

Policy: KDB
Adopted: 6/25/79
Amended: 7/15/02
Amended: 2/11/13

Hermon School Department

Public's Right to Know / Freedom of Access

The Hermon School Committee recognizes the importance of a well-informed public to the operations of the Hermon School Department. The School Committee will comply with all applicable sections of Maine's Freedom of Access Act.

The School Committee designated the superintendent, and to act in the absence of the superintendent, the director of special services, as the Public Access Officer for the Hermon School Department.

Except as otherwise provided by statute, all School Committee proceedings shall be open to the public, any person shall be permitted to attend, and any records or minutes of such proceedings that are required by law shall be made promptly and shall be open to public inspection.

School Committee agendas and minutes, proposed and approved School Committee policies, annual budget reports, student handbooks and School Committee Freedom of access training documentation/certificates shall be available for immediate inspection and/or copying in the Superintendent's Office. Requests for all other public records shall be made, preferably in writing, to the superintendent, specifying the records desired for inspection/copying. The superintendent/designee may request clarification concerning which public record or records are being requested.

The superintendent/designee shall acknowledge receipt of a request for inspection and/or copying of public records within a reasonable period of time.

If the request is denied, the superintendent/designee shall inform the requestor in writing within five working days of the request and shall state the reason for denial. Otherwise, inspection and/or copying may be scheduled to occur within a reasonable period of time following the request at a time that will not delay or inconvenience the regular activities of the Hermon School Department.

The Hermon School Department is not required to create a record that does not exist.

ELECTRONICALLY STORED PUBLIC RECORDS

In compliance with the Freedom of Access Act, the Hermon School Department will provide access to an electronically stored public record as a printed document or the record or in the medium in which the record is stored, at the requester's option, except that the Hermon School Department is not required to provide access to an electronically stored public record as a computer file if the Hermon School Department does not have the ability to separate or prevent the disclosure of confidential information contained in or associated with that file. The Hermon School Department is not required to provide access to a computer terminal.

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FEES

Except as otherwise provided by law or court order, the Hermon School Department may charge fees as follows:

- A. A fee of \$.25 per page to cover the cost of copying.
- B. A fee of \$20 per hour after the first hour of staff time per request to cover the actual cost of searching for, retrieving, and compiling the requested public record. Compiling the public record includes reviewing and redacting confidential information.
- C. If conversion of a public record into a form susceptible of visual or aural comprehension or into a usable format, a fee to cover the actual cost of translation.
- D. A charge for the actual mailing costs to mail a copy of the record.
- E. No fee shall be charged for inspection of public records, unless the record cannot be inspected without being compiled or converted, in which case paragraph B or C applies.

As required by law, the Hermon School Department will provide the person making the request an estimate of the time necessary to complete the request and of the total cost and, if the estimated total cost exceeds \$100, will inform the requestor before proceeding. If the estimated total cost is greater than \$100 or if the requestor has previously failed to pay a fee assessed for access to Hermon School Department records, the requestor may be required to pay all or a portion of the estimated cost prior to the search, retrieval, compiling, conversion and copying of the public record.

The superintendent is directed to develop and implement such administrative procedures as may be necessary to carry out this policy.

Legal Reference: 1 M.R.S.A. § 401 et seq.

Cross Reference: BEC – Executive Session
GBJ – Personnel Records and Files
JRA – Student Educational Records

