

Community Relations

School Visitors

The Orange Board of Education and staff of the school district welcomes and strongly encourage members of the community and other interested persons to visit the schools.

The Superintendent of Schools shall establish regulations which:

1. encourage school visitations.
2. provide for appropriate hospitality for visitors.
3. require visitors to provide valid ID and register according to District Regulations in the School Office upon arrival at the school.
4. ensure that such visits will enhance educational programs rather than hinder them.
5. channel expressions of approval as well as constructive criticism to the Board of Education.

Orange Board of Education members are encouraged to visit schools to become acquainted with students, school personnel, and programs; however, Board members do not have any authority during their school visitations. Board members can only take actions in and through regularly called meetings of the Board or the Board's subcommittees, or when delegated to specific tasks by specific Board action.

The Orange Board of Education wants to convey a strong message to the community, faculty, parents, and students about the security of schools against strangers. The District uses School Gate Guardian to monitor and make a record of the visitors 16 years of age and older who enter each school. School Gate Guardian is a software program which works in conjunction with PowerSchool, the student information system, and is privacy-protected and secured through the same protection policies as apply to student information. Refusal to submit a valid ID through the School Gate Guardian system will be considered reason to deny access to the school.

Upon enrollment, and at the beginning of each school year, parents/guardians shall receive notice that the district uses School Gate Guardian to check-in and record visitors as part of its program to promote safety. Parents will be notified that School Gate Guardian performs an electronic background check, including a registered sex offender search, custody issue alerts, restraining order warnings, and protection from abuse order checks. Signs shall be posted at all schools to explain that valid ID's are required.

A person is guilty of loitering on school grounds when he/she loiters or remains in or about a school building, or grounds, without a reason or relationship involving custody of, or responsibility for, a student or any other license or privilege to be there.

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes

[53a-185](#) Loitering in or about school grounds: Class C misdemeanor.

Policy adopted: 9/9/2013

Policy reviewed: 10/14/2013

Administrative Guidelines Regarding Visitors to the Schools

1. Any person wishing to observe a school building, and/or observe any student program, must obtain prior approval from the Orange Elementary School System administrator (i.e. building level principal, director of special education, superintendent).
2. Visitors to any school building must be able to articulate a legitimate reason for their proposed visit and/or observation. Where the visitation involves direct contact with district students or observation of an identified student or student program, the visitor must have a sufficient educational nexus with the district, its educational programs, or the student to support such request.
3. All visitors will present ID and wear a visitor's badge identifying them as a visitor. The badge must be visible all times.
4. All visits must be reasonable in length and conducted in a manner least disruptive to the district's educational programs.
5. When determining whether to approve a request to visit and/or observe student programs, the Orange Elementary School System administrator shall consider the following factors:
 - The frequency of visits
 - The duration of the visit
 - The number of visitors involved
 - The effect of the visit on a particular class or activity
 - The age of the students
 - The nature of the class or program
 - The potential for disclosure of personally identifiable student information
 - Whether the visitor/observer has a legitimate educational interest in visiting the school

- Whether the visitor/observer has professional ethical obligations not to disclose any personally identifiable student information
 - Any safety risk to students and school staff
6. The Orange Elementary School System administrator has the discretion to limit, or refuse, requests for visits and/or observations of student programs in light of the above criteria.
7. If approval is granted for a request to visit a school building and/or observe a student program, arrangements must be made in advance to ensure that the visit will not disrupt educational programs. Upon arrival, all visitors must report directly to the visitors' reception area of the school office. All visitors must sign in and out of the building and shall be accompanied by appropriate school personnel while in the school buildings. The length and scope of any visit shall be determined by the building principal in accordance with these regulations and accompanying Board policy.

Regulation approved: 9/9/2013