

**SCHOOL VISITORS**

The Board welcomes visits to school by parents, adult residents of the community and interested educators and encourages parents/guardians to make informed decisions about the programs and services recommended for, or to which the District has assigned their children. To ensure order and safety in the schools, it is necessary to establish procedures governing school visits, classroom and program site visitations.

Policy: 7.5

Adopted: 4/14/04

Amended: 6/17/09

I. School Visitors, Classroom and Program Site Visitations

- A. *Statement of Purpose.* The Muhlenberg School District (“District”) encourages parents and guardians to make informed decisions about the programs and services recommended for, or to which the District has assigned, their children. Informed decision-making can involve visiting a recommended or assigned classroom or program site. The District also encourages parents to become involved in the ongoing education and development of their children and recognizes that occasional classroom or program site visits can promote effective parental involvement. The interest that parents and guardians often have in visiting classrooms and program sites must, however, be weighed against the disruption and distraction that often accompanies such visitations. Many children require a high level of consistency and predictability and low levels of visual and auditory distraction to learn and develop. The purpose of this policy is to establish rules that recognize the need of parents and guardians to inform their decisions about the education of their children without compromising unnecessarily the rights of other children to a stable, safe, and disruption-free learning environment.
- B. *Classrooms and Program Sites that are Subject to Visitation.* A parent or guardian, or a person with appropriate professional expertise designated by a parent or guardian, may visit a classroom or program site with approval of the Superintendent when (a) the District has specifically recommended that classroom or program for their child; (b) the District has assigned the child to that classroom or program; or (c) the child is currently placed in that classroom or program.
1. *Visitations To Which this Policy does not Pertain.* This policy does not pertain to (a) participation in school-wide or classroom events or activities to which all parents or parent volunteers or chaperones are invited; (b) participation by invitation in meetings with professional staff either after student dismissal, in non-classroom space, or in unoccupied classrooms; (c) observation of extracurricular events or activities to which all parents or members of the community in general are invited.

- C. *Scheduling—Advance Notice.* Parents or guardians must arrange visitations at least ten school days in advance with the principal of the building in which the classroom or program is located or, in the case of a special education program or service, with the responsible Supervisor of Special Education or Gifted Education. The parent or guardian must state the reason for the visitation. Nothing in these guidelines shall require the District to schedule a visitation within ten days of receipt of a request unless it is required to do so by law, regulation, or order.
- D. *Scheduling—Time.* The following shall apply to the timing of visitations, other than visitations that are by teacher invitation as part of a planned parent activity:
1. Visits shall not exceed one hour of silent observation in areas in which children are receiving instruction or are participating in activities;
  2. The total number of visits to any one classroom or program site shall not exceed two for any one child during any twelve month period; and
  3. The District may limit the timing or duration of visits based on the type and intensity of planned instruction or activities, the susceptibility of individual students to the disruption known or likely to be caused by the visit, the stated purpose of the visit, the number of adults the visit will place in the room at the same time, and the total amount of traffic in the classroom at or near the time of the visit.
- E. *Conditions of Visitations.* The following conditions shall be observed for all visits:
1. Visitors shall consist of not more than two parents, legal guardians, grandparents, or surrogate parents, or one appropriately-qualified professional designated by the parents, at any one time;
  2. Parents or guardians must identify in writing the name, address, telephone number, and professional credentials of, and must sign a release permitting the disclosure of personally-identifiable information to, any appropriately-qualified professional that they have designated to visit the classroom or program site of their child;

3. A District staff member other than the teacher, assistant teacher, or related services providers working with the child shall accompany any visitor;
4. Visitors shall refrain from conversation and from interaction with children or staff during the period of classroom or program observation;
5. School visitors who do not have proper clearances (PA State Police Criminal Record Check and PA Child Abuse History Clearance) must be accompanied by district personnel throughout the visit. A district representative may accompany any school visitor at any time.
6. The District staff member accompanying a visitor or the staff member responsible for the classroom or program may, in his or her sole discretion, terminate a visit at any time if, in the judgment of that staff member, the visit is significantly disrupting children, staff, or the learning process or becomes a threat to the health, safety, or welfare of children or staff;
7. During the visit, all visitors shall remain in such locations within the classroom or program site as are designated by the accompanying District staff member or the staff member responsible for the classroom. No visitor shall be permitted to roam throughout the school building or school grounds;
8. Questions or concerns about a visit or about anything observed during a visit must be addressed to the accompanying District staff member, or, by appointment, to the staff member responsible for the classroom, before or after the visit and outside the presence of children or working staff members; and
9. District staff shall not share with any visitor personally-identifiable information concerning any students other than the student who is the subject of the observation.
10. During school hours, visitors must register at the school office immediately upon entering the building and obtain a visitor's pass for identification. The visitor must wear the visitor's pass for the duration of the school visit.
11. Staff members shall require that a visitor has registered at the school office and received authorization to be present in the building.
12. Visitors shall return to the school office and sign out when leaving the building.

- F. In response to extraordinary circumstances, or to comply with the requirements of law, regulation or order, the District may waive any time line or condition established in these guidelines. No waiver given in accordance with this section shall be deemed to establish a revision or modification, or to establish a policy, practice, or custom contrary to the terms and conditions, of these guidelines.
- G. The Superintendent/designee or building principal/designee has the authority to prohibit the entry of any person to a school of this District in accordance with policy guidelines.
- H. Each school building shall post in its main entrance a notice that requires all visitors to report directly to the school office during school hours.

Administrative Procedures: 7.5  
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