



School Records

Dear Reader:

The following document was created from the MTAS website ([mtas.tennessee.edu](https://www.mtas.tennessee.edu)). This website is maintained daily by MTAS staff and seeks to represent the most current information regarding issues relative to Tennessee municipal government.

We hope this information will be useful to you; reference to it will assist you with many of the questions that will arise in your tenure with municipal government. However, the *Tennessee Code Annotated* and other relevant laws or regulations should always be consulted before any action is taken based upon the contents of this document.

Please feel free to contact us if you have questions or comments regarding this information or any other MTAS website material.

Sincerely,

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Table of Contents

School Records.....	3
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School Records

Reference Number: MTAS-700

SCHOOL RECORDS RETENTION SCHEDULE		
Description of Record	Retention Period	Legal Authority/ Rationale
Q-1. Accountability for 200 Days. Record details use of 200 days and in-service training.	Retain 5 years.	Audit standard authorized by Tennessee Department of Education Administration Rule 0520-1-2-.13. T.C.A. § 49-6-3004.
Q-2. Annual Report of Professional Personnel. Report made to the Tennessee Department of Education listing alphabetically all teachers and other professional personnel in the school system. This report shows for each professional the name of the school assigned, grades taught, whether full time or part time, and the number of months paid. The report also shows the number of principals, the number of teachers or other professionals in the school, kinds of certificates or permits, expiration date, and data on training, experience, salary, and such other information as required by the Tennessee Department of Education.	Retain 10 years before eligible for destruction. NOTE: This record may be useful as a back-up to payroll records for determining retirement status. Consider keeping this record 40 years if there is any question of availability or accuracy of payroll records.	Audit standard authorization by Tennessee Department of Education Administration Rule 0520-1-2-.13. (No retention schedule in rule.)
Q-3. Attendance Agreements of Out-of-District and Out-of-State Students. Agreements from the superintendent of education regarding students attending schools out of the district or state in which student resides.	Retain 5 years.	Audit standard authorized by Tennessee Department of Education Administration rule 0520-1-2-.13.
Q-4. Audits of Internal School Activity Funds. Audit report of activity funds handled by individual schools.	Permanent record.	T.C.A. § 6-56-105.
Q-5. Audits of Local School Systems. Audits of funds administered by superintendent of education showing date of audit, balances under previous audits, receipts and disbursements, balances carried forward, and total figures.	Permanent record.	T.C.A. § 6-56-104.
Q-6. Budget, Annual Operating. Annual approved budget document conforming to	Retain 5 years.	Audit standard authorization by

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standards of the Tennessee Department of Education. Document shows anticipated revenues from all sources and estimated expenditures for the fiscal year.		Tennessee Department of Education Administration Rule 0520-1-2-.13.
Q-7. Building Plans. Blueprints and specifications for buildings in the city school system.	Retain for life of building (plus additional time if litigation could arise from a building's early demise). Consider donating to archive.	Necessary for maintenance and operation of physical plant.
Q-8. Bus Operator's Bonds (Blanket Bonds). Yearly bonds, executed by school bus drivers acting as independent contractors, to insure faithful performance of the driver as specified in contract with the city school system.	Retain 3 years after release, replacement, or expiration of the bond, or 3 years after termination of the contract.	Keep for reasonable period of time for claims to be made against bond.
Q-9. Career Ladder – Certification Recommendation Form. Record advances of licensed personnel through credentialing system.	Permanent record. Must be photographically recorded in procedure approved pursuant to T.C.A. § 10-7-501. Keep originals for 1 year, then either return originals to educator if requested, or destroy them.	Tennessee Department of Education Administration Rule 0520-2-2-.07.
Q-10. Career Ladder – Local Evaluation Report Form for Probationary, Apprentice and Career Level I Teachers. Report results of local evaluation of teachers.	*Permanent record. Must be photographically recorded in a procedure approved pursuant to T.C.A. § 10-7-501. Keep originals for 1 year after certification decision including appeals, then return originals to educator, if requested, or destroy them.	Tennessee Department of Education Administration Rule 0520-2-2-.07.
Q-11. Census Records. Census of all school-age children in the city, showing name, age, and address of child; district number, names of parents, grade in school, and name of school attended. This record is no longer required.	Permanent record.	Audit standard authorized by Tennessee Department of Education Administration Rule 0520-1-2-.13.
Q-12. Certificates and Certificated Personnel. Permanent certificates issued to employed teachers and other certificated personnel by the Tennessee Department of Education.	Retain until employment of the person is terminated; then return to the person or to the next of kin if the person is deceased.	Necessary record for length of employment.

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Q-13. Contracts, Construction. Contracts between the school system and contractors for construction work, showing name of contractor, date, building specifications and amount of consideration.	Retain 7 years or until expiration of guarantees. If no guarantees are involved, retain 7 years after completion of contract.	Based on statute of limitations for actions for breach of contract plus 1 year. T.C.A. § 28-3-109.
Q-14. Contracts, Employee. Contracts between board of education and all employees.	Retain until 7 years after termination of employment.	Based on statute of limitations for actions for breach of contract plus 1 year. T.C.A. § 28-3-109.
Q-15. Contracts, Personal Service of Independent Contractor. Contracts between the board of education and operators of school buses and other independent contractors.	Retain 7 years after termination of contract.	Based on statute of limitations for actions for breach of contract plus 1 year. T.C.A. § 28-3-109.
Q-16. Cumulative Pupil Record. Record of each pupil in the school system, showing the pupil's name, address, parents' names and occupations, complete school record, achievement test results, health record, school activities and counselors' notes, and other information deemed appropriate by the Tennessee Department of Education.	Permanent record.	Historical document. Proof of education. Keep permanently to comply with procedures established by the Tenn. Dept. of Education Office of Accountability.
Q-17. Deeds. Original deeds to school property, showing date, description, and location of property, consideration, and signature of grantor.	Permanent record.	Establishes property rights.
Q-18. Eighth Grade Graduates Report. Duplicates of reports to the Tennessee Department of Education of those eligible to receive diplomas, showing year of graduation, name of school, name of student, and date of report. This record is no longer required.	Permanent record.	Historical document. Proof of education.
Q-19. Federal Title Projects Records. Record of federal "title" projects of all types, including funds received and disbursed.	Current year records plus the previous 3 years of records must be maintained. Other records to facilitate an effective audit, whether in process or not, must be maintained. (An	Audit standard authorized by Tennessee Department of Education Administration

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	example of this is International Association of Sound and Audiovisual Archives (IASA), Title I projects, which are written for 5 years. Toward the end of the 5 – year cycle, records should not be destroyed so that an effective audit can be conducted.)	Rule 0520-1-2-.13.
Q-20. Final BEP Accountability Summary. Report showing how the local school district has spent improvement funds received from the state through the Basic Education Program (BEP).	Retain 5 years.	Audit standard authorized by Tennessee Department of Education Administration Rule 0520-1-2-.13.
Q-21. Financial Report, Annual Public School. An annual report of the school system's financial condition made to the Tennessee Commissioner of Education.	Retain 10 years. NOTE: These reports can be important for research purposes and performing statistical analysis of the school system. May want to keep for 25 years for those purposes.	Audit standard authorized by Tennessee Department of Education Administration Rule 0520-1-2-.13.
Q-22. Fire Safety Inspection and Similar Reports. Duplicates of reports made by the Tennessee Department of Insurance, Division of Fire Protection, showing date, name of inspector, name and location of school, condition, etc.	Retain until new inspection report is received.	Important for liability purposes to keep a record of the most recent inspection.
Q-23. Fixed Assets. Comprehensive inventory of all school assets.	Retain 5 years.	Audit standard authorized by Tennessee Department of Education Administration Rule 0520-1-2-.13.
Q-24. General Ledger Accounts. Record of all receipts and disbursements for the department, showing date of entry, amount, source of receipt or purpose of payment, amount of debit or credit, and name of account credited or charged. (Also see F-15 and F-21.)	Permanent record.	Audit standard authorized by Tennessee Department of Education Administration Rule 0520-1-2-.13. Permanent retention is recommended by

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		comptroller in the Internal Control and Compliance Manual for Tennessee Municipalities.
Q-25. High School Diploma Certification and Roster of Graduates. List of graduating seniors and preparation of diplomas.	Permanent record.	Important historical value and useful proof of graduation.
Q-26. Home School Registration Form. Application for conducting a home school as described in T.C.A. § 49-6-3050(b). Approved home schools must also provide test results for students at grades 2, 5, 7, and 9. Request for waivers should be included in records as appropriate.	Retain 5 years after student graduates or drops.	Keep for audit purposes.
Q-27. Immunization Records. Described in T.C.A. § 49-6-5002. Original record of immunizations must remain with each pupil's active cumulative folder. Original accompanies pupil's cumulative folder when transferring to another school. A copy of the immunization record should be kept with the pupil's inactive cumulative record.	Retain 100 years after student graduates or drops.	Important health record for establishing proof of immunization.
Q-28. Insurance Policies. Policies of all types insuring the school system against various risks of loss.	Retain 7 years after expiration or replacement by a new policy; then destroy if all claims on the policy have been settled.	Based on statute of limitations for breach of contract actions plus 1 year. T.C.A. § 28-3-109.
Q-29. Invoices (Also Purchase Orders, Requisitions, etc.). Original invoices, purchase orders, and requisitions used in purchasing goods for the school system.	Retain 5 years.	Audit standard authorized by Tennessee Department of Education Administration Rule 0520-1-2-.13.
Q-30. Legal Opinions and Court Decisions. Records, including correspondence, stating or referring court decisions or legal opinions dealing with or affecting the school system.	Retain 20 years or until record no longer relevant, whichever is later.	Court opinions can have continuing impact on operations.
Q-31 Membership/Attendance Reports. Described in T.C.A. § 49-6-3007. [1] Superintendent's Membership /Attendance Report (S MAR) – District-wide report of	[1] *Retain 5 years. [2] *Retain 5 years. [3] *Retain 5 years.	Procedures established by Tennessee Department of

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<p>membership and attendance in academic, vocational, special education, and adult education for each 20-day reporting period of the school year.</p> <p>[2] Superintendent’s Annual Membership/ Attendance report (SAMAR) – District-wide year-end cumulative report of membership and attendance in academic, vocational, special education, and adult education.</p> <p>[3] School-level Monthly Attendance Report – Report of membership and attendance in academic, vocational, special education, and adult education at the school-level.</p> <p>[4] Transportation Report Generated by the Membership/Attendance Information System--School-level report generated by the automated membership/attendance information system that provides statistical data on students transported.</p> <p>[5] Attendance records (teachers’ attendance records, sign-in/out rosters, absentee lists) –records of original entry that document student attendance on a daily basis.</p> <p>[6] Average Daily Membership Special Education Options by Primary and Secondary Report—Report generated by the D&A Census Program showing average daily membership of students receiving special education services for each 20-day reporting period of the school year.</p> <p>[7] File dump from the Membership/Attendance Information System—An electronic file dump from the membership/attendance information system data file, including demographic and event data for each student.</p>	<p>[4] *Retain 5 years.</p> <p>[5] *Retain 5 years</p> <p>[6] *Retain 5 years</p> <p>[7] *Permanent record</p>	<p>Education Administration, Office of Accountability.</p>
<p>Q-32. Minutes, Board of Education. Record of regular and called meetings of the board of education, showing place of meeting, date, members present, record of proceedings and action taken, date of final approval and signature of chairman and secretary.</p>	<p>Permanent record.</p>	<p>Actions recorded in minutes are effective until superseded or rescinded. Keep for historical purposes.</p>
<p>Q-33. Monthly Trustee’s Report. Monthly record of funds collected, showing amounts distributed to the city school system and to any special school district in the county.</p>	<p>Retain 5 years.</p>	<p>Audit standard authorized by Tennessee Department of Education Administration</p>

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		Rule 0520-1-2-.13.
Q-34. Petitions. Petitions submitted to the superintendent or the board of education requesting the superintendent or the board to take certain actions.	If attached to minutes, retain until acted upon by the board of education. Otherwise, retain 3 years from the submittal date.	Keep for reasonable time in case there are inquiries regarding the petition.
Q-35. Preliminary Report-Grades PK-12 School Report. Report made to Tennessee Department of Education showing school's name, the number of full-time and part-time teachers, the number of boys and girls in each grade for each school, and such other information as the state requires for school approval decisions.	Retain 3 years.	Audit standard authorized by Tennessee Department of Education Administration Rule 0520-1-2-.13.
Q-36. Preliminary Staff Report. Report prepared by each teacher in the local school district and sent to the Tenn. Dept. of Education. The report shows the teacher's classroom assignments period by period.	Retain 3 years.	Keep for reasonable review period.
Q-37. Report of School System/School Compliance. Local school district report to the Tennessee Department of Education certifying that the district/school is in compliance with the laws, rules, regulations and minimum standards governing K-12 education.	Retain 5 years.	Audit standard authorized by Tennessee Department of Education Administration Rule 0520-1-2-.13.
Q-38. Requisitions for Equivalency High School Diplomas. Record of students passing GED examination and earning equivalent diplomas.	Permanent record.	Historical document. Proof of education.
Q-39. School Food Service Reports. Described in T.C.A. § 49-6-2303. Record of all pertinent information required by the Tennessee Department of Education dealing with school food service.	Retain all items except payroll records for the current year plus 3 previous years unless there is an active audit or investigation, in which case, the records must be retained until the audit or investigation is completed.	Audit standard is authorized by the Tennessee Department of Education Administration Rule 0520-1-2-.13.
Q-40. School Registers. Obsolete record. A daily record showing name, grade, age, and address of each pupil, name of parent(s) or guardian(s), school attended, and record of attendance. School records may be computerized or on paper.	Permanent record. This record is no longer created, but old copies should be kept permanently.	Keep for historical purposes.

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Q-41. Special Education Census. Detailed account of all students with disabilities with option(s) of service. Required by T.C.A. § 49-10-302 (c) (2) and Tennessee Department of Education Administration Rule 0520-1-9-.03 (4). This record is the basis for state and federal funding.	Permanent record.	Keep in case of litigation regarding services rendered to or withheld from student.
Q-42. Special Education – Certification of Services and Listing of Inappropriately Served and of Suspended Students with Disabilities. Court requires report of number of students with disabilities in special category.	Permanent record..	Keep in compliance with court order.
Q-43. Special Education Record. A cumulative record that contains all specific information relating to the referral process, assessment, placement, and option of service for each special education child. Required by T.C.A. § 49-10-302 (c) (2) and Tennessee Department of Education Administration Rule 0520-1-9.	Permanent record.	Keep in case of litigation regarding services rendered to or withheld from student.
Q-44. Statistical Report, Annual. Report submitted to the Tennessee Department of Education by the superintendent showing for each school system the grades in the schools, total enrollment, number of students previously enrolled elsewhere, net enrollment (boys and girls), total number of days present, number of days in the school session, average daily attendance, and other statistical information.	Retain 3 years.	Keep as supporting documentation for the annual report by the commissioner of education, which is required by T.C.A. § 49-1-211.
Q-45. Superintendent’s Report of Suspensions and Expulsions. End-of-year report containing statistical data on suspensions and expulsion as required by the Tennessee Department of Education.	Retain 3 years.	Keep as supporting documentation for annual report by the commissioner of education, which is required by T.C.A. § 49-1-211(a)(8)(a).
Q-46. System-Wide Personnel Compliance Sheet. Report shows the system-wide personnel by name and teacher number for positions for which there is a state employment standard.	Retain 3 years.	Keep as supporting documentation for annual report required by T.C.A. § 49-1-302 (a) (5) (A) (I).

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<p>Q-47. Textbook Reports.</p> <p>[1] Certification of Adoption by Local Board of Education – Official list of adopted textbooks required by T.C.A. § 49-6-2207.</p> <p>[2] Certification of Compliance-Assurance that local system has furnished required textbooks to students, signed by the superintendent.</p> <p>[3] Plan for Estimating School System Expenditures for Library and Instructional Material and Supplies and School Health Services – Report details estimated expenditures for funds allocated for the items noted above.</p>	Retain 7 years after termination date of contract.	T.C.A. § 28-3-109 (a) (3).
<p>Q-48. Transportation Report, Annual Pupil. Report to the Tennessee Department of Education giving information on the age, size, condition, etc. of school buses; average daily transported; and miles traveled.</p>	*Retain 5 years.	Procedure set by Tennessee Department of Education Administration, Office of Accountability, requires that the report be kept for 5 years.
<p>Q-49. Vocational Education Final Expenditure Report. Reports final expenditures for federal reporting and any carryover funds to be allocated.</p>	Retain 3 years.	Audit standard authorized by the Tennessee Department of Education Administration Rule 0520-1-2-.13.
<p>Q-50. Vocational Education – Mgt. Info. Svs. (MIS) Enrollment Form. Record provides statistical data on students and class enrollment necessary for funding purposes.</p>	Retain 3 years.	Audit standard authorized by the Tennessee Department of Education Administration Rule 0520-1-2-.13.
<p>Q-51. Vocational-Technical Education (Adult) Statistical Report. Report class titles, student demographic information, total hours, and funding sources for adult vocational education classes provided by local school districts.</p>	Retain 3 years.	Audit standard authorized by the Tennessee Department of Education Administration Rule 0520-1-2-.13.

*Indicates a mandatory retention period based on state and federal law.

DISCLAIMER: The letters and publications written by the MTAS consultants were written based upon the law at the time and/or a specific sets of facts. The laws referenced in the letters and publications may have changed and/or the technical advice provided may not be applicable to your city or circumstances. Always consult with your city attorney or an MTAS consultant before taking any action based on information contained in this website.

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