

SECTION: COMMUNITY  
 TITLE: SCHOOL VISITORS  
 ADOPTED: December 17, 2007  
 REVISED: February 27, 2017

# EPHRATA AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

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|  | <p style="text-align: center;">907. SCHOOL VISITORS</p> <p>1. Authority<br/>SC 510<br/>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.</p> <p>2. Definition<br/>A visitor is defined as any person seeking to enter a school building or location on school property who is not an employee of the school district or a student currently enrolled in that building.</p> <p>3. Delegation of Responsibility<br/>The Superintendent or designee and building principal have the authority to prohibit the entry of any individual to a district school, in accordance with Board guidelines and state and federal law and regulations.<br/><br/>The Superintendent or designee shall develop administrative regulations to implement this policy and control access to school buildings and school classrooms.</p> <p>4. Guidelines<br/>Persons wishing to visit a school should make arrangements in advance with the building principal. Visits may be prohibited upon the exercise of reasonable discretion by the principal.<br/><br/>In order to protect students and staff from the possibility of personal harm, as well as from unnecessary distractions, which interfere with the educational program or any related activity, all visitors, upon arrival at the school, must register at the office where they will sign in and sign out and receive a badge and instructions.<br/><br/>After the start of the school day, only one (1) entrance shall be used by visitors to the school. All other entrances shall be locked.<br/><br/>All staff members shall be responsible for requiring a visitor demonstrate that s/he has a visitor’s badge and has registered at the school office and received authorization to be present for the purpose of conducting business.<br/><br/>No visitor may confer with a student in school without the approval of the principal.</p> |
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| <p>SC 510<br/>Title 22<br/>Sec. 14.108</p> | <p>Should an emergency require that a student be called to the school office to meet a visitor, the principal or designee shall be present during the meeting.</p> <p>All school visitors must comply at all times with Board policies, district rules, and administrative regulations.</p> <p>Failure to comply with this policy shall result in more limited access to the school as determined by the building principal, consistent with Board policies, administrative regulations, school rules and federal and state law and regulations.</p> <p>Any individual considered to be an undesirable visitor will be notified in writing that future entry on school property may result in prosecution.</p> <p><u>Visits to Classrooms or Other Instructional Areas</u></p> <p>Parents/Guardians may request to visit their child’s classroom, but the request must be made prior to the visit, in accordance with established administrative regulations.</p> <p>The building principal or program supervisor must grant prior approval for the visit, and shall notify the classroom teacher prior to the visit.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Visitors wishing to meet with teachers or administration during the course of the school day shall make arrangements in advance.</li><li>2. Access to particular classrooms or other instructional areas of the school may be restricted upon the recommendation of the teacher in charge or as otherwise deemed necessary by the principal.</li><li>3. All visitors must agree to sign a confidentiality agreement. This agreement states that anything viewed during the visitation, not specific to their child (including the identification of other students served in the classroom), is considered confidential information and may not be disclosed.</li><li>4. Because classrooms and other instructional areas are the most vulnerable to the disruption of the educational process, specific conditions may be imposed upon visitors including but not limited to:<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>a. remaining in a designated place or seat.</li><li>b. refraining from speaking to students while the class or activity is in session.</li><li>c. refraining from entering or leaving the area while an activity is underway.</li></ol></li></ol> |
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|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>d. requiring that the dress and grooming of the visitor be consistent with the dress code for the students and employees within the building.</li><li>e. requiring that the visitor be chaperoned.</li><li>f. limiting the duration of the visit to one (1) class period per month, per child in the school for classroom visitations, in order to minimize disruption of the classroom schedule and the educational program. Under exceptional circumstances and upon request of the building principal, program supervisor, classroom teacher, or parent/guardian, the Superintendent may authorize additional or longer classroom visits by a parent/guardian.</li><li>g. designating particular routes of travel in the building or upon the school grounds.</li></ul> <p>5. Visitors of students in special education classrooms:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a. Classrooms visitations for the purpose of observation must be scheduled at least three (3) days in advance with the classroom teacher. The teacher must receive prior approval from the building principal before confirming a classroom visit.</li><li>b. Visitations cannot exceed one hour in duration without a pre-identified, specific purpose that requires a need for an extended stay. An estimated length of stay will need to be identified when the observation is scheduled with the classroom teacher and building principal. Non-specified lengths of visitation will not be approved. Visitors will not be permitted to stay and observe beyond the time agreed upon.</li><li>c. If a visitation is deemed disruptive for any reason, the visitors will be required to leave the classroom and/or school building.</li><li>d. The use of videotaping during an observation is not permitted. To honor the privacy laws of those students we serve, we only allow videotaping for the use of individual student assessment; or, as identified by a student's IEP team.</li></ul> <p>6. Parental participation in classroom activities or programs such as room parents, back-to-school events, and chaperones for field trips shall not constitute a classroom visit for purposes of this policy.</p> <p>7. The building principal or program supervisor and classroom teacher have the authority to ask a visitor to leave if the visitor disrupts the classroom routine, educational program, or daily schedule, or if a visitor violates Board policy. Failure to leave when asked or repeated, documented disruptions may result in</p> |
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| <p>24 P.S.<br/>Sec. 2402<br/>Pol. 250</p> | <p>loss of classroom visitation privileges.</p> <p><u>Student Visitors</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. All requirements for visitors apply to student visitors with additional considerations to be applied at the discretion of the building principal. Under most circumstances, student visitors are discouraged and, in any event, students must be age appropriate for the building they wish to visit.</li><li>2. Student visitors from other school districts must have written permission of both their own parent/guardian and the parent/guardian of any Ephrata student they wish to accompany into a school. Under no circumstances shall such student over the age of 18 be permitted to visit.</li><li>3. No student who is under suspension, expulsion, or other form of discipline from this or any other school district shall be permitted to visit an Ephrata school. Such students must have obtained expressed prior approval of the principal before entering and are restricted to the school office for the duration of their presence in the building.</li></ol> <p><u>Military Personnel</u></p> <p>Members of the active and retired Armed Forces, including the National Guard and Reserves, shall be permitted to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Visit and meet with district employees and students when such visit is in compliance with Board policy and district procedures.</li><li>2. Wear official military uniforms while on district property.</li></ol> <p><u>Discussions of Students</u></p> <p>No visitor may confer with a student in school without the approval of the principal. Should an emergency require that a student be called to the school office to meet a visitor, the principal or designee shall be present during the meeting.</p> <p>Teachers should not discuss individual students or the performance of those students with any non-school persons except that student's parent/guardian or surrogate parent without the written permission of each parent/guardian or surrogate parent. Exceptions to this policy may apply in connection with cooperation with law enforcement officials.</p> |
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Special Situations

1. Subject to the provisions of this policy, both custodial and non-custodial parents of an Ephrata student may visit the child's school unless a court order exists restricting such contact. In the event that a non-custodial parent seeks permission to visit, the school may make an effort to notify the custodial parent in advance of the visit.
2. The building principal shall have the discretion to exclude from the school premises any such person who disrupts or who appears likely to become a disruption to the education program. Any such individual shall be directed to leave the school premises immediately and law enforcement authorities shall be called if necessary.

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) hour notice of who they intend to bring. Such notice, while not required, 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 will not 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 twenty-four (24) hour 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 in the District's discretion and based on the circumstances of the case.

Audio, Video Recording, or Photographs

No visitor shall be allowed to photograph, record audio, 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, only 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.

Loud, Abrasive, and/or Profane Language or Behavior

It is the policy of the Ephrata Area School District to prevent disruptions to District operations and the instructional process. All persons, including but not limited to, students, parents/guardians, employees, 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 security or local law enforcement and be charged with trespassing for failure to promptly vacate the property upon notice or notification. In all cases, violators may be subject to appropriate laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

References:

School Code – 24 P.S. Sec. 510

State Board of Education Regulations – 22 PA Code Sec. 14.108

Military Visitors – 24 P.S. Sec. 2402

Board Policy – 000, 250

PA Chapter 14