

FILE: KI (replaces KK)

VISITORS TO THE SCHOOLS

The MSAD #56 School Board, hereinafter referred to as the “Board,” believes that visits to the schools by parent(s)/legal guardian(s), members of the community and public, and individual Board members can provide a positive experience. However, in order to avoid interruption of ongoing educational activities and in an effort to promote student and employee safety, the Principal of each school shall institute procedures relating to visitors to the school that are intended to maintain order and protect the safety of students. It is understood that such procedures may vary from school to school due to the nature of the building, the location of the school, the age of the students and other considerations.

I. PARENTAL NOTIFICATION

If there exists a court order containing restrictions on access to a child by a parent, and a parent or legal guardian wishes the school to act in a manner consistent with that order, it is the responsibility of the custodial parent or legal guardian to provide a certified copy of such order to the school.

II. SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS

Individual Board members have no governance authority except while sitting as members in a meeting of the Board or one of its committees or when authority has been expressly delegated by the Board. Therefore, individual Board members should follow the same procedures applicable to parents and members of the public. Individual Board members should refrain from appearing to direct or evaluate personnel and not become involved with the operating procedures of the school building.

III. UNAUTHORIZED VISITORS AND TRESPASSERS

Persons entering the school building without prior authorization from school officials and persons who fail to report to the main office upon entering the building are considered “unauthorized persons.” All unauthorized persons shall be immediately reported to the designated building administrator(s). The unauthorized person(s) shall then be directed to leave the premises should they lack a legitimate school-related purpose.

Those persons having no school-related purpose who remain on school premises or at school-sponsored events after being directed to leave, shall be considered “trespassers.” This shall also apply to all students under suspension or expulsion, unless otherwise authorized by the school administration. Such persons shall be immediately directed to leave the school premises.

Law enforcement shall be contacted as necessary when dealing with such persons.

IV. VISITS BY LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES AND DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES OFFICIALS

- A. Agents of law enforcement agencies or the Department of Human Services shall provide school officials with written consent from a student's parent(s)/legal guardian(s) prior to interviewing or questioning a student on school grounds during regular school hours except as provided below.

School personnel should take reasonable measures to verify the identity of unknown DHS or law enforcement personnel.

- B. Department of Human Services employees may interview a student on school grounds during regular school hours without prior notification of the parent(s)/legal guardian(s) by school officials, *only when the Department or its employee(s) states in writing that:*
1. The Department has reasonable grounds to believe that prior notice to the parent(s)/legal guardian(s) would increase the threat of serious harm to the child or another person, or
 2. The child, or a person providing services to the child, has contacted the Department and the Department is seeking an initial interview with the child; and
 3. The interview is necessary to carry out Department of Human Service's duties under 22 MRSA Ch. 1071.
- C. Law enforcement personnel may interview a student on school grounds during regular school hours without prior notification of the parent(s)/legal guardian(s) by school officials only when the law enforcement agent:
1. *States in writing* that he/she has reasonable grounds to believe there is a health or safety emergency that requires the interview without prior parental notice and consent; and
 2. *States in writing* that a reasonable effort has been made to contact the student's parent(s)/legal guardian(s) without success, and that law enforcement personnel seek to question the student about continuing or imminent criminal activity.
- D. Prior to removing a child from school without express permission of the parent(s)/legal guardian(s), DHS or law enforcement authorities shall adequately demonstrate their legal authority to take custody of the child (e.g., court order, warrant or other legal authority). Parent(s)/legal guardian(s) should be notified of the removal as soon as practicable.

V. RELEASE OF STUDENT TO PERSONS OTHER THAN PARENT(S)/LEGAL GUARDIAN(S) AND AUTHORIZED CARE PROVIDERS

A student will be released only to parents, legal guardians or persons authorized in writing by parent(s)/legal guardian(s) to pick up the student. Where school personnel have reason to question the authenticity of written authorization, they should make appropriate efforts to telephone the student's parent(s)/legal guardian(s) to confirm the authority of the person seeking to pick up the child. Principals may institute other appropriate procedures regarding release of students to parents, guardians and authorized persons.

NOTE: The school reserves the right to question the authenticity of any written or verbal communication and to deny the release of students to unauthorized or unknown persons.

Legal Reference: 15 MRSA §§3203-A (arrests of juveniles), 3501 (interim care of juveniles)

20-A MRSA §§ 6001, 6804

20 U.S.C. § 1232g (FERPA)

22 MRSA Ch. 1071 (DHS interviews)

ADOPTED: April 8, 1986

REVISED: November 10, 1998