

EARLY RELEASE PROCEDURES FOR SCHOOL DISTRICT OF PHILADELPHIA  
STUDENTS

EFFECTIVE DATE: [SEPTEMBER 9, 2013](#)

REVISED DATE: [OCTOBER 13, 2017](#)

I. Protocols

A. Only the principal or the principal's designee may grant the early release of students during the school day. The principal and designee must be fully informed regarding procedure and process.

B. All of the following procedures apply to all of the students in the building, including pre-kindergarten students.

C. Under no circumstance may a pre-kindergarten through 12th grade pupil be released to an adult who is not properly identified. In addition to obtaining valid identification from the individual who is picking up the student, school-based staff must also check the student's pocket/record to determine if the child's parent or legal guardian has approved or denied the individual's access to the student. Please enter all court orders into the SIS. Please also check the SIS to see if there are any current legal alerts. If there are any Judicial orders in the student's record/pocket and there are any concerns about those orders please call the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities at 215-400-4830.

D. Valid identification must include the photograph and signature of the individual picking up the student. A government issued ID is preferred.

E. The release must take place in the school office and not in any other location in the school. Students may not be released from the nurse's office. Under no circumstance are non-school staff to be wandering unaccompanied in the school building.

F. Visitation by parents/guardians that do not have an educational purpose will not be permitted.

G. If there is not an emergency situation, those individuals listed on the emergency pickup card cannot remove the child from school without the parent/guardian's approval.

H. When a written request is received by the parent/guardian to release any student to someone other than the guardian, the authenticity of the request must be established. Telephone requests must be carefully screened. Parents/guardians should be advised that approval of release of their child to another adult, based on written or telephone requests, may be refused.

For all students released early, the following information must be recorded in the school office:

1. Date
2. Pupil's name
3. Room Number

4. Time of dismissal
5. Adult's name (printed and signed)
6. Relationship to student
7. Type of identification used
8. Staff initials
9. If age-appropriate, student initials

Please See the attached Early Dismissal Log to be initiated daily

- I. All of the above procedures must also be followed when the school day has officially ended and there are remaining students who are being picked up late.
  - J. When confirming an identification, all adults who are picking up students must remove their headwear, including but not limited to burqa, chadar, boshiya, niqab, or hats. All staff should be culturally sensitive in asking adults to remove these items and this activity should take place if at all possible in a private area and by the same gender.
  - K. All students, including pre-kindergarten and kindergarten students, must enter through the main door.
  - L. During the school day, parents/guardians may not come into the schoolyard during recess without the expressed approval of the school principal. Students may not, under any circumstance, be dismissed early from the schoolyard. All early dismissals must occur in the main office.
  - M. All schools must establish and communicate a protocol whereby visitors are permitted into the building, (by Aiphone or another method). All visitors must be carefully monitored when entering a school building to ensure each travels directly from the entrance to the school's main office.
  - N. All staff must wear their School District of Philadelphia identification badges, at all times, in part to distinguish staff from visitors.
  - O. Emancipated minors with a court order may be released without an accompanying adult.
  - P. Students 18 years of age or older, who live independently without a guardian, may be released without an accompanying adult.
  - Q. All emergency contact information must be entered into the SIS. Please contact the SDP help desk for assistance.
- II. Circumstances That Warrant an Early Release of a Pupil to be Granted

A. Medical and Dental Appointments

1. Dismissal of students for medical or dental appointments may be permitted only for emergency purposes. A note from a physician or a dentist should certify the emergency (need not be submitted in advance).
2. The School Handbook distributed to parents at the beginning of the school year must inform parents that medical and dental appointments should be scheduled during non-school hours. This policy should be reiterated during the school year, as needed.
3. If a student is released for emergency medical or dental treatment, the date, time of the release and time of return must be on file in the school office

B. Illness or Injury

1. A parent or other responsible adult must be contacted to come to the school when a student's illness or injury requires immediate notification.
2. The parent, guardian, or other designated adult representative of the family who comes to school must report to the office and provide valid identification, checked against school records, before the student is released.

C. Suspensions

1. Students are to remain in the building until the close of the school day unless released to the parent, guardian or other responsible adult. The identification of the adult must be verified in accordance with this procedure.

D. Hearings

1. When a student or parent presents a summons from Juvenile Court, the principal must dismiss the student in accordance with this procedure.

Note:

- It is the responsibility of the principal to inform and review with all school staff the Early Release Procedure, as well as post this procedure prominently throughout the school and on the website in multiple languages. This procedure should also be distributed throughout the year, at multiple occasions.
- Schools should forward reminders to parents, at every opportunity, to update: (1) parental contact information, (2) list of approved individuals who may pick up their child (once identification is confirmed), and, (3) court orders or special instructions regarding their child.
- All school staff must sign the accompanying form demonstrating receipt of this procedure and their acknowledgement of their understanding of the procedure. The signed, and dated form is to be maintained in the employee's folder.