

VISITORS TO THE SCHOOLS

To promote effective communication between the citizens of the community and the school system, the Board of Education encourages parents and other persons with legitimate interest in the education and welfare of children to visit their schools periodically during the course of the school year.

The Board recognizes that many visitations that will occur are regularly scheduled events, e.g., parent-teacher organization meetings, public gatherings, registering of pupils, etc. There are also occasions when parents or guardians desire to visit their child's classroom at other than regularly scheduled times. When such visitations occur, they shall be made on the basis of a defined need and shall be made only with the approval of their child's teacher and Principal. The Board views these visits as constructive; however, no such visit shall be permitted to interfere with the educational process.

Student visitors from other schools, unless they have a specific reason and prior approval of the Principal or designee, shall not be given permission to enter school buildings.

Visits to school buildings are to be in accordance with the Board regulations posted in conspicuous places. A violation of the visitation policy may be prosecuted pursuant to New York State law.

The following rules apply to visitors to the schools:

1. Anyone who is not a regular staff member or student of the school will be considered a visitor.
2. All visitors to the school must report to the office of the principal upon arrival at the school. There they will be required to sign the visitor's register and will be issued visitor's identification, which must be worn at all times while in the school or on school grounds. The visitor must sign out in the principal's office before leaving the building.
3. Visitors attending school functions that are open to the public, such as parent-teacher organization meetings or public gatherings are not required to register.
4. Parents or citizens who wish to observe a classroom while school is in session are required to arrange such visits in advance with the classroom teacher(s), and principal so that class disruption is kept to a minimum.

5. Teachers are expected not to take class time to discuss individual matters with visitors.
6. Any unauthorized person on school property will be reported to the principal or his/her designee. Unauthorized persons will be asked to leave. The police may be called if the situation warrants.
7. All visitors are expected to abide by the rules for public conduct on school property contained in this code of conduct.

Public Conduct on School Property

The district is committed to providing an orderly, respectful environment that is conducive to learning. To create and maintain this kind of environment, it is necessary to regulate public conduct on school property and at school functions. For purposes of this section of the code, “public” shall mean all persons when on school property or attending a school function, including students, teachers and district personnel.

The restrictions on public conduct on school property and at school functions contained in this code are not intended to limit freedom of speech or peaceful assembly. This district recognizes that free inquiry and free expression are indispensable to the objectives of the district. The purpose of this code is to maintain public order and prevent abuse of the rights of others.

All persons on school property or attending school functions shall conduct themselves in a respectful and orderly manner. In addition, all persons on school property or attending a school function are expected to be properly attired for the purpose they are on school property.

A. Prohibited Conduct

No person, either alone or with others, shall:

1. Intentionally injure another person or threaten to do so.
2. Intentionally damage or destroy school district property or the personal property of a teacher, administrator, other district employee, or any person lawfully on school property, including graffiti or arson.
3. Disrupt the order of classes, school programs or other school activities.
4. Distribute or wear materials on school grounds or at school functions that are obscene, advocate illegal action, appear libelous, obstruct the rights of others, or are disruptive to the school program.

Policy 1240

5. Intimidate, harass or discriminate against any person on the basis of race, color, creed, national origin, religion, age, gender, sexual orientation or disability.
6. Enter any portion of the school premises without authorization or remain in any building or facility after it is normally closed.
7. Obstruct the free movement of any person in any place to which this code applies.
8. Violate the traffic laws, parking regulations or other restrictions on vehicles.
9. Possess, consume, sell, distribute or exchange alcoholic beverages, controlled substances, or be under the influence of either on school property or at a school function.
10. Possess or use weapons in or on school property or at a school function, except in the case of law enforcement officers or except as specifically authorized by the school district.
11. Loiter on or about school property.
12. Gamble on school property or at school functions.
13. Refuse to comply with any reasonable order of identifiable school district officials performing their duties.
14. Willfully incite others to commit any of the acts prohibited by this code.
15. Violate any federal or state statute, local ordinance or board policy while on school property or while at a school function.

B. Penalties

Persons who violate this code shall be subject to the following penalties:

1. Visitors: Their authorization, if any, to remain on school grounds or at the school function shall be withdrawn and they shall be directed to leave the premises. If they refuse to leave, they shall be subject to removal by school security personnel or local law enforcement and/or arrest.
2. Students: They shall be subject to disciplinary action as the facts may warrant, in accordance with the due process requirements.

3. Tenured faculty members: They shall be subject to disciplinary action as the facts may warrant in accordance with Education Law Section 3020-a or any other legal rights that they may have.
4. Staff members in the classified service of the civil service entitled to the protection of Civil Service Law Section 75. They shall be subject to immediate ejection and to disciplinary action as the facts may warrant in accordance with Civil Service Law Section 75 or any other legal rights that they may have.
5. Staff members other than those described in subdivisions 4 and 5. They shall be subject to warning, reprimand, suspension or dismissal as the facts may warrant in accordance with any legal rights they may have.

C. Enforcement

The building principal or his/her designee shall be responsible for enforcing the conduct required by this code.

When the building principal or his/her designee sees an individual engaged in prohibited conduct, which in his/her judgment does not pose any immediate threat of injury to persons or property, the principal or designee shall tell the individual that the conduct is prohibited and attempt to persuade the individual to stop. The principal or his/her designee shall also warn the individual of the consequences for failing to stop. If the person refuses to stop engaging in the prohibited conduct, or if the person's conduct poses an immediate threat of injury to persons or property, the principal or designee shall have the individual removed immediately from school property or the school function. If necessary, local law enforcement authorities will be contacted to assist in removing the person.

The district shall initiate disciplinary action against any student or staff member, as appropriate, with the "Penalties" section above. In addition, the district reserves its right to pursue a civil or criminal legal action against any person violating the code.

Dissemination and Review

A. Dissemination of Code of Conduct

The Board will work to ensure that the community is aware of this code of conduct by:

1. Providing copies of a summary of the code to all students at a general assembly held at the beginning of each school year.
2. Making copies of the code available to all parents at the beginning of the school year.
3. Mailing a summary of the code of conduct, written in plain language, to all parents of district students before the beginning of the school year and making this summary available upon request.
4. Providing all current teachers and other staff members with a copy of the code and a copy of any amendments to the code as soon as practicable after adoption.
5. Providing all new employees with a copy of the current code of conduct when they are first hired.
6. Making copies of the code available for review by students, parents and other community members.

The board of education will sponsor an in-service education program for all district staff members to ensure the effective implementation of the code of conduct. The superintendent may solicit the recommendations of the district staff, particularly teachers and administrators, regarding in-service programs pertaining to the management and discipline of students.

The board will review this code of conduct every year and update it as necessary. In conducting the review, the board will consider how effective the code's provisions have been and whether the code has been applied fairly and consistently.

The board may appoint an advisory committee to assist in reviewing the code and the district's response to the code of conduct violations. The committee will be made up of representatives of student, teacher, administrator and parent organizations, school safety personnel and other school personnel.

Before adopting any revisions to the code, the board will hold at least one public hearing at which school personnel, parents, students and any other interested party may participate.

The code of conduct and any amendments to it will be filed with the Commissioner no later than 30 days after adoption.

Ref: Education Law §§1708; 2801

Adoption date: January 1994

Revised Policy Adoption date: December 18, 2007