

LACKAWANNA TRAIL SCHOOL DISTRICT

SECTION: COMMUNITY

TITLE: SCHOOL VISITORS

ADOPTED: April 20, 2009

REVISED: March, 2009

907. SCHOOL VISITORS	
<p>1. Purpose SC 510</p>	<p>The Board welcomes and encourages visits to schools by parents/guardians, community members or interested educators.</p> <p>The Board recognizes that some school visits are planned and scheduled, while some are informal. Examples of informal visitations may include, but not be limited to: delivery of school materials or other items to students, visiting with the school nurse, meeting students for early release, or dropping off students for late arrival. Scheduled school visits may include, but not be limited to: teacher conferences, discipline meetings, IEP team meetings, or class observations.</p> <p>The Board also recognizes that there will be visits to the school during special times such as American Education Week or other specifically designated programs.</p> <p>To assure that the greatest benefit can be derived from such visits and to ensure safe order in the schools and the protection of the rights of students and staff, the following guidelines shall govern all school visitations.</p>
<p>2. Delegation of Responsibility</p>	<p>The School Code provides that the sole responsibility to make regular visits to the various schools of the district and to report to the Board concerning such visits is vested in the district Superintendent. Therefore, the district Superintendent has the authority and responsibility to implement these guidelines.</p>
<p>3. Guidelines</p>	<p>The Superintendent or building principal shall have the authority to permit or deny entry of any person to a school building of this district when the following procedures have been complied with:</p> <p>1. <u>Reporting To The Office</u></p> <p>All visitors must report to the building's main office or to the designated school greeter to register before proceeding to their destination in the building regardless of whether prior approval for the visit has been given. All visitors will be escorted to their destination by a school employee.</p>

2. Scheduling Visitations

While all visitors must have a scheduled appointment, less formal visits as identified above will not need an appointment. Parent-Teacher Organization meetings and building programs where parents/guardians receive written invitations from the building administration are considered scheduled appointments. Exceptions may be made in the case of emergencies at the discretion of a building principal or designee in matters that affect the safety of the students and staff.

3. Interruptions

Visitors may not interrupt any staff member carrying out his/her professional duties. Visitors are not to interrupt a teacher during preparation times or other related instructional duties unless an appointment has been made or other advance notice given according to the guidelines provided herein.

4. Conferences With Teachers

Conferences with teachers are encouraged. Such conferences may be requested by either the parent/guardian or the teacher and should be scheduled during the teacher's preparation time or before or after school. Unscheduled conferences will be at the discretion of the principal and teacher. Conferences shall only be granted to parents and/or legal guardians. During conferences, teachers should not discuss information about a student or his/her progress with visitors other than a parent or legal guardian unless the parent or legal guardian is present, and has given his/her consent.

5. Classroom Observations

Classroom observations by parents/guardians, community members or interested educators can be valuable, even though they may disrupt the class. It is believed that parents/guardians, other community members, and educators can gain a better sense of the instructional process by observing teaching and learning activities.

Observations will be considered when the parent or legal guardian submits a request, verbally, or in writing to the principal one (1) week prior to the visit and receives approval from the principal either verbally or in writing.

The principal will consult with the teacher and subsequently notify the parent or legal guardian by phone to discuss the scope of the visit.

The principal will consider the following factors in the approval process:

<p>Pol. 225</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The purpose of the observation.b. The duration of the observation. c. The classroom activities planned during the observation.d. The number of previous observations of that particular class.e. The needs of the children in that class. <p>There may be circumstances when an administrator will observe the class with the parent/guardian, if permission to visit is granted.</p> <p>Principals are encouraged to schedule parent/guardian classroom visits during American Education Week and other specially designated times.</p> <p>6. <u>Discussions Of Students</u></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 such parent/guardian, or surrogate parent. Exceptions to this policy may apply in connection with cooperation with law enforcement officials.</p> <p>7. <u>Non-Parent Attendance At Conferences</u></p> <p>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) hours 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, and has given his/her consent.</p> <p>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) hours 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.</p>
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<p>4. Classroom Visitation by Parents</p>	<p>8. <u>Audio, Video Recording Or Photographs</u></p> <p>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.</p> <p>9. <u>Loud, Abrasive And/Or Profane Language Or Behavior</u></p> <p>It is the policy of the Lackawanna Trail 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.</p> <p>Consequences of such actions will result in offenders being formally banned from the building, and charges of Disorderly Conduct may be filed.</p> <p>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, may 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.</p> <p>In order to maintain effective educational programs for all students in the Lackawanna Trail School District, it is essential to eliminate as many distractions from instruction as possible.</p> <p>Parents may visit their child in the classroom at times outlined in this policy after they have identified themselves to the building principal and the classroom teacher unless there are legal visitation restrictions. A parent is defined as the person or agency that has the right to act as the legal guardian of the child.</p> <p>If the visit is for an inquiry about the child's educational program, parents shall make an appointment with the building principal or Special Education Director prior to the visit.</p> <p>If the purpose of the visit is to observe the child, the parents shall contact the building principal or Special Education Director to schedule the observation with a minimum of twenty-four (24) hours notice. The observation shall be limited to only the parent's child to protect confidentiality of other children in the classroom.</p>
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Classroom visitations by parents shall be limited to one (1) class period unless the building principal or Special Education Director approves an arrangement for extended time.

Visits shall be limited to no more than one (1) visit per semester unless the parents, teacher(s) and building principal or Special Education Director agrees upon additional visits.

The classroom teacher shall have the right to terminate any classroom visitation if the visitation is substantially affecting normal classroom procedures or is disruptive to the instruction of the children.

If the visitation is terminated by the classroom teacher and parents are asked to leave, the teacher shall immediately notify the building principal.

If applicable, the classroom teacher shall also inform the Special Education Director, explaining the reason for the termination.

Parents of children not currently enrolled in a class may request a visitation of the class if the intent is to consider the program as a placement option for the child. All arrangements for the visitation shall be made by the Special Education Director with the parent in order to minimize any interference with the classroom instructional schedule.

Parents of children currently or potentially assigned to a classroom who arrange for a classroom visitation shall be given the following instructions in written form or, if the parents are visually impaired, the instructions will be presented verbally. The parent shall be required to sign and date a statement that the "Parent Classroom Visitation Instructions" have been received and understood. If a parent refuses to sign the statement, the staff will be provided with appropriate guidelines for documenting that the parent received the visitation instructions.

References:

School Code — 24 P.S. Sec. 510

Board Policy — 225