



MONROE TOWNSHIP SCHOOLS
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March 26, 2025

VIA EMAIL: opra+request-73807-cf6e3974@requests.opramachine.com

V Stone

RE: OPRA Request dated March 19, 2025

Dear V Stone:

As custodian of records for the Monroe Township Board of Education ("Board" and/or "District"), I am writing this letter in response to your request pursuant to the Open Public Records Act (OPRA) submitted and received via email on Wednesday, March 19, 2025.

More specifically, your OPRA request seeks access to the following:

- 1) The amount spent on athletic teams at the Monroe Township High School in the 2023-2024 school year**
- 2) A breakdown of what amount each sport received (For example: How much was received by basketball, softball, etc.)**
- 3) How do you determine what amount to give each sport - is it an amount per student or is there some other way that you decide?**

Please note that the aforementioned request is overly broad and seeks information, rather than identifiable records. OPRA operates to make identifiable government records "readily accessible for inspection, copying, or examination." N.J.S.A. 47:1A-1; MAG Entertainment, LLC v. Div. of ABC, 375 N.J. Super. 534, 546 (App. Div. 2005). MAG Entertainment, LLC held, "[w]hile OPRA provides an alternative means of access to government documents not otherwise exempted from its reach, it is not intended as a research tool litigants may use to force government officials to identify and siphon useful information." Id. at 547.

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“Under OPRA, agencies are required to disclose only ‘identifiable’ government records not otherwise exempt.” Id. at 549; *See also Bent v. Stafford Police Dep’t*, 381 N.J. Super. 30, 37 (App. Div. 2005) (holding that OPRA only allows requests for records as contrasted from information, and to qualify under OPRA a request must reasonably identify a record and not generally data, information or statistics). The Board is not required to perform research on behalf of the requestor, only to produce specific records identified by the requestor. Likewise, the Board is not required to create new documents in order to respond to an OPRA request. *See Sussex Commons Assocs., LLC v. Rutgers*, 210 N.J. 531, 544 (2012).

A proper OPRA request must identify with reasonable clarity, by specifically describing those documents that are being sought. *See Gannett New Jersey Partners L.P. v. County of Middlesex*, 379 N.J. Super. 205, 211-12, 877 A.2d 330 (App. Div. 2005); *New Jersey Builders Association v. New Jersey Council on Affordable Housing*, 390 N.J. Super. 166, 178 (App. Div.), certif. denied, 190 N.J. 394 (2007); *Bent v. Stafford Police Dep’t*, 381 N.J. Super. 30, 40 (App. Div. 2005). Under OPRA, one cannot submit “wholesale requests for general information to be analyzed, collated and compiled by the responding government entity.” *MAG Entertainment, LLC v. Division of Alcoholic Beverage Control*, 375 N.J. Super 534, 868 A.2d 1067 (App. Div. 2005) (Court found a request for “all books, records, [and] documents” related to a specific project to be improper.)

Notwithstanding the above, please be advised that there are no records which are responsive to your request therefore your request is denied. *See Klock v. Newark Public Schools*, GRC Complaint No. 2013-242 (July 2014) (Finding that Custodian properly denied a request where there were no responsive documents); *Pusterhofer v. N.J. Dep’t of Education*, GRC Complaint No. 2005-49 (July 2005) (“The Custodian has certified that the requested record does not exist. Therefore, the requested record cannot be released and there was no unlawful denial of access”).

This correspondence and the foregoing information constitute the Board’s full and complete response to your OPRA request and therefore, your OPRA request is closed.

Sincerely,



Lisa Goldstein
OPRA Secretary/Custodian of Records