Basics of Managing
School Records

Washington State Archives
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Benefits of Managing Records

- Enables the agency to fulfill its mission
- Promotes cost-effective use of agency resources
- Promotes open and accountable government
All public records shall be and remain the property of the state of Washington. (RCW 40.14.020)

They shall be delivered by outgoing officials and employees to their successors and shall be preserved, stored, transferred, destroyed or disposed of, and otherwise managed, only in accordance with the provisions of this chapter.
What Is a Public Record?

For the purposes of **retention and destruction**, two criteria (RCW 40.14.010):

1. Made or received in connection with the transaction of public business
2. Regardless of format

- For **public disclosure**, refer to chapter 42.56 RCW.
It may be your personal device or account, but if it’s being used for agency business, keep in mind that you are accessing (and sometimes creating) public records.
Every officer who shall mutilate, destroy, conceal, erase, obliterate, or falsify any record or paper appertaining to the officer's office...is guilty of a **class B felony** and shall be punished by **imprisonment in a state correctional facility** for not more than ten years, or by a fine of not more than **five thousand dollars**, or by both.
How Do I Know What to Keep?

Districts are granted ongoing legal authority to disposition (get rid of records) through legal documents called records retention schedules.

Records retention schedules for Schools are approved by the State Records Committee.

Local Records Committee
Which Schedule Do I Use?

Visit sos.wa.gov/Archives >> Go to “Local Governments Tab” >>
Select Charter Schools, Educational Service Districts, or School Districts

Local Government Common Records Retention Schedule (CORE)*
For records that are commonly created/received by most government agencies, i.e. -
- Board meetings
- Contracts and agreements
- Facilities management

Public Schools (K-12) Records Retention Schedule
For records that are specific or unique to schools, i.e. –
- Grades and assessments
- Interscholastic activities
- Lesson plans and teaching
- Official student records

* State government agencies use the State Government General Records Retention Schedule instead of the CORE Schedule.
Rule of Thumb: Never destroy a record unless you can point to a “DAN” authorizing you to do so.
KEEP PUBLIC RECORDS for MINIMUM RETENTION

then

DESTROY

TRANSFER
HOLD IT!

There are times when you must hang on to records even if their retention requirements have been met:

- Litigation holds (must keep until hold lifted)
- Open public records requests (must keep related responsive documents until request fulfilled/closed)
“Born Digital” Records

- Electronic records must be retained in electronic format...for the length of the designated retention period.

- Printing and retaining a hard copy is not a substitute for the electronic version.

(WAC 434-662-040)
School Records FAQs

- Reporting – Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) – General, DAN SD51-01-37
- Attendance – School-Sponsored Activities, Events and Programs, DAN SD51-06C-31
- Administration of Federal and State Categorical Grant Programs, DAN SD51-06A-02

Note these “Big Bucket” DANs in the Schools Schedule. You will probably use these often.
School Records FAQs

Are there any DANs in the School Schedule that take precedence over DANs in the CORE or State General Schedules?

- Certain school employee misconduct files
- Certificated years of experience for instructional staff
- Permission for minors to participate
Official Student Records (100 years)
- Official grade/enrollment records
- Successful requested changes

Student Cumulative File (3 years)
- Everything else
School Records FAQs

What are some strategies for keeping our Official Student Records safe for 100 years?

These methods may be costly so make sure to keep ONLY what is necessary

- **Paper:** Stored in a clean, dry space, paper lasts for hundreds of years
- **Microfilm:** Won’t need reformatting and can be stored with State Archives
- **TIFF or PDF/A:** Much easier to use but will require LOTS of digital storage space
How long are P-223 Forms kept?

Monthly enrollment reporting (P-223) forms should be retained for 4 years after submission or until completion of State Auditor, whichever is sooner, and then destroyed under **SD51-01-37 Reporting – Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) – General**.
School Records FAQs

What do you do when a student moves to a new district?

Send a copy, keep the original

A COPY of the student’s cumulative folder and official record must be sent to the receiving district and the ORIGINALS must be retained by the old district, in accordance with RCW 28A.225.330.
School Records FAQs

How long are SPED Files & Notices kept?

- **SPED Student History File**: after parents notified and 6 years after student leaves district
- **SPED File Disposition Notice**: 6 years after notice provided to parent or adult student
## School Records FAQs

### How long are Associated Student Body (ASB) Records kept?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of ASB Records</th>
<th>Covered By</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agendas / Meeting Packets</td>
<td>GS50-05A-13: Retain for 6 years after end of calendar year then Transfer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bylaws</td>
<td>GS50-05A-01: Retain until superseded then Transfer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>GS50-05A-07: Retain until no longer needed for agency business then Transfer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elections</td>
<td>GS2012-019: Retain for 6 years after end of calendar year then Transfer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Records</td>
<td>GS2011-184: Retain for 6 years after end of fiscal year then Destroy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yearbooks</td>
<td>GS50-06F-04: Retain until no longer needed for agency business then Transfer</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Are districts responsible for managing email sent/received by students using district-provided email accounts?

Maybe. Only if students are conducting business on behalf of the district. For example, if students were involved in fundraising or Associated Student Body activities.
CORE defines “employee” as:

Any individual who performs tasks or assumes responsibilities for or on behalf of the agency regardless of pay status. Including paid staff, volunteers, interns, work-study students, etc.

GS50-04B-06 Employee Work History
Schools Records FAQs

- Language and terminology
- New records series
- Obsolete records series
- Federal and state requirements

We want to hear from you.

If not, please let us know!
WASBO Records Management Networking Group

• WASBO membership **not** required to attend meetings

• Meetings held 2\textsuperscript{nd} Thursday of each month at 9:30am

• [https://www.wasbo.org/page/Copyof59](https://www.wasbo.org/page/Copyof59)
Records Management Resources

• Website: sos.wa.gov/archives
  – Training – online and in-person
  – How-to videos
  – Retention schedules
  – Advice sheets
FREE CONSULTATION, TRAINING, AND ADVICE

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