

STATE OF CONNECTICUT  
FREEDOM OF INFORMATION COMMISSION

In the Matter of a Complaint by

FINAL DECISION

Philip Medeiros,

Complainant

against

Docket # FIC 2025-0121

Superintendent of Schools, Bolton Public  
Schools; and Bolton Public Schools,

Respondents

February 11, 2026

The above-captioned matter was heard as a contested case on June 2, 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 January 15, 2025, the complainant requested that the respondents provide copies of the following:
  - (a) Any and all text and email communication to or from Beth Goldsnider, Darryl Giard, and Kristin Heckt that includes the following:
    - [i] To or from [pmedeiros@boltonct.org](mailto:pmedeiros@boltonct.org) or [philmedeiros@gmail.com](mailto:philmedeiros@gmail.com);
    - [ii] The words: Phil, Medeiros, PM;
    - [iii] Chris / Lyons / Chris Lyons / [clyons@boltonct.org](mailto:clyons@boltonct.org);
    - [iv] Skirt, dress, dress code, trans, gender, transgender, fingernails, dress code, contract, union, disciplinary, harassment, investigate / investigatory / investigation, inappropriate, concerns;
    - [v] Parents AND relationship or inappropriate [; and]
  - (b) Any and all email communication from [pmedeiros@boltonct.org](mailto:pmedeiros@boltonct.org) or [philmedeiros@gmail.com](mailto:philmedeiros@gmail.com) to Beth Goldsnider, Darryl Giard, Kristin Heckt, Daniel Ayer, Tracy Wunch, and /or Elaine Allegretti.
  - (c) Communications between Mrs. Goldsnider, Mrs. Heckt, and Mr. Giard regarding the staff Climate Survey sent to BCS staff in spring 2023. Please also include the raw, unedited data derived from this survey.

It is found that the complainant also requested that the respondents waive any associated fees.

3. It is found that by email dated January 16, 2025, the complainant clarified that the same key words and search terms, listed in [i] through [v] of paragraph 2(a), above, should be used to search for records responsive to the request described in paragraph 2, above.

4. It is found that by email dated January 17, 2025, the respondents acknowledged the complainant's January 15, 2025 request, and informed him that it may take some time to review their files as the requested records were from 2023 and 2024.

5. It is found that by email dated February 18, 2025, the complainant requested that the requested records be provided to him by February 21, 2025, and that "[f]ailure to do so will result in my filing a FOIA complaint and civil lawsuit to compel your compliance."

6. It is found that by email dated February 20, 2025, the respondents informed the complainant that they were processing his request, and that "due to the expansive nature of the request" and need to "determine if the records are disclosable or need redaction," the respondents would not produce the records by February 21, 2025.

7. By complaint dated February 22, 2025, and filed February 24, 2025, the complainant appealed to the Commission, alleging that the respondents violated the Freedom of Information ("FOI") Act by failing to provide all of the records described in paragraph 2, above.

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 records described in paragraph 2, above, to the extent that such records exist and are maintained by the respondents, are public records within the meaning of §§1-200(5) and 1-210(a), G.S.

12. With respect to the request described in paragraph 2(c), above, it is found that in late April 2025, the respondents provided the climate survey to the complainant.

13. It is found that on or about April 30, 2025, the complainant and respondents worked with the assigned ombudsman in this matter to narrow the scope of the request. The complainant wrote:

The simplest, clearest request is simply for all emails TO and FROM administrators,<sup>1</sup> including cc; that refer to me in the BODY of the email. This would exclude such communications that included me as a sender or recipient.

Body text referring to me include the following search terms:

Phil, Phillip, Medeiros, PM, /P/ (single letter P in isolation, e.g. P has alleged discrimination)

The date range to be provided is September 1, 2022 through November 30, 2024.

14. It is found that by email dated May 27, 2025, the respondents provided the complainant with approximately a dozen responsive emails, with some redactions.<sup>2</sup>

15. At the hearing on this matter, the complainant acknowledged that the respondents had provided him with responsive records, but contended that they failed to provide him with copies of all responsive records. Specifically, the complainant contended that the respondents had failed to provide him with copies of responsive emails as well as any text messages. The complainant also contended that the respondents “were neither prompt nor exhaustive.”

### **Text Messages**

16. With respect to the requested text messages, the respondents testified that they believed that the complainant had narrowed his request to emails only based upon the narrowed request from April 30, 2025.

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<sup>1</sup> The administrators whose records were requested included Darryl Giard, Principal; Beth Goldsnider, Director of Student Services and interim superintendent; and Kristin Heckt, Superintendent.

<sup>2</sup> At the hearing on this matter, the complainant testified that he was not challenging any of the redactions.

17. As a result of the amended request, the respondents understood the complainant's request to be for emails only and, therefore, did not conduct any further searches<sup>3</sup> for responsive text messages.

18. The complainant testified, however, that he did not intend to limit his request to just emails and he still sought responsive text messages. It is found that there is no evidence in the record, outside of the complainant's testimony, that he was still seeking text messages as part of his request.

19. It is found that the respondents reasonably believed that the complainant's narrowed request of April 30, 2025 limited his request to only emails.

20. Based on the facts and circumstances of this matter, it is found that the respondents' interpretation of the complainant's request as narrowed by the April 30, 2025 email, was reasonable, and their response was therefore proper, as such, the request for text messages will not be further addressed herein.

### **Emails**

21. With respect to the requested emails, it is found that the respondents worked with their technology vendor, Novus Insight, to search for responsive emails.<sup>4</sup>

22. It is found that the respondents provided Novus Insight with the April 30, 2025 narrowed search and from that narrowed search, Novus Insight located approximately 14,000 potentially responsive emails.

23. It is found that Novus Insight could not refine the number of potential emails due to limitations of their search technology, despite the narrowed search, and recommended that the respondents engage their legal counsel to refine the search.

24. It is found that the respondents did engage their legal counsel, who refined the search and produced responsive emails which were then provided to the complainant, as described in paragraph 14, above.

25. It is found that the respondents took reasonable steps to search, respond to and comply with the complainant's request for emails.

26. Accordingly, it is concluded that the respondents did not violate the disclosure provisions of §§1-210(a) and 1-212(a), G.S., regarding the complainant's request for emails.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> The respondents testified that that they had checked the cellular telephones of Darryl Giard and Kristin Heckt and had not found any responsive text messages prior to the April 30, 2025 narrowed search.

<sup>4</sup> Ms. Goldsnider also testified that she took potentially responsive emails home with her at night and redacted personal information manually but realized this procedure would take too long.

<sup>5</sup> At the hearing on this matter, the complainant questioned the respondents' witness about the search related to Chris Lyons and what actual email address was searched. However, it is found that the narrowed search terms did not include that email address.

**Promptness**

27. With regard to the complainant's promptness allegation, the Commission has held that the meaning of the word "promptly" is a particularly fact-based question. In Advisory Opinion #51, *In the Matter of a Request for Declaratory Ruling, Third Taxing District of the City of Norwalk, Applicant* (January 11, 1982), the Commission advised that the word "promptly," as used in §1-210(a), G.S., means "quickly and without undue delay, taking into account all factors presented by a particular request."

28. The advisory opinion goes on to describe some of the factors that should be considered in weighing a request for records against other priorities:

[t]he volume of the records requested; the amount of personnel time necessary to comply with the request; the time by which the requestor needs the information contained in the records; the time constraints under which the agency must complete its other work; the importance of the records to the requester, if ascertainable; and the importance to the public of completing the other agency business without the loss of the personnel time involved in complying with the request.

29. The respondents testified that they complied with the complainant's request promptly in light of the number of other records requests they had pending, staffing challenges they faced at the time of the request, along with other demands such as teacher retirements and departures, student placement, budget meetings and town budget referendums.

30. It is found that, as of February 2025, Ms. Goldsnider, in addition to her own duties as Director of Student Services, was also serving as interim superintendent.

31. The respondents testified, and it is found, that their contact person at Novus Insight was out sick and therefore production of potentially responsive emails was delayed for approximately one month.

32. It is found that while the respondents had three administrative assistants, two were neither trained nor authorized to review and redact emails, and the third was out on leave.

33. At the hearing on this matter, the complainant testified that his request was time sensitive due to a pending complaint, filed by the complainant, against the respondents before the Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities ("CHRO").

34. The respondents testified that they understood that the evidentiary period had closed for the CHRO complaint and therefore treated the complainant's request as an ordinary request for records.

35. It is found that the complainant did not notify the respondents that his request was time sensitive.

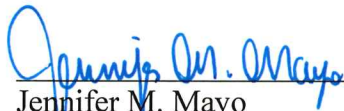
36. Based on the specific facts and circumstances of this case, it is found that the respondents promptly provided the records at issue to the complainant.

37. It is therefore concluded that the respondents did not violate the promptness provisions of §§1-210(a) and 1-212(a), G.S., as alleged by the complainant.

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

1. The complaint is dismissed.

Approved by Order of the Freedom of Information Commission at its regular meeting of February 11, 2026.

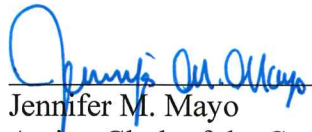
  
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Jennifer M. Mayo  
Acting Clerk of the Commission

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:

**PHILIP MEDEIROS**, 26 Armitage Court, Ashford, CT 06278

**SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS, BOLTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS; AND BOLTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS**, c/o Attorney Rebecca R. Santiago, Shipman & Goodwin LLP, One Constitution Plaza, Hartford, CT 06103-1919

  
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Jennifer M. Mayo  
Acting Clerk of the Commission