

JASPER CUSD #1 FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT PUBLIC NOTICE

Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Procedures

FOIA OFFICERS:

Andrew D. Johnson, Superintendent
Janet Benefiel, Executive Secretary

FOIA REQUESTS SHOULD BE DIRECTED TO:

Jasper County CUSD #1
c/o FOIA Officer
609 S. Lafayette Street
Newton, IL 62448

Phone 618-783-8459 – Fax 618-783-3679 – ajohnson@iccu1.org

Phone 618-783-8459 - Fax 618-783-3679 – jbenefiel@iccu1.org

The following procedures shall be followed when persons seek access to information under the provisions of the Illinois Freedom of Information Act:

1. Inspection of district records not excluded from the Illinois Freedom of Information Act will be permitted between the hours of 8:30 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. Monday through Friday, on days the district office is open for business.
2. Records are inspected at the district office, 609 S. Lafayette Street, Newton, Illinois. Records are not to be removed from the district office.
3. Requests to inspect district records will be submitted in writing, by fax, or email to the Superintendent or designee. The district will either comply with or deny the written request for public records within 5 working days. Under circumstances specified in Section III of the Act, the time for responding may be extended by not more than 5 working days.
4. Inspection will not be allowed when records are in immediate use by persons exercising official duties that require use of the records.
5. Requests must specify district records with reasonable particularity to avoid inefficient use of staff time in retrieving and preparing records for inspection.
6. Should the requested records be classified as exempt but contain information which is not exempt, the Superintendent or a designee shall delete the exempt material and release the remaining information for inspection and copying.
7. The Superintendent or a designee shall be present during the inspection or copying of district records.
8. Upon request copies of the requested district public records shall be produced at the time of inspection. A fee, which is reasonably calculated to reimburse the District for the actual costs of

reproducing and certifying the public records, may be charged after the first 50 pages. The following fee will be charged for copying district records: \$.15 per page.

9. Copy fees will be waived or lowered if the person making the requests states a specific purpose for the request, which is in the public interest. A request is in the public interest if its purpose is to access and disseminate information regarding the health, safety and welfare or the legal rights of the general public and is not for the principal purpose of personal or commercial benefit. "Commercial benefit" does not apply to news media requests. In setting the amount of the waiver or reduction, the Superintendent may consider the amount of materials requested and the cost of copying them.

If a request for access is denied, in whole or in part, the Superintendent will provide the individual making the request with a written denial and notice of the right to appeal the decision.

Public Information

Jasper County Community Unit #1 School District is organized and operates as a Unit District serving the needs of children in grades pre-kindergarten to 12 and others as required by the School Code.

The School District, in an active partnership with parents and community, will promote excellence in a caring environment in which all students will learn and grow. This partnership shall empower all students to develop a strong self-esteem and to become responsible learners and decision makers. The School District is committed to developing and using a visionary and innovative curriculum and knowledgeable and dedicated staff.

The total operating budget for the 2015-2016 school year is \$10,664,803.

The District employs 172 full time employees and 2 part time employees.

There are four schools located in three buildings in the Jasper Unit #1 School District:

Newton Community High School

Grades 9 – 12
201 West End Avenue
Newton, IL 62448
618-783-2303

Jasper County Junior High

Grades 7 – 8
1104 West Jourdan Street
Newton, IL 62448
618-783-4202

(NCHS/JCJH are located within the same building)

Newton Elementary

Grades 1 – 6
100 Maxwell Street
Newton, IL 62448
618-783-8464

Ste. Marie Elementary

Pre- K – Kindergarten
P.O. Box 157
311 Franklin Street
Ste. Marie, IL 62459
618-455-3219

Office of Special Needs

Located at District Administration Office
609 South Lafayette Street
Newton, IL 62448
618-783-3651

District Administration Office

609 South Lafayette Street
Newton, IL 62448
618-783-8459

The School District has a Board that is made up of seven elected members:

Jon Fulton, President
Holly Farley, Secretary
Mandy Rieman
Melissa Stanley

Gordon Millsap, Vice President
Jerry L. Jed Earnest
Rob Street

Access to District Public Records

Full access to the District's public records is available to any person as provided in the Illinois Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), this policy, and implementing procedures.

Freedom of Information Officer

The Superintendent shall serve as the District's Freedom of Information Officer and is assigned all duties and powers of that office as provided by FOIA and this policy. The Superintendent may delegate these duties and powers to one or more designees but the delegation shall not relieve the Superintendent of the responsibility for the action that was delegated. The Superintendent or designee(s) shall report any FOIA requests and the status of the District's response to the Board at each regular Board meeting.

Definition

The District's public records are defined as records, reports, forms, writings, letters, memoranda, books, papers, maps, photographs, microfilms, cards, tapes, recordings, electronic data processing records, electronic communications, recorded information and all other documentary materials pertaining to the transaction of public business, regardless of physical form or characteristics, having been prepared by or for, or having been or being used by, received by, in the possession of, or under the control of the School District.

Requesting Records

A request of inspection and/or copies of public records must be made in writing and may be submitted by personal delivery, mail, telefax, or email directed to the District's Freedom of Information Officer. Individuals making a request are not required to state a reason for the request other than to identify when the request is for a commercial purpose or when requesting a fee waiver. All requests for inspection and copying shall immediately be forwarded to the District's Freedom of Information Officer or designee.

Responding to Requests

The Freedom of Information Officer shall approve all requests for public records unless:

1. The requested material does not exist;
2. The requested material is exempt from inspection and copying by the Freedom of Information Act;
or
3. Complying with the request would be unduly burdensome.

Within 5 business days after receipt of a request for access to a public record, the Freedom of Information Officer shall comply with or deny the request, unless the time for response is extended as specified in Section 3 of FOIA. The Freedom of Information Officer may extend the time for a response for up to 5 business days from the original due date. If an extension is needed, the Freedom of Information Officer shall: (1) notify the person making the request of the reason for the delay, and (2) either inform the person of the date on which a response will be made or agree with the person in writing on a compliance period. When responding to a request for a record containing both exempt and non-exempt material, the Freedom of Information Officer shall redact exempt material from the record before complying with the request.

Copying Fees

Persons making a request for copies of public records must pay any applicable copying fee. The Freedom of Information Officer shall, as needed, recommend a copying fee schedule for the Board's approval. Copying fees, except when fixed by statute, are reasonably calculated to reimburse the District's actual cost for reproducing and certifying public records and for the use, by any person, or its equipment to copy records. No fees shall be charged for the first 50 pages of black and white, letter or legal sized copies. No fee shall be charged for electronic copies other than the actual cost of the recording medium.

Access

The inspection and copying of a public record that is the subject of an approved access request is permitted at the District's administrative office during regular business hours, unless other arrangements are made by the Freedom of Information Officer.

Many public records are immediately available from the District's website including, but not limited to, a description of the District and the methods for requesting a public record.

Preserving Public Records

Public records, including email messages, shall be preserved and cataloged if: (1) they are evidence of the District's organization, function, policies, procedures, or activities, (2) they contain informational data appropriate for preservation, (3) their retention is required by State or federal law, or (4) they are subject to a retention request by the Board Attorney (e.g. a litigation hold), District auditor, or other individual authorized by the School Board or State or federal law to make such a request. Unless its retention is required as described in items numbered 3 or 4 above, a public record, as defined by the Illinois Local Records Act, may be destroyed when authorized by the Local Records Commission.