

# Williamson County Board of Education

**Adopted Date:**

8/21/17

3.604

**PUBLIC RECORDS REQUEST**

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1 The Tennessee Public Records Act ("TPRA") provides that all state, county and municipal records  
2 shall, at all times during business hours be open for personal inspection by any citizen of this state,  
3 and those in charge of the records shall not refuse such right of inspection to any Tennessee  
4 citizen, unless otherwise provided by state law. Accordingly, the public records of Williamson  
5 County Schools are presumed to be open for inspection unless otherwise provided by law. Access  
6 to public records shall be limited to Tennessee citizens.  
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8 Personnel of Williamson County Schools shall timely and efficiently provide access and assistance  
9 to Tennessee citizens requesting to view or receive copies of public records to the degree required  
10 by applicable law. No provisions of this Policy shall be used to hinder access to open public  
11 records. However, the integrity and organization of public records, as well as the efficient and safe  
12 operation of Williamson County, shall be protected as provided by current law. Concerns about this  
13 Policy should be addressed to the Public Records Request Coordinator for Williamson County  
14 Schools or to the Tennessee Office of Open Records Counsel ("OORC").  
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16 This Policy is available for inspection and duplication at the Williamson County School's central  
17 office and at [www.wcs.edu](http://www.wcs.edu). This Policy shall be reviewed every two years to ensure continued  
18 compliance with applicable law.  
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20 This Policy shall be applied consistently throughout the various offices, departments, and/or  
21 divisions of Williamson County Schools.  
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**Definitions:**

- 23 1. Records Custodian: The office, official or employee lawfully responsible for the direct  
24 custody and care of a public record. The records custodian is not necessarily the original  
25 preparer or receiver of the record.
- 26 2. Public Records: All documents, papers, letters, maps, books, photographs, microfilms,  
27 electronic data processing files and output, films, sound recordings, or other material,  
28 regardless of physical form or characteristics, made or received pursuant to law or  
29 ordinance or in connection with the transaction of official business by any governmental  
30 agency.
- 31 3. Public Records Request Coordinator: The individual, or individuals, designated in Section  
32 III, A.3 of this Policy who has, or have, the responsibility to ensure public record requests  
33 are routed to the appropriate records custodian and are fulfilled in accordance with the  
34 TPRA. The Public Records Request Coordinator ("PRRC") may also be a records  
35 custodian.
- 36 4. Requestor: A Tennessee Citizen seeking access to a public record, whether it is for  
37 inspection or duplication.  
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## 1 Requesting Access to Public Records

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- 4 1. Public record requests shall be made to the Public Records Request Coordinator ("Coordinator") or his/her designee in order to ensure public record requests are routed to the appropriate records custodian and fulfilled in a timely manner.
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- 6 2. Requests for inspection only cannot be required to be made in writing. The Coordinator should request a mailing or email address from the requestor for providing any written communication required or permitted under the TPRA.
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- 10 3. Requests for inspection may be made orally or in writing by either submitting the attached Form at the Williamson County Schools Central Office located at 1320 Main Street, Suite 202, Franklin, Tennessee 37064 or by calling Williamson County Schools at 615-472-4000.
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- 13 4. Requests for copies, or requests for inspection and copies, shall be made in writing using the attached Form at Williamson County Schools located at 1320 Main Street, Suite 202, Franklin, Tennessee 37064 or by phone at 615-472-4000.
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- 16 5. Proof of Tennessee citizenship by presentation of a valid Tennessee driver's license or alternative acceptable form of ID is required as a condition to inspect or receive copies of public records.
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## 20 Responding to Public Records Requests

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- 23 1. The Coordinator shall review public record requests and make an initial determination of the following:
  - 24 a. If the requestor provided evidence of Tennessee citizenship;
  - 25 b. Whether the records requested are described with sufficient specificity to identify them;
  - 26 and
  - 27 c. Whether the records are Williamson County Schools records and, if so, what Williamson County School is the custodian of the records
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- 30 2. The PRRC shall acknowledge receipt of the request and take any of the following appropriate action(s):
  - 31 a. Advise the requestor of this Policy and ask for proof of Tennessee citizenship;
  - 32 b. If the requester asks for copies explain the form that needs to be completed and any fees, if not otherwise waived.
  - 33 c. If permitted under this Policy, the Custodian shall inform the requester in writing that the request has been denied and an explanation of the reason why the request is denied, including any one of the following reasons:
    - 34 1. The requestor is not, or has not presented evidence of being, a Tennessee citizen.
    - 35 2. The requestor's description of the records is not specific enough to determine what records are being requested.
    - 36 3. An exemption makes the record not subject to disclosure under the TPRA and provide the exemption in written detail.
    - 37 4. Williamson County Schools are not the custodian of the requested records.
    - 38 5. The records do not exist.
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- 1 d. If appropriate, contact the requestor to see if the public records request can be
- 2 narrowed.
- 3 e. If known, forward the records request to the appropriate records custodian in Williamson
- 4 County School.
- 5 f. If requested records are in the custody of a different governmental entity, and the
- 6 Coordinator knows the correct governmental entity, advise the requestor of the correct
- 7 governmental entity and Coordinator for that entity if known.
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- 10 3. The designated Coordinators for Williamson County are:
- 11 a. For Requests from citizens of the State of Tennessee to Williamson County Schools is
- 12 the School Attorney;
- 13 b. For Personnel Requests to Williamson County Schools is the Assistant Superintendent
- 14 of Human Resources;
- 15 c. For Media Requests for to Williamson County Schools is the Communications Director.
- 16
- 17 4. Distributing Public Records Request to the Appropriate Records Custodian:
- 18 a. Upon receiving a public records request, a records custodian shall promptly make
- 19 requested public records available in accordance with Tenn. Code Ann. § 10-7-503. If
- 20 the records custodian is uncertain that an applicable exemption applies, the custodian
- 21 may consult with the Coordinator, legal counsel, or the Office of Records Counsel.
- 22 b. If not practicable to promptly provide requested records because additional time is
- 23 necessary to determine whether the requested records exist; to search for, retrieve, or
- 24 otherwise gain access to records; to determine whether the records are open; to redact
- 25 records; or for other similar reasons, then a records custodian shall, within seven (7)
- 26 business days from the records custodian's receipt of the request notify the requestor in
- 27 writing.
- 28 c. If a records custodian denies a public record request, he or she shall deny the request
- 29 in writing.
- 30 d. If a records custodian reasonably determines production of records should be
- 31 segmented because the records request is for a large volume of records, or additional
- 32 time is necessary to prepare the records for access, the records custodian shall
- 33 notify the requestor in writing that production of the records will be in segments and that
- 34 a records production schedule will be provided as expeditiously as practicable. If
- 35 appropriate, the records custodian should contact the requestor to see if the request
- 36 can be narrowed.
- 37 e. If a records custodian discovers records responsive to a records request were omitted,
- 38 the records custodian should contact the requestor concerning the omission and
- 39 produce the records as quickly as practicable.
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- 1 5. Redacting Confidential Information or Information not otherwise subject to the Public  
2 Records Act.
  - 3 a. If a record contains confidential information or information that is not open for public  
4 inspection, the records custodian shall prepare a redacted copy prior to providing  
5 access. If questions arise concerning redaction, the records custodian should coordinate  
6 with counsel or other appropriate parties regarding review and redaction of records.  
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  - 8 b. Whenever a redacted record is provided, a records custodian should provide the  
9 requestor with the basis for redaction. The basis given for redaction shall be general in  
10 nature and not disclose confidential information.  
11
- 12 6. Inspection of Records.
  - 13 a. There shall be no charge for inspection of open public records.
  - 14 b. Under reasonable circumstances, the Coordinator or a records custodian may require  
15 an appointment for inspection or may require inspection of records at an alternate  
16 location. The record Custodian will cooperate with the requester or schedule a  
17 time during regular business hours that is convenient for the requestor  
18
- 19 7. Copies of Records.
  - 20 a. A records custodian shall promptly respond to a public record request for copies in the  
21 most economic and efficient manner practicable.
  - 22 b. Copies will be available for pickup at a location specified by the records custodian.
  - 23 c. Upon payment for postage, copies will be delivered to the requestor's home address by  
24 the United States Postal Service.
  - 25 d. A requestor is not permitted to make copies of records with personal equipment or  
26 removing the records to have copied by a third party.  
27  
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- 29 8. Fees and Charges and Procedures for Billing and Payment
  - 30 a. Fees and charges for copies of public records should not be used to hinder access to  
31 public records.
  - 32 b. Records custodians shall provide requestors with an itemized estimate of the charges  
33 prior to producing copies of records and may require pre-payment of such charges  
34 before producing requested records.
  - 35 c. When fees for copies and labor do not exceed five dollars (\$5.00), the fees may be  
36 waived. Requests for waivers of any fees above must be presented to the Coordinator  
37 who is authorized to determine if such waiver is in the best interest of Williamson County  
38 and in the public good. Fees associated with aggregated records requests will not be  
39 waived.  
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1 d. Fees and charges for copies are as follows:

- 2 i. \$0.15 per page for letter- and legal-size black and white copies.
- 3 ii. \$0.50 per page for letter- and legal-size color copies.
- 4 iii. Other fees: A Public Records Custodian may charge higher fees for copies of
- 5 documents that are on a medium other than 8½ x 11 inch paper or 8½ x 14 inch
- 6 paper.
- 7
- 8 iv. Cost of Labor to produce copies. When the total time to fulfill a public records
- 9 request exceeds 1 hour the records custodian may charge the Requester a labor fee
- 10 after the Requester is notified of the labor charge.
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  - 12 • In calculating the charge for labor, a Records Custodian shall determine the
  - 13 number of hours each employee spent producing a request.
  - 14 • The Records Custodian shall then subtract the 1 hour threshold from the
  - 15 number of hours the highest paid employee spent producing the request.
  - 16 • The Records Custodian will then multiply the total number of hours to be
  - 17 charged for the labor of each employee by that employee's hourly wage.
  - 18 • Finally, the Records Custodian will add together the totals for all the
  - 19 employees involved in the request and that will be the total amount of labor
  - 20 that can be charged.
- 21 v. In calculating the charge for labor, a Records Custodian shall determine the number
- 22 of hours each employee spent producing a request.
- 23 vi. The Records Custodian shall then subtract the 1 hour threshold from the number of
- 24 hours the highest paid employee spent producing the request.
- 25 vii. The Records Custodian will then multiply the total number of hours to be charged for
- 26 the labor of each employee by that employee's hourly wage.
- 27
- 28 viii. Finally, the Records Custodian will add together the totals for all the employees
- 29 involved in the request and that will be the total amount of labor that can be charged.
- 30 ix. If an outside vendor is used, the actual costs assessed by the vendor.
- 31 x. Payment is to be made by cash or personal check payable to Williamson County
- 32 Schools.
- 33 xi. Payment in advance will be required.
- 34

35 9. Aggregation of Frequent and Multiple Requests.

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37 Williamson County Schools will not aggregate record requests when more than (4) requests

38 are received within a calendar month either from a single individual or a group of individuals

39 deemed working in concert.

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45 Legal Reference:

46 TCA § 10-7-503(a)(2)(A)

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