

**DISTRICT CODE: 903
VISITORS TO SCHOOL DISTRICT BUILDINGS
AND COMMUNITY RELATIONS**

Policy reflects Minnesota statute and aligns with other District 270 policies.

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to inform the school community and the general public of the position of the School Board on visitors to school buildings and sites.

II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

The School Board encourages interest on the part of parents and community members in school programs and student activities. The Board welcomes visits to school buildings and school property by parents and community members provided the visits are consistent with the education, health and safety of students and employees and are conducted within the procedures and requirements established by the School District.

The School Board believes in maintaining a school environment that is safe for students and employees and free of activity that may be disruptive to the learning process or employee working environment.

III. RESPONSIBILITY

The School District administration shall present recommended visitor procedures and requirements to the School Board for review and approval. The procedures should reflect input from employees, students and advisory groups, and shall be communicated to the school community and general public. Upon approval by the School Board, such procedures and requirements shall be an addendum, formally noted under Regulations section. The superintendent or designee will coordinate the process needed to provide for periodic School Board policy review and approval.

IV. VISITOR LIMITATIONS

- A. An individual or group may be denied permission or such permission may be revoked to visit a school or school property if the visitor(s) does not comply with the School District procedures and regulations or if the visit is not in the best interest of students, employees or the School District.

HOPKINS PUBLIC SCHOOLS POLICIES

- B. An individual or group who enters school property without complying with the procedures and requirements may be guilty of criminal trespass and thus subject to criminal penalty. Such persons may be detained by the school principal or a person designated by the school principal in a reasonable manner for a reasonable period of time pending the arrival of a police officer.

Legal References:

Minn. Stat. 123B.02 - General Powers of Independent School Districts

Minn. Stat. 128C.08 - Assaulting a Sports Official Prohibited

Minn. Stat. 609.605. Subd. 4 - Trespass on School Property

903-R - Regulations pursuant to this policy

Adopted: May 8, 2003

Revised: March 6, 2014

Reviewed: April 18, 2017

DISTRICT CODE: 903-REGULATIONS

**VISITORS TO SCHOOL DISTRICT BUILDINGS
AND COMMUNITY RELATIONS**

I. VISITS TO THE SCHOOL

The Board of Education and staff of the School District welcome members of the community and other interested persons to periodically, and subject to the considerations set out below, visit the schools of the District. School improvements often come from suggestions originating in such visits.

The superintendent is authorized to establish such regulations as will:

- A. Encourage visitors to observe the schools.
- B. Provide the appropriate hospitality for visitors.
- C. Channel expressions of approval as well as constructive criticism to the Board.
- D. Ensure that such visits will enhance the effect of the educational program rather than hinder it.

Board of Education members who visit schools of their own volition have no more authority than any other citizen.

II. INTERACTION BETWEEN SCHOOL STAFF AND THE PUBLIC

The District is in the business of providing services to its students, their parents, and other citizens. A reasonable and expected part of that service is responding to requests for information within the access and time constraints imposed by the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). School District staff are expected to respond to requests for information and assistance in a timely and professional manner.

Every employee is the school system's point of contact with the public. The Board encourages every employee to assume responsibility for the public image of the school system. Good relationships benefit the school system and ultimately each member.

HOPKINS PUBLIC SCHOOLS POLICIES

Similarly, each and every staff member should be treated with respect and dignity by parents and members of the public.

III. SCHOOL VISITOR PROCEDURES AND EXPECTATIONS

Parents, citizens, alumni, and other adult visitors are welcome and encouraged to visit our schools. The Hopkins Public Schools recognize that partnerships with the community are necessary for students to succeed in our schools, and visits are an appropriate vehicle and enhance that partnership.

However, the School Board, the superintendent and the building principals of the District reserve the right to decline to give permission for or to withdraw permission for parents, citizens, alumni, and other members of the public to visit the schools of the District if such action is deemed necessary to ensure the physical or emotional safety of the students of the District or to prevent disruption of the District's educational programs.

Visitors must comply with the building's school visitor procedure, including checking-in with the secured entrance, so they may be directed to the teacher, student, or class they wish to see.

All visitors will wear a badge or button so that students and staff will be aware that they have checked in with the office. The office will make every effort to see that classes are not interrupted while in session for the admission of guests. For the protection of everyone, teachers are asked to courteously direct all visitors who are not wearing a visitor's badge or button to the office. For the same reason, all agents, repair persons, etc., must report to the building office and receive a visitor's badge or button before approaching any person within the building.

Parents wishing a conference with a teacher should not expect to interrupt the teacher's class but should telephone the school or e-mail the teacher in advance to arrange an appointment.

In the event of an emergency that requires that parents have immediate contact with their student, parents may either call or go to the office to:

HOPKINS PUBLIC SCHOOLS POLICIES

- A. Explain the circumstances of the emergency; and
- B. Request that their student be called to the office to meet with them and/or talk to them on the telephone.

Building administrators are given the discretion, where circumstances so dictate and on a case-by-case basis, to adopt and enforce more restrictive rules to govern visits to the schools. The superintendent is to be advised of each such instance.

In the event that a staff member is confronted in a face-to-face or telephone conversation with unacceptable or disrespectful behavior, the following steps should be taken:

- A. The offending person should be informed orally and in as calm and professional a manner as the circumstances allow that their conduct is unacceptable and why this is the case. A copy of this procedure may be given, or mailed, to the person.
- B. The offending person should be told that if the behavior continues, the discussion will be terminated.
- C. The offending person should be informed that a memorandum of the incident will be prepared, provided to the staff person's supervisor, and maintained in the files of the District.
- D. If the behavior continues, the conversation should be terminated.
- E. The incident should be promptly reported to the staff persons' superior.

If the conduct occurs in the context of e-mail, facsimile transmissions, letters, notes, or other documentary forms of communication, steps A through C can be carried out by a similar form of communication or by telephone. In either case, copies of the offending communication and the staff person's response to it should be attached to the

HOPKINS PUBLIC SCHOOLS POLICIES

memorandum of the incident. The memorandum will include the name and phone number of the staff person's supervisor.

Staff members are encouraged to request the advice and assistance of the supervisor in responding to such a situation.

Unacceptable and disrespectful behaviors include, but are not limited to, the following:

Inappropriately raised voice, shouting or yelling toward a staff member;

Obscene or foul language, whether directed at the staff member or toward another person;

Insulting the staff person's intelligence, judgment, or professionalism;

Threats, the intimidation of violence or behavior which reasonably can be expected to intimidate a staff member; and

Un-permitted and unwelcome touching of any nature, regardless of the degree of force used.

In applying this Policy, staff members must always be aware that there is an important distinction between declining to be treated in an unacceptable or disrespectful manner and, on the other hand, refusing to carry out a legitimate request for information or assistance. The former is not a reason for the latter. Timelines created by a statute or a district policy for making a response to an otherwise legitimate request must be observed even while the issue of unacceptable or disrespectful conduct is being addressed.

HOPKINS PUBLIC SCHOOLS POLICIES

Legal References:

Minn. Stat. 123B.02 General Powers of Independent School Districts

Minn. Stat. 128C.08 Assaulting a Sports Official Prohibited

Minn. Stat. 609.605. Subd. 4 Trespass on School Property

KK-R Regulations pursuant to this policy