

B. Code of Ethical School Standards & Basic Management Principles

9. Access to Public Records

The Narragansett School Committee recognizes that the free flow of information to the public is essential to a thriving democracy. Accordingly, the Narragansett School Committee, pursuant to its authority under R.I.G.L. §38-2-3, promulgates this Policy to ensure compliance with the Access to Public Records Act, R.I.G.L. §38-2 *et seq.*, in regards to all records held by the Narragansett School Committee and/or the Narragansett School Department.

1. All parties seeking access to records held by the Narragansett School Committee and/or the Narragansett School Department shall place their requests in writing.

**EXCEPTION:** No writing is required where the request is for a public document prepared for or readily available to the public. Public documents which are prepared for or readily available to the public will be provided as expeditiously as possible, usually upon request, but not later than ten (10) business days after receipt of the request, unless an extension of time is prepared pursuant to Paragraph 5.

2. When the request for access to records is required to be placed in writing, that written request shall be referred to the Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent. If the Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent determines that the requested records fall under the definition of “public records,” as provided in R.I.G.L. §38-2-2, access to the same shall be provided no later than ten (10) business days after receipt of the initial written request, unless an extension of time is prepared pursuant to Paragraph 5.

3. If the requesting party wishes to make or receive copies of public records, he or she shall be charged \$.15 per page for photocopies of written documents copyable on common business or legal-sized paper. If said written documents are not copyable on common business or legal-sized paper, the charge will be the actual cost of reproduction. If the party wishes electronic copies of the records, he or she may be charged the reasonable actual cost for providing said electronic records. The party shall also be responsible for costs for search and retrieval of records at the rate of \$15.00 per hour, with the first hour of search and retrieval coming at no charge. Prior to the search/retrieval and/or copying of records, the Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent shall provide an estimate of said costs, including an itemization of the search/retrieval costs. Said costs shall be pre-paid.

If the requesting party desires to receive copies sent by mail, that party is responsible for providing a stamped, self-addressed envelope.

**EXCEPTION:** These provisions will not apply to public documents prepared for or readily available to the public, as described in Paragraph 1.

4. If the Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent determines that requested records do not fall under the definition of “public records,” denial of access shall be communicated to the requesting party in writing within ten (10) business days of receipt of the written request, unless an extension of time is prepared pursuant to Paragraph 5. Said written denial shall state the specific reasons for which access to the requested documents is being denied, and outline the procedures for appealing this decision.

I.B.9. Access to Public Records (continued)

5. If additional time beyond the ten (10) business days from the date of receipt of the initial request is needed to respond, the Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent shall indicate to the requesting party, in writing, that an extension of time of up to twenty (20) additional business days is necessary, along with the specific reasons for which the extension is necessary.

6. If the Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent denies access to the requested documents, the requesting party may petition the Superintendent of Schools for review. The Superintendent shall make his or her final determination within ten (10) business days after submission of the petition to review the decision of the Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent. If the requesting party is dissatisfied with the Superintendent's determination, the party may file a complaint with the Department of the Attorney General, 150 South Main Street, Providence, RI 02903, or the Providence County Superior Court.

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Narragansett School System  
Narragansett, Rhode Island