

RIVERSIDE PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT 96

3340 S. Harlem Ave. Riverside, IL 60546

708-447-5007

708-447-3252 fax

www.district96.org



October 1, 2025

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

Concerned Citizen

r.smith.847@proton.me

Re: Freedom of Information Request

Dear Concerned Citizen:

On September 24, 2025, Riverside School District 96 (the "District") received a Freedom of Information Act ("FOIA") request from you. Your request and the District's response are below:

Request:

1. Emails, text messages, or correspondence (including communications on personal devices or accounts if they pertain to public business, consistent with City of Champaign v. Madigan, 2013 IL 112116) between 2013 and 2017 involving Rachel Marrello, in her capacity as a District 96 board member, that reference the employment, contract, or termination of Superintendent Bhavna Sharma-Lewis;
2. Board meeting minutes, agendas, or related records (open and closed session) from 2013-2017 in which Superintendent Sharma-Lewis's employment, contract, or termination was discussed;
3. Any memos or documents circulated to the Board of Education during 2013-2017 regarding Superintendent Sharma-Lewis's employment, contract, or termination.

Response: Please find enclosed the records responsive to your 2nd and 3rd requests. I withheld records containing closed session minutes, which are exempt from disclosure under Section 7(1)(I) of the FOIA. 5 ILCS 140/7(1)(I).

As it pertains to your request for emails and text messages, the District is not in possession of records responsive to this request. I spoke with the former Board member, who confirmed she is not in possession of emails or text messages responsive to this request.

FOIA Response

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You have the right to have the denial reviewed by the Public Access Counselor (PAC) at the Office of the Illinois Attorney General. 5 ILCS 140/9.5(a). You can file your Request for Review with the PAC by writing to: Public Access Counselor, Office of the Attorney General, 500 South 2nd Street Springfield, Illinois 62701, Fax: 217-782-1396, E-mail: public.access@ilag.gov, Phone: 877-299-3642. If you choose to file a Request for Review with the PAC, you must do so within 60 calendar days after the date of the denial letter. 5 ILCS 140/9.5(a). Please note that you must include a copy of your original request for documents and

the denial letter when filing a Request for Review with the PAC. You also have the right to seek judicial review of your denial by filing a lawsuit in the State circuit court. 5 ILCS 140/11.

Sincerely,


Matthew Ryan-Joy
Freedom of Information Act Officer