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Subject: **RECORDS AND INFORMATION MANAGEMENT**

References: [Policy 2196 – Records and Information Management](#)
[Policy 2197 – Management of Personal Information](#)
[Education Act](#)
[Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act](#)
[SCDSB Classification and Retention Schedule](#)

Contact: Business Services

1. Purpose

- 1.1 This Administrative Memorandum Procedure (APM) outlines how the Simcoe County District School Board (SCDSB) complies with its legal and operational obligations and requirements to manage records and information in its custody or control. The purpose of the records and information management program is to:
- 1.1.1 set out a structure for the efficient and systematic control of board records through their lifecycle;
 - 1.1.2 provide relevant, and accurate records to support board priorities and strategic planning;
 - 1.1.3 provide evidence to support planning, decision-making, policy development and effective, efficient, and trustworthy program and service delivery;
 - 1.1.4 provide evidence of activities, decisions and actions to support legal requirements;
 - 1.1.5 manage and mitigate risk;
 - 1.1.6 preserve corporate memory and organizational history;
 - 1.1.7 to facilitate and sustain day-to-day operations;
 - 1.1.8 secure and protect information for business continuity and the protection of privacy; and,
 - 1.1.9 support transparency, accountability, public trust and confidence.

2. Definitions

- 2.1 Archival record - a record of on-going historical or evidential value that is kept permanently once the original operational need for the record has ceased.
- 2.2 Classification and Retention Schedule (CRS) - a schedule setting out a functional organizational structure for classifying official records and applicable retention periods developed through a review of board information assets and departmental consultation. It reflects legal requirements, operational needs and records management best practices.
- 2.3 Official records - recorded information in the custody and control of the board relating to the mandate and functions of the board that have been identified for retention in the SCDSB CRS because of their legal, operational or financial value. An official record is evidence of the board's activities.

- 2.4 Record - recorded information, regardless of physical format or characteristics, that memorializes and provides objective evidence of activities performed, events elapsed, results achieved, or statements made in the course of the organization's daily activities. Records include all recorded information within the custody and control of the board that were prepared by board employees in fulfilling their assigned duties in keeping with the mandate and functions of the board and for the purpose of documenting services, transactions and evidence.
- 2.5 Records and Information Management (RIM) - the management of information assets in a manner that makes information easily locatable, accessible; securely protected and stored; and disposed of when no longer required in accordance with a CRS.
- 2.6 Transitory or Non-records - recorded information that does not need to be retained. Transitory have short-time and temporary usefulness; such as drafts, duplicate copies of official records or data collected that is summarized into a final report. The vast majority of email will likely constitute a transitory record.

3. RIM Principles

- 3.1 Accessibility - records and information will be readily available and accessible to individuals authorized to access the material.
- 3.2 Accountability and stewardship - accountability for managing records and information in the custody and control of the organization is clearly defined, communicated, and monitored.
- 3.3 Risk management - risks to records and information are managed, and practices and processes are in place to protect records and information.
- 3.4 Usability and quality control - records and information meet the needs of staff and stakeholders. Information is timely, accurate, reliable, relevant, easy to use, and has integrity.
- 3.5 Planning and coordination - coordinated planning for records and information management is linked to organizational goals, objectives, and financial planning.
- 3.6 Integration - the management of records and information is integrated with program planning and other business processes.
- 3.7 Protection - the protection of records and information shall be in accordance with the relevant legislation. Records and information that are classified as private, confidential, privileged, secret (as referenced in the *Education Act* s.266(10)) or essential to business continuity, shall be protected with a reasonable level of security measures.

4. Relevant Legislation

- 4.1 *Education Act* - sets out provisions for the creation and maintenance of the pupil record (s. 265 (1) and s.266) and for the establishment of a records management program (s.171(38)). The Ontario Student Record (OSR) guideline and APM A7610 – Ontario Student Record (OSR) set out rules for the creation, use, transfer and retention of the OSR.

- 4.2 *The Ontario Evidence Act* - sets out how records may be used as evidence in legal proceedings in a court of Ontario.
- 4.3 *The Canada Evidence Act* - sets out how RIM may be used as evidence in legal proceedings in a court in a matter under federal jurisdiction.
- 4.4 *The Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (MFIPPA)* - MFIPPA addresses issues of disclosure of records under the care and custody of school boards/authorities, as well as the collection, use, and disclosure of records containing personal information. MFIPPA defines a record and also regulates the collection, use, disclosure, and accuracy of personal information stored in records and creates a process for obtaining access to recorded information.

The MFIPPA has two key requirements that must be considered when defining and managing records:

- 4.4.1 It sets a minimum retention of one year for personal information that has been used by an organization. To simplify compliance and organization of records, these types of records are managed on a school year basis. For example, student mark records, verification reports and consent forms should be retained for the current school year, plus one additional year to provide for this legal right of access. The CRS reflects the minimum retention period for these types of records.
 - 4.4.2 It supports a public right of access to records through the board definition of a record as any recorded information in the custody and control of the board.
- 4.5 *The Personal Health Information Protection Act (PHIPA)* - PHIPA addresses the collection, use, disclosure, retention, and destruction of personal health information.
 - 4.6 Other statutory provisions - various provincial and federal laws may also include specific records creation and retention requirements. The requirements of these laws are reflected in the CRS.
 - 4.7 Ministry Policy and Program Memoranda (PPMs) - Ministry of Education PPM's may include requirements for the collection, creation, use retention and destruction of RIM and these requirements are reflected in the CRS.

5. Scope and Application of the RIM Program

- 5.1 The RIM program applies to all records in the custody or under the control of the board related to the board's mandate and functions regardless of the medium (i.e. electronic or paper) they were created or are maintained in, and includes:
 - 5.1.1 records relating to students and their educational programs;
 - 5.1.2 records collected or received by all board staff and third party contractors or agents on behalf of the board; and,
 - 5.1.3 all business applications and information technology systems used to create, store, and manage records including email, database applications and websites.

- 5.2 The RIM program does not apply to the following records that may be within the custody of the board:
- 5.2.1 records of employee unions;
 - 5.2.2 trustee records not relating to the mandate and functions of the board;
 - 5.2.3 publications and personal communications of staff not related to the employment of an individual or prepared in the context of their assigned duties; and,
 - 5.2.4 personal communications of students and student work except as required to maintain order and discipline in the school and for assessment and evaluation purposes.
- 5.3 Notwithstanding the exclusions listed above, in accordance with APM A1350 – Information and Computing Technology and Internet - Appropriate Use Guidelines for Employees, any record found in the custody of the board or on any board-owned device may be subject to a requirement to produce records for legal purposes or may be used to prevent misconduct and ensure compliance with the law.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

All staff plays a role in the effective management of board records.

- 6.1 All employees are responsible for:
- 6.1.1 creating and maintaining accurate records as required for their assigned duties;
 - 6.1.2 managing records in accordance with the RIM program and the CRS; and,
 - 6.1.3 ensuring appropriate security measures are applied to protect them from damage, loss, theft or inappropriate disclosure.
- 6.2 Superintendents/managers/principals/supervisors are responsible for ensuring:
- 6.2.1 departmental or school records are managed in accordance with the RIM program and CRS regardless of format or medium;
 - 6.2.2 staff are aware of and understand their responsibilities with regard to board records including appropriate use and disclosure provisions; and,
 - 6.2.3 consulting with Business Services to classify and assign retention periods for any new types of records created and for inclusion in the SCDSB CRS.
- 6.3 Business Services is responsible for:
- 6.3.1 establishing and maintaining the RIM program including developing the CRS and classifying and assigning retention of new records;
 - 6.3.2 developing policies, procedures and training programs to support the RIM program;
 - 6.3.3 receiving and implementing legal holds to suspend the disposition of records;
 - 6.3.4 litigation or for access requests;
 - 6.3.5 conducting compliance audits;
 - 6.3.6 advising on the retention, protection and storage of records; and,
 - 6.3.7 the transfer of archival records to the Simcoe County archives.

7. The Classification and Retention Schedule (CRS)

The SCDSB CRS sets out a functional organizational structure where records are organized by the function and activity they support. It sets out a standardized process classifying and retaining records and sets out retention periods for those records. The schedule is based on records management best practices and was developed through consultation with staff. Retention periods assigned reflect legal requirements, operational needs and legal needs. It is posted on the staff website – Classification and Retention Schedule.

The CRS will be updated to reflect new types or categories of records as they are created.

7.1 Records Functions

Records are organized into thirteen functional areas based on the “function or purpose” of the record. Although functions may generally align with departments, this is not always the case, for example, payroll records are functionally financial records; therefore, payroll records are classified as a financial record. The chart that follows lists and describes the functions.

7.2 Records Series

Functions are subdivided into records series based on business activities and groups “like records” with “like retention periods” for ease of retention management and scope notes list the specific types of records included in each record series.

7.3 Responsibility

In most cases, responsibility will rest with the originating department, but not always. For example, the school originates payments from school basic budget, but Business Services is responsible for retaining these records including original invoices.

7.3.1 Determining What Format to Retain

Many records are created in both electronic and paper form. To avoid duplicates, only one should be managed as the official record and all other formats should be destroyed. When an electronic record is retained as the official record, it is important that processes are established to ensure that electronic data is migrated as software and technology changes for the lifecycle of the record. Consult with Business Services to make a determination around which version shall be retained as the official version. Factors to consider when determining if paper or electronic will be maintained as the official record are:

- 7.3.1.1 access controls;
- 7.3.1.2 migration of electronic records and retention;
- 7.3.1.3 context (the record should be maintained with other information it relates to); and,
- 7.3.1.4 comprehensiveness of the record.

7.4 Retention

7.4.1 Active retention - establishes a period of time for which records should be maintained in the office or desk area. This is generally based on the frequency with which the information is likely to be accessed, and the goal is to minimize the amount of record storage space required in the primary work area. As a general rule, records that are referred to more than once per month are considered to be active.

7.4.2 In-active retention - establishes a period of time where records may be stored in a designated storage area until the end of its retention period. Inactive retention includes near-line or off-line storage. Inactive storage areas must be areas that allow for the protection and preservation of records, and must be free of the risk of mold or water damage.

7.4.3 Total retention - this column sets out the total retention period for the official record.

7.5 Non-responsible Department Retention Period

This column specifies a short-term retention by departments for copies of records. For example, school basic budget financial records such as cheque requisitions or field trip forms are official records for Business Services, but the school as the originator of these records should keep copies (normally current school year). These types of records are referred to as transitory records as they have short term value.

7.6 Retention Rules

7.6.1 Current year - retain for current school year, plus any additional time specified.

7.6.2 Event - specifies an action or event that triggers a retention period, for example retirement of student is an action that starts the retention for OSR records.

7.6.3 Permanent - the record is permanently retained.

7.6.4 Superseded - the record stands until a new one is issued to replace it.

7.7 Notes

The notes column in the online chart defines the event or action that triggers the retention. It also identifies records series that may be selected for retention as an archival record.

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Function	Title	Record Series
ACE	Adult and Continuing Education	Records relating to programs and services that are not part of day school (MOE curriculum based). Excludes student or client records. See STU or HUM.
ADM	Administration	Records relating to routine administration and office services functions.
COM	Communications/Public Relations	Records regarding the board's relations with the public and media and includes records relating to the production and distribution of information to the public.
FAC	Facilities Management	Records relating to the development, maintenance, construction and operation of board offices, properties, grounds and buildings.
FIN	Finance and Accounting	Includes records regarding financial management, budgeting, accounting, purchasing and all matters concerning the allocation and control of funds to departments and school. Also includes tax records.
GOV	Governance	Includes records regarding the establishment of policy and by-laws and the activities of the board and school planning.
HUM	Human Resource Management	Records regarding the board's relationship with its employees. Includes records regarding general staff programs as well as information on specific employees.
ITS	Information and Communications Technology	Includes records related to managing information and communications technology to support the business and education needs of the board. Excludes purchasing and financial records (see FIN) and contracts (see LEG).
LEG	Legal	Records regarding legal matters as well as contracts and agreements, insurance and real estate matters.
PLE	Planning and Enrolment	Records regarding facilities planning and enrolments.
PRO	Program	Records regarding the planning and implementation of Ministry Program Policy and Curricula, long-range planning and course of study, program reviews and curriculum guidelines.
RES	Research	Records relating to research and evaluation studies conducted or approved by the board.
STU	Student Records	Records regarding the delivery of services to individual students, as well as records required under the OSR guidelines and other records pertaining to an individual student.