

No. 907

SECTION: COMMUNITY

TITLE: SCHOOL VISITORS

ADOPTED: October 18, 2018

REVISED: August 30, 2018

No. 907 SCHOOL VISITORS

Purpose

The Board welcomes and encourages visits to Charter Arts schools by parents/guardians, community members or interested educators.

The Board recognizes that some visits are planned and scheduled, while some are informal. Examples of informal visitations may include, but not be limited to: delivery of school materials or other items to students, visiting with the school nurse, meeting students for early release, or dropping off students for late arrival. Scheduled school visits may include, but not be limited to: teacher conferences, discipline meetings, IEP team meetings, or class observations.

The Board also recognizes that there will be visits to Charter Arts during special times such as Grandparents Day or other specifically designated programs.

To assure that the greatest benefit can be derived from such visits and to ensure safe order and protect the rights of students and staff, the following guidelines shall govern all visits to Charter Arts .

Delegation of Responsibility

The School Code provides that the sole responsibility to make regular visits to and to report to the Board concerning such visits is vested in the Executive Director & CEO. Therefore, the Executive Director & CEO has the authority and responsibility to implement these guidelines.

Guidelines

The Executive Director & CEO or Principal shall have the authority to permit or deny entry of any person to Charter Arts when the following procedures have been complied with:

1. Reporting to the Office

All visitors must report to the building's main office or to the designated school greeter to register before proceeding to their destination in the building regardless of whether prior approval for the visit has been given. All visitors will be escorted to their destination by a Charter Arts employee.

2. Scheduling Visitations

While all visitors must have a scheduled appointment, less formal visits as identified above will not need an appointment. Parent-Teacher Organization meetings and building programs where parents/guardians receive written invitations from the building administration are considered scheduled appointments. Exceptions may be made in the case of emergencies at the discretion of an administrative cabinet member, Principal or designee in matters that affect the safety of the students and staff.

3. Interruptions

Visitors may not interrupt any staff member carrying out his/her professional duties. Visitors are not to interrupt a teacher during preparation times or other related instructional duties unless an appointment has been made or other advance notice given according to the guidelines provided herein.

4. Conferences with Teachers

Conferences with teachers are encouraged. Such conferences may be requested by either the parent/guardian or the teacher and should be scheduled during the teacher's preparation time or before or after school. Unscheduled conferences will be at the discretion of the Principal and teacher. Conferences shall only be granted to parents and/or legal guardians. During conferences, teachers should not discuss information about a student or his/her progress with visitors other than a parent or legal guardian unless the parent or legal guardian is present.

5. Classroom Observations

Classroom observations by parents/guardians, community members or interested educators can be valuable, even though they may disrupt the class. It is believed that parents/guardians, other community members, and educators can gain a better sense of the instructional process by observing teaching and learning activities.

Observations will be considered when the parent or legal guardian submits a request, verbally, or in writing to the principal one (1) school day prior to the visit and receives approval from the principal either verbally or in writing.

The Principal will consult with the teacher and subsequently notify the parent or legal guardian by phone to discuss the scope of the visit.

The Principal will consider the following factors in the approval process:

- a. The purpose of the observation.
- b. The duration of the observation.
- c. The classroom activities planned during the observation.
- d. The number of previous observations of that particular class.
- e. The needs of the children in that class.

There may be circumstances when an administrator will observe the class with the parent/guardian, if permission to visit is granted.

Principals are encouraged to schedule parent/guardian classroom visits during American Education Week and other specially designated times.

6. Discussions of Students

Teachers should not discuss individual students or the performance of those students with any non-school persons except that student's parent/guardian, or surrogate parent, without the written permission of such parent/guardian, or surrogate parent. Exceptions to this policy may apply in connection with cooperation with law enforcement officials.

7. Non-Parent Attendance at Conferences

If a parent or legal guardian wishes to invite another individual to a school meeting regarding his/her child, the school requests that the parent/guardian provide the school with twenty-four (24) hours' notice of who they intend to bring. Such notice, while not required, will assist the school in making arrangements for the meeting, such as the amount of space needed, or additional information needed, and help ensure a productive, child-centered meeting. Failure to provide such notice will not result in the rescheduling of a meeting. School employees may not discuss confidential information about a student with an advocate unless the student's parents/guardians are present.

If a parent or legal guardian intends to bring an attorney to any school meeting, it is required that they provide the school with at least twenty-four (24) hours' notice so that the school can consider the need for or arrange the presence of its legal counsel. Failure of a parent/guardian to provide notice of their attorney's presence may or may not result in postponement and rescheduling of a meeting for another time, when the school can arrange for appropriate representation, if needed. Whether to conduct the meeting or reschedule it shall be in the school's discretion and based on the circumstances of the case.

8. Audio, Video Recording or Photographs

No visitor shall be allowed to photograph, record audio, or videotape any person or any part of any building or to tape record any conversation of any kind without prior approval by the Principal. In general, only Special Education Individual Education Plan conferences may be taped with one (1) school day prior notification to the principal and the availability of an administrator to attend the conference. An exception to this policy shall apply in the case of public meetings or work sessions of the Board.

9. Loud, Abrasive and/or Profane Language or Behavior

It is the policy of the Charter Arts to prevent disruptions to school operations and the instructional process. All persons, including but not limited to, students, parents/guardians, employees, visitors and members of the general public are prohibited from the use of foul, profane and abusive language, whether spoken or written, or for a tirade in any manner in the school buildings or upon school grounds. If any visitor threatens, verbally abuses, or harasses a school employee, student, or another visitor, a building administrator will direct the visitor to leave the property.

All persons are therefore warned that if a visitor refuses to leave school property voluntarily, s/he will be subject to removal from school property by school security or local law enforcement and be charged with trespassing for failure to promptly vacate the property upon notice or notification. In all cases, violators may be subject to appropriate laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

Legal
24 P.S. 510
Pol. 225