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MSBA/MASA Model Policy 903

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903 VISITORS TO SCHOOL DISTRICT BUILDINGS AND SITES

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to inform the school community and the general public of the position of the school board on visitors to school buildings and other school property.

II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

- A. The school board encourages interest on the part of parents and community members in school programs and student activities. The school board welcomes visits to school buildings and school property by parents and community members provided the visits are consistent with the health, education and safety of students and employees and are conducted within the procedures and requirements established by the school district.
- B. The school board reaffirms its position on the importance of maintaining a school environment that is safe for students and employees and free of activity that may be disruptive to the student learning process or employee working environment.

III. POST-SECONDARY ENROLLMENT OPTIONS STUDENTS

- A. A student enrolled in a post-secondary enrollment options course may remain at the school site during regular school hours in accordance with established procedures.
- B. A student enrolled in a post-secondary enrollment options course may be provided with reasonable access, during regular school hours, to a computer and other technology resources that the student needs to complete coursework for a post-secondary enrollment course in accordance with established procedures.

IV. RESPONSIBILITY

- A. The school district administration shall present recommended visitor and post-secondary enrollment options student procedures and requirements to the school board for review and approval. The procedures should reflect input from employees, students and advisory groups, and shall be communicated to the school community and the general public. Upon approval by the school board, such procedures and requirements shall be an addendum to this policy.
- B. The superintendent shall be responsible for providing coordination that may be

needed throughout the process and providing for periodic school board review and approval of the procedures.

V. VISITOR LIMITATIONS

- A. Definition of “Visitor.” A “visitor” means any person who enters a district facility except for the following: enrolled students who are in the facility to attend school, to participate in a school sponsored event or activity, or to attend a meeting of a student-initiated, non-curriculum related group that is recognized by the District; central administrators; employees who are assigned to work at the facility or are otherwise authorized to enter the facility; and volunteers who have been assigned to be in the facility at the time of the visit.
- B. Sign-In Procedures. All visitors must comply with the following procedures:
 - a. Immediately upon entering a District facility, all visitors must report to the administrative office or reception desk. Signage to this effect must be prominently displayed on or near all unlocked doors to the facility.
 - b. Parents who wish to observe their children in the classroom during the regular school day must schedule the visit in advance with the classroom teacher and the building principal or principal designee.
 - c. The building principal or a designee will follow this policy in determining whether or not permission will be granted for a visit to a school building. A central administrator will follow this policy in determining whether or not permission will be granted for a visit to a District facility that is not a regular school building.
 - d. If permission for a visit is granted, the visitor will be given a visitor’s identification badge containing the visitor’s name and the location in the building where the visit will occur. Squires, Waldspurger & Mace P.A.
 - e. All visitors must wear the issued visitor identification badge in a conspicuous location at all times while in a District facility building.
 - f. If a District employee sees a visitor in a school building without a visitor’s identification badge, the employee must either escort the visitor to the administrative office or immediately notify the administrative office of the presence of the visitor.
 - g. Upon completing a visit, a visitor must return to the administrative office or reception desk, return the visitor’s identification badge, sign his/her name on the same form that was signed upon entering the building, and state the time of his/her departure.
 - h. The sign-in procedures do not apply to members of the public who are in a limited part of the facility in order to attend an event that is open to the public, such as parent-teacher conferences, a school board meeting or an athletic contest.

- C. Communication Protocols. The District recognizes that under limited circumstances parents may occasionally need to communicate with their children during the school day. When this need arises, parents must follow one of the following procedures:
- a. Parents may call the office and ask to speak with their child. School staff will then locate the child and instruct the child come to the office to speak with the parent by telephone. Students generally will not be permitted to place or receive a call from a classroom.
 - b. Parents may enter the administrative office of a school building and ask the office staff to call their child to the office. Parents may not go directly to a classroom or to any other location in a District facility without complying with the Visitor Procedures stated in this policy.
- D. Administrative Procedures in Response to Inappropriate Conduct. A central administrator, building principal, assistant principal, or designee may take the following steps when a visitor violates this policy or engages in other inappropriate conduct:
- a. Notify the offending visitor that his or her conduct is inappropriate.
 - b. Notify the offending visitor that if the conduct does not cease immediately, the visitor will be required to leave the building.
 - c. Notify the offending visitor that he or she is required to immediately leave the building.
 - d. Contact law enforcement.
 - e. Document the incident.
 - f. Take other action that the central administrator, building principal, assistant principal, or designee reasonably deems to be prudent or necessary in order to protect the safety of students, staff, or school property or to maintain an environment that is conducive to learning and working.
 - g. Any step or steps of this procedure may be skipped or addressed at a later time if the central administrator, building principal, assistant principal, or designee determines, in the exercise of his or her professional discretion, that immediate removal of the offending visitor is in the best interests of the students or the staff.
- E. Rules of Conduct. Every visitor policy should specify rules of conduct. All visitors must demonstrate respect and civility when interacting with other individuals during a visit. In addition, all visitors must immediately comply with any and all lawful directives given by a District employee, including a directive to leave the building. Visitors must not do any of the following during a visit:

- a. Violate any law or policy of the District;
- b. Make any threat or engage in any threatening behavior;
- c. Engage in any conduct that is designed to intimidate another person or that could reasonably be perceived as being designed to intimidate another person;
- d. Swear or use vulgar language;
- e. Demonstrate hostility toward another person;
- f. Engage in conduct that is objectively rude;
- g. Make or participate in making any personal attacks against another person;
- h. Make or participate in making any objectively disrespectful, demeaning, disparaging, or insulting comments or statements about or to another person;
- i. Confront or make physical contact with any person other than their own child, unless the physical contact is part of the normal greeting process, such as a handshake, or is reasonably necessary to prevent imminent harm to another person or serious harm to property;
- j. Photograph, film, or otherwise record any students, employees, or volunteers of the District outside of an event that is open to the general public;
- k. Enter onto school property while impaired from the use of alcohol or any other chemical;
- l. Create or participate in creating a disruption to the learning or working environment. Examples of disruptive behavior include, but are not limited to, using a raised voice, shouting, or yelling; talking with a teacher or a student while observing in a classroom; and engaging in other conduct that interrupts a lesson while observing in a classroom. *NOTE: This policy may not be construed to limit the ability or right of any person to file a complaint in accordance with any law or District policy governing the filing of complaints.

- F. Classroom Observations by Parent. Visitor policies should address classroom visits or “observations” by parents. For example: A central administrator, the building principal, an assistant principal, or a designee may deny a parent’s request to observe his or her child in the classroom, or may revoke permission for such a visit, if the central administrator, principal, assistant principal, or designee determines that:

- a. The parent has failed or refused to comply with any part of this policy, including the requirement that classroom visits be scheduled in advance;

- b. The parent observed in the classroom on a prior occasion during the school year and created a disruption or violated this policy in some other respect;
- c. The requested date or time for the visit is educationally inappropriate or inconvenient, such as when a test is being administered, when a substitute teacher or guest speaker is present, or when students are going on a field trip;
- d. The parent has observed the child in the classroom on at least three prior occasions or for three or more hours during the school year;
- e. The parent's parental rights have been terminated or the parent does not have physical custody or visitation rights during the school day or during the specific period of time when the parent wants to observe the classroom; or
- f. In the discretion of the building principal or principal designee, the parent's presence in the classroom is not in the best interests of the student, other children, or staff.

- G. Classroom Observations by Independent Examiner. Under federal and state law, independent examiners have the right to observe a student as part of an IEE in a manner that is similar to the observations a school staff member would conduct. A visitor policy should address this. For example: If the parent of a special education student requests an independent educational evaluation or hires an independent examiner to evaluate the student, and the parent requests that the independent examiner be permitted to observe the student in the classroom, the District will allow the independent examiner to visit and observe the student in the classroom to the extent permitted by law, provided that the independent examiner complies with this policy and does not create a disruption.
- H. Other Visits by Parent. A visitor policy should contain "catch-all" language to cover other types of visits by parents. For example: A central administrator, a building principal, an assistant principal, or a designee may deny permission for a parent to visit any part of a District facility if the central administrator, the principal, the assistant principal, or the designee determines that:
 - a. The parent has refused or failed to comply with any part of this policy;
 - b. The parent violated any rule or procedure of this policy while visiting a District facility on a prior occasion during the school year;
 - c. The requested date or time for the visit is educationally inappropriate or inconvenient;
 - d. The parent presents a risk of harm to a student, to a staff member, or to District property; or

e. The parent's actions or words suggest that the parent is impaired from using alcohol or another chemical.

- I. Visitor Policy – Parent's Right to Appeal Denial of Request to Visit. Parents generally do not have a "right" to visit school. Nonetheless, to eliminate arguments regarding due process, a visitor policy should contain the following type of language: "If a parent believes that his or her request to visit a District facility has been improperly denied, the parent may submit a written appeal to the Superintendent. The decision of the Superintendent or a designee is final."
- J. Visitor Policy – Visits by Third Parties. Visitor policies should address visits by third parties, including reporters for news outlets. For example: "A central administrator, a building principal, an assistant principal, or a designee may, as he or she sees fit, deny a visitor's request to visit any part of a District facility if the visitor is not a parent of a child who attends school in the facility."
- K. An individual, post-secondary enrollment options student, or group may be denied permission to visit a school or school property or such permission may be revoked if the visitor(s) does not comply with the school district procedures and regulations or if the visit is not in the best interest of students, employees or the school district.
- L. Visitors, including post-secondary enrollment options students, are authorized to park vehicles on school property at times and in locations specified in the approved visitor procedures and requirements which are an addendum to this policy or as otherwise specifically authorized by school officials. When unauthorized vehicles of visitors are parked on school property, school officials may:
 - a. move the vehicle or require the driver or other person in charge of the vehicle to move it off school district property; or
 - b. if unattended, provide for the removal of the vehicle, at the expense of the owner or operator, to the nearest convenient garage or other place of safety off of school property.
- M. An individual, post-secondary enrollment options student, or group who enters school property without complying with the procedures and requirements may be guilty of criminal trespass and thus subject to criminal penalty. Such persons may be detained by the school principal or a person designated by the school principal in a reasonable manner for a reasonable period of time pending the arrival of a police officer.

VI. No Trespass Orders

- A. What are some examples of situations in which a school official might issue a no

trespass order to a parent?

- a. Parent has repeatedly refused to comply with the visitor policy;
- b. Parent has threatened a student;
- c. Parent has threatened a staff member;
- d. Parent with no right to access a student attempted to access the student at school;
- e. Parent creates a material and substantial disruption at school;
- f. Parent has been charged with a serious crime involving a child (e.g. soliciting sex from a minor).

- B. Applicable Statute. Minnesota Statutes section 609.605, subdivision 4(d), states: It is a misdemeanor for a person to enter or be found on school property within one year after being told by the school principal or the principal's designee to leave the property and not to return, unless the principal or the principal's designee has given the person permission to return to the property.

Legal References: Minn. Stat. § 123B.02 (General Powers of Independent School Districts)
Minn. Stat. § 124D.09 (Postsecondary Enrollment Act)
Minn. Stat. § 128C.08 (Assaulting a Sports Official Prohibited)
Minn. Stat. § 609.605, Subd. 4 (Trespass)

Cross References: None