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School or Program Visitations Policy #51

Henry-Stark Counties Special Education District encourages visits by Board members, parent(s)/guardian(s), citizens, and taxpayers to all Henry-Stark Counties Special Education District programs and buildings. All visitors shall report to the Building Principal's office. Access will be limited as needed so as not to be disruptive to the educational climate.

An appointment must be made if a parent wishes to confer with a teacher. Conferences will be held outside school hours or during the teacher's preparation period.

In specific instances, visitors may be permitted to observe in classrooms. Visitors shall include other educational personnel, parents/guardian or students, professionals from outside agencies, independent educational evaluators, or qualified professionals retained by or on behalf of the parent or child. Qualified professionals must be individuals with demonstrated professional qualifications to evaluate the students in the area for which an evaluation is sought or an intern working under the direct supervision of such a qualified professional. Parents, Independent Evaluators, and other qualified professionals observing on behalf of the parents must be given "reasonable access of sufficient duration and scope" to educational facilities, personnel, classrooms, and buildings. Access must be provided to any public school facility, building, or program and to any facility, building, or program supported by public funds. Access to off-site work programs not supported by public funds shall be determined by the parent, the participating business, the home school, and the Henry-Stark Counties Special Education District on a case-by-case basis. Because of the likelihood of disruption to the educational process caused by multiple adults in the class, no more than one visitor at a time shall be scheduled. All visitors shall have a particular relevant purpose for the observation and must have prior administrative approval for their presence in the classroom.

Before the visit, the school district or Henry-Stark Counties Special Education District may require the parent, independent educational evaluator, or qualified individual to inform the building principal or supervisor in writing about the specified purpose of the proposed visit, the date, and the approximate duration of the visit. The visit will be scheduled by agreement between the visitor and the administration regarding the visit's

date, time, duration, and permitted purpose. The visitor will not be permitted to bring equipment or devices to the visit without prior notice other than notepads and writing instruments. No dangerous instrumentalities or materials of any kind will be permitted in school or at school activities.

Because of privacy concerns, the visitor will not be permitted to film, record, photograph, or otherwise invade the privacy and disrupt the educational environment of children not his own or whom he has not been engaged to evaluate. Visits permitted under this policy are for purposes defined by this policy only. No commercial, political, or proselytizing activities are permitted in classrooms or during learning periods and activities.

The visitor will not disrupt the educational process. If the visitor does disrupt the educational process, his or her visit and his or her rights to visitation may be curtailed, consistent with law and policy.

The evaluator or qualified professional must be afforded reasonable access to allow him/her to evaluate the child, the child's performance, and the educational program, placement, services, or environment proposed for the child.

This access includes interviews with personnel, child observations, assessments and tests of the child, or assessments of the child's educational programs, services, or placement. Any interviews cannot interfere with the employee's duties, and the school district can limit the personnel interviewed to personnel having information relevant to the child's educational program. Interviews must be scheduled for a time and place mutually agreeable to both the cooperative and independent evaluator.

The visits should occur at a mutually agreeable time to both the district and the parent.

In that such visits may be disruptive to the educational climate, media members will not be allowed in school facilities without the approval of the Director or District Superintendent.

Any staff member may request identification from any person on school grounds or in any school building; refusal to provide such information is a criminal act. The Director or designee shall seek the immediate removal of any person who: 1) refuses to provide requested identification, 2) interferes with, disrupts, or threatens to disrupt any school activity or the learning environment. Remaining on school premises after being notified that a visitor must be considered trespassing.

LEGAL REF: 105 ILCS 5/14-8.02 AND 14-8.02 (a)

Adopted: 03/18/2010

Updated: 09/03/2019

Updated: 11/29/2022