

## SCHOOL VISITORS

Portsmouth Public Schools uses a visitor management system that enables each school building to screen all visitors against a national sexual offender database. It also establishes a consistent sign-in process across the division. All visitors, including parents, will be asked to report to the main office or security station upon their arrival at the school. Security or office staff will request that each visitor provide their government issued ID. The visitor's name, address, date of birth, and photo will be checked for a match to a national sexual offender database and other public records regarding people who cannot access school property. Visitors will receive a badge to be worn at all times while on the school grounds. Additional procedures include:

- A. Persons wishing to visit one or more schools are to make arrangement in advance through the school office of each school to be visited.
- B. Any person who does not register with the school office is on school property without authorization and should be asked to identify himself/herself properly and obtain permission or to leave the school grounds. If the visitor refuses to leave the school grounds or creates any disturbance, the building principal should request aid from the Portsmouth Police Department.
- C. No visitor may see a student in school unless it is with the specific approval of the principal. If an emergency situation requires that a student be called to the office to meet with a visitor, a member of the administrative staff must be present during the conference. A student is never to be permitted to leave the school with anyone who is not clearly identified as his/her parent or an appropriately authorized person.
- D. Students may not bring guests to school unless permission to do so has been granted by the principal.
- E. Parents, other than those who have been asked by a teacher to be in the classroom, who wish to observe learning activities taking place in their child's classroom are to confer, in advance, with the principal and the teacher and state the purpose of the visitation.

It is important that each parent understands that because classroom visitations can be distracting to the students, the following regulations have been established:

1. Visitations will not be allowed during examinations and independent study periods.
2. A visitation should be no longer than sixty (60) minutes or one (1) class period.
3. The number of visitors at any one (1) time shall not exceed the parents of one (1) student.
4. The frequency of visits for any student's parents should be no more than one (1) unit every two (2) weeks. The principal, under unusual circumstances, may permit additional visits.
5. Parents are to be silent observers and are not to create any type of disturbance or disruption to the learning process.
6. Copies of instructional materials being used by the students or teacher may not always be immediately available during the visitation.
7. Any comments made by individual students are to be maintained in confidence by the visitor to the activity.
8. Use of audio or visual equipment to record classroom activities must be approved by the principal. No visitor shall be allowed to videotape students in the classroom, without the prior consent of the principal, as it may violate the privacy rights of students unrelated to the visitor. Recording of other school activities to which the public is invited will be in accordance with Regulation 9160 – Attendance at Public Events.
9. If the nature and instructional purpose of any activity calls for students to be segregated by gender for purposes of privacy, only visitors of the same gender may observe those groups in the privacy areas.
10. Any comments or concerns are to be discussed with the teacher before or after the school day when students are not present.

11. If a parent or other visitor wishes to tape record a conversation with a teacher or the principal, s/he should request permission from the principal. If the teacher or principal wishes to record a conversation with a parent or other visitor, s/he is to inform that person that the conversation is being recorded before the conversation begins.

A copy of these regulations (9150 F1) is to be given to and signed by each non-staff visitor to a classroom as an indication that s/he understands the regulations.

Visitors are to be encouraged to meet with the principal and teacher during the non-instructional hours to discuss the observation and to obtain answers to their questions. If a parent has a concern about what may be transpiring in his/her child's classroom, s/he should follow the Board's policy 9130 which states that the parent is to address the matter first with the teacher and, if not rectified, to then meet with the principal.

- F. No staff member is to transact business with a visitor who does not have visitor's pass and/or has not duly registered at the school office and received authorization to be present for the purpose of conducting business.

If a disabled person should visit a school and request accommodation and s/he has not submitted the Request for Accommodation Form (9160A F1), in advance, the principal should ask the person to allow the school adequate time to arrange for the accommodation, providing such accommodation is reasonable (see Regulation 9160A).

Each principal shall post in a conspicuous place at each entrance, the regulations and procedures to be followed by visitors.

Adopted: September 15, 2005

Revised: October 2018

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