

SECTION: COMMUNITY  
 TITLE: SCHOOL VISITORS  
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# EAST STROUDSBURG AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

907. SCHOOL VISITORS	
1. Authority	The Board welcomes and encourages interest in district educational programs and other school-related activities. The Board recognizes that such interest may result in visits to school by parents/guardians, adult residents, educators and other officials. To ensure order in the schools and to protect students and employees, it is necessary for the Board to establish policy governing school visits.[1]
2. Delegation of Responsibility	<p>The Superintendent or designee and building principal have the authority to prohibit the entry of any individual to a district school, in compliance with applicable law and regulations, established Board policy and Administrative Regulations, and Board approved health and safety plans.</p> <p>The Superintendent or designee and building principal may limit all visitors to designated areas or may limit the number of visitors to a district school when necessary to protect the health and safety of students, staff and the public.</p> <p>The Superintendent or designee may develop administrative regulations to implement this policy and control access to school buildings and school classrooms.</p>
3. Definition	<b>Visitor</b> is defined as any person seeking to enter the school building or grounds, regardless of whether they have an appointment, who is not an ESASD employee or a student currently enrolled in the district.
4. Guidelines	<p>1. <u>Reporting To The Office</u></p> <p>Only one (1) designated entrance that is monitored and capable of controlling visitor entry shall be used by all visitors to the school. All other entrances shall be locked.[3]</p> <p>All visitors must report to the building’s main office or to the designated school greeter to register before proceeding to their destination in the building, regardless of whether prior approval for the visit has been given. In order to protect the health and safety of students, staff and the school community, all visitors shall be required to provide a valid government-issued photo identification which will be scanned, recorded and maintained in the district’s database in exchange for a school district visitor’s identification badge. The visitor’s badge must be visibly worn at all times while on school district property. All visitors will be escorted to their destination by a school employee. All visitors shall be informed of any applicable health and safety rules, which must be followed prior to entry and while the visitor is in the school building and on school property.[2]</p>

2. Scheduling Visits

All school visits shall be scheduled ahead of time. Parent-Teacher Organization meetings and building programs where parent/guardians receive written invitations from the building administration are considered scheduled appointments. Exceptions may be made in the case of emergencies at the discretion of an administrative team member, building principal or designee in matters that affect the safety of the students and staff.

3. Interruptions

All visitors may not interrupt any staff member carrying out his/her professional duties. All visitors are not to interrupt a teacher during preparation times or other related instructional duties unless an appointment has been made or other advance notice given according to the guidelines provided herein.

4. Conferences With Teachers

Conferences with teachers are encouraged. Such conferences may be requested by either the parent/guardian, teacher or administrator, as applicable, and should be scheduled during the teacher's preparation time or before or after school. Unscheduled conferences will be allowed at the discretion of the principal and teacher. Conferences shall only be granted to parents and/or legal guardians. During conferences, teachers should not discuss information about a student or his/her progress with any visitors other than a parent or legal guardian unless the parent or legal guardian is present.

5. Classroom Observations

Classroom observations by parents/guardians, community members or interested educators can be valuable, even though they may disrupt the class. It is believed that parents/guardians, other community members and educators can gain a better sense of the instructional process by observing teaching and learning activities.

Observations will be considered when the parent or legal guardian submits a request in writing to the principal three (3) school days prior to the visit and receives approval from the principal either verbally or in writing.[1][4]

The principal will consult with the teacher and subsequently notify the parent or legal guardian by phone to discuss the scope of the visit.

The principal will consider the following factors in the approval process:

- a. The purpose of the observation.
- b. The duration of the observation.
- c. The classroom activities planned during the observation.

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d. The number of previous observations for that particular class.

e. The needs of the children in that class.

There may be circumstances when an administrator will observe the class with the parent/guardian, if permission to visit is granted.

6. Discussions of Students

School personnel should not discuss individual students or the performance of those students with any non-school persons except that student's parent/guardian, without the written permission of such parent/guardian. Exceptions to this policy may apply in connection with cooperation with Children and Youth, and law enforcement officials.

7. Non-Parent Attendance At Conferences

If a parent or legal guardian wishes to invite another individual to a school meeting regarding his/her child, the district requests that the parent/guardian provide the district with twenty-four (24) hours notice of who they intend to bring. Such notice will assist the district in making arrangements for the meeting, such as the amount of space needed or additional information needed, and help ensure a productive, child-centered meeting. Failure to provide such notice shall result in the rescheduling of a meeting. School employees may not discuss confidential information about a student with an advocate unless the student's parents/guardians are present.

If a parent or legal guardian intends to bring an attorney to any school meeting, it is required that they provide the district with at least forty-eight (48) hours notice so that the district can consider the need for or arrange the presence of its legal counsel. Failure of a parent/guardian to provide notice of their attorney's presence may or may not result in postponement and rescheduling of a meeting for another time, when the district can arrange for appropriate representation, if needed. Whether to conduct the meeting or reschedule it shall be at the district's discretion and based on the circumstances of the case.

8. Audio, Video Recording Or Photographs

No visitor shall be allowed to photograph, record, audiotape, or videotape any person or any part of any building or to tape record any conversation of any kind without prior approval by the building principal. In general, Special Education Individual Education Plan conferences may be taped with one (1) school day prior notification to the principal and the availability of an administrator to attend the conference. An exception to this policy shall apply in the case of public meetings or work sessions of the Board.

9. Loud, Abusive And/or Profane Language Or Behavior

It is the policy of the East Stroudsburg Area School District to prevent disruptions to district operations and the instructional process. All persons, including but not limited

to, students, parents/guardians, employees, all visitors and members of the general public are prohibited from the use of foul, profane and abusive language, whether spoken or written, or for a tirade in any manner in the school buildings or upon school grounds. If any visitor threatens, verbally abuses, or harasses a school employee, student, or another visitor, a building administrator will direct the visitor to leave the property.

All persons are therefore warned that if a visitor refuses to leave district property voluntarily, s/he will be subject to removal from district property by district school police, security or local law enforcement and may face other civil/criminal charges under applicable law. In all cases, violators will be subject to appropriate laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

10. Students Leaving School Property

Students are not permitted to leave school property without prior permission from the office of the school principal. The school principal or designee shall not permit a student to leave school in the custody of anyone other than the parent/guardian or with the verified written or verbal permission of the parent /guardian.

11. Loitering/Causing Disturbance

Any person who is not a member of the school staff or student body and who loiters on or about any school building or grounds without permission or who causes a disturbance may be guilty of loitering and may be prosecuted according to all applicable laws. A person is guilty of loitering when s/he loiters or remains in or about a school building or grounds; not having any reason or relationship involving custody of or responsibility for a student or any other specific, legitimate reason for being there; and not having written permission from anyone authorized to grant the same. Any school authority shall have the right to order all such loiterers or trespassers from any school grounds or building. If refusal occurs, such person will be bound over to the proper legal agency for proper adjudication.

References

1. 24 P.S. 510
2. Pol. 705
3. Pol. 709
4. 22 PA Code 14.108