

<b>Procedure Title</b>	<b>Records Management</b>		
<b>Date of Issue</b>	November 23, 2022	<b>Related Policy</b>	<a href="#">BP 2120-D</a>
<b>Revision Dates</b>		<b>Related Forms</b>	
<b>Review Date</b>		<b>Originator</b>	Administrative Council
<b>References</b>			
Education Act; PIM Toolkit 'Model of a Records and Information Management Policy', pimedu.org ; Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (MFIPPA); BP 1408-D "Privacy and Information Management"; AP 2121-D "Retention and Destruction of Clinical Records"; Combined Ministry of Education Ontario Student Record Guidelines, 2000 and Bluewater District School Board AP 6701-D "Ontario Student Record"; AP 3301-D "School Openings, Amalgamations, and Closures"			

**1.0 RATIONALE**

- 1.1 Records and information are important strategic assets that belong to the board. Bluewater District School Board manages records and information, taking into consideration privacy, accessibility, and data protection, in accordance with federal, provincial, and municipal legislation, including licensing college regulation, to meet operational requirements of the board, for present and future needs.
- 1.2 All employees are responsible for the records and information they create and/or maintain to support the business operations of the board. They must ensure compliance with the board's policies and procedures, including, but not limited to, this procedure, BP/AP 2120-D "Records Management", BP 1408-D "Privacy and Information Management" (and its related procedures), and the Bluewater District School Board Classification and Retention Schedule (retention schedule), in the management of board records.
- 1.3 This procedure applies to all recorded information created, captured, collected, or received in the normal course of board business operations, whether held in digital (electronic) or hardcopy format.

**2.0 DEFINITIONS**

**2.1 Classification and Retention Schedule**

The Bluewater District School Board Classification and Retention Schedule (retention schedule) provides a record-keeping plan for the board and dictates how long to keep records found within the system.

The retention schedule gives direction to the life cycle of the record and considers any legal or statutory regulations concerning the retention of types of records. The length of retention listed in the retention schedule should be strictly followed.

The retention schedule does not apply to copies of original records.

The retention schedule is an internal document that can be accessed by employees through M365 SharePoint → BWDSB Home → Forms, Templates, and Reference Documents → [Classification and Retention Schedule folder](#).

**2.2 Legal Hold**

A legal hold is the retention of records beyond their normal retention because of litigation, freedom of information, or other legal requirements. Legal holds are placed on records in consultation with the freedom of information and privacy coordinator. After the legal hold is removed, the records revert to their normal retention schedule.

- 2.3 **Legislated**  
Legislated records have retention periods that are determined by legislation, such as minutes of legislated committees, financial statements, Ontario Student Records (OSR), timetables and schedules, course of study, employee records, leases and agreements, property records, and accounts receivable.
- 2.4 **Non-Legislated**  
Non-legislated records have retention periods that are determined by the board, such as donations, job descriptions, property damage, student enrolment, facility bookings, and student accommodation planning.
- 2.5 **Non-Record**  
A non-record has no bearing on the organization's functions, operations, or mandate. Non-records are typically used, if ever, only for a very limited period. They do not have to be collected and maintained. These documents are not required to be retained and therefore do not appear on a records retention schedule. Examples of non-records include the following:
- reference books;
  - published legislation from other boards, municipalities, or government agencies;
  - extra copies / convenience copies.
- 2.6 **Original Clinical Record**  
An original clinical record is any information (assessments and clinician notes) contained in the student file prepared by the regulated health professional that meet the requirements as set out by applicable regulatory colleges. Please refer to BP and AP 2121-D "Retention and Disposal of Clinical Records" for additional information.
- 2.7 **Record**  
A record is any information however recorded whether in print form, on film, by electronic means, or otherwise. Records can be in many formats: paper, video, audio, microfilm, or electronic. Examples of electronic records include, but are not limited to email, text message, digital media, websites electronic document management systems. The retention schedule must be applied to all types of records.
- 2.8 **Records and Information Management (RIM) Program**  
When used in coordination, BP 2120-D "Records and Information Management, its related procedures, and the Classification and Retention Schedule, form the Bluewater District School Board Records and Information Management (RIM) Program.
- 2.9 **Transitory Record**  
A transitory record is useful for only a short time and has minor importance. When its use is over it should be deleted or destroyed. Examples of transitory records include the following:
- personal messages;
  - general notices and announcements;
  - copies of documents and emails;
  - cc, bcc, or 'for your information' (FYI) emails kept only for convenience;
  - drafts and working documents to prepare final records with a few exceptions such as agreements / contracts, drafts in developing legislation.

## **3.0 PROCEDURE**

### **3.1 Roles and Responsibilities**

3.1.1 All employees are responsible for:

- 3.1.1.1 creating and maintaining accurate records as required for their assigned duties;
- 3.1.1.2 managing records in accordance with board policies, procedures, the retention schedule, and applicable federal and provincial legislation;
- 3.1.1.3 participating in records management training, as provided;

- 3.1.1.4 ensuring that, at the end of employment/term/contract with the board, records and information remain property of the board and are returned to the control of the board; and
- 3.1.1.5 ensuring appropriate access, security, and destruction processes are in place to protect the records that they are responsible for from damage, loss, theft, or inappropriate disclosure.
- 3.1.2 Superintendents/administrators/managers/supervisors are responsible for ensuring:
  - 3.1.2.1 School/departmental records are managed in accordance with board policies and procedures, the retention schedule, and applicable federal and Ontario legislation, regardless of format or medium. Schools are responsible for the effective management of records created and/or used at the school, including office records, student records, staffing information, teaching resources etc. Ontario Student Records (OSRs) will be managed in accordance with the board's 'Combined Ministry of Education Ontario Student Record Guidelines, 2000 and Bluewater District School Board AP 6701-D "Ontario Student Record"'.
  - 3.1.2.2 employees are aware of and understand their responsibilities regarding board records, including appropriate use and disclosure provisions, and where to access the retention schedule on SharePoint;
  - 3.1.2.3 the retrieval of the records/information (electronic and hard copy) that an employee has created, when their employee changes positions or leaves their employment with the board, to ensure transfer of knowledge;
  - 3.1.2.4 that all third-party organizations, contractors, or agents who receive personal information on behalf of the board are aware of and comply with the board's policy and procedures regarding records and information management; and
  - 3.1.2.5 consulting with Corporate Services to classify and assign retention periods (if unsure in relation to the retention schedule).

## **3.2 Access, Security, and Control**

- 3.2.1 All board employees, trustees, and volunteers are responsible for the protection of personal, confidential, and/or sensitive information entrusted to them, or that they are exposed to within their duties. They must ensure that personal information in their care and control is secured and protected from unauthorized access, disclosure, and inadvertent destruction by adhering to the procedures and best practices as outlined in this procedure, board policy BP 1408-D "Privacy and Information Management" (and its related procedures), as well as all other board policies and procedures, as applicable.
- 3.2.2 Access to confidential and sensitive data and information will be restricted to those with a legitimate work-related purpose, authority, or on a 'need-to-know' basis for accessing such data and information.
- 3.2.3 Physical recorded information (e.g., paper) containing confidential and or sensitive information will be stored in secure locations (i.e., lockable cabinets, locked records storage areas with specific access).
- 3.2.4 Confidential and sensitive recorded information will only be stored in/on system-level approved/ established storage systems.
- 3.2.5 Confidential and sensitive recorded information will not be stored on an individual computer hard drive (e.g., (C :) Drive), external hard drive, or USB key, without additional security measures being implemented, such as password protection or encryption.

- 3.2.6 Under the direction of their administrator/manager/supervisor, employees will securely and permanently destroy data and information in accordance with the retention schedule, applicable policies and procedures, and/or departmental processes.
- 3.2.7 Employees will not download or transfer confidential, sensitive, and/or internal board recorded information to unapproved storage devices.
- 3.2.8 Contracts/agreements/arrangements with external vendors/providers will include provisions for the protection and appropriate application of records management.
- 3.2.9 Vital records are identified within the retention schedule and will be managed by each school/department (through the administrator/manager/supervisor) in a safe and secure manner to support business continuity and recovery in the event of disaster.

### 3.3 Record Format

- 3.3.1 The following considerations must be reviewed by the accountable manager/supervisor\* when determining whether the electronic version of the record can be considered the official record:
  - 3.3.1.1 Record Requirements
    - a. Is there legislation, regulation, and/or other requirement of the board that indicates that the record must be retained in a certain format (e.g., Ontario Student Record requirements for paper)?
    - b. How long is the retention period for the record? For example, personal storage is typically not appropriate for long-term storage.
  - 3.3.1.2 Access Controls
    - a. Has the software/technology that will store the record been approved by the board?
    - b. If there is personal or confidential information included, what is the most secure way to store the information?
    - c. Does the software incorporate the board's retention schedule?
    - d. Does the software/technology permit access to necessary employees if the incumbent changes?
  - 3.3.1.3 Migration of Electronic Records and Retention
    - a. Is it a reasonable expectation that the software/technology, which the file was created with will be available and supported by the board for entire retention period of the record?
    - b. If the record is stored within an electronic database system, is that record retrievable/printable (if required) and does that database assign the correct retention period to the record?
  - 3.3.1.4 Context (e.g., the record should be maintained with other related (printed) information)
- \*NOTE: the accountable manager/supervisor is listed within the retention schedule as being primarily responsible for the creation and maintenance of a particular series of records.
- 3.3.2 For access and privacy purposes, there will only be one complete official copy of each record retained. Backup copies will only be prepared when there is sufficient need for authenticity of the original record, where they are considered vital records (as per retention schedule), and to provide ease of access.
- 3.3.3 Consideration should be given to establishing consistent naming conventions for electronic records within departments and schools. This will allow for faster retrieval, browsing, and more accurate retention/destruction. The following are suggestions for naming electronic files:

- 3.3.3.1 Decide on the order of the naming elements. For example, Committee Name-Document Type-Date of Meeting (e.g., School Council Minutes 05-25-2022).
- 3.3.3.2 Use the following date format 'mm-dd-yyyy', which is consistent with the board's student information system. This date can be used to indicate the date of the meeting or when the document has obtained final approval.
- 3.3.3.3 Include document type (e.g., report, agenda, minutes etc.) in the file name.
- 3.3.3.4 Use dashes, underscores, or periods for separating elements in a filename (ensuring that periods are not used at the start or end of a file name).
- 3.3.3.5 Keep filenames as short as possible, but still meaningful.

3.3.4 When an electronic record is retained as the official record, it is imperative that processes are established to ensure that electronic data is migrated as software and technology changes for the life cycle of the record.

### 3.4 Record Destruction

- 3.4.1 Generally, the accountable school or department, who is listed within the retention schedule as being primarily responsible for the creation and maintenance of a particular series of records, will be responsible for the record's disposal in accordance with the retention schedule.
- 3.4.2 Records will be reviewed regularly for destruction in accordance with the board's retention schedule, including those records stored electronically.
- 3.4.3 Records that include confidential/personal information, or are of a sensitive nature, will be destroyed by shredding or by a means to render the information illegible.
- 3.4.4 Transitory records may be destroyed after their use has been served. Most electronic/voicemail and telephone transitory messages are considered short-term records and should be disposed of as soon as their purpose has been served. However, if the content of the message or any attachments contain record of business decisions, their retention would then be governed by the requirements of the retention schedule.
- 3.4.5 Corporate Services manages the board's corporate records and education centre archive record retention. On an annual basis, Corporate Services will arrange for the destruction of eligible corporate and archive records.
- 3.4.6 If there is a potential, pending, or ongoing lawsuit, investigation, audit, or records are required in response to a formal freedom of information request under the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (MFIPPA), related documents may be put on legal hold and retained beyond the approved retention requirements set out in the retention schedule. Legal holds would be coordinated through Corporate Services.
- 3.4.7 In the event of a school closure/amalgamation, the principal of the school will refer to administrative procedure AP 3301-D "School Openings, Amalgamations, and Closures" to ensure proper management of records, artwork, memorabilia etc.