Management of School District Records

The School District of Palm Beach County
IT / Records Management
Introduction
Presentation Objectives

- Provide instruction to school and Department personnel relating to district recordkeeping requirements including retention, inactive records, and disposition

- Describe IT/Records Management’s areas of responsibility and available resources
Overview of Records Management Components

- Records life cycle
- Records retention
- Inactive records
- Records disposition
Records Life Cycle

- Creation
- Active use
- Inactive storage
- Disposition
Department of Record

- The Department of Record is the administrative department or school which is determined to be the holder of the official copy of a record.
Convenience Copies

- Many departments and schools maintain copies of records for quick reference
- The Department of Record maintains the original (record copy) as specified by the Records Retention Schedule
- The retention of duplicates is “retain until obsolete, superceded, or administrative value is lost”
Record Series

- Record Series – a group of records filed together because they have similar characteristics or because they perform similar functions.
Active Use of Records

- Active records are records which are frequently accessed for day-to-day operations
Inactive Records

- Inactive records are records which are no longer frequently accessed by the creator but which are required to be maintained for legal, regulatory, tax, or historical reasons per the records retention schedule
Buried Alive
How can ineffective records management affect the way we serve our “customers”?
Why Practice Good Records Management?

- Good customer service
- Compliance with legal retention requirements, including public records laws
- Smaller files and fewer files = faster retrieval time
Why Practice Good Records Management? (continued)

Save money

- Reduce equipment costs to store the records
- Reduce amount of floor space associated with files and file cabinets
- Reduce costs associated with litigation
Records Retention

The Palm Beach County School District Records Retention Schedule is a compilation of retention and disposition for public records. These standards are based on the legal, fiscal, historical, and administrative value of the records.
The Seven-Year Myth

There is no five-year or seven-year blanket retention period for records.

Retention periods for some records series may be as short as a month while other record series have permanent retention.
Function over Form

When determining what record series a specific record falls into, consider what is the FUNCTION of the record.
Retention Requirements

Retention requirements take into consideration:

- Audits
- Statute of limitations
- Applicable state and federal codes and statutes
- Typical conditions set forth in contracts
Florida State General Records Schedules

- The Florida Department of State, Bureau of Archives and Records Management (BARM) is the state agency that regulates and approves records retention and disposal for all Florida public agencies.

- General Records Schedules (GS) are developed and published by BARM and cover records series that are common to two or more Florida government agencies.
The Palm Beach County School District Records Retention Schedule has been compiled from GS1, GS2, GS6, and GS7. It should be consulted during any records inventory process, any time the records are to be relocated, and any time records disposal is considered.
Exercise #1: Using the Records Retention Schedule

Practice:
1) Look up “bulletins” in the Records Retention Schedule to find the title of the record series it falls under.
2) Look up the records series.
3) What is the retention period for the record (official) copy?
4) What conditions, if any, must be satisfied before the record copy can be destroyed?
5) What is the retention period for duplicates?
Exercise #2: Using the Records Retention Schedule

Practice:

1) Look up “purchase orders” in the Records Retention Schedule to find the title of the record series it falls under.

2) Look up the record series.

3) What is the retention period for the record (official) copy?

4) What conditions, if any, must be satisfied before the record copy can be destroyed?

5) What is the retention period for duplicates?
Inactive Records Revisited

- Inactive records are records which are no longer frequently accessed by the creator but which are required to be maintained for legal, regulatory, tax, or historical reasons per the records retention schedule.
Inactive Records: On-Site Storage

- Inactive records with a relatively short-term retention period are normally maintained by the Department of Record for ease of retrieval, disposal, and cost-effectiveness.
Inactive Records: Best Practices

- When possible, avoid mixing record series and years to make disposition easier
- Determining retention requirements at the time of document creation makes disposition easier
- Know duplicates (convenience copies) from the official records
Inactive Records: Best Practices (continued)

- Examine storage location for possible hazards and remove official records which may be subject to damage
- Lack of climate control (heat and humidity) can lead to record damage (e.g., mildew, rodents, moisture, etc.)
- Records stored in electrical rooms are vulnerable to fire, smoke, and water damage
- Custodial closets contain chemicals, solvents, and water that can spill and damage records
- Water pipes can burst and air conditioning ducts can leak, damaging records
Inactive Records: Off-Site Storage

- Inactive Records identified as requiring long-term or permanent retention, controlled storage conditions, or other special requirements may have off-site storage coordinated through the Records Management Office.
Criteria for Off-Site Storage

When you request to send something to off-site storage, Records Management will verify the records retention requirement.

The records will not be stored if:
- the retention period has been met or exceeded
- the requesting department or school is not the Department of Record
- the records are duplicates
Records Disposition

- Prior to any records disposal, the Records Retention Schedule must be consulted to find the appropriate record series and retention requirement.

- Once records have met or exceeded the retention requirement and qualifications set forth for that records series, the records can be destroyed.
Records Hold

A hold on records destruction may be placed on records that:
- Are under investigation
- Are involved in litigation

These records must be held until the investigation or litigation has been concluded and appeals have run out.

These holds affect ONLY the Department of Record.
Records Disposal Certification Process

- To assist schools and departments in the records disposal process, the Records Management Office develops the annual Records Disposal Certification

- Before the Records Disposal Certification bulletin is distributed to all schools and departments, it is approved by the District's General Counsel and Internal Auditor
Records Disposal Certification (continued)

- Records Management distributes the bulletin to all administrative departments, Area Superintendents, and Principals
- All schools and departments complete one Records Disposal Certification for their location, including record volume and method of disposal
- Records Management is required to annually report to BARM the total cubic feet of records destroyed from all schools and departments
Confidential records (primarily student-related) should be shredded, if possible.

If access to a shredder is not available, provide for the security of the records as most reasonably possible.

For environmental reasons, the incineration of paper records is discouraged.
Records Not Requiring Disposal Certification

- Refer to the back page of the Records Disposal Certification for a list of record series categories that may be destroyed at any time after the records become obsolete, superceded, or the administrative value is lost.
Public Records

- The School Board and the Office of Public Affairs have established guidelines relating to handling public records requests.
- Generally speaking, most documents can be considered public records, with the exception of specified confidential records.
Records Containing Confidential Information

- A few types of records are exempted from the public records law
- These exemptions mainly relate to confidential student records and law enforcement records
Records Coordinators

- Functions of Records Coordinator
- Available resources
On-line Resources

- IT / Records Management Office Web site
  www.palmbeach.k12.fl.us/records

- Florida Department of State Bureau of Archives and Records Management (BARM)
  www.dos.state.fl.us/dlis/barm
Where To Turn For Help

- Records retention or disposition?
  - Records Analyst, PX 47420

- Student records/transcript requests?
  - Sr. Records Technician, PX 46813

- Creating or using District forms?
  - Forms Analyst, PX 47528
Where To Turn For Help (continued)

- Subpoenas relating to student records?
  - Student Services, PX 47330
- Subpoenas relating to employee records?
  - Employee Records & Information Services, PX 48522
- Public records requests?
  - Public Affairs, PX 48228
Test Your Knowledge

Please put your name, the date, and your SSN# at the top of the test. This test must be completed to earn in-service points. You may refer to your notes as needed. You have 15 minutes to complete the test.
Post Test Review
Thank You for Your Interest and Attention!

Do you have any questions?

A short exercise on student cumulative folders is coming up.
Exercise: Student Cumulative Folder

- Join us in examining and preparing a student cumulative folder for long-term storage
Records Management Training

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