

## **Community Relations**

### **Visits to the Schools**

The Board of Education welcomes and strongly encourages members of the community and other interested persons to visit the schools.

The Superintendent is authorized to establish such regulations to:

1. Encourage visitors to observe our schools;
2. Provide for appropriate hospitality for visitors;
3. Channel expressions of approval as well as constructive criticism to the Board of Education;
4. Ensure that such visits will enhance the effect of the educational program rather than hinder it;and
5. Require all visitors to register in the office of the Principal upon their arrival at the school.

Board of Education members who visit schools of their own volition have no more authority than any other citizen.

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes

[53a-185](#) Loitering in or about school grounds: Class C misdemeanor

**Policy adopted: March 19, 2012**

*Sample policy to consider***Community Relations**

## Visits to the Schools

The Board of Education (Board) and staff of the school district welcome and strongly encourage members of the community and other interested persons to visit the schools. Such visits shall be regarded as expressions of interest in school affairs and/or efforts to become informed about school programs and activities.

The Superintendent shall establish regulations which:

1. Encourage school visitations.
2. Provide for appropriate hospitality for visitors.
3. Channel expressions of approval and constructive criticism to the Board of Education.
4. Ensure that public visits will not hinder the educational program.
5. Require all visitors to register in the principal's office upon arrival at the school.
6. Ensure student safety.

Visits to individual classrooms during instructional time shall be permitted only with the Principal's and teacher's prior approval. Such visits shall not be permitted if their duration or frequency interferes with the delivery of instruction or disrupts the normal school environment. When a visit involves a conference with a teacher or the Principal, an appointment should be scheduled during non-instructional time.

The Board desires to work collaboratively with parents with an educational nexus with the district, its educational programs or the student being observed, to observe the students in their current classrooms or observe proposed educational placements in the Board's schools. The Board, through its administration, reserves the right to limit observations of current and proposed educational placements in accordance with administrative regulations and the Board's Guidelines for Independent Educational Evaluations. Since continuity in classrooms is often difficult to achieve and maintain, while visiting in a classroom, a visitor must not interrupt the class in any way, nor speak to (unless invited to do so) or disturb the students or teacher.

Although Board of Education members are encouraged to visit schools independently, they have authority only in regularly called meetings of the Board of Education, or when delegated specific tasks by specific Board of Education action.

Optional: The Superintendent, working with building administrators, shall develop and implement procedures regarding campus visitors who are identified as sex offenders. These procedures shall address (1) parental rights; (2) escort by District personnel; (3) access to common areas of the campus; (4) access to classrooms; (5) drop off and release of students; (6) eligibility to serve as volunteers; and (7) any other relevant issues.

The Principal or his/her designee shall have complete authority to exclude from the school premises any persons whom he/she has reason to believe are disrupting the educational programs in the classroom or in the school, are disturbing the teachers or students on the premises, or whom the Principal believes are on the premises for the purposes of committing an illegal act.

## Community Relations

### Visits to the Schools (continued)

#### *Another version to consider:*

The Board and staff of the school district welcomes and encourage parents or guardians, members of the community, and other interested persons to visit the schools. To preserve the security of the schools, all visitors must check in at the main office where they shall be given whatever information or assistance is required. All visitors are required to wear school-provided identification badges for the duration of their visit.

#### *Another version to consider:*

The Board of Education encourages visits by citizens, residents, and parents to all school buildings.

In order to promote a safe and productive educational environment for all students and staff, the Board of Education requires all visitors to receive prior approval from the school Principal or his/her designee before being permitted to visit any school building. The Board of Education, through the administration, reserves the right to limit visits in accordance with administrative regulations.

Upon arrival, all visitors must comply with any applicable building security procedures, including but not limited to utilizing security buzzers for access, complying with requests for photo identification, reporting directly to and signing in and out at the visitors' reception area of the school office, prominently displaying visitors' badges or other identification required for visitors to the school buildings, limiting access to those areas of the buildings and grounds for which the visitors have authorized access, and complying with directives of school officials at all times.

Legal Reference:        Connecticut General Statutes  
                                 53a-185 Loitering in or about school grounds: Class C misdemeanor  
                                 "Guidelines Regarding Independent Educational Evaluations at Public Expense and  
                                 In-School Observations," CSDE (March 28, 2018)

Policy adopted:  
rev 1/14 rev 3/14 rev 1/19 rev 7/20

*Sample policies are distributed for demonstration purposes only. Unless so noted, contents do not necessarily reflect official policies of the Connecticut Association of Boards of Education*

*Existing regulation number 1250 adopted 3/19/12, appropriate as written. A sample follows for comparison and consideration.*

## **Community Relations**

### **Guidelines for Visitors**

#### **1. Statement of Purpose**

The establishment and maintenance of an effective and successful school environment that protects the educational integrity of instructional time invites the full participation of parents, community members and visitors with the children. The cooperation of all including others with business requirements is necessary in meeting the expectations of the school district in this regard in providing for the safety and well-being of all.

In an effort to communicate the policies and expectation of the district to the school community, the following is an outline of the responsibilities and expectations for parents, community members, vendors and others visiting Beecher Road School.

#### **2. Access**

Safety and Security is a concern and interest of the school community. In order to ensure the integrity of the learning environment, promote successful learning experiences for children, and provide a safe and orderly school environment, it is necessary to identify procedures that provide guidance and direction for appropriate access to the school facility.

To that end, every person entering the school building or present on school grounds during the school day is required to report to a designated location at either of the main entrances to the school and:

- a. Specify purpose and destination for visit.
- b. Sign-in and later, upon completion of the visit, sign-out.
- c. Be prepared to show identification.
- d. Obtain a visitors pass in the Main Office.

#### **3. Adherence**

Failure to follow the procedures of this policy may lead to restriction or denial of visitation privileges for violators.

#### **4. Building Administration**

- a. Develop, review, and monitor procedures related to this policy.
- b. Enforce procedures as approved by the Board of Education.
- c. Communicate procedures and policy to staff and community.
- d. Address situations of failure to comply.

#### **5. Faculty & Staff**

- a. Notify the office of all visitors expected in advance of the visit
  - of special events, plays, performances including a list of dates, times and locations.
  - of scheduled visits of volunteers, chaperones, parents conferencing and others business.
- b. At times other than normal dismissal, release children from the classroom only to the Nurse or School Office. Children will be met at the designated School Office or Nurse Office.
- c. Redirect any person anywhere in the building not carrying a visitor pass to the Office and notify the Office.
- d. Refer any person(s) who have not followed the procedures to the Office and report the incident to the Office.

## **6. Parents, Family & Care Providers**

- a. Understand and comply with procedures outlined in Section 1 above.
- b. Report to the Office on every visit.
- c. Notify in writing your child's classroom teacher of any scheduled change in dismissal times.
- d. Come into the building and report to the Main Office and Nurse, when the child is ill, to pick up and drop-off your child during school day hours.
- e. Bring forgotten items such as homework, lunch or bathing suits to the Main Office.
- f. Bring child medications, as required by policy, directly to the Nurse after signing in the Main Office.

## **7. Other Vendors**

- a. Understand and comply with procedures as reflected in Sections 1 and 2 of this Policy.

**Regulation approved: March 19, 2012**

*An administrative regulation to consider/modify***Community Relations****Visits to the Schools****Visitor Protocols Definition**

For the purposes of this administrative regulation a visitor shall be defined as any person entering a school facility during normal school hours other than:

- A student who attends that facility
- A member of that school's staff and faculty
- Central Office Employees with assigned duties at the school facility
- Multi-site Employees with assigned duties at the school facility
- Maintenance Department Employees
- Uniformed Police or Fire Department personnel in performance of their assigned duties

**All visitors shall:**

1. Enter building at location designated by the school administration
2. Go to the Main Office
3. Sign in the Visitor's Log Book (Visitor name, Purpose of visit, Person visiting)
4. Be issued a Visitor's ID Badge with date of visit
5. Visitors shall sign out at the end of their visit

The Principal or designee may refuse to register an outsider if he/she reasonably concludes that the individual's presence or acts would disrupt the school, students or employees; would result in damage to property; or would result in the distribution of a controlled substance. The Principal or designee or school security officer may revoke any outsider's registration if he/she has a reasonable basis for concluding that the individual's presence on school grounds would interfere or is interfering with the peaceful conduct of school activities or would disrupt or is disrupting the school, students, or staff.

**Visitors entering the building at locations other than the designated visitors' entrance shall be:**

1. Stopped by staff
2. Asked to identify themselves by name
3. Asked their purpose for being in the building
4. Directed by staff:
  - a. out of the building and to use the designated entrance
  - b. to the Main Office (if warranted by proximity to the Main Office)

**Visitors who refuse to identify themselves shall be considered trespassers. Staff shall:**

1. Direct them to leave the building
2. Call the Main Office
3. The Principal or his/her designee upon evaluation of the situation may:
  - call the Police
  - call Central Office
4. Consider locking down building

**Special Exceptions to the above:**

## Visits to the Schools

### Visitor Protocols (continued)

#### Special Events (Plays, Concerts, Award Ceremonies, etc.)

When a special event is planned which will attract large numbers of visitors so as to make the sign-in procedures impractical, the school administration shall designate and mark the appropriate path to the event location (auditorium, APR, gym, media center etc.). Appropriate staff shall be assigned to direct visitor(s) to the event location.

#### Deliveries

School staff that is expecting the delivery of a package(s) should notify the Main Office. Packages are not to be delivered directly to the staff. All packages shall be delivered to a location as determined by the school administration.

A sign-in log shall be maintained for deliveries required for building operations (such as food, fuel, etc.) to locations other than the Main Office.

Students are not expected to receive mail and/or packages at school. Mail and/or packages for students are to be refused unless prior arrangements have been approved by the school principal.

#### Operations

Maintenance Department Employees shall notify the school administration of their presence within the school facility.

#### Other Board of Education employees without assigned duties at the school facility shall:

1. Enter building at location designated by the school administration
2. Go to the Main Office
3. Sign in the Visitor's Log Book (Visitor Name, Purpose of Visit, Person Visiting)
4. Sign out at the end of their visit

#### Board of Education members shall:

1. Enter building at location designated by the school administration
2. Go to the Main Office
3. Sign in the Visitor's Log Book (Visitor Name, Purpose of Visit, Person Visiting)
4. Sign out at the end of their visit

#### Classroom Observations:

When determining whether to approve a request to visit and/or observe student programs the Principal or his/her designee shall consider such factors as (1) the frequency of visits; (2) the duration of the visit; (3) the number of visitors involved; (4) the effect of the visit on a particular class or activity; (5) the age of the students; (6) the nature of the class or programs; (7) the potential for disclosure of confidential personally identifiable student information; (8) whether the visitor has a legitimate educational interest in visiting the school; (9) whether the visitor/observer has professional ethical obligations not to disclose any personally identifiable student information; (10) compliance with the Board's Guidelines for Independent Educational Evaluations, if applicable; and (11) any safety risk to students and school staff. The following guidelines shall be followed:

1. If the visitor wishes to observe a classroom, the time will be arranged in advance after the Principal has conferred with the teacher. The Principal has the discretion to limit, or refuse, requests for visits and/or observations of student programs in light of the above criteria. If a request is denied, the Principal will provide the reason for his/her decision. An effort will be made to find another means to provide the requested information.

**Community Relations****Visits to the Schools (continued)**

2. If the purpose of the classroom visitation is to observe learning and teaching activities, the visitor may be asked to confer with the teacher before and after the observation to enhance understanding of the activities.
3. The Principal may withhold approval if particular events such as testing would be adversely affected by a visit. Similarly, if a visitor's presence becomes disruptive, the Principal may withdraw approval. In either case, the Principal will give reasons for the action; and
4. If a dispute arises regarding limitations upon or withholding of approval for visits:
  - a. The visitor will first discuss the matter with the Principal;
  - b. If it is not satisfactorily resolved, the visitor may request a meeting with the Superintendent or designee.
  - c. The Superintendent or designee will promptly meet with the visitor, investigate the dispute and render a written decision. The written decision will indicate that the visitor may appeal to the Board of Education to review the limitations imposed.
5. The District has an obligation to maintain the confidentiality of personally identifiable student information.

Regulation approved:

cps 6/10 rev 1/14 rev 4/14 rev 1/19

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