| 1.1.19 | Election Poll Lists | 2 years following the elections | | Business Office |
| 1.1.20 | Election Tally | 2 years following the elections | | Business Office |
| 1.1.21 | Election Tally Books and Returns | 2 years following the elections | | Business Office |
| 1.1.22 | Election Canvassing | 10 years following elections | | Business Office |
| 1.1.23 | Election Registrations | 2 years following voter registration | | Business Office |

| 1.0 Administrative Records | | | | |
|--|--|--------------------------|---------------------------|--|
| 1.2.0 Building and Grounds Record | | Retention Period* | Historical Value** | Suggested Keeper of the Records |
| 1.2.1 | School District boundaries (and Plats) (including acknowledgments of changes) | Permanent | X | Business Office |
| 1.2.2 | Architecture Building Blueprints | Life of building | X | Building & Grounds |
| 1.2.3 | Building and Site Data Books | Permanent | | ----- |
| 1.2.4 | Tools and Equipment Inventory | Retain until superseded | | Buildings & Grounds |
| 1.2.5 | Specification | Life of building | | Buildings & Grounds |
| 1.2.6 | Building Permits | 6 years after acceptance | | Buildings & Grounds |
| 1.2.7 | Electrical Information | Life of building | | Buildings & Grounds |
| 1.2.8 | Maintenance Requests | 1 year | | Buildings & Grounds |
| 1.2.9 | Abstract/Deeds/Title Papers/Mortgages | Permanent | | Business Office |
| 1.2.10 | Chemical Wastes Manifest (including asbestos and radon checks) | Permanent | | Buildings & Grounds |
| 1.3.0 Transportation Records | | | | |
| 1.3.1 | Parent or Other School District Transportation Contracts | 6 years | | Business Office |
| 1.3.2 | Bus Transportation Contract | 4 years after expiration | | Business Office |
| 1.3.3 | Field Trip Permission Request | 1 year | | Business Office |
| 1.3.4 | Financial Statement for Out-of-District Field Trips | 1 year | | Business Office |
| 1.3.5 | Bus Rules/Policy | Until superseded | | Business Office |
| 1.3.6 | Bus Route Listing | 4 years | | Business Office |
| 1.3.7 | School Bus Accident Report | 7 years | | |
| 1.3.8 | Pupil Transportation Report | 7 years | | |
| 1.4.0 Statistical Records | | | | |
| 1.4.1 | Wisconsin School Directory update (PI-1280) & Verification of Private Schools Within Public District (PI-1201) | 1 year | | District Administrator |
| 1.4.2 | Pupil Nondiscrimination and Educational Equity Report (PI-1197B) | 7 years | | District Administrator |
| 1.4.3 | Fall Staff Reports (PI-1202) | 3 years | | District Administrator |
| 1.4.4 | School District Statistical Report (PI-1203) | 7 years | | District Administrator |

1.0 Administrative Records

| 1.5.0 Program Applications/Evaluations | | Retention Period* | Historical Value** | Suggested Keeper of the Records |
|--|---|-------------------|--------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1.5.1 | ESEA Consolidated Application (PI-9550) | 5 years | | Instructional Services |
| 1.5.2 | ESEA Affirmation of Consultation with Private School Officials (PI-9550-AC) | 7 years | | Instructional Services |
| 1.5.3 | ESEA NCLB Assurances (PI-9550-Assurances) | 7 years | | Instructional Services |
| 1.5.4 | Title I Paraprofessional Compliance School Report Summary (PI-9550-II-BB) | 7 years | | Human Resources |
| 1.5.5 | Application – Alcohol/Traffic Safety Chapter 20 | 5 years | | |
| 1.5.6 | Carl Perkins Basic Grant Application (PI-1303) | 5 years | | Instructional Services |
| 1.5.7 | VEERS Composite Enrollment Report (PI-1330-R) | 5 years | | Instructional Services |
| 1.5.8 | Vocational Student Concentrator Completer Graduate Follow-up Survey (PI-1335-VEERS) | 5 years | | Instructional Services |
| 1.5.9 | Summer School Program Report – ITP Summary (PI-1805) | 5 years | | Instructional Services |
| 1.5.10 | Title I Part C – Education of Migratory Children Local Project Application – Summer (PI-1730) | 5 years | | Instructional Services |
| 1.5.11 | Title I Comparability Report (PI-1753) | 7 years | | Instructional Services |
| 1.5.12 | Grant Application: Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse Grant (PI-1816) | 5 years | | Student Services |
| 1.5.13 | State AODA Grants Renewal Form (PI-1813) | 5 years | | Student Services |
| 1.5.14 | State AODA Grants End of Year Report | 5 years | | Student Services |
| 1.5.15 | Annual Report for Children at Risk Program (PI-2375) (when identified) | 5 years | | Student Services |
| 1.5.16 | Course Offerings Report (PI-1215) | 7 years | | Instructional Services |

| 2.0 Finance Records | | | | |
|---|---|--|---------------------------|--|
| 2.1.0 Purchasing/Payroll Records | | Retention Period* | Historical Value** | Suggested Keeper of the Records |
| 2.1.1 | Purchase Requisition | 1 year | | Business Office |
| 2.1.2 | Purchase Orders | 3 years | | Business Office |
| 2.1.3 | Bids & Contracts | 3 years | | Business Office |
| 2.1.4 | Performance Guarantee/Warrant of Vendor | Until expiration of the warranty | | Business Office |
| 2.1.5 | Vacation/Personal Leave Records | 3 years from time of record creation | | Human Resources |
| 2.1.6 | W-2 Forms | 7 years | | Business Office |
| 2.1.7 | W-4 Forms | 4 years | | Business Office |
| 2.1.8 | Social Security Report | 7 years after retirement | | Business Office |
| 2.1.9 | Retirement Reports | 7 years after retirement | | Business Office |
| 2.1.10 | Enrollment Cards | Maintain 7 years after retirement, resignation or termination | | Human Resources |
| 2.1.11 | Disability Insurance | Maintain 7 years after retirement, resignation or termination | | Human Resources |
| 2.1.12 | Life Insurance | Maintain 7 years after retirement, resignation or termination | | Human Resources |
| 2.1.13 | Health/Dental Insurance | Maintain 7 years after retirement, resignation or termination. | | Human Resources |
| 2.1.14 | Tax Sheltered Annuity | Maintain 7 years after retirement | | Human Resources |
| 2.1.15 | United Way Contributions | 1 year | | Business Office |
| 2.1.16 | Union Dues | Current year | | Business Office |
| 2.1.17 | Payroll Distribution Report | 4 years | | Business Office |
| 2.1.18 | Payroll Deduction Report | 4 years | | Business Office |
| 2.1.19 | Additional Pay Authorization Forms | 4 years | | Business Office |
| 2.1.20 | Insurance Reports and Bills | 7 years after date of retirement, resignation or termination. | | Human Resources |
| 2.1.21 | Absence Report/Time Sheets | 7 years after date of retirement, resignation or termination | | Human Resources |
| 2.1.22 | State and Federal Tax Reports | 4 years | | Business Office |
| 2.1.23 | Stop Payments | 4 years | | Business Office |
| 2.1.24 | Cancelled Payroll Checks | 4 years | | Business Office |

2.0 Finance Records

| 2.2.0 Accounting/Budget Records | | Retention Period* | Historical Value** | Suggested Keeper of the Records |
|---------------------------------|--|--------------------|--------------------|---------------------------------|
| 2.2.1 | Budget Report (PI-1504) | Permanent | | Business Office |
| 2.2.2 | Annual Report (PI-1505) | Permanent | | Business Office |
| 2.2.3 | Annual Report Calendar (PI-1505 Calendar) | 1 year | | Business Office |
| 2.2.4 | Annual Report (Aid Certification Data) (PI-1505-AC) | Permanent | | Business Office |
| 2.2.5 | Special Education Fiscal Report--Annual (PI-1505-SE) | Permanent | | Business Office |
| 2.2.6 | Special Education Fiscal Report Budget (PI-1505-SE Budget) | 1 year | | Business Office |
| 2.2.7 | Audited Annual Report (Aid Certification Data) (PI-1506-AC) | 1 year | | Business Office |
| 2.2.8 | Financial Audit Statement (PI-1506) | Permanent | | Business Office |
| 2.2.9 | Regular Tuition Reports (PI-1514) | Permanent | | Business Office |
| 2.2.10 | Summer School (PI-1804) | 1 year after audit | | Instructional Services |
| 2.2.11 | Annual Budget Report (DPI) | Permanent | | Business Office |
| 2.2.12 | Annual Audit Reports | Permanent | | Business Office |
| 2.2.13 | Disbursement and Receipt Journal | 7 years | | Business Office |
| 2.2.14 | General Ledger – All Funds | 7 years | | Business Office |
| 2.2.15 | Fund Ledger Cards | 7 years | | Business Office |
| 2.2.16 | Canceled General Voucher Checks | 7 years | | Business Office |
| 2.2.17 | Monthly Bank Statements | 7 years | | Business Office |
| 2.2.18 | Monthly Reconciliation Ledger | 7 years | | Business Office |
| 2.2.19 | Bank Deposit Receipts | 7 years | | Business Office |
| 2.2.20 | District Equalization Valuation Report | 7 years | | Business Office |
| 2.2.21 | State Aid Computation Cards (PI-1519) | 7 years | | Business Office |
| 2.2.22 | Tax Levy Certification (PI-401) | 7 years | | Business Office |
| 2.2.23 | State Aid Payment Vouchers (PI-1518) | 7 years | | Business Office |
| 2.2.24 | Pupil Transportation (PI-1547) | 7 years | | Business Office |
| 2.2.25 | Common School Fund Voucher | 7 years | | Business Office |
| 2.2.26 | State Superintendent Acknowledgment of District Boundary Changes | 7 years | | Business Office |
| 2.2.27 | Outstanding Long-Term Indebtedness Statements/Notification | Permanent | | Business Office |

| 2.0 Finance Records | | | | |
|---|---|----------------------------------|---------------------------|--|
| 2.2.0 Accounting/Budget Records (cont'd) | | Retention Period* | Historical Value** | Suggested Keeper of the Records |
| 2.2.27.1 | Long-Term Bonds | Permanent | | |
| 2.2.27.2 | Long-Term Notes | Permanent | | |
| 2.2.27.3 | Short-Term Notes | Permanent | | |
| 2.2.27.4 | Approved State Trust Fund Application | Permanent | | |
| 2.2.22.5 | Land Contracts | Permanent | | |
| 2.2.27.6 | Certificate of Bond Sale | Permanent | | |
| 2.2.27.7 | Schedule of Bond Retirements | Permanent | | |
| 2.2.28 | Canceled Bonds of Indebtedness and Interest | 7 years | | Business Office |
| 2.2.29 | Invoices | 7 years | | Business Office |
| 2.2.30 | Short-Term Contracts for Contest Officials (e.g., spelling bee, Academic Decathlon, etc.) | 3 years | | Athletic Director |
| 2.2.31 | Short-Term Contracts for Athletic Officials (seasonal referee, etc.) | 3 years | | Athletic Director |
| 2.2.32 | Insurance Policies | 7 years | | Business Office |
| 2.2.33 | Damage and Loss Reports | 7 years | | Business Office |
| 2.2.34 | Food Service Records | | | Food Service |
| 2.2.34.1 | Application/Agreement/Policy Statements for Food and Nutrition Programs | 5 years | | Food Service |
| 2.2.34.2 | Applications for Free and Reduced Price Meals | 5 years | | Food Service |
| 2.2.34.3 | Joint Agreement/Vendor – Management Company Verification Summary/Documentation | Current fiscal year plus 4 years | | Food Service |
| 2.2.34.4 | Daily Participation Record (by building) | Current fiscal year plus 4 years | | Food Service |
| 2.2.34.5 | Daily Participation Record (by district) | Current fiscal year plus 4 years | | Food Service |
| 2.2.34.6 | Menus/Production Record (lunch and breakfast) | Current fiscal year plus 4 years | | Food Service |
| 2.2.34.7 | Claim Worksheet for NSL,SB, SMP,WMMP, EEN (PI-1409) | Current fiscal year plus 4 years | | Food Service |
| 2.2.34.8 | Donated Food Distribution Program Monthly Inventory Records | Current fiscal year plus 4 years | | Food Service |
| 2.2.34.9 | A la Carte, Lunch Breakfast, ½ -Day Kindergarten | Current fiscal year plus 4 years | | Food Service |
| 2.2.34.10 | Milk Program Sales Records | Current fiscal year plus 4 years | | Food Service |
| 2.2.35 | Grant Applications – Successful ++ | 5 years | | Business Office/Instr. Services |
| 2.2.36 | Grant Applications – Unsuccessful | 1 year | | Initiating Department |
| 2.2.37 | State Tuition Claim (PI-1524) | 1 year after audit | | Business Office |

2.0 Finance Records

| 2.2.0 Accounting/Budget Records (cont'd) | | Retention Period* | Historical Value** | Suggested Keeper of the Records |
|--|--|--|--------------------|---------------------------------|
| 2.2.38 | Tuition Claim for non-Residents | 1 year after audit | | Business Office |
| 2.2.39 | Summer School (PI-1804) (Electronic) | 1 year after audit | | Instructional Services |
| 2.2.40 | Notification to Exceed Revenue Limits (PI-1572-B) | Permanent | | Business Office |
| 2.2.41 | Group and Foster Home FTE Log (PI-1589) | 5 years | | Business Office |
| 2.2.42 | Mentoring Grant for Initial Educators (PI-1640) | 7 years | | Instructional Services |
| 2.2.43 | Peer Review and Mentoring Grants (PI-1653) | 7 years | | Instructional Services |
| 2.2.44 | District Development Levels Aligned to Grades in PI 34.27.29 (PI-1675) | Permanent | | Human Resources |
| 2.2.45 | National School Lunch PROV 2 Contract | 4 years | | Food Service |
| 2.2.46 | School Food Authority-Civil Rights Compliance Self Evaluation Form—National School Lunch (PI-1441) | 4 years | | Food Service |
| 2.2.47 | USDA Commodity Distribution Program Complaint Form (PI-6005) | Filed only when complaint has been received. Keep records for 4 years beyond that. | | Food Services |

3.0 Personnel Records

| 3.1.0 Employee Records | | Retention Period* | Historical Value** | Suggested Keeper of the Records |
|------------------------|--|--|--------------------|---------------------------------|
| 3.1.1 | Teaching Certificates (Including permits and certifications) | 6 years after date of retirement, resignation, or termination. | | Human Resources |
| 3.1.2 | Transcript of College Credit | 6 years after date of retirement, resignation, or termination. | | Human Resources |
| 3.1.3 | Certified Staff Certificates of Previous Experience | 6 years after date of retirement, resignation, or termination. | | Human Resources |
| 3.1.4 | Evaluation Records | 6 years after date of retirement, resignation, or termination | | Human Resources |
| 3.1.5 | Individual Teaching Contracts | 6 years after date of retirement, resignation, or termination. | | Human Resources |
| 3.1.6 | Other Individual Employment Contracts | 6 years after date of retirement, resignation, or termination. | | Human Resources |
| 3.1.7 | Applications (Hired) | 6 years after date of retirement, resignation, or termination | | Human Resources |
| 3.1.8 | Applications (Not Hired) | 3 years | | Human Resources |
| 3.1.9 | Immigration and Nationalization Services INS-9 Forms | 3 years from date of hire, or one year after termination, whichever is later | | Human Resources |
| 3.1.10 | Staff Accident Reports | 5 years after settlement | | Human Resources |
| 3.1.10.1 | Injury Claims | 5 years after settlement | | Human Resources |
| 3.1.10.2 | Workers Compensation | 5 years after settlement | | Human Resources |
| 3.1.10.3 | Public Liability | 5 years after settlement | | Human Resources |
| 3.1.10.4 | Settlements | 7 years after settlement | | Human Resources |
| 3.1.11 | Medical Records | 6 years after date of retirement, resignation, or termination. | | Human Resources |
| 3.1.11.1 | Physical Examinations | 6 years after date of retirement, resignation, or termination. | | Human Resources |
| 3.1.11.2 | TB Tests | 6 years after date of retirement, resignation, or termination. | | Human Resources |
| 3.1.12 | Health & Dental Insurance Waivers | 3 years after date of retirement, resignation or termination | | Human Resources |
| 3.1.13 | Affirmative Action Files | 7 years | | District Administrator |
| 3.1.14 | Arbitration Decisions – Negotiator | 7 years | | Human Resources |

3.0 Personnel Records

| 3.1.0 Employee Records (cont'd) | | Retention Period* | Historical Value** | Suggested Keeper of the Records |
|---------------------------------|---|---|--------------------|---------------------------------|
| 3.1.15 | Athletic Activity Contracts | 6 years after date of retirement, resignation or termination. | | Human Resources |
| 3.1.16 | Classification Studies – Description of job duties of individual school district positions. | 6 years from creation | | Human Resources |
| 3.1.17 | Disability Insurance Claims – Claims filed by employees for disability insurance program. | 6 years after final settlement of claim | | Human Resources |
| 3.1.18 | Eligibility Register – List of job applicants who have qualified for positions within district. | 3 years after job has been filled | | Human Resources |
| 3.1.19 | Employee Deficiency/Termination Reports | 6 years after retirement, resignation, or termination | | Human Resources |
| 3.1.20 | Equal Employment Opportunity Reports/Summary Data Reports sent to Federal Government | 3 years | | Human Resources |
| 3.1.21 | Fair Labor Standards Act – Salary schedules, employee classification, compensation periods, work schedules/periods | 6 years after retirement, resignation, or termination. | | Human Resources |
| 3.1.22 | Grievance Files – Employee grievances and/or complaints filed under a labor agreement or personnel rules. This also relates to arbitration files and related court cases. | 10 years after date of settlement. | | Human Resources |
| 3.1.23 | Insurance Certificates and Policies | 6 years after expiration | | Human Resources |
| 3.1.24 | Insurance Premium Reports | 6 years from date of creation | | Human Resources |
| 3.1.25 | Insurance Working Files | 6 years from date of creation | | Human Resources |
| 3.1.26 | Labor Union – Contracts Contracts between school district and various labor unions including: correspondence, salary schedules, personnel policies. | Permanent | | Human Resources |
| 3.1.27 | Labor Union – Disputes | Permanent | | Human Resources |
| 3.1.28 | Labor Union – Negotiations Minutes | Permanent | | Human Resources |
| 3.1.29 | Non-Union Salary Determination – Annual salary schedules for all non –union employees. | 6 years after expiration | | Human Resources |
| 3.1.30 | OSHA – Employee Accident Reports | 3 years beyond date of accident | | Human Resources |
| 3.1.31 | OSHA – Employee Exposure Records+++ Any information concerning employees exposed to toxic substances or harmful physical agents. | 30 years after termination, resignation, or retirement | | Human Resources |

3.0 Personnel Records

| 3.1.0 Employee Records (cont'd) | | Retention Period* | Historical Value** | Suggested Keeper of the Records |
|---------------------------------|---|--|--------------------|---------------------------------|
| 3.1.32 | OSHA – Employee Medical Records Any information concerning the health status of an employee which is made or maintained by a physician, nurse, or other health care personnel, or technician, including: medical and employment questionnaires or histories, medical exams, medical opinions, descriptions of treatments and prescriptions, and employee medical complaints. | 30 years after termination, resignation, or retirement | | Human Resources |
| 3.1.33 | Performance of Work Contracts | 6 years after action completed | | Human Resources |
| 3.1.34 | Personnel Files – Individual Containing applications, accident reports, citations, medical records (physical exam certificates, etc.). personal history, employee references, and letters of appointments/promotion, termination/resignation | 6 years after date of retirement, resignation, or termination | | Human Resources |
| 3.1.35 | Personnel files – Summer School Applications/contracts and miscellaneous correspondence for summer employment. | 6 years after date of retirement, resignation, or termination | | Human Resources |
| 3.1.36 | Personnel and Promotion List | 6 years or until superseded | | Human Resources |
| 3.1.37 | Position Recruitment File – Relating to posting, recruitment, selection, and appointment to each position. | 6 years after date of recruitment | | Human Resources |
| 3.1.38 | Requisition for Personnel – Request for personnel to fill job vacancies. | Retain until 6 years after job is filled or the requisition is cancelled | | Human Resources |
| 3.1.39 | Substitute Teacher Reports | 3 years from date of hire | | Human Resources |
| 3.1.40 | Unemployment Claims/Compensation Claims for unemployment | 6 years after date of claim | | Business Office |
| 3.1.41 | Summons/Pleadings, Other Legal Documents | 7 years | | Human Resources |
| 3.1.42 | Notices of Claims | 7 years | | Business Office |

Further Considerations

The Age Discrimination in Employment Act requires one year retention of job applications, resumes, job advertisements or notices to the public, test papers for employer—administered aptitude tests, and physical examination records

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 requires at least one-year retention of employment records (including promotions, training and accommodations made) for disabled applicants and employees.

4.0 Student Records

| 4.1.0 Student Records | | Retention Period* | Historical Value** | Suggested Keeper of the Records |
|-----------------------|---|---|--------------------|---------------------------------|
| 4.1.1 | Enrollment or Registration Forms | Date of Withdrawal plus 7 years. | | |
| 4.1.2 | Home Language Reports – Civil Rights Information | 1 year after student graduates or leaves school system, unless extended by consent. | | Instructional Services |
| 4.1.3 | Listing of Disclosure and Transfer of Student Records | 5 years after student graduates or leaves school system. | | Instructional Services |
| 4.1.4 | Nonresident Pupil Attendance Application/Agreement | 5 years after student graduates or leaves school system. | | Business Office |
| 4.1.5 | Athletic Records—Team results, participation, contracts, transportation records, etc. | 5 years after student graduates or leaves school system. | | Athletic Director |
| 4.1.6 | Accident Reports—Student Originating during school year and on school buildings or grounds. | 1 year after student graduates or leaves school system, unless extended by consent. | | Student Services |
| 4.1.7 | Application for Driver Education Certificates (PI-1715) | 1 year | | Instructional Services |
| 4.1.8 | Driver Education Program Application (PI-1709) | 7 years | | Business Services |
| 4.1.9 | Home Based Education Application (PI-1206) | 7 years | | |
| 4.1.10 | January Pupil Membership Report (PI-1563) September Pupil Membership Report(PI-1563) | 7 years | | Business Office |
| 4.1.11 | Pupil Count Youth Challenge Academy (PI-1563 YCA) | 7 years | | Business Office |
| 4.1.12 | Pupil Nondiscrimination and Educational Equity Report (PI-1197-B) | 7 years | | Student Services |
| 4.1.13 | Five-Year School Self-Evaluation Summary for Status of Pupil-Nondiscrimination (PI-1198) | 7 years | | Student Services |
| 4.1.14 | Teacher Grade Books | 1 year after entry of grades in cumulative record. | | Student Services |
| 4.1.15 | Teacher Attendance Records | 1 year after entry of grades in cumulative record. | | Student Services |
| 4.1.16 | Lesson Plans | Until no longer of administrative value | | |

4.0 Student Records

| 4.2.0 Progress Records | | Retention Period* | Historical Value** | Suggested Keeper of the Records |
|---|---|--|--------------------|---------------------------------|
| 4.2.1 | Student Progress Records | 5 years after student graduates or leaves the school system | | School Based |
| 4.2.1.1 | Middle School Record | 5 years after student graduates or leaves the school system | | School Based |
| 4.2.1.2 | Scholastic School Record | 5 years after student graduates or leaves the school system | | School Based |
| 4.2.1.3 | Student Grades | 5 years after student graduates or leaves the school system | | School Based |
| 4.2.1.4 | Courses Taken | 5 years after student graduates or leaves the school system | | School Based |
| 4.2.1.5 | Attendance Record | 5 years after student graduates or leaves the school system | | School Based |
| 4.2.1.6 | Student's School Extracurricular Activities | Permanent | | |
| 4.2.1.7 | Degrees/Awards | Permanent | | |
| 4.2.1.8 | Report Cards | Permanent | | |
| 4.2.1.9 | High School Transcripts | Permanent | | |
| <p>Note: If copies of report cards or grade reports are the only record of grades received at the K-8 levels they must be retained for date of withdrawal of the student plus (7) years. If they are the only record of grades received at the 9-12 levels prior to the use of a standardized academic achievement record or cumulative file, they must be retained permanently.</p> | | | | |
| 4.2.2 | Achievement and Test Results Ability Profile—Report of the results of WKCE and other standardized state and national achievement, mental abilities, and aptitude tests reported by score, percentile rank, etc. | 1 year after recording of data in the academic achievement or cumulative record. Note: If testing results are not recorded on the achievement or cumulative record either manually or by affixing labels, the results must be retained permanently for grades 9-12 and until the date of withdrawal plus 7 years for all other grades. | | Instructional Services |

4.0 Student Records

| 4.3.0 Student Health Care Records | | Retention Period* | Historical Value** | Suggested Keeper of the Records |
|-----------------------------------|--|---|--------------------|---------------------------------|
| 4.3.1 | <p>a. Student's Health Care Records—Accurate complete and current data base; past health history, present health status, review of systems, health practices, developmental history and status, family structure, function and health.</p> <p>b. Health Care Provider Records (Patient Health Records)</p> <p>There are no legal provisions explicitly addressing the period of time patient health care records must be maintained or when they must be destroyed. The general practice is to maintain these records as long as similar non-student records, e.g., accident reports, employee health records, are maintained, which is typically 5-7 years. The department recommends that a school district consult with their legal counsel and medical advisor to develop policies regarding the maintenance and destruction of pupil records that must be treated as patient health care records.</p> | <p>1 year after student graduates or leaves school system, unless extended by consent.</p> <p>Health care records are not considered to be behavioral records—could retain longer and may need to if relates to Medicaid funds/audit. 5-7 years</p> | | Student Services |
| 4.3.2 | Emergency Cards —Card or other form of record providing information on whom to contact in the event of an emergency, accident, or illness to a student | Until superseded or until student ceases enrollment, whichever sooner. | | Instructional Services |
| 4.3.3 | Exclusion and Verification Documentation —Affidavits or similar documents seeking the exclusion of students from participation in immunization or other health care programs for medical or religious reasons | If data from the verification documentation is recorded on the cumulative health card, the documentation need be retained only as long as administratively valuable. | | |
| 4.3.0 Student Health Care Records | | Retention Period* | Historical Value** | Suggested Keeper of the Records |
| 4.3.4 | Reports to Enforcement Agencies —copies of reports on child abuse or neglect, communicable disease, dog bites, drug offenses, missing children, or sexually transmitted disease submitted to the Wisconsin Department of Health and Family Services or local law enforcement and animal control agencies. | Retain for two (2) years following submission of report. | | |
| 4.3.5 | Special Health Care Records —Logs or reports of medications or treatment administered to students on a group or individual basis. | Current; If in support of Medicaid claim, 5-7 years. | | |

4.0 Student Records

| 4.3.0 Student Health Care Records (cont'd) | | Retention Period* | Historical Value** | Suggested Keeper of the Records |
|--|--|---|--------------------|---------------------------------|
| 4.3.6 | Parent's Requests and Physician's Authorization for specialized health care. | End of validity of request or authorization plus 2 years. | | |
| 4.3.7 | Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) Access Policies | Until superseded | | |
| 4.3.8 | <p>FERPA Records of Access to Information Record of each request to access to and each disclosure of personally identifiable information from the educational records of a student.</p> <p>Documentation of requests from and disclosure to the parent or eligible student, to an official of the district for what the district has determined are legitimate educational interests, to a party with written consent from the parent or eligible student, or to a party seeking directory data.</p> <p>Documentation of requests from and disclosures to any party not included in (a) above.</p> <p>Written consents from the parent or eligible student for information disclosure. <i>Retention Note: It is an exception to the retention periods given for parental and eligible student consents that if the only records covered by a consent are those associated with enrollment by a student in grades Pre-K through 8, the consents may be disposed of at the same time the records are destroyed.</i></p> <p>Written refusals from the parent or eligible student to the disclosure of directory information.</p> | <p>Retain for two (2) years</p> <p>Permanent retention (per regulation- 34 CFR 99.32(a)(2))</p> <p>From the parent: Retention until the student is 18.</p> <p>From the eligible student: retention is permanent.</p> <p>If refusals are valid as long as the student is in attendance. Retain only if of administrative valuable. If refusals must be renewed each academic year, retain until superseded or if of administrative value after date of withdrawal.</p> | | |
| 4.4.0 Student Records | | Retention Period* | Historical Value** | Suggested Keeper of the Records |
| 4.4.0 | Protest of Record Statements —Statements by parents or eligible students commenting on contested information in a student record, or stating why they disagree with a district's decision not to amend a record, or both. | Retain for as long as the record containing the contested information is maintained. | | |
| 4.4.1 | Custody Documents — <i>It is an exception to the retention period given that a court order superseded by a subsequent order (e.g., a change in guardianship) need be retained only as long as administratively valuable.</i> | Until student is 18 years of age. | | |

4.0 Student Records

| | | | | |
|-------|--|--|--|------------------------|
| 4.4.3 | Psychological Test Results, Central Office | 1 year after student graduates or leaves school system unless extended by consent. | | Student Services |
| 4.4.4 | Individual Student Disciplinary File | 1 year after student graduates or leaves school system unless extended by consent. | | |
| 4.4.5 | Student Expulsion Report | 1 year after student graduates or leaves school system unless extended by consent or expunged. | | District Administrator |
| 4.4.6 | Student Suspension Report | 1 year after student graduates or leaves school system unless extended by consent. | | |
| 4.4.7 | Assault Against Staff Report | 1 year after student graduates or leaves school system unless extended by consent. | | |

4.0 Student Records

4.5.0 Special Education Individual Student Records—Records with all personally identifiable information redacted are not individual student records and may be maintained for program evaluation and compliance as specified in Section 5.0 of the schedule.

| | | | | |
|-------|------------------------------------|--|--|------------------|
| 4.5.1 | Evaluation Records | 1 year after student graduates or leaves school system unless extended by consent. | | Student Services |
| 4.5.2 | Individual Education Program (IEP) | 1 year after student graduates or leaves school system unless extended by consent. | | Student Services |

Under federal law, recipients of federal funds must maintain certain records for financial or program audit purposes. These records include a child's IEP Team evaluation reports, IEPs and placement notices. The records must be kept for the current fiscal year plus four more years.

Under the IDEA, a school district must inform the parents of a child with a disability when personally identifiable information is no longer needed to provide educational services to the child. The notice would normally be given at the time the child graduates or otherwise ceases to be enrolled in the school district. The purpose of the notice is to alert parents that certain pupil records may be needed for proof of eligibility for benefits or other purposes. The information that is no longer needed must be destroyed at the request of the parent. Otherwise, as noted above, under state law the information may be maintained for only one year after the child graduates or otherwise ceases to be enrolled, unless the parent or adult pupil specifies in writing that the records may be maintained for a longer period of time. [34 CFR. 300.373 or 300.573]

Therefore, the department recommends that when a child graduates or otherwise ceases to be enrolled, the district obtains the permission of the parent or adult pupil to maintain IEP team evaluation reports, IEPs, and placement notices for the current fiscal year plus four more years for audit purposes. If the parent requests destruction of the records or will not grant permission to maintain the records for five years, then the Office of Special Education Program (OSEP), U.S. Department of Education, recommends removing the personal identifiers from the records. Once personal identifiers are removed, the records are not pupil records and may be maintained until they are no longer needed to satisfy the federal record maintenance requirement.

5.0 Special Education Records

| 5.1.0 Special Education Records | | Retention Period* | Historical Value** | Suggested Keeper of the Records |
|---------------------------------|--|-----------------------------------|--------------------|---------------------------------|
| 5.1.1 | Special Education Plan/Claim (PI-2199 or equivalent) | 4 years after end of project year | | Student Services |
| 5.1.2 | IDEA Application/Plan (PI-2111) | 4 years after end of project year | | Student Services |
| 5.1.2.1 | Flow-Through Funds | 4 years after end of project year | | Student Services |
| 5.1.2.2 | Discretionary Funds | 4 years after end of project year | | Student Services |
| 5.1.2.3 | Local Educational Agency Transfer Funds | 4 years after end of project year | | Student Services |
| 5.1.2.4 | Preschool Entitlement Funds | 4 years after end of project year | | Student Services |
| 5.1.2.5 | Preschool Discretionary Funds | 4 years after end of project year | | Student Services |
| 5.1.3 | IDEA Federal Student Data Report (PI-2197) | 4 years after end of project year | | Student Services |
| 5.1.4 | Registration of Blind Students (PI-2015) | 4 years after end of project year | | Student Services |
| 5.1.5 | National Instructional Materials Access Center and Accessibility Standard Statement of Assurance (PI-2194) | 4 years after end of project year | | Student Services |
| 5.1.5 | School District Plan, Part A Exceptional Needs | 4 years after end of project year | | Student Services |
| 5.2.0 Other Student Records | | | | |
| 5.2.1 | Full-Time Open Enrollment Program Notice of Assignment and Notice of Intent to Attend (PI-9415) | 5 years | | Business Services |
| 5.2.2 | Nonresidential School District Approval or Denial of Open Enrollment Application (PI-9416) | 5 years | | Business Services |
| 5.2.3 | Resident School District Approval or Denial of Open Enrollment Application (PI-9417) | 5 years | | Business Services |
| 5.2.4 | Appeal of School District Denial of Open Enrollment (PI-9418) | 5 years | | Business Services |
| 5.2.5 | Request for Tuition Waiver Due to Move—(PI-9419-A) | 5 years | | Business Services |
| 5.2.6 | Request for Tuition Waiver Due to Move —(PI-9419-B) | 5 years | | Business Services |
| 5.2.7 | Request for Tuition Waiver Due to Move (Spanish Version) (PI-9419-B Spanish) | 5 years | | Business Services |
| 5.2.8 | Public School Open Enrollment Approval/Denial Summary (PI-9420) | 5 years | | |
| 5.2.9 | Alternative Education Program Grant Application (PI-9710) | 4 years after end of project year | | Student Services |
| 5.2.10 | Disproportionality Application (PI-8801) | 4 years after end of project year | | Student Services |
| 5.2.11 | State AODA Grants: AODA Program Interim Report (PI-7101/PI-7102) | 4 years after end of project year | | Student Services |

4.0 Student Records

| 5.1.0 Other Student Records (cont'd) | | Retention Period* | Historical Value** | Suggested Keeper of the Records |
|--------------------------------------|---|--------------------------------------|--------------------|---------------------------------|
| 5.2.12 | Transfer of Service Exemption Request – Special Education (PI-5001-A) | 4 years after end of project year | | Student Services |
| 5.2.13 | SAGE Year End Report & Contract Update (PI-SAGE-1-EOY) | 1 year | | Business Services |
| 5.2.14 | SAGE State Aid Entitlement (PI-SAGE-ENT) | 1 year | | Business Services |
| 5.2.15 | SAGE Performance Objectives (PI-SAGE-1-O) | 4 years after end of project year | | Instructional Services |
| 5.2.16 | School Performance Report (PI-SPR) | 15 years | | Assessment & Accountability |
| 5.2.17 | High Cost Special Education Initiative Claim Form (Pi-1570) | 4 years after end of project year | | Student Services |
| 5.2.18 | Special Education Procedural Compliance Self-Assessment Report and Corrective Action Plan (PI-3202) | 4 years after end of project year | | Student Services |
| 5.2.19 | Application to Offer GED Option #2 (PI-8201) | Permanent | | Student Services |
| 5.2.20 | District Waiver for One percent Cap—WI Alternate Assessment (WAA) – Students with Disabilities | 4 years after the end of the project | | Student Services |
| 5.2.21 | Local Use Form; Homeless Student Identification (PI-Q03-8) | 4 years after end of project year | | Student Services |

Code Explanation

* Retention periods begin at the time the records are created.

** Notify the State Historical Society if record(s) will not be preserved permanently by the district.

*** Includes annual and special meetings of the electors.

+ Only selected drawings/blueprints have historical value

++ Records must be retained for five years after completion of the activity for which the grant was used.

+++ The EPA Toxic Substance Control Act requires 10 year retention for record of adverse reactions to employees' health, or health-related allegations arising from occupational exposure; five years for other allegations.

It is suggested that a copy also be routed for preservation to a local library.

Additional/Miscellaneous Records

School Districts may have records not on this retention schedule. Many older records do not conform to the record types listed here. To prevent the accidental destruction of historically significant records, school districts should notify the State Historical Society prior to the destruction of any record more than 50 years old, whether listed in the schedule or not.

School district may destroy records that do not appear on this schedule any time after seven years and be in compliance with s. 19.21(6) provided that 60 days written notice is given to the State Historical Society. If the school district wishes to destroy a record before seven years have elapsed, it must obtain approval from the Public Records Board. Districts should contact the Executive Secretary of the Public Records Board for information on how to submit schedules to the Board for its review.

6.0 Miscellaneous Records

| 6.1.0 Miscellaneous Records | | Retention Period* | Historical Value** | Suggested Keeper of the Records |
|-----------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|--------------------|---------------------------------|
| 6.1.1 | School Newspapers | Permanent | # | |
| 6.1.2 | School Yearbooks | Permanent | # | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |

Notice on Personally Identifiable Data and Confidential Information

Private or confidential data on an individual shall not be created, collected, stored, used, maintained, or disseminated by the student information system in violation of federal or state law and shall not be used for any purpose other than those already stated or by agreement with companies that provide student assessment data. If the student information system manager enters into a contract with a private individual or third party to perform any of the student information system manager functions, that agreement shall require that the data be protected in the same fashion.

No private or confidential data will be released except under the following circumstances as stated in 34 CFR Part 99 Final Regulations for FERPA:

1. To teachers and officials of the district when the determination has been made that there are legitimate educational interests, under Section 99.31(a)(1).
2. To school and district personnel when a student is seeking to enroll, under Section 99.31(a)(2).
3. To comply with a subpoena or court order, under Section 99.31(a)(9).
4. To honor a request from a judicial order, or an authorized law enforcement unit, or lawfully issued subpoena, under Section 99.31(a)(9)(i). A law enforcement unit refers to all state and local prosecution authorities, all state and local law enforcement agencies, the Department of Corrections, and probation officers who are part of the Judiciary.
5. To educational officials in connection with an audit or evaluation of a federal or state supported education program, under Section 99.32(c)(3).
6. To appropriate parties in connection with an emergency if such knowledge is necessary to protect the health and safety of the student or other individuals, under Section 99.36(a). In cases of health or safety emergency, the request for release must first be directed to the school district that owns the data. The student information system manager, under Section 99.36(a), may also convene a committee to evaluate the request to determine whether or not the person who would receive the information is in a position to deal with the emergency and the extent to which time is of the essence.
7. To researchers whose proposals are approved by the student information system manager, when a clear legitimate educational interest is established, provided that personally identifiable information if discovered is not disclosed to anyone other than the initiator of the request and the student information system manager. A determination of legitimate educational interest is based in part on whether sharing information on a specific person would unfavorably affect that individual's ability to learn and function in the classroom. [Section 99.31(a)(6) of FERPA]

Data will be disclosed only on the conditions that: (1) the party to whom the data are released does not disclose the information to any third party without the prior written consent of the student information system manager, the company who provided the student assessment data (if assessment data are being disclosed), or the school district that owns the data; (2) only when the data are protected in a manner that does not permit the personal identification of an individual by anyone except the party referenced in the disclosure; and (3) the data are destroyed when no longer needed for the purposes under which the disclosure was granted.

Given the complexity of the law, school districts are encouraged to seek the advice of school district legal counsel.

7.0 Electronic Records

General record schedules cover records in all media. However, Chapter 12, § Administrative Code 12, Electronic Records Management-Standards and Requirements, became effective May 1, 2001. The purpose of this rule is to ensure that public records in electronic format are preserved, maintained, and remain accessible for their designated retention period. Because of frequent technological change, including hardware and software obsolescence and media degradation, agencies must take steps to manage and protect electronic records for as long as they are needed. To meet business needs and protect the legal, financial and historical interests of internal business operations and Wisconsin citizens, agencies must prepare and execute migration plans for electronic records as necessary to prevent them from becoming inaccessible during their retention periods.

Retaining Records

Records may be delayed from destruction, but only under the following conditions:

- Records are required for an IT system, business program, performance, financial, or security forensic audit;
- Records are relevant to an actual or imminent legal proceeding; or
- A relevant public record request has been received and not completed.

Before disposing of a record, the office managing the record must determine if an audit, litigation, or public record request is pending. And notably, after a public records request has been filed, Wisconsin law forbids the destruction of any relevant record until the request is granted, or at least 60 days after the request is denied, and court orders may extend this time period. Wis. Stats. § 19.35(5). If agency staff members have questions regarding Wisconsin's Public Records Law, then the agency's legal custodian of records will provide further guidance.

Official records that are inactive, but not yet expired should be transferred to a low-cost, record storage facility, such as the State Records Center.

Confidentiality of Records

Some records series, in whole or in part, contain confidential records as related to security, and protected personal information. If in doubt as to whether or not a specific record is confidential, it is always a good idea to check with agency legal counsel. If your agency does not have a legal counsel, an Assistant Attorney General in the Department of Justice will provide advice.

Personally Identifiable Information (PII)

Some records in this schedule contain personally identifiable information as defined by Wisconsin law. Wis. Stats. § 19.62(5). Public access to and security of personally identifiable information is often restricted by law. Therefore, agencies should be aware of the requirements in Wisconsin Statutes, Chapter 19, as well as all applicable program specific laws or regulations. Such records should also be destroyed as confidential. If in doubt as to whether a specific record contains personally identifiable information, it is a good idea to check with agency legal counsel.

For Further Assistance

For assistance, please contact the following individuals:

--for general information on records management and technical assistance:

Executive Secretary, Public Records Board, 4622 University Avenue
Madison, WI 53702 (608) 266-2996

--for information or questions about historical records:

Archives Collection Development, State Historical Society, 816 State
Street, Madison, WI 53706 (608) 262-0629

--for information on records-related requirements of the Department of Public Instruction:

Data, Forms, and Records Management Section
Department of Public Instruction, 125 South Webster Street,
Madison, WI 53702 (608) 267-9154

The Wisconsin Department of Justice provides guidance to the public on the public records law, s. 19.31-39, Wis. Stat. Inquiries may be made by calling (608) 266-3952. Guidance may also be found in the Department of Justice's Public Records Law Compliance Outline, available at <http://www.doj.state.wi.us/>.

8.0 E-Mail as Public Records

E-Mail Records

E-mail messages are public records like any other record. That is, they are public records if they are made or received by any governmental employee in connection with the transaction of public business. The local and state records management policy does not distinguish among media with regard to the definition of records. By definition, “public records” means all books, papers, maps, photographs, films, recordings, optical disks, electronically formatted documents, or other documentary materials, regardless of physical form or characteristics, made or received by any state agency or its officers or employees in connection with the transaction of public business (s. 16.61(2)(b), Wis. Stats.).

All e-mail messages, including personal communications, could be subject to investigatory review or discovery proceedings in legal actions. Some courts have set legal precedents for making use of e-mail communications as evidence. Haphazard filing procedures, incomplete recordkeeping, and the use of informal language in e-mail messages may misrepresent governmental agencies in legal proceedings. As with other records, no e-mail record may be destroyed after someone requests it until the request is granted, 60 days have elapsed following denial of the request, and litigation on the record’s availability is complete and any court order has been complied with.

E-mail records also fall within the definition of “record” under the Open Records Law (s. 19.32(2), Wis. Stats.):

“Record” means any material on which written, drawn, printed, spoken, visual or electromagnetic information is recorded or preserved, regardless of physical form or characteristics, which has been created or is being kept by an authority. “Record” includes, but is not limited to, handwritten, typed or printed pages, maps, charts, photographs, films, recordings, tapes (including computer tapes), computer printouts and optical disks.

“Record” does not include drafts, notes, preliminary computations and like materials prepared for the originator’s personal use or prepared by the originator in the name of a person for whom the originator is working; materials which are purely the personal property of the custodian and have no relation to his or her office; materials to which access is limited by copyright, patent or bequest; and published materials in the possession of an authority other than a public library which are available for sale, or which are available for inspection at a public library. (s. 19.32(2), Wis. Stats.)

Electronic mail records are subject to these law citations.

A. Archiving and Retention

Electronic mail is normally backed up to ensure system integrity and reliability, not for the sole purpose of future retrieval, although backups may at time serve the latter purpose incidentally.

Attachments (files created in other applications software) are an integral part of e-mail. For e-mail documentation to be adequate, complete, and reliable, the e-mail message, any attachments, and the transmission history (routing, date, and time) may be needed. The use of different applications software among users and senders can lead to inoperable or garbled files for the receiver. The growing use of standard software is assisting to solve this problem.

E-mail users should be aware that generally it is not possible to assure the longevity of electronic mail records for record-keeping purposes, in part because of the difficulty of guaranteeing that electronic mail can continue to be read in the face of changing formats and technologies and in part because of the changing nature of electronic mail systems. This becomes increasingly difficult as electronic mail encompasses more digital forms, such as embracing compound documents, usage of digital technology, voice recognition, audio and video media, and imaging in addition to text. Furthermore, in the absence of the use of authentication systems, it is difficult to guarantee that e-mail documents have not been altered, intentionally or inadvertently.

E-mail records that have administrative, legal, fiscal, historical, or audit significance should be saved beyond the designated system retention to either a secure network folder or a shared network file in a manner that facilitates backup and access. Staff should, on a regular basis, review e-mail and delete items that do not need to be retained. Such maintenance can reduce the burden on servers and improve the overall performance of the system yet ensure that the requirements of records management are observed. The agency E-Mail Coordinator should be available for assistance or technical advice on how to assure that needed e-mail records are preserved before the system deletion occurs.

B. Disclosure and Restricted Access without Consent

The electronic mail system is provided at government expense to conduct official governmental business. Incidental and occasional personal use is permitted, but such messages will be treated no differently from other messages. The governing agency has authority to obtain access to the contents of any employee’s electronic mail files without the permission of the employee. Such circumstances include unavailability of the employee, a potential disciplinary issue, or preservation of e-mail from possible destruction.

Inspection, monitoring, or disclosure of electronic mail without the consent of the user of such e-mail will be permitted when required by and consistent with law, if there is reason to believe violations of law or policy have taken place, when performing periodic checks for excessive personal use of e-mail, and for meeting time-dependent, critical operational needs.

Electronic mail has become a preferred way of communicating for many individuals, including school board members. Because e-mail communications as described herein may constitute public records under the Public Records Law and because such e-mail must be retained pursuant to records retention requirements, school board members and school administrative staff should formulate policy and procedures to ensure that records are properly managed and preserved. School district staff and school board members must be aware that although e-mail can be an efficient and convenient means of communications, the use of e-mail creates obligations to ensure that communications are preserved for public information purposes. School board members should presume that any e-mail that they receive or send related to school district business is a record and should take steps to preserve such e-mail consistent with the guidance provided herein.

C. Definitions

Electronic Mail System/Services: Any messaging system that depends on computing facilities to create, send, forward, reply to, transmit, store, hold, copy, download, display, view, read, or print computer records for purposes of simultaneous communication across computer network systems between or among individuals or groups, that is either explicitly denoted as a system for electronic mail or is implicitly used for such purposes, including services such as electronic bulletin boards, listservs, and newsgroups.

E-Mail Record/E-Mail: Any or several electronic computer records or messages created, sent, forwarded, replied to, transmitted, stored, held, copied, downloaded, displayed, viewed, read, or printed by one or several e-mail systems or services. This definition applies equally to contents of such records and to transactional information associated with such records, such as headers, summaries, addresses, and addressees.

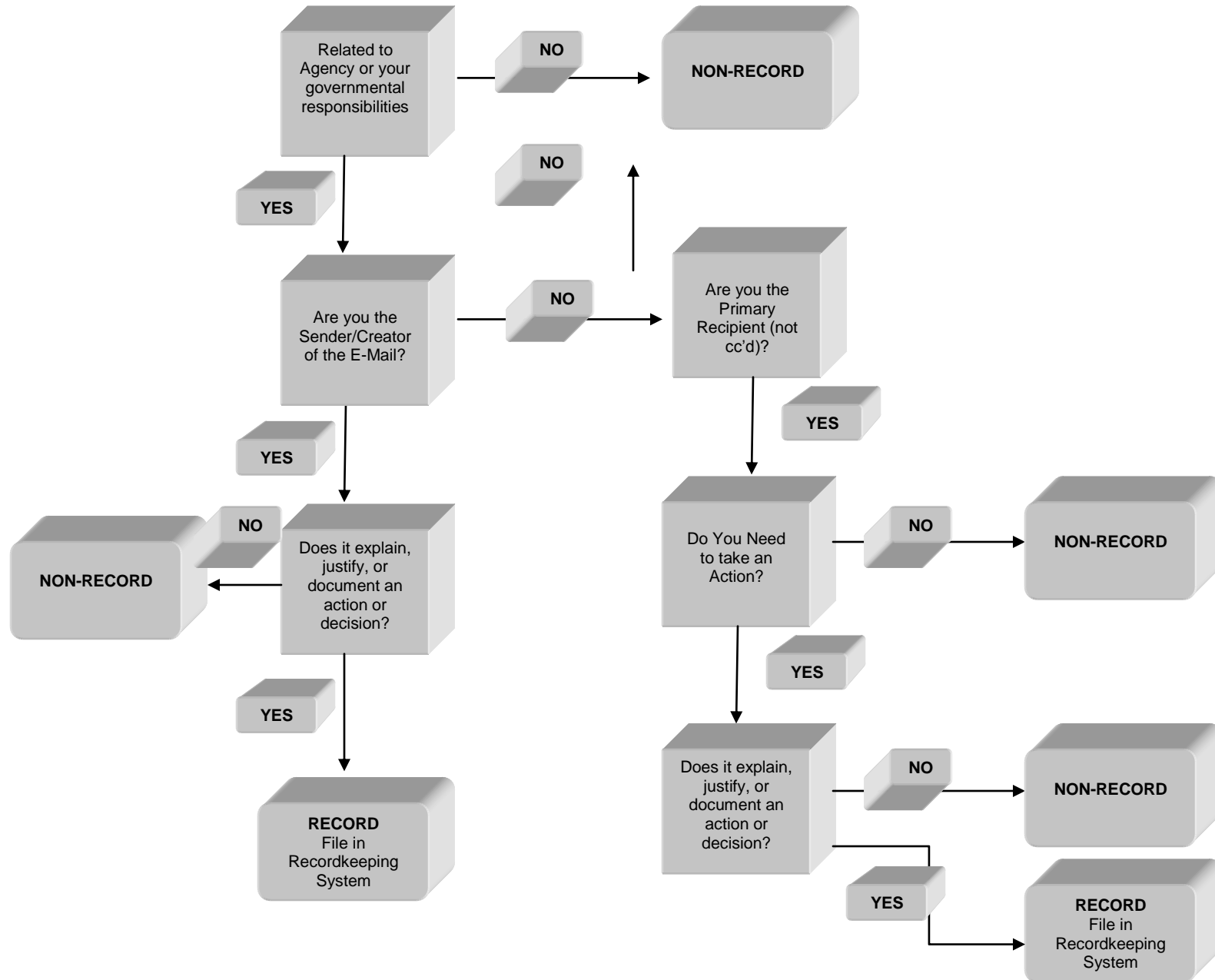
Possession of E-Mail: An individual is in “possession” of an e-mail record, whether the original record or a copy or a modification of the original record, when that individual has effective control over the location of its storage. Thus, an e-mail record that resides on a computer server awaiting download to an addressee is deemed, for purposes of this policy, to be in the possession of that addressee.

Holder of an E-mail Record: An e-mail user who is in possession of a particular e-mail record, regardless of whether that e-mail user is the original creator or a recipient of the contents of the record.

Open Records: For many years Wisconsin has had a strong emphasis on openness in government in general and on public access to governmental records in particular. This has been expressed in statutory form as a presumption of a public right of access to governmental records. The Open Records Law (s.19.32, Wis. Stats.) states that since “representative government is dependent upon an informed electorate...all persons are entitled to the greatest possible information regarding the affairs of government.” There is a presumption of public access. However, the law recognizes the need for some records to be exempted from disclosure by more specific state and federal law and case law principles, such as the “balancing test”: whether the public interest is best served by disclosure or nondisclosure. State and federal confidentiality laws that are more specific than the Open Records Law will usually take precedence.

E-Mail as a Public Record Flowchart

How to decide if an e-mail is a public record.



9.0 The Education Department’s General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR)

EDGAR consolidated into a single document uniform requirements for the administration of U.S. Department of Education grants. The administrative regulations provide specific provisions for retention of federal program records. EDGAR provides for a five year retention period. If any litigation, claim, negotiation, audit or other action involving the records has commenced before the end of the five year period, the records must be retained until completion of the action and resolution of all issues or until the end of the **five year period**, whichever is later.

The following is a listing of federal educational programs covered by these EDGAR provisions:

No Child Left Behind Act of 2001—ESEA Reauthorization

Title I Improving the Academic Achievement of the Disadvantaged

- Part A Basic Programs
- Part B Student Reading Skills Improvement Grants
 - Subpart 1 Reading First
 - Subpart 2 Early Reading First
 - Subpart 3 Even Start
- Part C Migrant Education
- Part D Neglected and Delinquent or At Risk
- Part F Comprehensive School Reform
- Part G Advanced Placement
- Part H School Dropout Prevention

Title II Teachers

- Part A Teacher and Principal Training and Recruiting Fund
- Part B Math and Science Partnerships
- Part C Innovation for Teacher Quality
- Part D Enhancing Education through Technology

Title III English Language Acquisition, Language Enhancement, and Academic Achievement Act

Title IV 21st Century Schools

- Part A Safe and Drug Free Schools and Communities
- Part B 21st Century Community Learning Centers
- Part C Environmental Tobacco Smoke

Title V Promoting Informed Parental Choice and Innovative Programs

- Part A Innovative Programs
- Part B Public Charter Schools
- Part C Voluntary Public School Choice

Title VI Flexibility and Accountability

- Part A Improving Academic Achievement
- Part B Rural Education Initiative

Title VII Native Americans and Alaskan Education Program

- Part A Indian Education
- Part B Native Hawaiian Education
- Part C Alaska Native Education

Title VIII Impact Aid

Title IX General Provisions

- Parts A through F—Definitions, flexibility, Consolidation, Waivers, Uniform Provisions

Title X, Part C Education of Homeless Children and Youth

- Carl Perkins Vocational Education Act
- Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)—Part B
- IDEA Preschool Grant

State Grants also hold the five year retention period. State Grants to Local Education Agencies (LEAs) include:

- P-5 Program
- Head Start Program
- Alternative Education Grants
- AODA Prevention/Intervention Grants
- Grants to Mentors
- Peer Review and Mentoring
- Talented and Gifted Program Grants
- Advanced Placement Grants
- English for Southeast Asian
- STEM Grants
- Grants for Nurses
- Consolidation Grants