

## VISITORS TO SCHOOLS AND DISTRICT LOCATIONS

### I. PURPOSE

To ensure compliance with state laws and to provide a safe environment for students and employees.

### II. SCOPE

This policy applies to all schools and district locations/property.

### III. DEFINITIONS

Visitor - any person seeking to enter a school building or district location/property who is not an employee of the school district or a student currently enrolled in that building.

### IV. POLICY STATEMENT

The Shelby County Board of Education encourages parents and other citizens of the District to visit schools, classrooms, and, as appropriate, district locations/properties during the school year. However, the Board has a legitimate interest in avoiding disruption to the educational process and is responsible for ensuring the safety of the educational and work environments of students and employees of the District.

Authorization to visit in the school building or on the school campus will be determined by the Principal or designee who shall have the authority to exclude from the school premises any persons (1) disrupting the educational programs in the classroom or in the school, (2) disturbing the teachers or students on the premises, (3) on the premises for the purpose of committing an illegal act or (4) unlawfully on the premises. Unauthorized persons on

the school property will be asked to leave the premises. Failure to comply could result in criminal arrest.

Additionally, if it is determined by the Superintendent or designee that the continued presence of a visitor or parent/guardian has caused disruption at a school, work environment, or district location/property, the Superintendent or designee may take appropriate action. Appropriate action may include, but is not limited to, immediate removal; restricting access to a specified area; and/or banning the visitor or parent/guardian from the school or property for a specified period of time.

### **Opportunity for Patriotic Society Members to Speak at Schools**

In accordance with state law, principals shall allow representatives of a patriotic society the opportunity to speak with students during school hours for one day at the beginning of the school year for no more than 10 minutes to inform the students of how the patriotic society may further the student's educational interest and civic involvement to better their schools, communities, and themselves.

## **V. RESPONSIBILITY**

- A. Principals are responsible for ensuring a safe teaching and learning environment. Principals are also responsible for developing procedures which encourage parents, patrons, and other citizens to visit schools without disrupting the teaching and learning environment.
- B. Visitors are responsible for reporting to the office when visiting schools or designated area when visiting district locations/properties and for complying with established procedures.
- C. Staff are responsible for reporting to the principal/supervisor or designee any unauthorized persons on school premises or district locations/property.
- D. The office responsible for security services, in conjunction with the department charged with academic school support, is responsible for interpreting this policy and providing support to schools and district locations/properties. Any questions concerning this regulation or the accompanying policy should be directed to the office responsible for security services.
- E. The Superintendent is responsible for determining if this policy is followed.

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**Legal References:**

1. TCA 49-2-303 (b)4
2. TCA 49-6-2008
3. Students and Employee Safe Environment Act of 1996
4. TCA 39-14-406
5. TCA 40-39-201, et seq.
6. T.C.A. 39-17-305

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**Cross References:**

1. 6059 Registered Sex Offenders
2. 6027 Searches and Interrogations

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## **District Locations/Properties**

Visitors to district locations shall adhere to the general rules communicated at the location or property, such as reporting to a specific area for processing, sign-in/check-in procedures, and displaying a visitor's pass.

## **School Locations**

Since having patrons visit schools can be invaluable in building public support, schools should solicit visitation by parents and others during special school events and activities and at other times during the school year. When parents/guardians or patrons call the school to inquire about visiting, they will be notified of the most desirable time to visit. Parents or guardians of children attending the school are not required to make an appointment to visit classrooms but must clear it with the principal or designee first. Additionally, parents must make appointments for teacher conferences through the school office or guidance office.

## ***General Requirements***

- Notices shall be displayed in each building indicating that all visitors are required to register with the school office and obtain authorization from the Principal or designee to be on the school premises.
- Except on occasions such as school programs, athletic events, open houses, or similar public events, all visitors must report to and be processed in the school office upon arrival and departure from the school site.
- When on the premises, all visitors shall be issued and visibly display a guest pass.
- All district employees or contract employees who are doing work at a school location must wear their identification badge prominently displayed.
- The Principal may prohibit visits to his/her school at specific times (i.e., during standardized testing).
- All school visitors must comply at all times with Board of Education policies, administrative rules and school regulations.
- The official identification of personnel from investigatory or regulatory agencies that interact with the schools shall be sufficient for entering the school when the personnel are conducting official business of the agency. Such agencies may include, but are not limited to: the judiciary, the Tennessee Department of Human Services, local and state fire marshal's offices, the Memphis and Shelby County Health Department, and the Tennessee Department of Children's Services.

- Visitors are prohibited from taking pictures of or making any type of recordings or transmissions of students and staff while visiting on school property. Exceptions may only be granted in accordance with district policy/regulations and applicable state and federal law (See also policy 6003 Confidential Student Information).

### **Requirements Regarding Disruption of Schools, Work Environments, or District Locations/Properties**

When a visitor's actions or presence in any manner disrupts the instructional program at a school, the teacher is authorized to notify the principal or designee. The principal or designee may exclude disruptive visitors from the classroom, portions of the school building, the entire school building, or other school premises. The district security and/or the police may be called if the situation warrants.

Additionally, when a visitor's actions or presence in any manner disrupts a district work environment or district location/property, district staff at the location may contact the Superintendent or designee regarding limiting the visitor's access to the location or any area thereof. The district security and/or the police may be called if the situation warrants.

All visitors who have their access to a school or district property or any portion thereof limited or who are banned from a school or district location/property shall receive written justification for the action and shall be provided with information on the duration of the ban or limitation on access. If the person is a parent of a student at a school, the school parent shall also provide the parent with information on appropriate ways to maintain parental involvement in school and their child's education. If warranted, the Superintendent or designee may review actions regarding banning a visitor from or limiting a visitor's access to a school, portions of a school, and/or a district location/property.