

VISITATION OF SCHOOLS

1.0 General

It is the policy of the Board to promote safety and order within the schools to achieve a learning environment. It is also the policy of the Board to afford its employees reasonable opportunities to communicate with each other and to be communicated with.

2.0 Visitation Procedures

The Superintendent shall develop Administrative Regulations that shall observe the following:

2.1 Any person visiting the public schools shall be routed to the principal's office. For the purpose of this policy, the term "visitor" shall include all persons other than students and employees assigned to the school visited.

2.2 The principal in each school shall maintain a visitor log. The principal shall cause the name, arrival time, and departure time of each visitor, other than visitors whose presence is limited to the principal's office, to be recorded in said log. Upon sign in, ALL visitors shall be issued a "visitor's badge", which shall be worn by the visitor for the duration of his/her visit. If a visitor desires to meet with an employee or employees of the school, the principal shall arrange the requested meeting or meetings under the following conditions:

2.2.1 Employees of the school shall be made available for meetings only during duty-free periods when not instructing students, supervising students, conducting class preparation, training, or performing other duties (this paragraph shall not be construed to limit or prohibit meetings between teachers and parents during planning periods).

2.2.2 The duration of such meetings shall not extend beyond such duty-free periods; and,

2.2.3 The principal shall assign the location for approved meetings and note the location in the visitor log.

2.2.4 A principal may deny any requested meeting if the safety, welfare, and orderly instruction of students would be jeopardized. For example, if a visitor appears to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs or manifests abnormal behavior, denial of access to the school would be appropriate. Any person may be prohibited from school property by the Superintendent or the principal of the school if such person's conduct is disruptive or detrimental to the education process. The Superintendent may also prohibit any person from access to school property if it is deemed to be in the best interests of the school system.

3.0 Commercial Agents

Insurance, magazine, and newsagents are prohibited from canvassing students, teachers, or principals in the school building. Representatives of book companies, school supplies and other school related commercial agents are prohibited from canvassing schools without special permission from the Superintendent and from canvassing teachers without permission from the principal. However, teachers may never be canvassed while classes are in session. Demonstrations of products such as ovenware, cooking utensils, et cetera, in the schools shall not be permitted.

4.0 Classroom Observations

Decisions upon requests to visit classrooms are made on an ad hoc basis by the school principal and are reviewed by balancing the educational benefits to be derived from such visits against the disruption and distractions inherent with the presence of outside observers. Parents are welcome to visit classrooms on a limited basis upon arrangement with a school principal. Classroom visitations shall be limited to no more than 30 minutes, unless authorized by the Superintendent. Visits by parents are encouraged to promote parent involvement and understanding of educational programming that is being provided.

5.0 Access by Protection and Advocacy [P & A] System Representatives

Upon receipt of written request for access by a P & A system, provided to the Director of Special education, asserting that an incident has been reported, that a complaint has been made to the P & A system, or that the P & A system has determined there is or may be imminent danger of serious abuse or neglect of an individual with a mental illness, the district shall facilitate reasonable unaccompanied access to its facilities by authorized P & A system agents so as to permit a P & A system to conduct a full investigation of an incident of abuse or neglect at all times. Such notice must include a description of the allegations giving rise to the need for such access, the location along with the date and time of the proposed access to school facilities. The notice must also contain an assurance that any evidence of abuse or neglect that is observed or discovered by P & A system agents, that requires protective measures to be taken, shall be immediately communicated to the Director of Special Education.

5.1 Access. In order to minimize interference with instructional activities and to permit the scheduling of activities that will not be unduly disrupted by the presence of P & A agents, reasonable notice (not less than 24 hours) of scheduled access must be provided. The number of P & A system agents shall be limited to two per visit. School personnel may not be interrupted or interviewed when performing duties involving the instruction or supervision of students. Students may only be interviewed during periods when instruction is not being provided (before and after the instructional day or during lunch periods). Arrangements shall be made to interview students in private if such a request is made. P & A system representatives shall be provided with an opportunity to photograph school facilities upon request. The district shall not assign or permit administrative staff to observe or interfere with scheduled visits.

5.2 Employee interviews. The district reserves the right to have counsel present should a request be made to interview school employees.

5.3 General Inspections. In the absence of an allegation of abuse or neglect, agents of a P & A system shall be afforded reasonable unaccompanied access to school facilities during school days under the same terms and conditions described above (except that the written notice provided to the Director of Special Education need only indicate the location, date and time of the proposed access to school facilities and contain an assurance that any evidence of abuse or neglect that is observed or discovered by P & A system agents, that requires protective measures to be taken, shall be immediately communicated to the Director of Special Education).

5.4 Exceptions to Administrative Regulations. Should the circumstances of an specific case require deviation from this policy or administrative regulations, consideration will be given to modifying them in a way that will not impede the fulfillment of the obligations of West Virginia Advocates in its capacity as a P & A system.

6.0 Review Schedule

This policy shall be reviewed in accordance with the Policy Review Schedule published by the Superintendent.

AUTHORITY:

ADOPTED: 07/22/14

REVISED: _____

See Administrative Regulations 6005.AR