**P1250(a)**

**Community Relations**

**Visits to the Schools**

The Board of Education and staff of the school district welcome and strongly encourage members of the community and other interested persons to visit the schools. Such visits shall be regarded as expressions of interest in school affairs and/or efforts to become informed about school programs and activities.

The Superintendent shall establish regulations which:

1. Encourage school visitations.

2. Provide for appropriate hospitality for visitors.

3. Ensure that public visits will not hinder the educational program.

4. Ensure student safety.

5. To preserve the security of the schools, all visitors must check in at the security kiosk where they shall be given whatever information or assistance is required. All visitors are required to follow current district security protocol.

Visits to individual classrooms during instructional time shall be permitted only with the Principal’s and teacher’s prior (no drop-ins) approval. Such visits shall not be permitted if their duration or frequency interferes with the delivery of instruction or disrupts the normal school environment. When a visit involves a conference with a teacher or the Principal, an appointment should be scheduled during non-instructional time.

Since continuity in classrooms is often difficult to achieve and maintain, while visiting in a classroom, a visitor must not interrupt the class in any way, nor speak to (unless invited to do so) or disturb the students or teacher.

Although Board of Education members are encouraged to visit schools independently, they have authority only in regularly called meetings of the Board of Education, or when delegated specific tasks by specific Board of Education action.

The Superintendent, working with building administrators, shall develop and implement procedures regarding campus visitors who are identified as sex offenders. These procedures shall address (1) parental rights; (2) escort by District personnel; (3) access to common areas of the campus; (4) access to classrooms; (5) drop off and release of students; (6) eligibility to serve as volunteers; and (7) any other relevant issues.

The Principal or his/her designee shall have complete authority to exclude from the school premises any persons whom he/she has reason to believe are disrupting the educational programs in the classroom or in the school, are disturbing the teachers or students on the premises, or whom the Principal believes are on the premises for the purposes of committing an illegal act. Such instances shall be reported to the Superintendent.

**P1250(b)**

**Community Relations**

**Visits to the Schools** (continued)

**Classroom Observations:**

When determining whether to approve a request to visit and/or observe student programs the Principal or his/her designee shall consider such factors as (1) the frequency of visits; (2) the duration of the visit; (3) the number of visitors involved; (4) the effect of the visit on a particular class or activity; (5) the age of the students; (6) the nature of the class or programs; (7) the potential for disclosure of confidential personally identifiable student information; (8) whether the visitor has a legitimate educational interest in visiting the school; and (9) any safety risk to students and school staff. The following guidelines shall be followed:

1. If the visitor wishes to observe a classroom, the time will be arranged in advance after the Principal has conferred with the teacher. The Principal has the discretion to limit, or refuse, requests for visits and/or observations of student programs in light of the above criteria.
2. If the purpose of the classroom visitation is to observe learning and teaching activities, the visitor may be asked to confer with the teacher before and after the observation to enhance understanding of the activities.
3. The Principal may withhold approval if particular events such as testing would be adversely affected by a visit. Similarly, if a visitor’s presence becomes disruptive, the Principal may withdraw approval, In either case, the Principal will give reasons for the action; and
4. If a dispute arises regarding limitations upon or withholding of approval for visits:
   1. The visitor will first discuss the matter with the Principal;
   2. If it is not satisfactorily resolved, the visitor may request a meeting with the Superintendent or designee.
   3. The Superintendent or designee will promptly meet with the visitor, investigate the dispute and render a written decision. The written decision will indicate that the visitor may appeal to the Board of Education to review the limitations imposed.

For purposes of this policy, the term “observer” means either a parent or guardian, or a third party, such as an evaluator, who has been asked to observe a specific student at a parent or guardian’s request. A parent or guardian’s right to observe extends only to his/her child.

All observations must be scheduled in advance, in order to limit disruption to the educational process. The parent shall inform the school principal who the observer will be, and the school principal or his/her designee will work with the observer to schedule a mutually convenient time for the observation. All observations shall be limited to one half hour (30 minutes). If the observer has a legitimate reason for needing additional observation time, such request shall be made in advance, and the building principal shall have the discretion to grant such request.

In order to avoid disruption of the classroom environment, the number of people observing a student at any one time shall be limited to two persons. In addition, a school staff person will

**P1250(c)**

**Community Relations**

**Visits to the Schools** (continued)

**Classroom Observations** (continued)

accompany the observer(s) at all times during the course of the observation. The observer(s) shall report to the main office and sign in upon arrival, and wait in the main office for the staff person who will accompany the observer. The observer(s) must wear a visitor’s badge at all times while inside the school building.

The Board expects that observers will be respectful of the instruction that is occurring in the classroom. Observers must turn off all cellphones, sit quietly, and not engage the students in conversation. If at any point, the observation becomes disruptive to the educational process, the school staff may end the evaluation. Once the observation has concluded, the observer(s) shall sign out in the main office and leave school grounds, unless she/he has other legitimate business at the school.

An observer should not expect to conference with teachers before, during or after the observation, as the teacher has responsibilities for a classroom full of students. Instead, the parent or guardian may make a separate appointment to meet with the teacher at another time.

Any reports generated concerning observations of children in school may not contain any personally identifiable information concerning other students present in the classroom at the time of the observation. Observation reports concerning children do not constitute teacher or staff evaluations.

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes

53a-185 Loitering in or about school grounds: Class C misdemeanor

Policy adopted: May 5, 2015 NEWTOWN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

**EFFECTIVE: July 1, 2015** Newtown, Connecticut

Policy revised: December 5, 2017

**R1250(a)**

**Community Relations**

**Visits to the Schools**

**Visitor Protocols**

**Definition**

**For the purposes of this administrative regulation a visitor shall be defined as any person entering a school facility during normal school hours other than:**

* A student who attends that facility
* A member of that school’s staff and faculty
* Central Office Employees with assigned duties at the school facility
* Multi-site Employees with assigned duties at the school facility
* Maintenance Department Employees
* Uniformed Police or Fire Department personnel in performance of their assigned duties

**All visitors shall:**

1. Arrive at the school building main entrance, press A-phone, and advise staff as to the purpose of their visit

2. Enter the building through the main entrance door after being granted access by staff

3. Immediately report to the security welcome desk

4. Present photo identification to staff, which will be scanned into the Raptor Visitor Management System

5. Be issued a printed Visitor ID Badge, which includes their photograph, date of visit, and location of visit within the school building

6. Affix the Visitor ID Badge to their outer-most garment where it shall remain visible throughout the duration of their visit

7. Report back to the security welcome desk upon the conclusion of their visit

8. Return Visitor ID Badge to staff, who will remove their name from the Raptor Visitor Management System

9. Promptly exit the school building through the main egress doors

The Principal or designee may refuse to register an outsider if he/she reasonably concludes that the individual’s presence or acts would disrupt the school, students or employees; would result in damage to property; or would result in the distribution of a controlled substance. The Principal or designee or school security officer may revoke any outsider’s registration if he/she has a reasonable basis for concluding that the individual’s presence on school grounds would interfere or is interfering with the peaceful conduct of school activities or would disrupt or is disrupting the school, students, or staff.

**R1250(b)**

**Community Relations**

**Visits to the Schools**

**Visitor Protocols** (continued)

**Visitors entering the building at locations other than the designated visitors’ entrance shall be:**

1. Stopped by staff, who will immediately summon security personnel

2. Delay at the area of contact until arrival of security personnel

3. Escorted by the security personnel to the welcome desk, or outside the building if warranted

4. Requested to provide photo identification and reason for visit

5. Processed as a visitor according to number 4 through 9 above

**Visitors who refuse to identify themselves shall be considered trespassers. Staff shall:**

1. Immediately summon a school administrator (or designee) and the SRO or SRO (if applicable)

2. The administrator (or designee) upon evaluation of the situation may:

a. Contact the Police Department

b. Direct the individual(s) to leave the building immediately with an escort from security personnel or staff

c. Consider implementing District emergency response procedures as necessary

**Special Exceptions to the above:**

**Special Events (Plays, Concerts, Award Ceremonies, etc.)**

When a special event is planned which will attract large numbers of visitors so as to make the sign-in procedures impractical, the school administration shall designate and mark the appropriate path to the event location (auditorium, APR, gym, media center etc.). Appropriate staff shall be assigned to direct visitor(s) to the event location.

**Deliveries**

School staff that is expecting the delivery of a package(s) should notify the Main Office. Packages are not to be delivered directly to the staff. All packages shall be delivered to a location as determined by the school administration.

A sign-in log shall be maintained for deliveries required for building operations (such as food, fuel, etc.) to locations other than the Main Office.

Students are not expected to receive mail and/or packages at school. Mail and/or packages for students are to be refused unless prior arrangements have been approved by the school principal.

**R1250(c)**

**Community Relations**

**Visits to the Schools**

**Visitor Protocols** (continued)

**Operations**

Maintenance Department Employees shall notify the school administration of their presence within the school facility.

**Other Board of Education employees without assigned duties at the school facility shall:**

1. Enter building at a location identified and approved by the school administration

2. Ensure the district-issued photo ID badge is clearly displayed on their person

3. Report to the security welcome desk located in the building main lobby

4. Provide their district-issued photo ID badge and name to security personnel or staff

5. Check out of the building at the security welcome desk at the conclusion of their visit

**Special Exceptions to the above:**

**Board of Education members shall:**

1. Enter building at location designated by the school administration

2. Go to the Main Office

3. Sign in the Visitor’s Log Book (Visitor Name, Purpose of Visit, Person Visiting)

4. Sign out at the end of their visit

Regulation approved: May 5, 2015, Effective: July 1, 2015 NEWTOWN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Regulation revised: July 21, 2016, December 5, 2017 Newtown, Connecticut