



## ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE

### RECORDS AND DOCUMENTS MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

2600

Procedure No.

November 1, 2011

Date

- I. **PURPOSE:** The primary purpose of this document is to address and serve as the resource guide for the **Records and Documents Management Program (RDMP)** for records pertinent to Prince George's County Public Schools. Guidelines set forth in the RDMP are consistent with the Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR) 14.18.02 and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

The following procedures are made in order to maintain a standardized records procedure:

- A. Create, implement and maintain a Records and Documents Management Program (RDMP) for Prince George's County Public Schools.
  - B. Appoint a responsible entity to ensure the implementation and appropriate maintenance of the procedures as outlined.
  - C. Maintain and dispose of records according to the prescribed schedule.
- II. **POLICY:** The Board of Education recognizes the importance of maintaining a uniform, system-wide Records and Documents Management Program to ensure that records and documents controlled by Prince George's County Public Schools are maintained in a professional, efficient and economical manner consistent with accepted standards and provisions of state and federal laws. (Board Policy 2600)
- III. **BACKGROUND:** Records management is a recognized discipline of increasing importance. In order for the school system to run effectively and comply with federal, State and local laws, a RDMP must be in place.

The intent of the RDMP is to provide Prince George's County Public Schools (PGCPS) with guidelines and standards for the establishment and maintenance of an effective program.

The components of the Program include the creation, maintenance, protection, retention, preservation and disposition of records, as well as non-records and provide the following:

- A. Authorization for the permanent retention of those records deemed by statute or considered to be of permanent value or both.
- B. Authorization for the destruction of records that are not essential to the operations after the lapse of a stated period of time.



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### IV. DEFINITIONS:

1. **Active Records** – Records or materials that are maintained in the office of an activity for current daily operations and which are referred to or used in the conduct of current work.
2. **Administrative Value** – Usefulness of records to an activity for carrying on its day-to-day and future work activities.
3. **Appraisal of Records** – Analysis of all records within an activity to determine administrative, fiscal, historical, or legal value to the activity's operation.
4. **Custody** – Guardianship of records, whether it be physical or legal control of the records.
5. **Cutoff** – Specific period of time after which no new records can be added to the file(s). Recurring files required to conduct business usually are cut off at the end of the fiscal year; incident files (e.g., contracts, special projects, grants, etc.) are cut off upon completion of a specific action.
6. **Dispersal (of records)** – Distribution of copies of records outside the office of origin.
7. **Disposable Records** – Records of temporary (i.e., non-permanent) value and/or those that have reached a point of inactivity and that are of no further administrative, legal, informational, historical or research value and which may be disposed of after a specific period of time, as specified in a specific Records Retention and Disposal Schedule.
8. **Document** – Media upon which information is written, transcribed or recorded.
9. **Electronic Filing System** – Planned method of indexing and arranging records, including guides and folders.
10. **Electronic Mediums** – Magnetic tape or ribbon of any material impregnated or coated with magnetic or other material on which information may be placed. Commonly used as a medium for housing computer programmed information.
  - a. **Microfiche** – Sheet of film on which many micro-images of related information have been printed in columns or rows.
  - b. **Microfilm** – Photographic reproduction of a document on film. The document may be reduced anywhere from one twenty-fourth (1/24) to one



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forty-eighth (1/48) its original size, with such clarity that it can be enlarged back to its normal size without loss of detail.

- c. **Flash Drive** – External device that may be used to store information.
  - d. **Data Warehouse** – Electronic storage of historical or current data which may include electronic records for specific activities.
11. **Fiscal Value** – Usefulness of records for the administration of an activity's financial obligations.
  12. **General Schedules** – (General Records Retention Schedules) – Schedules that set retention periods for records common to many divisions, offices and/or schools (e.g., Accounting Records, Personnel Records, Purchasing Records, etc.)
  13. **Hard Copy** – Original document or a paper copy. It can also refer to paper printout of computers, sometimes used to identify typewritten documents.
  14. **Historical Value** – Usefulness of records for historical research: includes records that show an activity's origin, administrative development, and present organizational structure.
  15. **Holdings** – Custody of all of the records for a specific activity.
  16. **Inactive Records** – Records having a very low reference rate and which are no longer needed.
  17. **Inventory** – Physical survey of all record series files maintained by a division, office and/or school, together with operational data concerning such files, volumes, and locations.
  18. **Legal Value** – Usefulness of records that may contain evidence of legally enforceable rights or obligations.
  19. **Microforms** – Various types of microfilm formats such as rolls, jackets, fiche, etc.
  20. **Non-Records** – Materials created or acquired for reference, exhibition, or “back-up” such as: manuals, pamphlets, and informational letters; copies of “records” and documents used as working, reading, tickler and suspense files; shorthand notes and notebooks that have been transcribed; other temporary papers used to control internal work in progress including telephone messages, routing slips, preliminary drafts, and messages of a non-policy nature, and stocks of



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publications, office reference materials (dictionaries, thesaurus, telephone directories, etc.) and other reproduced documents.

21. **Official Record** – Official copy (one) of anything within the active or non-active files of the school system, which is maintained by the originating entity. All copies of an official record should be treated as non-record material and the destruction of same does not require documentation.
22. **Permanent Records** – Records that are of enduring administrative, legal, financial, historical, or research value and which must be retained indefinitely. These may be active or inactive and are not disposable.
23. **Public Records** – Paper, correspondence, form, book, photograph, microform, magnetic tape, compact disk, computer storage media, map, drawing, or other document, regardless of physical form or characteristics, that has been made or received by a division, office and/or school in connection with the transaction of official business and which must be preserved for informational value or evidence of a transaction. All other records or documents required by law are to be filed with or kept by an activity of the division, office and/or school.
24. **Record** – Documentary material in any form or format including paper, microform, electronic record or other medium that is created by a division, office and/or school or received by a division, office and/or school in connection with the transaction of public business.
25. **Records Center** – Low-cost area for housing and servicing inactive or semi-active records with a reference rate that does not warrant retention in office space and/or equipment.
26. **Record Copy** – Term used to uniquely identify or designate the (single) official record within a division, office and/or school. All copies of the record/copy should be treated as “non-record” or “working” material and should not be part of, nor are they included in, the RDMP. In most cases, the “record” or “record copy” is the original document created within the activity. In the case of loss, destruction, or media change (e.g., paper to microfilm) of a “record copy,” the originating entity may subsequently designate a copy or other type of reproduction as the (new) “record copy.”
27. **Records Disposal** – Destruction of records when they are no longer needed by the division, office and/or school.



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28. **Records Disposition** – Management planning and analysis to determine when records are no longer needed for current business. Determinations include: destruction, transfer to a records center, microfilming before destruction, etc.
29. **Records Management Program** – Comprehensive system that provides guidelines and procedures for efficient and economical control of records and information used and kept by divisions, offices and/or schools. It includes control of a piece of paper (or other records media) from its inception as a document to its final destination for disposal or permanent retention.
30. **Records Manager** – Individual who possesses enough familiarity with the mission and files within a division, office, and/or school elements to provide meaningful data concerning file retention and disposition actions.
31. **Records Retention and Disposal Schedule** – Provides the name and/or brief description of a record, the retention period for the record, and the disposal instruction for same.
32. **Records Series** – Group of related records, normally used and filed under a single filing system and kept together as a unit for reference for retention and/or disposition purposes.
33. **Records Storage Log** – Document that lists and describes all records within a division, office, and or school. When signed by the Records Manager, it officially authorizes either the destruction of records no longer essential to operations (normally after a specific time period) or provides for permanent retention of those records, which have administrative, fiscal, historical or legal value.
34. **Retention Period** – Length of time that must elapse before records may be destroyed.
35. **Retrieval** – Recovering of information from records, whether through machine retrieval, review and/or copy of microfilm, or by recalling records from storage.
36. **Scheduling** – Determination and writing of retention periods for records.
37. **Security Copies** – Duplicates of records, stored in a designated area to provide back up for any records lost or destroyed.
38. **Shredding** – Process used to destroy records by physical or mechanical means prior to disposal.



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39. **Storage Cartons** – Boxes used to hold records that will be kept in storage.
40. **Transmittal of Records** – Physical or electronic movement of records or record information from one location to another.
41. **Vital Records** – Records needed for continuing operations and mission accomplishments. Such records require security storage or other means of protection. Where feasible, these records should be located “off-site” so they may be used for record retention when “on-site” records are not available (due to fire, flood, or other disaster).

#### V. **PROCEDURES:**

##### A. **Goals for Records Retention and Disposal Schedules**

The goals of the RDMP are to develop a systematic process that will:

1. Maintain adequate and proper documentation and evidence of activities for record keeping.
2. Provide timely disposal of records no longer needed for current business.
3. Identify records requiring longer retention that may be maintained off-site in economical storage facilities.
4. Serve as a source of all records/non-records relevant to Prince George's County Public Schools.
5. Preserve records of continuing or enduring value.
6. Maintain a current retention and disposal schedule that will require updates.
7. Save time, space and money.

##### B. **General Considerations for Maintenance of Records**

1. No statement in this RDMP shall be construed to authorize the destruction of records that have been in custody for less than three years or for such other period or condition that is expressly required by State or federal law.
2. School system records or series of records that are subject to audit must be retained until such time as reports of the audit have been received and accepted by the appropriate officials or the retention period has been



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satisfied, whichever is longer. As some records are subject to more than one audit, all audit requirements must be satisfied.

3. The records of discontinued schools remain the responsibility of the designated division and are governed by the same schedules as those issued for the records of existing schools.
4. Schedules shall be prepared by each division for all record series created and maintained. Accordingly, all are responsible for maintaining and implementing records retention and disposal schedules within the divisions and/or offices and schools, which they are assigned.
5. The division, office and/or school's Records Manager is responsible for ensuring that these schedules are maintained.

#### C. Extra Copies

Frequently, copies of records are maintained at more than one location. The following guidelines are provided for disposing of extra copies:

1. Designate the location of the "record copy."
2. Disposition of the record copy is governed by the retention schedule.
3. Identify the other copies as "non-record copies."
4. Disposition of the "non-records copies" is governed by the school system's retention schedule.

#### D. Preparing the Records Retention and Disposal Schedules

Schedules shall be prepared by divisions, offices, and/or schools using the following four steps:

1. Inventorying the records.
2. Appraising the records.
3. Preparing the schedule.
4. Obtaining legal authorization for use of the schedule.

#### E. Preparing Yearly Files



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1. File index reference listing will be kept in front of each file cabinet to facilitate filing of and searching for documents.
2. Each file folder will be properly labeled and stored as active files in filing cabinets marked accordingly.
3. Documents within each folder will be filed chronologically with the most recent document on top.
4. File labels will include the following information, in the order listed:
  - a. File Index Number.
  - b. Fiscal Year Designation, e.g., FY-04.
  - c. Subject.
  - d. Disposition Instructions, e.g., S.B. 1 FY-04 – Chief Executive Officer's Bulletin #1 – Retain three years. Destroy after retention period.
5. Concurrent with the preparation of files for the current fiscal year, the files for the previous fiscal year will be designated as inactive and the cabinets will be marked accordingly.
6. Files for the years beyond those designated for retention within the immediate work area will be prepared for disposition.
7. Records eligible for discarding and destruction shall be removed from the storage area and destroyed.
8. To avoid misidentification of documents to be retained versus documents to be discarded, storage cartons will not be reused and will be discarded with their contents.
9. Each Records Manager shall verify when documents eligible for discarding have been discarded and record the date of disposition on the Record Disposition Form.

#### **F. Implementing the Records and Documents Management Program**

Each division, office and/or school shall designate a Records Manager to coordinate the activities relating to records retention and disposition.

Responsibilities will include:



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1. Developing methods and procedures for implementing the Records Retention and Disposal Schedule at the division, office and/or school.
2. Identifying those records and non-records that should be treated as confidential.
3. Updating schedules biannually.
4. Publicizing the Program within the division, office and/or schools.
5. Providing directions for implementing the Program.
6. Developing methods for storing and destroying material.
7. Checking to see that the provisions of the schedule are being followed and that the destruction or other disposition of records and non-records are properly recorded.
8. Interpreting, on request, the schedules and procedures to personnel.
9. Recommending necessary steps to ensure the preservation of records with long retention periods.
10. Suggesting filing procedures to facilitate disposal of records.
11. Determining the appropriateness of using a microform and/or CD ROM as a means of conserving space and ensuring security of records.
12. Submitting a proposed schedule that shall be approved in writing by a legally designated official of the division, office and/or school.
13. Decisions of the Records Manager in regard to retention and/or disposition of records are subject to review by the Chief Executive Officer's designee.

#### G. Structure of the Records Retention and Disposal Schedule

There are 12 parts to the Records Retention and Disposal Schedule.

1. **Office/School** – An operation or functional entity.
2. **Type of Record(s)** – Group or type of record typically of the same class or category (e.g., student, staff, financial records etc.).



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3. **Schedule Number** – Number assigned to each schedule received by \_\_\_\_\_.
4. **Page Number** – Sequential page number and number of pages used to complete the schedule.
5. **Date Completed** – Most recent date the schedule was completed, revised and/or approved.
6. **Item Number** – Sequential number listed for each record on the schedule.
7. **Description of Record** – Description of a specific record series and any form number that identifies the record.
8. **Legal Reference** – Any state or federal regulation that governs the decision for the Records Retention and Disposal Schedule.
9. **Retention Period** – Length of time that must elapse before non-permanent records may be destroyed.
10. **Responsible Entity** – Unit responsible for the maintenance and disposal of the records (e.g., division, office and/or school).
11. **Location of Record Copy** – Physical site in which the single official record is held. Records may need more than one location (e.g., five years at the school, then forwarded to local central office).
12. **Disposition Instruction(s)** – Directions for destroying records and carrying out the disposition in compliance with the appropriate regulation.

#### H. Procedures for Transferring Records from Active to Inactive Status

1. Pack all records in cartons. Records with different disposal dates shall not be placed in the same carton.
2. Mark all cartons clearly with a dark marking pen. The first carton on each Records Transmittal and Receipt form shall begin with the number 1. The carton shall begin with the number 1 with subsequent numbers following with the disposal date clearly written. Identify the contents as follows:
  - a. Name of division, office and/or school of record.
  - b. Subject matter.



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- c. Applicable Fiscal Year.
  - d. Date of Storage.
  - e. Disposition Instructions, i.e., if contents are for permanent retention, indicate that. If contents are to be disposed of after the retention period, indicate the discard date and disposition instructions – “Destroy by Shredding.”
3. Complete a Records Transmittal Form for each group of cartons with different disposal dates. All cartons of records listed on a specific Records Transmittal Form shall be disposable within the same calendar or fiscal year.
    - a. Maintain the copy of the Records Transmittal Form within your division, office, and/or school.
  4. Verify the date boxes will be transferred from Active to Inactive Status.
  5. Disposal Schedules will not occur for at least one year.

#### I. **Procedures for Records Disposal**

Records scheduled for disposal shall be assigned to the following categories and destroyed as indicated:

1. **Confidential records** – shred under the supervision of the staff member responsible for the records or his/her designee.
2. **All other records** – dispose of as wastepaper, recycle, or shred.

After records have been destroyed, a Certificate of Records Disposal Form must be completed and maintained in the current files.

#### J. **Completing the Records Inventory Form**

The purpose of the Records Inventory Form is to allow for the disposal of records in a timely basis and to ensure that space will be available for future accession.

#### K. **Transferring Records from Active to Inactive**

1. Suitable storage for records, except in those rare cases in which records are determined to be archival quality, shall be accepted.



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2. Each division, office and/or school is encouraged to preserve and make available for legitimate purposes original copies of documents of historic significance.
- VI. **RELATED PROCEDURES:** Administrative Procedure 5125, Individual Student School-Based Records; Administrative Procedure 5125.1, Individual Student Non-School-Based Records; Administrative Procedure 5125.2, Student Records: Form Management Program; Administrative Procedure 5125.4, Request for Data Processing Services; Administrative Procedure 5125.5, Children in State-Supervised Care-Transfer of Educational Records.
- VII. **MAINTENANCE AND UPDATE OF THESE PROCEDURES:** This Administrative Procedure will be reviewed annually by a RDMP Task Force appointed by the Superintendent of Schools and updated as required.
- VIII. **CANCELLATIONS AND SUPERSEDURES:** This Administrative Procedure cancels and supersedes all other writings of an earlier date on this general subject.
- IX. **EFFECTIVE DATE:** November 1, 2011.

Approved by:  
William R. Hite  
Superintendent of Schools

Distribution: Lists 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 10, 11, 12, and 13