Administrative Procedure 4750

ARCHIVAL RECORDS

Responsibility: Director of Education

Legal References: Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act

Related References: AP 1100 - MFIPPA
AP 1110 - Records Management
AP 4770 - Secure Disposition of Records

1. Preamble

The following procedures provide guidelines and expectations regarding the retention, storage and disposition of archival records.

2. General

2.1 All records of the institution are subject to the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, and other privacy laws.

2.2 Archival records are unique in that they often have significant evidential, historic or research value and can provide a record of the activities of a body of individuals (i.e. a student body or an elected Board of officials). Archival records can be divided into two categories: archives, which are records of significance and are generally paper-based, and artifacts, which include three-dimensional objects such as uniforms, trophies, equipment, furniture, paintings, etc.

2.3 Records such as Office Index Cards and Ontario Student Records are not considered archival as their retention is specified by the Education Act.

2.4 Archives are managed by the site responsible for creating them. The archives at the Education Centre are managed by the Freedom of Information, Privacy and Records Information Management Officer.

2.5 There are three main types of archival records:
- **Non-personally identifiable**: this would include school records such as flyers, dance posters, instructional materials etc. that do not identify individual people, and could include three-dimensional artifacts.
- **Identifiable, but public or created for a consistent use and purpose**: this would include such items as Board and Board committee minutes; copies of local or school newspapers; yearbooks; memorabilia from anniversaries; or team, class or staff photos and could include artifacts.
- **Identifiable, with personal information**: these records would include school registers, class lists and any other documents that allow for the identification of specific individual(s).

3. Glossary of Terms

3.1 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. Examples of Board archival records include minutes of trustees meetings, including steering, standing and advisory committees; Board policies; specific financial records; and other documents that are required to be kept permanently in accordance with legislation. Records may be paper, electronic, microfilm, photographs, maps, audio and/or video recordings or three-
dimensional objects. School archival records can include trophies and plaques, copies of yearbooks, samples of school uniforms, school newspapers, photographs, teacher record books or day books, and any other type of memorabilia that demonstrates school activities during various eras.

3.2 Collection - a group of archive materials.

3.3 Legislated - includes records with retention periods that are determined by legislation, such as minutes of the Board and Committee meetings, financial statements, Ontario Student Records, timetables and schedules, courses of study, employee records, leases and agreements, property records, and accounts receivable.

3.4 Non-Legislated - includes records with retention periods that are determined by the Board, such as archives, donations to schools, job descriptions, property damage reports, student enrolment/attendance records, facility bookings, student accommodation planning.

4. Determining What to Keep

4.1 Legislated archival records must be kept for the appropriate retention specified in the legislation. Once that retention has been reached, the records can either be flagged for destruction (see Administrative Procedure 4770 - Secure Disposition of Records) or a determination can be made whether there is on-going historical or research value in keeping a selection of the records.

4.2 Archive records which record the activities of a school or of the Board which do not have a legal retention requirement need to be evaluated for their on-going historical or research value. Often, retaining a representative sampling of these materials is sufficient to illustrate the activity being identified. Questions regarding the appropriateness of retaining certain materials can be directed to the Freedom of Information, Privacy and Records Information Management Officer.

5. Proper Storage of Archive Records

5.1 When determining an appropriate location for the storage of archival records, consideration should be given to locations that do not experience extremes of temperature. The records should be placed out of direct sunlight and thought given to locations that are free of insects or other pests. Records should be stored off the floor, in case of flooding. As much as possible, a location that considers both fire safety and also the potential for water damage in case of a fire would be appropriate.

5.2 Care should be taken to avoid storing archives with other, modern materials. New materials, such as plastics, can give off gases which can hasten the deterioration of old records.

5.3 As many archival materials are very fragile, care should be taken when handling these materials. Wear gloves whenever possible, as the oils from skin can damage the records.

6. Disposition of Archive Records

6.1 If some of the archival collection is more than 75 years old, if it is beginning to show signs of extreme deterioration and/or if the quantity of archives has exceeded the physical space allocated for their retention, then schools or locations may wish to consider moving the archival materials to a location that can assist with their proper preservation.

6.2 The Freedom of Information, Privacy and Records Information Management Officer at ext. 4409 should be contacted to discuss the records in the collection and how to contact the local archivists who may be interested in the school's collection.
6.3 When considering divesture of archive records, consideration needs to be given to Section 2 (2) of the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, which states: “Personal information does not include information about an individual who has been dead for more than thirty years.” Because this may be difficult to determine, the Archives of Ontario suggests that records containing personal information could be made available 100 years after the date of creation. Therefore, the records need to be divided into the three categories identified in section 2.6 above: “non-personally identifiable”; “identifiable, but public or created for a consistent use and purpose”; and “identifiable, with personal information”. Records which are listed as “identifiable, with personal information” may not be made available to the general public until 100 years after the date of the creation of the record.

6.4 Questions concerning this procedure should be directed to the Freedom of Information, Privacy and Records Information Management Officer.