

**Wallkill Valley Regional High School
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Concerned Community Member
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Dear Sir/Madam:

Please accept this correspondence in response to the Open Public Records Act ("OPRA") request that you submitted to the Board on or February 16, 2026. Governmental agencies are required to respond to OPRA requests within seven business days; therefore, this response is timely. Your request sought the following documents and information. Internal numbers are added for ease of reference:

I am writing to formally request access to (1) the Finance Committee meeting minutes related to the upcoming 2026–2027 fiscal year budget, (2) the dates of all Finance Committee meetings concerning the budget, (3) and clarification as to whether those meetings are open to the public. I am also requesting (4) copies of any preliminary or draft versions of the proposed budget that have been provided to Board members regarding the 2026–2027 fiscal year. In addition, (5) I am seeking clarification on the total projected shortfall, the specific areas where reductions or cuts are currently being considered (for example, staff, programs, transportation/bussing, athletics, or other operational areas), and the assumptions used in calculating the projected deficit.

Please be advised that your request has been granted, in part, and denied, in part, as explained in detail below:

1. Finance Committee minutes related to the upcoming 2026-2027 fiscal year budget:

Please be advised that no records responsive to this request exist. However, please see the attached memorandum that was sent to Board members following the most recent Committee meeting on January 27, 2026. The document provides much of the same information that would be included in official Committee minutes. Please further note that this document is also partially responsive to Request No. 2, seeking the dates of Finance Committee meetings (discussed below).

2. The dates of all Finance Committee meetings concerning the budget:

Please be advised that this request is **denied** because no such document exists. See Paff v. Galloway Twp., 444 N.J. Super. 495 (App. Div. 2016) (upholding denial of an OPRA request because there is no obligation under the Act to create new records that are not already extant.)

3. Clarification as to whether [Finance Committee] meetings are open to the public:

Although OPRA is intended as a tool for seeking documents or records, not, in most cases, information, I can inform you that Finance Committee meetings are not open to the public, as they are not subject to the Open Public Meetings Act because there is not a quorum of the Board present.

4. Copies of any preliminary or draft versions of the proposed budget that have been provided to Board members regarding the 2026-2027 fiscal year:

Please be advised that this request is denied pursuant to OPRA's exemption for inter-agency or intra-agency advisory, consultative or deliberative materials. See N.J.S.A. 47:1A-1.1.

5. Clarification on the total projected shortfall, the specific areas where reductions or cuts are currently being considered (for example, staff, programs, transportation/bussing, athletics, or other operational areas), and the assumptions used in calculating the projected deficit:

Please be advised that this request is denied on multiple bases: 1) the request seeks "clarification" not specific documents or records. As noted above, records custodians are not required under OPRA to do create new documents, nor are they required to perform research. See, e.g., MAG Entertainment v. Div. of Alcohol Beverage Control, 375 N.J. Super. 534 (App. Div. 2005) ("OPRA simply operates to make identifiable government records readily accessible for inspection, copying, or examination"); Reda v. Twp. of West Milford, GRC Complaint No. 2002-58 (Jan. 17, 2003) (finding that OPRA does not require records custodians to conduct research or to correlate data from various records)

If you should have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely yours,



Joseph P. Hurley Jr.
School Business Admin/Board Secretary