

COMMUNITY RELATIONS

Visits to the Schools

The Okemos public school district strives to provide safe schools. Visitors shall not interfere with the educational programs or secure learning environment for students and staff. The building principal or facility administrator is responsible for all visitor approval. Therefore, to ensure the safety of students, staff and the continuity of programs, all visitors must report to the main office of the school or facility for identification.

The board and staff of the school district welcome and encourage parents, members of the community, and other interested persons to visit their schools as long as the visitations do not interfere with the regular school activities. The board also recognizes the value of and encourages comments and suggestions from visitors toward improving the schools.

The superintendent is authorized to establish regulations that ensure visits will not interfere with the educational programs and that a safe and secure learning environment is maintained for students and staff during visits to the schools.

See Also:

Board Policy 1251: Disorderly Conduct

Board Policy 6162.6: Research in the Schools

Board Regulation R6141.11: Classroom Observation Guidelines -
HIV/AIDS or Sex Education

Elementary & Secondary Student-Parent Handbooks

Policy

Adopted: 12-19-57

Amended: 07-24-06

Reviewed:

The board and staff of the Okemos school district welcome and encourage parents, community members and other interested individuals to visit our schools. Visitations shall be permitted for the purpose of becoming acquainted with school instruction, programs, personnel, operation and/or the facility. The following guidelines are intended to maintain a safe and secure learning environment for students and staff by the educational program continuing undisturbed when visitors are present and by preventing the intrusion of disruptive persons in the schools.

1. Requests for visitations must be made to the building administrator at least 24 hours in advance so a mutually agreeable visitation can be scheduled. This prior approval may be waived by the principal or facility administrator.
 - 1.1 Visitors should clearly express the purpose for their visit. This is so the school can more easily schedule the visit to make sure the visitor observes what the visitor is coming to see.
 - 1.2 The building administrator must discuss the visitation with appropriate staff to assure the visitation will not interfere with the day's instructional activities.
 - 1.3 Teachers have a right to request an administrator's presence during visitation.
 - 1.4 Individuals, agents, and agencies exhibiting or marketing materials, services, or programs may not contact school staff during school hours without specific approval of the principal.
2. Visitors must report to the principal's office prior to a scheduled visitation and inform the office staff that he/she is in the building to visit. All school buildings shall post notice that visitors must first make their presence known to the appropriate building administrator before contacting any other person in the building or on the grounds.
3. Visitors shall make themselves as inconspicuous as possible. It is essential and expected that the visit will not interfere with the instruction and/or rights of other students.
4. Visitors to classrooms shall not interrupt or interfere with classroom activities.
 - 4.1 The classroom teacher will determine observer seating arrangements in the classroom. The visitor should remain seated throughout the visit, unless asked to do otherwise by the classroom teacher.
 - 4.2 Visitors may not use audio or visual equipment (VCR, camera, tape recorder) to record classroom activities due to the privacy rights of other students.
 - 4.3 Visitors will refrain from giving directions or making evaluations of teachers or operating procedures during class time.

- 4.4 If a visitor wishes to confer with the teacher, the visitor should make arrangements for a conference with the teacher to be held at a separate time from the classroom visit.
5. Visits to observe instructional activities in a class or course by a parent/guardian may only occur when the parent/guardian's child is enrolled and present. Parent concerns about any aspect of his/her child's educational program should be presented according to procedures set forth in board policy 1312, a copy of which can be obtained from the school board office or school principal's office.
6. Visitation tours of a school or visits to a classroom are welcome from parents of potential enrollees. Principals or designees may accompany the parents as they observe the programs or grade levels of interest.
7. The building principal or designee shall have authority to limit visitations to classrooms and/or exclude from the school premises any person who: a) the principal believes the visitor's behavior, consistent with these regulations, is disrupting the educational program in the classroom or in the school; b) has not received permission from the principal's office to be in the building; c) is distracting staff or children on the premises; or, d) the principal suspects is on the premises for the purpose of committing an illegal act. The principal has the authority to request aid from a law enforcement agency if any visitor to the district's buildings or grounds refuses to leave or creates a disturbance.
8. School board members may visit schools or classrooms on an unofficial basis the same as any parent or citizen of the community, following these guidelines. No board member may visit a school or classroom on an official basis unless designated to do so by the board and pre-arranged through the building principal. Unofficial visits by school board members shall not be considered to be inspections nor supervisory in nature.
 - 8.1 School board members who have children in the schools and, therefore, have parental opportunities to converse with their child's teacher, counselor or administrator, shall make it clear that they are speaking and/or visiting as a parent and not as a member of the board of education.
 - 8.2 If, during a visit to a school or program, a board member observes a situation or condition which causes him/her concern, the board member shall discuss the situation first with the superintendent as soon as convenient or appropriate. Such a report or discussion shall not be considered an official one from the board.

Volunteers are integral to the educational process in the Okemos Public Schools. Each school is authorized to develop procedures for volunteering in the classrooms consistent with these regulations.

Regulations: 07-24-06