

## PUBLIC ACCESS TO SCHOOL DISTRICT RECORDS

Full access to information concerning the administration and operations of the school district shall be afforded as provided by the Public Disclosure Law, mindful of the right of individuals to privacy and the desirability of efficient administration of the district. Public access to district records shall be afforded according to the procedures developed by the superintendent or designee and periodically reviewed by the board.

"School district records" include any writing, printing, reproduction, photographing, etc., containing information relating to the conduct of operations and functions of the district which is prepared, owned, used, or retained by the district. "Writing" means handwriting, typewriting, printing, photocopying, photographing, and every other means of recording any form of communication on representation, including letters, words, pictures, sounds, or symbols, or combination thereof, and all papers, maps, magnetic or paper tapes, photographic films and prints, motion picture, film and video recordings, magnetic or punched cards, discs, drums, diskettes, sound recordings and other documents including existing data compilations from which information may be obtained or translated. "School district records" do not include the personal notes and memoranda of employees which remain in the sole possession of the maker thereof and which are not generally accessible or revealed to other persons.

The superintendent or designee shall serve as the Public Records Coordinator with responsibility and authority for ensuring compliance with the display, indexing, availability, inspection, and copying requirements of state law and this policy. The public records coordinator shall authorize the inspection and copying of the district's records only in accordance with the criteria set forth in this policy.

In accordance with RCW 42.17, the district shall make available for public inspection and copying all district records, or portions thereof, except those which contain the following information:

1. Personal information from any file maintained for students. [RCW 42.17.310(11)(a)] Information from student records will be disclosed only in accordance with the requirements of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 and district policy adopted pursuant thereto. (See Policy 3231.)
2. Personal information in files maintained for employees to the extent that disclosure would violate their right to privacy. (Requests for verification of employment are not public records and will not be disclosed without written authorization. Performance evaluations that do not discuss specific instances of misconduct are private and not of legitimate public concern. They will not be disclosed) [RCW 42.17.310(l)(b)].
3. Test questions, scoring keys, or other examination data used to administer academic tests. [RCW 42.17.310(1)(f)]
4. Contents of real estate appraisals made for or by the district relative to the acquisition of property until the project is abandoned or until such time as all of the property has been acquired, but in no event shall disclosure be denied for more than three years after the appraisal. [RCW 42.17.310(1)(g)]
5. Preliminary drafts, notes, recommendations, and intradistrict memoranda in which opinions are expressed or policies formulated or recommended except that a specific record shall not be exempt when publicly cited by the district in connection with any district action. [RCW 42.17.310(1)(i)]

6. Records which are relevant to a controversy in which the district is a party but which records would not be available to another party under the rules of pretrial discovery for cases pending in the superior courts. [RCW 42.17.310(1)(j)]
7. Records or portions of records the disclosure of which would violate personal rights of privacy. [RCW 42.17.310(1 and 2)]
8. Records or portions of records, the disclosure of which would violate governmental interests. [RCW 42.17.310(2)]
9. The residence addresses and telephone numbers of staff members and volunteers held in personnel records, rosters, and mailing lists. [RCW 42.17.310 (i)(u)]
10. Personally identifiable information for special education students. [WAC 392-172-422]

If the district denies any request in whole or in part for inspection and copying of records, the district shall provide the requesting party with a written statement of the reasons for the denial setting forth the specific exemption (and statutory section) which applies.

If the record which is requested for inspection or copying contains both information exempted from disclosure and nonexempt information, the district shall, to the extent practical, produce the record with the exempt portion deleted and shall provide a written explanation for the deletion.

The district may inquire to ensure that:

- a record will not be used for commercial purposes,
- the privacy rights of students, staff and patrons are protected, and
- no exception to full access applies.

The public records coordinator is authorized to seek an injunction to prevent the disclosure of records otherwise disclosable when it is determined that there is reasonable cause to believe that the disclosure would clearly not be in the public interest and would substantially and irreparably damage any person or would substantially or irreparably damage vital governmental functions.

The coordinator shall inform any employee and appropriate collective bargaining unit representative when a record naming the employee has been requested. The employee and representative shall be informed of the district's intended response to the request.

Legal Ref: RCW 42.17

Policy Revised	September 23, 2003
Policy Adopted	August 11, 1981
Bethel School District #403	