



MINNESOTA HISTORICAL SOCIETY
STATE ARCHIVES DEPARTMENT

345 Kellogg Boulevard West, St. Paul, Minnesota 55102-1906 (651) 259-3260

Government Records Information Leaflet No. 2 School District Records

Many historically important records remain in the custody of Minnesota school districts. This statement identifies some of the most valuable series of school district records. Many districts will have examples of all these records series; others may have very few. Records on this list may be eligible for transfer to the State Archives in the Minnesota Historical Society. Transfer of such records to any other historical agency, public library, or museum is allowed with the permission of the State Archives.

MINUTES of the Board of Education meetings, earlier called **CLERK'S BOOK OF RECORDS**.

AGENDA PACKETS containing material presented to Board of Education for action or information.

CLERK'S REGISTER of receipts and disbursements.

TREASURER'S REGISTER of receipts and disbursements.

ANNUAL BUDGETS of the district.

AUDIT REPORTS issued by private accounting firms and by the State Auditor.

SUPERINTENDENT'S FILES that contain annual/monthly reports to the Board of Education, policy memoranda, minutes of staff and citizen advisory committees, and special reports.

NEWSLETTERS distributed to the public and staff.

PERMANENT STUDENT RECORDS: Early records may be in volume form, later ones are on standardized "permanent student record card." School districts are strongly encouraged to retain these records because of reference use by former students.

CENSUS: Annual list of all school-age children in the district.

LIBRARY RECORDS: Lists of holdings in library and reports of librarian, especially before 1912.

TEXTBOOK INVENTORY RECORDS: Usually found with rural school records, especially before 1920.

AUXILIARY ORGANIZATION RECORDS, including records of student councils, athletic associations, clubs, interest groups, activity funds, and graduation programs; usually secretary's and treasurer's record books.

PARENT TEACHER ASSOCIATION (or PTSA) RECORDS: Secretary's books, treasurer's books, and scrapbooks that may have been deposited with the school district.

NORMAL SCHOOL RECORDS: Student records, reports, and bulletins of courses operated by school districts that prepared students for teaching careers in the common schools.

Many school districts have in their custody important records of **CLOSED RURAL SCHOOLS** that existed before consolidation. These records may contain clerk's books, treasurer's books, library records, student record cards, attendance registers, censuses, and consolidation data. These records may be eligible for transfer to the State Archives.

Many school districts also maintain records of **SPECIAL JOINT POWERS ORGANIZATIONS, VOCATIONAL COOPERATIVES, SPECIAL EDUCATION COOPERATIVES, CABLE TELEVISION COOPERATIVES**, or other organizations that include several separate school districts. These records, including minutes, annual reports, audit reports, and correspondence may be the official set of the organization's records or simply the participating district's copies. When the organization is no longer operating, or when the records become noncurrent, State Archives staff will be available to evaluate the records and may transfer those of historical importance.

Some school districts also have retained records of the former office of **COUNTY SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS**. These records may include teacher's annual or term reports, school censuses, consolidation data, or student records. If these records are no longer needed by the district, they may be eligible for transfer to the State Archives.

The preservation and orderly disposition of records of Minnesota school districts are governed by Minnesota Statutes 138.17, Subdivision 1. No records of the schools can be destroyed or removed from agency custody without signed authorization by the Records Disposition Panel as constituted by this statute. Further information and forms on which to request permission to destroy records on a onetime basis or to transfer noncurrent records to the State Archives are available from the State Archives, Minnesota Historical Society, at the address and phone number shown above. The general records retention schedule for school districts is available online at <http://www.region1.k12.mn.us/main/Portals/0/SMARTFIN/docs/DistrictGeneralRecordsRetention.pdf>.