

## **Request for Public Records**

**Purpose** This procedure implements Iowa Code Chapter 22 regarding access to public records. The purpose of this procedure is to facilitate public access to public records, while safeguarding records against damage or destruction. Public records are those records, documents, tapes, or other information stored or preserved in any medium of or belonging to the District, which are not otherwise authorized or required by law to be kept confidential.

**Location** A request for access to a record should be directed to the Board Secretary or Community Relations Office (<https://crschools.us/departments/communications-and-media-relations/public-records-request/>). If a request for access to a record is misdirected, District personnel will promptly forward the request to the appropriate person within the District.

**Hours** Public records that cannot be provided electronically or in hard copy may be made available for examination from 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. and 1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. Monday through Friday by appointment, except for holidays and recesses.

**Requests** Persons may request copies of public records in writing, including electronically. (<https://crschools.us/departments/communications-and-media-relations/public-records-request/>) Requests should include the name, mailing address, email address, and telephone number of the person requesting the record. All requests shall identify the records in sufficient detail to enable the District to reasonably identify the requested records. A person shall not be required to give a reason for requesting a public record.

**Response to Request** Most public records requests have a short response time. Public records available on the District website are available immediately and other records that are already compiled but not available online are typically provided within a few days. Iowa Code does allow that the response to public records request should not exceed 10 business days and shall not exceed 20 calendar days. Iowa Code also provides for a reasonable and good faith delay if there are certain legal questions pertaining to the records being requested. Access to a public record may be delayed for one of the purposes authorized by Iowa Code Section 22.8(4) or 22.10(4) (for example, to ascertain if a record is a public record or to seek opinion of counsel). The custodian of the record shall promptly give notice orally or in writing to the person requesting the record of the reason for the delay and an estimate of the length of the delay.

**Copying** A reasonable number of copies of a public record may be made in the District's office (see fee schedule). If copying equipment is not available in the office where an open record is maintained, the custodian shall permit its examination in that office and arrange to have copies promptly made elsewhere.

**Security of Records** No person may, without permission from the custodian of the record, search or remove any record from District files. The custodian of the record/designee shall supervise examination and copying of records. Records shall be protected from damage and disorganization.

**Fees** No fees shall be charged for a reasonable number of copies of the following:

- current agendas for meetings of the District's Board of Directors
- District publications designated for dissemination to the public, as long as they are still available
- forms necessary for a person to transact business with the District or to receive an education (such as employment, application forms, student enrollment forms, free and reduced priced meal applications, open enrollment or voluntary permit forms, or referrals for special education).

Copies of records may be made for members of the public on District copy machines or from electronic storage systems at cost. When the mailing of copies of records is requested, the actual costs of such mailing may also be charged to the requester.

A fee may be charged for actual District expenses in retrieving and supervising the examination of requested records, which is in addition to the copy fee. In addition, costs for retrieval and copying of public information stored in electronic storage systems may be charged to the requester.

Requests for public records may require legal review of the requested records to ensure confidential information, including but not limited to personally identifying information about any student or employee, is not disclosed. The review is necessary to ensure compliance with federal and state law. Reasonable legal fees incurred by the District to respond to public record requests are not to be paid out of taxpayer funds. The District will require the individual requester or for-profit entity requesting the records to pay the actual cost of the review.

The District is not required to extract, assimilate, or interpret information or data, or to create public records; however, if the District agrees to perform any of these functions, the person making the request may also be charged an hourly fee.

**Payment** If there is any cost associated with a request, the District will provide an estimate. If the requester agrees to pay the estimate, the District Accounting Department will prepare and directly send an invoice to the requester. The District will require payment prior to providing the public records. A requestor may always amend their request to lessen or even eliminate any cost.

#### **Fee Schedule**

The District may charge the following fees related to a records request:

- Copies: There is no charge for the first 10 pages of photocopies. After that, there is a charge of 20 cents per sheet of paper. If information is provided on a flash drive, there is a charge of \$10.00.
- Postage or other delivery costs will be charged, at cost, if it exceeds \$1.
- Expenses directly attributable to the examination of and making and providing copies of public records. Expenses shall include actual cost, per hour, of employee time and legal fees associated with review and/or retraction of records as allowed by Iowa Code Section 22.3(2).

In making a determination for charges, a series of requests from one person or organization in a 30-day period or a series of requests from persons in a single organization may be aggregated.

**Documentation of Requests** To the extent feasible, requests for public records will be documented by the Community Relations Office. Documentation serves as confirmation of requests and the response of the District.

Legal Reference: Iowa Code §§ 22

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