FREEDOM OF INFORMATION GUIDELINES

COMPLIANCE

It is the policy of the Board of Education of Rich Township High School District 227 to permit access to and copying of public records in accordance with the Illinois Freedom of Information Act, hereinafter referred to as the "Act," (5 ILCS 140/1 et. seq.). The District acknowledges its obligation to provide public records to requesters as expediently and efficiently as possible pursuant to the Act. All public records as defined in the Act are presumed to be open to inspection and copying, and unless a requested record is believed to be exempt from disclosure under Section 7 of the Act, it shall be so made available in a prompt and efficient manner.

REQUESTING RECORDS

A. A request for records must be in writing and directed to the attention of the District Freedom of Information Officer. Upon receipt of a request for records, the request shall be immediately given to the District Freedom of Information Officer.

Any person requesting records for a commercial purpose must advise the Freedom of Information Officer that the request is for commercial purposes, and such a request will be handled in the manner described below in sup part D.

Any person orally requesting records shall be advised to put the request in writing to the District, directed to the attention of the District Freedom of Information Officer.

Records will be made available for inspection during regular business hours at:

District Administration Center
Rich Township High Schools
20550 S. Cicero Avenue
Matteson, IL 60443

B. District Freedom of Information Officer

The District has designated the following individual as the Freedom of Information Officer:

Cassandra Jadrych
District Administration Center
Rich Township High Schools
20550 S. Cicero Avenue
Matteson, IL 60443

The District has designated the following individual as the Alternate Freedom of Information Officer:

Robin Nettles
District Administration Center
Rich Township High Schools
20550 S. Cicero Avenue
Matteson, IL 60443

Upon receiving a request for a public record, the Freedom of Information Officer shall:

(1) note the date the public body received the written request;

(2) compute the day on which the period for response will expire and make a notation of that date on the written request;

(3) maintain an electronic or paper copy of a written request, including all documents submitted with the request until the request has been complied with or denied; and

(4) create a file for the retention of the original request, a copy of the response, a record of written communications with the requester, and a copy of other communications related to the request.

C. Content of Requests. All requests should, to the extent reasonably possible, specify with particularity the records requested to be reviewed and copied. If any records are to be certified, it must be so indicated in the request, specifying which records are to be certified.

D. Requests for Commercial Purposes. In accordance with the requirement of the Act, any person requesting public records for a commercial purpose must inform the District that the requested records are to be used for a commercial purpose. The District's response to such a request shall be made within 21 days and shall otherwise be in accord with the applicable provisions of the Act. Section 2c-10 of the Act defines commercial purpose to mean:

> The use of any part of a public record or records, or information derived from public records, in any form for sale, resale or solicitation or advertisement for sales, or services. For purposes of this definition, requests made by news media and non-profit, scientific, or academic organizations shall not be considered to be made for a "commercial purpose" when the principal purpose of the request is (i) to access and disseminate information concerning news and current or passing events; (ii) for articles of opinion or features of interest to the public, or (iii) for the purpose of academic, scientific, or public research or education.

REQUEST FOR STUDENT SCHOOL RECORDS

Requests from parents, students, or other persons authorized to request records under the authority of the Illinois School Student Records Act may be directed to the Building Principal or Associate Principal. Requests for student records by such persons shall be processed in accordance with the Student Records Act and the district's policies and regulations on student records.

RESPONSES TO REQUESTS FOR RECORDS

Within five (5) working days after receipt of a written request for records, the District Freedom of Information Officer will provide one or more of the following responses to the person requesting the records:

1. Advise in writing that the records are available for inspection or copying at a designated location within the school district. If copies have been requested, that the records are available for pick up at a designated location within the school district, along with a statement of the required fee, if any. However, in the event that the fee for copying the requested records exceeds Ten Dollars, the records will not be copied unless the fee is paid in advance and the requesting party shall be advised of this requirement.

2. That the five-day limitation has been extended to not more than five (5) additional working days pursuant to the Extension of Time to Comply section.

3. Advise in writing that the request is unduly burdensome due to its categorical nature or size, and that the requesting party has the opportunity to meet and confer with a District Freedom of Information Officer to attempt to make the request manageable.

4. Deny, in whole or in part, the request in writing, stating the specific basis for denial to include a detailed factual basis for the application of the claimed exemption. Any denial shall be made in writing and mailed or given personally within the five (5) day period or any extension thereof.

INTENT TO DENY REQUEST

If the District receives a request for public records and asserts that the requested records are exempt from disclosure under either subsection (1)(c) or subsection (1)(f) of Section 7 of the Act, the District's Freedom of Information Officer shall, within the time limit for the response (five working days), provide written notice to the requester and to the Public Access Counselor of the District's intent to deny the request in whole or in part. This notice shall include: (1) a copy of the request for the records; (2) the proposed response from the District; and (3) a detailed summary of the District's basis for asserting the exemption.

RIGHT TO REVIEW BY PAC AND TO JUDICIAL REVIEW

Any denial of a request for public records shall include a statement that the person requesting the records has the right to a review of the denial by the Public Access Counselor and shall provide the address and telephone number of the Public Access Counselor. The requester shall also be informed of the right to seek judicial review pursuant to Section 11 of the Act.

EXEMPT RECORDS

Certain public records are exempt from copying and inspection pursuant to Sections 7 and 7.5 of the Act. If any public record exempt from disclosure under Section 7 of the Act contains any material which is not exempt, the District may elect to redact the information that is exempt and make the remaining information available for inspection and copying.

EXTENSION OF TIME TO COMPLY

The time limit of five (5) working days to comply with a request for records may be extended in each case for not more than five (5) additional working days for certain reasons noted in the Act. If the time is to be extended, Notice shall be given to the requester in writing, indicating the reason for the extension of time for disclosure.

The requester and the District may agree in writing to extend the time of compliance for an agreed upon period of time.

RETRIEVAL AND COPYING

Retrieval and copying of records is limited only to employees of Rich Township High School District 227, designated by the Superintendent or other District Administrator.

INSPECTION OF RECORDS

Inspection of records shall only be permitted in the presence of an employee of the school district, designated by the Superintendent or other District Administrator.

CATALOG OF RECORDS

Records received or prepared beginning July 1, 1984, are catalogued by type as listed by these guidelines.

CENTRAL FILE FOR DENIAL LETTERS

A central file of copies of all denial letters, indexed by the type of exception for the denial, will be maintained by the Superintendent's Office.

FEES

The fees for copies of records shall be as provided below, or as otherwise determined by the Board of Education from time to time.

a. No fee shall be charged for the first 50 pages of black and white copies requested;

b. $.15 per page after 50 for black and white copies;

c. Actual cost for color copies or electronic medium.

d. $1.00 per certificate if the copies are to be certified.

If the person making the request for records states that the purpose of the request is for health, safety and welfare or legal rights of the general public rather than for personal benefit or commercial gain and requests that the fee be waived or reduced, the Superintendent may, upon inquiry of the precise reason or the request, grant such waiver or reduction as he or she deems appropriate. Should any person wish to appeal a fee waiver or reduction decision of the Superintendent, such appeal is to be made to the Board of Education, in writing.

QUESTIONS

Should any person have any questions regarding access to public records of the School District that are not answered herein, these questions may be addressed to the District's Freedom of Information Officer.