

PUBLIC ACCESS TO SCHOOL DEPARTMENT RECORDS

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this policy is to clarify and set forth the allowance of the School Committee in regards to the authorization for and release of any and all official records maintained in behalf of the North Kingstown School Department.

PHILOSOPHY:

The School Committee acknowledges its legal obligations and public responsibility to keep the community, and all parties of interest in the North Kingstown School Department, informed and aware of the business and general activities of the educational program maintained for the children of North Kingstown.

The Committee further recognizes that a well informed public is an understanding and supportive public who has equal rights and responsibilities to be knowledgeable of the ongoing activities of school operations. In fulfilling its responsibilities to this latter understanding, the School Committee sets forth this policy of guideline and expectation for dealing with citizen information requests.

POLICY STATEMENT:

The Superintendent of schools is hereby designated as the custodian of all records, documents, writings, letters, memoranda, or other written, typed, copied, or developed materials possessed, assembled, or maintained by this school district. **Access to and/or release of any such data or information shall be subject to the following stipulations:**

1. All requests for public information shall be presented in writing and forwarded to the Superintendent immediately upon its receipt by any employee or representative of the school department. The Superintendent shall thereupon make a determination as to whether or not the information requested is public in nature.
2. If the Superintendent finds the information to be public in nature, it shall be released for reproduction on the premises. The party requesting the information is to be charged the cost of reproduction and any other expenses entailed in locating and retrieving the information. If the information is in active use or otherwise unavailable, the party requesting the information will be notified immediately upon its becoming available.
3. If the Superintendent finds the information not to be public in nature, the requesting party shall be informed, and the information will not be released.
4. If the Superintendent is unable to ascertain whether or not the information requested is public in nature, the Superintendent is hereby authorized to request on behalf of the School Committee, an opinion from the school district's attorney, the

Town Solicitor, the State Department of Education, or the office of the Attorney General as to the nature of the information. Such opinion requests will be made within ten (10) days of the original request for the information. The Superintendent shall notify the person requesting such information that a legal opinion is being requested and shall notify such person immediately upon receipt of the legal opinion.

Adopted: 8/26/74

Amended: 8/7/89

Revised