

<b>POLICY TITLE:</b>	Public Information Policy
<b>ADOPTION/EFFECTIVE DATE:</b>	March 18, 2019
<b>MOST RECENTLY UPDATED:</b>	June 24, 2024

## PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to improve accessibility of information available to DC public charter school families and other stakeholders by requiring that public charter schools post specific public information on the school's website. The DC Public Charter School Board (DC PCSB) historically allowed schools to add a link to the school's profile on DC PCSB's website to comply with the requirements outlined in this policy. However, not all stakeholders intuitively come to DC PCSB's website when searching for school-specific information. There is also the challenge of schools making material changes to documents mid-year, thus making the posted version on DC PCSB's website out of date. To ensure the public has accurate information, public charter schools must publicly post the documents listed in this policy to a single page on the school's website no more than two mouse clicks from the homepage.<sup>1</sup> Schools are responsible for posting, and maintaining, the most current documents on their websites.

DC PCSB will continue to publish the following information about public charter schools on its website: Qualitative Site Reviews, Financial Analysis Reports, key information about public charter school contracts, new school proposals (charter applications), annual compliance reporting deadlines, schools' annual reports, all DC PCSB policies, charter review and renewal reports, and more.

## POLICY

Schools will be required to post the following documents publicly on their websites within 14 school days of submitting the documentation to DC PCSB to comply with the local education agency (LEA) Submission Calendar<sup>2</sup> or within 14 days of updating materials to comply with local or federal laws and/or meet Office of State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) or DC PCSB requirements. They will be referred to as "Public Information Documents" throughout this policy. Public Information Documents:<sup>3</sup>

1. School calendar

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<sup>1</sup> DC PCSB will also provide the link to each school's Public Information Documents webpage on its website.

<sup>2</sup> Information on compliance reporting can be found here: <https://dcpcsb.org/annual-compliance-reporting>.

<sup>3</sup> All documents must be for the most current school year, with the exception of school budgets (which must align with the most current fiscal year), Form 990s (which must be the most recently available form), and lead testing results (which must be from the most recent test, which could be the prior school year).

2. Student/ Family Policies, which must include policies or information around:<sup>45</sup>
  - a. Discipline Policy,
  - b. Attendance Policy,
  - c. Grievance Procedures and Policies (including parent complaints),
  - d. Non-Discrimination Policy,
  - e. Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) Notice,
  - f. Policy to Prevent and Address Sex Abuse in Schools (on behalf of students),<sup>6</sup> and
  - g. Inclement Weather Policy (a statement on when decisions to close are shared with families and stakeholders)
3. Centralized hub for open meeting and board information (listed below)<sup>78</sup>
  - a. Current board roster
  - b. Contact information for Chair and Vice Chair of the board (a general email address, e.g., Board@LEA.org, is acceptable)<sup>9</sup>
  - c. Board meeting calendar
  - d. Board meeting notices and agendas
  - e. Board meeting minutes
  - f. Board meeting records, including any recordings, transcripts, and materials
4. Employee Policies, which must include board-approved policies around compliance with applicable employment law, including:<sup>10</sup>
  - a. Sexual harassment,
  - b. Equal opportunity,
  - c. Drug-free work place,
  - d. Staff complaint resolution process, and

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<sup>4</sup> If all policies listed in 2a-2g are in a Student Handbook, the school may link to its handbook; if not, the school must provide a link to all written policies.

<sup>5</sup> Items 2a-2f are required by the LEA Submission Calendar.

<sup>6</sup> Required under DC Code § 38-951.01 et seq.

<sup>7</sup> Annually, DC PCSB will ensure each school's website contains a centralized hub for information related to the school's board of trustees, including meeting information, records, and materials required to be posted pursuant to the Open Meetings Act (see DC Code § 38-1802.05(e) and DC Code §§ 2-571 et seq.). However, DC PCSB will not review or continuously monitor the contents of each school's centralized hub for compliance with the Open Meetings Act. Schools should not conflate compliance with this *Public Information Policy* with compliance with the Open Meetings Act. The DC Office of Open Government enforces the Open Meetings Act and ensures compliance with the law. If, through periodic review related to this or other policies or oversight practices, DC PCSB notices a school's materials or meeting(s) may not comply with the Open Meetings Act, the agency will refer the matter to the Office of Open Government. Schools are encouraged to contact the Office of Open Government at [opengovoffice@dc.gov](mailto:opengovoffice@dc.gov) to request Open Meetings Act training or support.

<sup>8</sup> Items 3a-3f must either exist on the Public Information Documents webpage or the link to their location must be on Public Information Documents webpage; schools must also include a direct link to their centralized board information hub on their homepage.

<sup>9</sup> Note items 3a and 3b are required by this policy but not by the Open Meetings Act.

<sup>10</sup> If all policies in 4a-4e are in the Employee Handbook, the school may link to the handbook as well as list the page numbers with relevant information; if not, the school must link to each written policy. All items listed in 4a-4e are required by the LEA Submission Calendar.

- e. Whistleblower
- 5. Salary scales for teaching positions<sup>11</sup><sup>12</sup>
- 6. School budgets (as submitted to DC PCSB or OSSE) aligned with the Common Financial Reporting Standards<sup>13</sup>
- 7. Form 990s (non-profit tax filings)<sup>14</sup>
- 8. Annual report<sup>15</sup>
- 9. Results of the school's annual water testing for lead<sup>16</sup>
- 10. Contact information for the following school staff:<sup>17</sup> Title IX coordinator; McKinney-Vento Homeless coordinator; Special Education point of contact; safety point of contact for external agencies, organizations, community stakeholders, and parents (this will not be the same person as the emergency contact listed for DC HSEMA)<sup>18</sup>
- 11. Lottery procedures and lottery timeline (for schools not participating in My School DC)
- 12. Student application (for schools not participating in My School DC)
- 13. Student enrollment form(s)

If DC PCSB anticipates updates to the list of **Public Information Documents**, staff will commit to holding a meeting with school leaders, school staff (via existing taskforces), and parent stakeholders (via the Parent and Alumni Leadership Council [PALC]) to solicit feedback. Any updates to the **Public Information Documents** will be made through revisions to this policy to include a public comment period, public hearing, and board vote.

Per the School Reform Act, DC PCSB may request any book, record, paper, or document at any time as DC PCSB determines necessary for its oversight purposes.<sup>19</sup> This applies to any special or unanticipated request for data or documents not otherwise captured above.

DC PCSB will check these documents and links for Public Information throughout the course of the calendar year. If DC PCSB determines a document/information cannot be accessed, content is not posted, and/or material changes have been

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<sup>11</sup> DC Code § 38-1834.01 requires all LEAs to create public salary scales for teaching positions.

<sup>12</sup> Salary scales available shall be either for the current school year or the most recently published scale.

<sup>13</sup> DC Code § 38-1802.04(c)(23) requires all District LEAs to comply with Common Financial Reporting Standards.

<sup>14</sup> Tax filings required by the Internal Revenue Service.

<sup>15</sup> DC Code § 38-1802.04 (c)(B)(11) requires schools to submit annual reports to DC PCSB.

<sup>16</sup> Per DC Code § 38-825.01a(b)(2)(F).

<sup>17</sup> Title IX coordinator, McKinney-Vento Homeless coordinator, and Special Education point of contact are required by the LEA Submission Calendar as well as federal regulations.

<sup>18</sup> As recommended by the School Safety Enhancement Committee: <https://dme.dc.gov/safetyreport> (Recommendation 4a, page 51).

<sup>19</sup> DC Code § 38-1802.11(a)(2).

made to content that violate applicable law or the Charter Agreement, it will impose consequences as described below.

Consequences:

### **Early Warning**

An Early Warning is an email that is sent to the head of school and Website Administrator by DC PCSB staff and is clearly labeled “early warning.” The Early Warning will provide a deadline for correcting the issue(s) identified by DC PCSB before an Out of Compliance notice is issued.

### **Out of Compliance**

An Out of Compliance notice is an email specifically labeled “Out of Compliance” sent by DC PCSB’s executive director, executive leadership, directors, or senior managers to the head of school, Website Administrator, and board chair for failure to take required action within the timeframe provided in an Early Warning email. The Out of Compliance notice will provide a deadline for correcting the issue(s) identified by DC PCSB before a Notice of Concern is considered.

### **Notice of Concern**

If a school fails to take required action within the timeframe provided in an Out of Compliance notice, DC PCSB staff will recommend the Board vote to issue a Notice of Concern. Notices of Concern are taken into consideration during each school’s five- and ten-year charter reviews and during the charter renewal process, as well as when evaluating enrollment ceiling increase requests. The Notice of Concern will provide a timeframe for curing the issue before further Board action is considered.