

Adopted: 2016-01-12

Policy EHB

Records Retention & Management

This policy provides a general framework on conception, planning, organization and control over activities related to the conservation, classification, use and flow of documents produced or received by the School Board within its functions and required for the pursuit and realization of its mission. As such, the policy applies to all members of the NFSB's administrative units.

PURPOSE

To efficiently manage documents created by and for the New Frontiers School Board (NFSB) in accordance with the applicable legislation within a sound records management framework. More specifically, this policy aims at ensuring uniform and efficient management of active, semi-active and inactive documents within the NFSB establishments by:

- a) Meeting legal requirements;
- b) Promoting a standardized records management system and set of instructions within the School Board;
- c) Identifying stakeholders' responsibilities;
- d) Eliminating the conservation of duplicate documents;
- e) Ensuring better protection of documents and more efficient access to documents archived within the School Board.

LEGAL FRAMEWORK

The NFSB is a public body according to the Archives Act (art. 6.1), which requires that any public body to establish and maintain a retention schedule "... determining the periods of use and medium of retention of its active and semi-active documents and indicating which inactive documents are to be preserved permanently, and which are to be disposed of" (R.S.Q., ch. A-21.1, art. 7). Other applicable legislation includes:

- Civil code of Quebec, L.Q., c. 64 Act to establish a legal framework for information technology (R.S.Q., chap. C-1.1)
- Act respecting access to documents held by public bodies and the Protection of personal information (R.S.Q., ch. A-2.1)
- Archives Act (R.S.Q., ch. A-21.1)
- Education Act (R.S.Q., ch. 1-13.3)
- Act respecting occupational health and safety (R.S.Q., ch. S-2.1)
- Canada Evidence Act (R.S.C, ch. C-5)

DEFINITIONS

A list of definitions is provided as Appendix A to this policy. It has been added to the policy for information purposes only and can be modified without consultation

BASIC PRINCIPLES

Records management aims to maintain institutional integrity, guarantee organizational operations, and preserve the historical heritage of the NFSB and its establishments.

The School Board must take appropriate measures to ensure efficient management of its documents, more specifically by putting into place administrative procedures, which guarantee:

- a) The protection of nominal and confidential data involving access right restriction;
- b) The quick access to any information available and necessary to make a decision or to clarify an opinion;
- c) The rationalization of space and equipment for the filing of documents;
- d) The rationalization of records management procedures, more specifically by the application of new information technologies.

Information obtained through any source is filed and used with due respect to the person, laws (such as the Copyright Act) and professional corporations' standards.

The security, integrity and confidentiality of information contained in files shall be guaranteed by the use of technological and material security measures.

Files are considered as management resources in the same way as human, financial or building resources within the NFSB.

SAFEGUARDING OF RECORDS

Measures of protection are taken to guarantee the backup, integrity, data permanency and confidentiality of information contained in documents retained by the School Board.

All documents confidential and essential to the operations of the NFSB are to be identified and subjected to appropriate protection measures. To this effect, the School Board must ensure the protection of personal data retained.

In a technological environment, security of information is guaranteed by maintaining specific measures adapted to this environment.

To protect documents on digital medium, a backup copy of archived documents on digital medium is stored outside of the premises where servers are kept for this purpose.

In the event of a disaster, measures for the reconstruction of recorded essential information shall be planned in order to assure the continuity of NFSB's activities.

RIGHTS OF POSSESSION

The School Board has all rights of possession over all documents under its control. The School Board is the owner of documents produced or obtained by its employees as part of their duties. To this effect, when an employee ceases to work for the School Board, this employee must yield to the School Board all documents produced or obtained while on duty regardless of the medium.

MANAGEMENT PRINCIPLES

All documents contained in a School Board file shall be processed according to the approved retention schedule and consistent with that provided for by the BANQ.

Active and semi-active documents are located in the user's working area and identified in a way to facilitate their location and to respect the requirements of the Act respecting access to documents held by public bodies and the Protection of personal information.

Inactive documents to be disposed of shall be sent to recycling, with the exception of confidential documents, which are to be disposed of by burning or shredding.

The management of any document shall take into account the cost associated with its creation or receipt, keeping, tracking and handling throughout its life cycle.

STAKEHOLDERS' RESPONSIBILITIES

Records management responsibilities are distributed among the various NFSB stakeholders in the following way:

1. The School Board shall:
 - 1.1. Allocate the resources required for the effective and efficient application of the records management system;
 - 1.2. Promote this policy among the staff in order to emphasize the importance and advantages of sound records management;
 - 1.3. Ensure the protection of documents containing confidential information.
2. The Secretary General shall:
 - 2.1. Ensure the respect of laws and regulations pertaining to records management;
 - 2.2. Write, update and distribute the material providing information for the use of the records management system;
 - 2.3. Write, coordinate, implement, audit and proceed with the follow-up of the records management system, that is to say, the classification, protection, keeping and disposal of documents in cooperation with the administrative units;

- 2.4. Oversee the operations related to the accession, clerical operation, preservation, and dissemination of legal, permanent and essential documents designed to recount the history of the NFSB establishments;
 - 2.5. Coordinate the implementation of this policy, ensure its application and the procedures on records management derived from it within the School Board;
 - 2.6. Ensure the physical organization of documents and the records centre to promote rational and economical use of space and equipment;
 - 2.7. Ensure that training sessions for staff are scheduled periodically for the use of the records management system and provide technical assistance;
 - 2.8. Oversee the operation of the archives department;
 - 2.9. Establish and maintain a uniform classification scheme to facilitate the tracking of documents;
 - 2.10. Establish procedures for the disposal of documents;
 - 2.11. Establish procedures for the consultation and loan of documents;
 - 2.12. Establish and maintain technical and technological tools required for the keeping and management of documents no matter the medium (physical, microfilm or electronic) in collaboration with the Information Technology department;
 - 2.13. Oversee the authorization of appropriate access to the management information system;
 - 2.14. Establish procedures to limit access to nominal and personal data contained in some files;
 - 2.15. Promote and plan development of records management for documents archived on electronic medium while ensuring the permanency, integrity and authenticity of data;
 - 2.16. Choose, in collaboration with the Information Technology department, technology tools enabling management of electronic records.
 - 2.17. On behalf of the School Board provide the BAnQ with its retention schedule and any further amendments.
3. The person in charge of records management shall:
 - 3.1. Ensure the liaison with the Secretary General;
 - 3.2. Cooperate in the setting up and improvement of the records management system retained by the School Board;
 - 3.3. Ensure the security and protection of essential and confidential documents in the establishment;
 - 3.4. Proceed, on an annual basis, with streamlining, downgrading and transfer, if need be, of the documents according to approved procedures;
 - 3.5. Assume responsibility for the records management of original documents in the establishment;
 - 3.6. Identify and file documents in accordance with the Classification Plan in force within the School Board.
 4. The Council of Commissioners shall:
 - 4.1. Adopt a records retention and management policy and its amendments;
 - 4.2. Adopt a retention schedule and a classification plan, and their amendments;
 - 4.3. Authorize the Secretary General to sign and transmit the retention schedule and its amendments to the BAnQ, on behalf of the School Board, for approval.
 5. The Information Technology Department shall:
 - 5.1. Install the electronic mediums required for the proper use of the records management database by the administrative units;
 - 5.2. Provide advice on best technological practices and standards for records management;
 - 5.3. Maintain a technology watch at all times by implementing a transitional strategy to guarantee accessibility, readability and reproducibility of information, especially when going through technological changes;
 - 5.4. Ensure a back up of archived documents on an electronic medium is made and is kept outside the records centre;
 - 5.5. Ensure the adherence to and application of security, confidentiality and access measures related to electronic information and implement appropriate measures accordingly.

MANAGEMENT OF INFORMATION

A request for access to information shall always state the name, function and unit or the name of the external body making the request.

ACCESS TO INFORMATION**RESEARCHERS**

A researcher may, as established in the Act respecting Access to documents held by public bodies and the Protection of personal information, be granted the authorization to consult or obtain copies of archived documents for study, research or statistical purposes. The consultation or transmittal is contingent on written authorization from the Commission d'accès à l'information du Québec.

SCHOOL BOARD PERSONNEL

Personnel may, as established in the Act respecting access to documents held by public bodies and the Protection of personal information, have access to files while at work.

TRANSMISSION OF INFORMATION

Information recorded shall be made available to authorized users at a suitable time and in an appropriate format. Fees may be charged in accordance with the Regulation respecting fees for the transcription, reproduction or transmission of documents or personal information (R.S.Q., c. A-2.1, r.3).

ARCHIVING OF INFORMATION

Information is archived only if essential to the management of the establishment or if relevant to legal, strategic or historical requirements. Archived information shall be filed in a logical structure adapted to records management purposes.

Files shall be archived in a closed area ensuring their security and their confidential nature. In the event of electronic information, data contained in files shall be archived ensuring their security and their confidential nature.

Archiving of data on digital medium will be done to ensure the security, integrity and confidentiality of information in accordance with the Act to Establish a Legal Framework for Information Technology (R.S.Q., c. C-1.1).

PROTECTION AND CONFIDENTIALITY OF INFORMATION

An employee wishing to take or transport a file outside of an establishment must obtain prior authorization, ensure the safety and confidentiality of the file and return it in its entirety.

Personnel having access to any particular file shall respect the confidential nature of data contained in the file. The flow of information contained in the file is limited strictly to the personnel having access to this file or to the personnel whose functions require having access to this information.

MANAGEMENT TOOL

To achieve its objectives on records management, the NFSB makes available to its administrative units basic and standardized tools to help them in the conservation and disposal of active and semi-active documents. These document management tools are available through the Archives Department. The School Board also makes also available to its administrative units a records centre where inactive files are archived.

In addition to resources available through the Federation des Commissions scolaires du Québec and the Association des archivistes du Québec, the School Board establishes a retention schedule for its documents and ensures that it is respected.



Records Retention & Management

DEFINITIONS

Archives: "The body of documents of all kinds, regardless of date, created or received by a person or body in meeting requirements or carrying on activities, preserved for their general information value" (R.S.Q., ch. A-21.1, art. 2).

Retention Schedule: List adopted by the School Board and approved by Bibliothèques et Archives nationales du Québec (BANQ) "determining the periods of use and medium of retention of its active and semi-active documents and indicating which inactive documents are to be preserved permanently, and which are to be disposed of" (R.S.Q., ch. A-21.1, art. 7). This list specifies the various NFSB administrative files and documents and refers to the Recueil des délais de conservation des commissions scolaires du Québec produced by the Fédération des Commissions scolaires du Québec and BANQ.

Records Centre: A facility for the controlled retrieval of semi-active and inactive records, operated to facilitate their tracking.

Administrative Unit: All School Board departments, schools and centres.

Retention Period: Guidelines established under the Retention Schedule to determine the length of time documents must be kept and the final disposal of said documents (permanent conservation or destruction).

Document: Correspondence, reports, studies, registers, publications produced by or for the school board to the exclusion of publications or reference materials for libraries.

Active File: "Document in current use for administrative or legal purposes" (R.S.Q., ch. A-21.1, art. 2) and usually stored in the user's offices.

Inactive Document: "Document no longer used for administrative or legal purposes" (R.S.Q., ch. A-21.1, art. 2) but stored for its historical value.

Semi-active Document: "Document in occasional use for administrative or legal purposes" (R.S.Q., ch. A-21.1, art. 2). The archives centre can file this document on behalf of the user who can recall it at any time.

Document Management: Organization and administration of the flow of operations related to administrative systems required for the treatment of documents (paper and electronic) from their creation or receipt to their destruction or storage.

Classification Plan: A plan or framework developed by the School Board to file and track different types of documents or files in a structured and logical order.

Nominal Information: Data pertaining to a natural person and used to identify this person. Confidential data of a public nature are not considered as nominative data according to the Act respecting access to documents held by public bodies and the Protection of personal information (art. 57). The name of a natural person is not a nominative datum.

Information Support: Information stored on hardware. There are two types of support: support for analog documents (paper, microfilm, film, microfiche) and support for numeric documents (hard disk, video cassette, diskette, video tape, CD-ROM, DVD, CD-R).

End.