

## How to Request Your Child's School Records in Massachusetts

**Parents and guardians have the legal right to request and review their child's educational records. These rights are protected under the following laws:**

- Massachusetts Student Records Regulations (603 CMR 23.00): Schools must provide records within 10 calendar days of a request.
- Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA, 34 CFR Part 99): Requires schools to provide access within 45 days of a request.
- Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA, 34 CFR 300.613): Requires special education records to be provided without unnecessary delay if needed for an IEP meeting or legal proceeding.

### Reasons to Request Your Child's School Records:

- Reviewing records before an IEP meeting.
- Gathering documentation to determine if a child may need special education services.
- Disputing a school's decision regarding an IEP, 504 Plan, placement, or accommodations.
- Reviewing disciplinary actions such as suspensions, incident reports, or behavioral documentation.
- Investigating bullying concerns and obtaining incident reports.
- Understanding academic struggles, including missing assignments, failing grades, or lack of intervention.
- Checking for errors, inconsistencies, or missing information in a student's educational file.
- Obtaining documentation for an advocate, attorney, or in cases involving custody or legal matters.

### What Records Can Be Requested:

**Under Massachusetts and federal law, parents have the right to request all records maintained by the school that relate to their child. This includes, but is not limited to:**

- General education records: Report cards, attendance, standardized test scores (MCAS, SAT, etc.), and teacher reports.
- Special education records: IEPs, evaluations, progress reports, service delivery logs (speech, OT, PT), and IEP meeting notes.

- Disciplinary records: Suspensions, behavior incident reports, referrals, and detention records.
- Communications: Emails, internal memos, and teacher notes related to the student.
- Health and medical records: If maintained by the school nurse or health office.
- Intervention and support records: Response to Intervention (RTI) documentation, 504 Plans, and social-emotional evaluations.

### **How to Request Student Records:**

#### Step 1: Submit a Written Request

A written request ensures documentation and creates a clear record of communication. The request should be sent to the schools principal, records custodian, or special education director.

### **Sample Letter for Requesting Student Records:**

[Your Name]

[Your Address]

[City, State, ZIP]

[Your Email]

[Your Phone Number]

[Date]

[School Name]

[Principal or Records Custodians Name]

[School Address]

[City, State, ZIP]

Subject: Request for Student Records

Student Name: [Your Childs Full Name]

Date of Birth: [MM/DD/YYYY]

Grade: [Current Grade]

School Name: [School Name]

**I am requesting a complete copy of my child's educational records, including but not limited to:**

- General education records: Attendance, report cards, teacher reports, and standardized test scores.
- Special education records: IEPs, evaluations, progress reports, related service logs, and IEP meeting notes.
- Disciplinary records: Suspension notices, behavioral logs, and incident reports.
- Health and medical records: Maintained by the school.
- All communications regarding my child: Including emails, meeting notes, and teacher correspondence.

I request that these records be provided in [preferred format: electronic (PDF), paper copies, or both]. If any records do not exist, please confirm this in writing.

As required by Massachusetts law (603 CMR 23.07(2)), I expect to receive these records within 10 calendar days. If these records are needed for an upcoming IEP meeting or legal matter, IDEA requires them to be provided without unnecessary delay.

Please confirm receipt of this request and provide a timeline for when I can expect the records. If you have any questions, I can be reached at [Your Phone Number] or [Your Email].

Sincerely,

[Your Name]

**Step 2: Send the Request**

- Submit the request via email or certified mail to ensure a record of communication.
- Send the request to the principal, special education director, and/or records custodian.
- Follow up if there is no confirmation within a few days.

**Step 3: Review the Records**

- Check for missing documents such as IEP meeting notes, evaluations, or disciplinary reports.
- Look for errors or inconsistencies that may require corrections.
- If records are missing or incomplete, submit a follow-up request.

**Step 4: What to Do If the School Delays or Denies the Request**

**If the school does not provide records within the required timeframe or refuses to release certain records, parents have the following options:**

1. Send a second request in writing, referencing Massachusetts law (603 CMR 23.07(2)).
2. Contact the districts superintendent or special education director to escalate the issue.

**3. File a complaint with the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) Problem Resolution System (PRS):**

Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE)

Problem Resolution System (PRS) Office

135 Santilli Highway

Everett, MA 02149

Phone: (781) 338-3700

Fax: (781) 338-3710

Email: [DESECompliance@mass.gov](mailto:DESECompliance@mass.gov)

Website: <https://www.doe.mass.edu/prs/>

**For special education records, parents may also file a FERPA complaint with the U.S. Department of Education:**

Website: <https://studentprivacy.ed.gov/file-a-complaint>

**Key Timelines for Massachusetts Parents**

- Massachusetts Law (603 CMR 23.07(2)): Schools must provide student records within 10 calendar days.
- FERPA (34 CFR 99.10): Schools must provide access to records within 45 days.
- IDEA (34 CFR 300.613): Special education records must be provided without unnecessary delay if needed for an IEP meeting or legal matter.