

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION COMMISSION  
OF THE STATE OF CONNECTICUT

In the Matter of a Complaint by

FINAL DECISION

Mirian Bleich,

Complainant

against

Docket #FIC 2025-0278

Superintendent of Schools,  
West Hartford Public Schools;  
and West Hartford Public Schools,

Respondents

March 26, 2026

The above-captioned matter was heard as a contested case on October 6, 2025, at which time the complainant and the respondents appeared, stipulated to certain facts, and presented testimony, exhibits, and argument on the complaint.

After consideration of the entire record, the following facts are found and conclusions of law are reached:

1. The respondents are public agencies within the meaning of §1-200(1), G.S.
2. It is found that, by email dated February 11, 2025, the complainant sent the respondents' Assistant Corporation Counsel a request for a copy of the following records:
  - a. Any and all materials, including but not limited to power points (sic), used by RE-Center for [West Hartford Public Schools] ("WHPS") staff;
  - b. Copies of any minutes or other materials where RE-Center and/or its contract with West Hartford is discussed, reported on, authorized and/or voted on by the WHPS Board of Education and/or the Town of West Hartford, the Superintendent of West Hartford Schools, or any other purchasing entities;
  - c. A copy of the purchasing policy applicable to WHPS' Office of Equity Advancement;
  - d. Any purchase order and/or documentation of sole source to/from the Superintendent, Office of Equity

Advancement, and Board of Education regarding RE-Center; and

- e. Any and all documents pertaining to the authority of the Office of Equity Advancement to enter into contracts.<sup>1</sup>

3. It is found that, by email dated February 11, 2025, the respondents' Assistant Corporation Counsel acknowledged the request and indicated that she would forward the request to the respondents for processing.

4. It is found that, by email dated February 24, 2025, the respondent Superintendent provided the complainant with copies of invoices and payment information concerning RE-Center. It is further found that the respondent Superintendent explained that the records identified the services that the respondents contracted for with RE-Center. With respect to the PowerPoint presentation referenced paragraph 2.a, above, it is found that the respondent Superintendent informed the complainant that the respondents had contacted RE-Center to determine whether they could provide the complainant with a copy of the record, but were informed that, because the record was proprietary, they could not provide the complainant with a copy of such record. It is further found that the respondent Superintendent extended the following invitation to the complainant: "I'm happy to arrange a meeting however if (sic) I can share information in person or perhaps respond to any specific question." Finally, it is found that the respondent Superintendent informed the complainant that, other than the PowerPoint presentation, the respondents did not maintain any additional responsive records.

5. It is found that, by email dated March 31, 2025, the complainant communicated with the Executive Director of Equity Advancement for WHPS (the "Executive Director"), explaining that she had met with the respondent Superintendent on March 28, 2025, and had been provided with access to certain additional records. It is found that the complainant further explained that the respondent Superintendent had suggested that she communicate with the Executive Director to request access to certain additional presentation materials.

6. It is found that, by email dated April 3, 2025, the Executive Director informed the complainant that, because the presentation materials that she maintained are proprietary, there were no additional records in her possession that she could share with the complainant.

7. By email dated and filed April 23, 2025, the complainant appealed to this Commission, alleging that the respondents violated the Freedom of Information ("FOI") Act by failing to provide her with a copy of all requested records.

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<sup>1</sup> The Commission notes that, prior to the request for records at issue in the instant case, the complainant requested that the respondents provide her with a copy of the contract between the respondents and RE-Center Race & Equity in Education, Inc. ("RE-Center") (the "First Request"). It is found that, on February 7, 2025, the respondents provided the complainant with a copy of the responsive contract. *See* Ex. D and Ex. E.

8. Section 1-200(5), G.S., provides:

“[p]ublic records or files” means any recorded data or information relating to the conduct of the public’s business prepared, owned, used, received or retained by a public agency, or to which a public agency is entitled to receive a copy by law or contract under section 1-218, whether such data or information be handwritten, typed, tape-recorded, videotaped, printed, photostated, photographed or recorded by any other method.

9. Section 1-210(a), G.S., provides in relevant part that:

[e]xcept as otherwise provided by any federal law or state statute, all records maintained or kept on file by any public agency, whether or not such records are required by any law or by any rule or regulation, shall be public records and every person shall have the right to . . . (3) receive a copy of such records in accordance with section 1-212.

10. Section 1-212(a), G.S., provides in relevant part that “[a]ny person applying in writing shall receive, promptly upon request, a plain, facsimile, electronic or certified copy of any public record.”

11. It is concluded that the requested records are public records within the meaning of §§1-200(5) and 1-210(a), G.S.

12. It is found that RE-Center is a Hartford, Connecticut based non-profit organization committed to dismantling systematic racism and promoting racial justice in K-12 education and training educators to understand and effectively engage with students and colleagues from diverse backgrounds.

13. It is found that the respondents contracted with RE-Center for, *inter alia*, six professional development sessions for educators within WHPS. It is further found that part of the professional development provided by RE-Center included a PowerPoint presentation entitled “Advancing equity and racial justices; Driving Transformative Change,” which was presented to educators over the course of five days.

14. It is further found that, although RE-Center initially informed the respondents that they could not provide the complainant with a copy of the PowerPoint presentation, *see* ¶ 4, above, the respondents again sought permission from RE-Center to provide the complainant with a copy of the presentation. It is further found that RE-Center ultimately consented to the disclosure and, on July 30, 2025, the respondents provided the complainant with a copy of the PowerPoint presentation referenced in paragraph 2.a, above, as well as with a supplemental PowerPoint presentation developed by WHPS’ Equity Diversity Council (“EDC”), which was created by educators within WHPS after they attended the professional development sessions

presented by RE-Center.<sup>2</sup>

15. At the hearing on this matter, the complainant acknowledged that the respondents had provided her with copies of various records responsive to her request, including the PowerPoint presentation referenced in paragraph 2.a, above. The complainant contended, however, that the respondents narrowly interpreted the request set forth in paragraph 2, above, and thereby failed to provide her with a copy of all requested records, including material “embedded” within the PowerPoint presentation and notes taken by educators attending professional development sessions presented by RE-Center. The complainant also contended that the respondents failed to provide her with access to certain student curriculum developed by educators that attended RE-Center’s professional development sessions.

16. It is found that the contract between the respondents and RE-Center, which was provided to the complainant in connection with her first request for records, *see* n.1, above, outlines a series of items and services that RE-Center *could* provide to the respondents. *See* Ex. E, pg. 2, ¶¶ 1, 4, 7; pg. 3, ¶¶ 3, 7; pg. 4, ¶ 1. It is found, however, that the actual services from RE-Center that the respondents contracted for, except for the Board of Education (“BOE”) training sessions<sup>3</sup>, are set forth on page 6 of the contract.

17. It is found that the respondents provided the complainant with a copy of all records concerning the services they received from RE-Center.

18. It is found that the complainant did not request a copy of notes taken by the educators who attended the professional development sessions presented by RE-Center; nor did she request access to student curriculum.

19. Finally, regarding materials or links contained within the PowerPoint presentation referenced in paragraph 2.a, above, it is found that, while the respondents do not maintain an electronic copy of the PowerPoint presentation, they were able to determine that many of the links to videos contained in the PowerPoint presentation can be obtained on YouTube (free of cost) or with a New York Times subscription. *See* Ex. 1, ¶ 26. It is found that other items which were underlined in the PowerPoint presentation were books that the RE-Center representative believed were good resources and/or recommended reading for the members of the EDC. *See* Ex. 1, ¶ 27.

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<sup>2</sup> The Commission notes that, after receiving the presentations referenced in paragraph 14, above, the complainant sent the respondents an additional request for a copy of public records including: (1) notes, records, and correspondence related to the six contracted sessions with RE-Center; (2) records and correspondence of consultation or coaching of WHPS staff for the contracted period; and (3) the mission statement collaborated on or written by RE-Center (the “Third Request”). The Commission further notes that, on or about August 15, 2025, the respondents provided the complainant with a copy of all records responsive to the Third Request and informed the complainant that they did not maintain any records responsive to the request concerning the mission statement. *See* Ex. F.

<sup>3</sup> It is found that, although page six of the respondents’ contract with RE-Center states that RE-Center was to provide training sessions to the BOE, such deliverable never came to fruition. It is further found that the respondents do not maintain any records responsive to such training. *See* Ex. 1, ¶ 23.

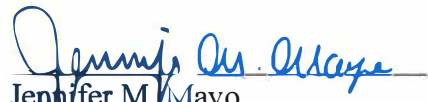
20. The Commission notes that, as is the case frequently when responsive records are provided to a requester, the requester learns that there are, or may be, additional records the requester would like to access. The complainant is certainly free to make a follow-up request for a copy of records that she believes the respondents maintain. As concerns the instant matter, however, it is found that the respondents reasonably interpreted the request set forth in paragraph 2, above, conducted a thorough search for records responsive to such request, and provided a copy of all responsive records they maintain to the complainant.

21. It is concluded therefore that the respondents did not violate the disclosure requirements of §§1-210(a) and 1-212(a), G.S.

The following order by the Commission is hereby recommended on the basis of the record concerning the above-captioned complaint:

1. The complaint is hereby dismissed.

Approved by Order of the Freedom of Information Commission at its regular meeting of April 22, 2026.

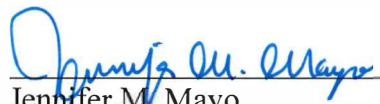
  
Jennifer M. Mayo  
Acting Clerk of the Commission

PURSUANT TO SECTION 4-180(c), G.S., THE FOLLOWING ARE THE NAMES OF EACH PARTY AND THE MOST RECENT MAILING ADDRESS, PROVIDED TO THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION COMMISSION, OF THE PARTIES OR THEIR AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE.

THE PARTIES TO THIS CONTESTED CASE ARE:

**MIRIAM BLEICH**, 346 Westmont Street, West Hartford, CT 06117

**SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS, WEST HARTFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS;  
AND WEST HARTFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS**, c/o Attorney Cynthia Lauture, Office of the Corporation Counsel, 50 South Main Street, Room 319, West Hartford, CT 06107 and Attorney Andrew J. Glass, Karsten & Tallberg, LLC, 500 Enterprise Dr., Suite 4B, Rocky Hill, CT 06067

  
Jennifer M. Mayo  
Acting Clerk of the Commission