

THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF PHILADELPHIA

SECTION: COMMUNITY

TITLE: School Visitors

ADOPTED: April 27, 1981

REVISED: July 14, 1984

907 SCHOOL VISITORS

Purpose

The School District welcomes and encourages visits by parents and others who desire to become informed regarding schools and educational programs.

Acceptable reasons for such visits include observation of significant programs, participation in special events, and conferring with staff. The visit should have legitimate purpose and not interfere with the continuity of instruction.

Classroom observation is encouraged to assist the visitor in developing understanding of the school program; observation of a staff member to determine his/her competency is reserved for the administrator.

Authority

The Administrator has the right to refuse admission to the school for any excessive number of visitors or to any who disregard the following:

1. Those wishing to visit a school shall make arrangements in advance with the school office by stating reason, date, and time of the proposed visit. In all cases where permission is not obtained in advance it must be obtained promptly upon entering the school. No visitor may remain at a school without the permission of the Administrator, but may appeal to the district superintendent for reconsideration of the decision.
2. Prior to approval of the request, the administrator shall discuss the request with the staff member involved. Should there be disagreement, the administrator's decision shall prevail but the basis for that decision shall be first discussed with the staff member.
3. Upon arrival at the school, the visitor must sign the Visitor's Register in the school office where the visitor will be given instructions as well as a Visitor's Pass or Identification Badge and, if necessary, provided with an escort.

4. The staff member being visited shall require that the visitor present the Visitor's Pass or Identification Badge.
5. Upon completion of the visit, the visitor shall return to the office to return materials and enter departure time in the Visitor's Register.
6. Administrators shall have the right to adapt or set aside the above procedures in event of special activities such as assembly programs, athletic events, or musical performances.

Guidelines

No visitor shall be permitted to interrupt a staff member in the performance of duties whether that interruption be for conversation or observation.

To minimize interruption to the instructional program and to ensure safety, no visitor may confer with a teacher or student without the approval of the Administrator.

No visitor shall go directly to a classroom to deliver or "pick-up" students or speak to teachers unless such visits have been approved previously by the principal. Approval for taking a student from school shall be granted only to a parent or guardian having custody unless that parent or guardian gives explicit permission in writing to release the student to a designated family member or adult.

Should an emergency require that a student be called to a school office to meet a visitor, the Administrator shall be present throughout the meeting.

Appropriate portions of this policy statement shall be placed by the Administrator in the School Handbook sent to parents.

Maintenance of Safety

The Administrator has the authority to exclude any visitor who is considered to be disruptive or will cause disruption to the educational program, disturbing to students or staff, or intent on committing an illegal act. Wherever possible, the Administrator shall specifically indicate the circumstances under which a parent may return.

There shall be posted at all entrances to schools, and at other appropriate places, a copy of the City of Philadelphia Anti-Trespass Ordinance and a copy of the School District Visitation Regulations.

All School District personnel, other than those assigned to the school, must wear identification badges on outer clothing at all times during the visit.

School staff who observe visitors without proper identification are to report that information immediately to the school office.

Photography, Filming, or Videotaping in School District Buildings

The photographic reproduction of school programs, students or physical plants by non-School District personnel is generally prohibited. Exceptions may be made for:

1. the news media with approval of the Office of Communications, and in accordance with School Operations Policy and Procedures 108.0 and 108.1.
2. educational purposes with the approval of the Offices for Curriculum and Instruction where the program is of continuous duration, or School Operations where the program is of limited duration.
3. commercial purposes only with the approval of the parents of any students to be involved, School Operations and the Law Department.
4. other purposes not listed above only with the approval of School Operations and the Law Department.

All approvals are to be directly verified by the facility's Administrator.

Enforcement

1. City of Philadelphia Ordinance "Unauthorized Entry on School Premises", 1971 and 19 P.S. Section 3503 Defiant Trespass.