

## **RSU #63**

- a. NEPN/NSBA Code:** **KI**
- b. Title:** **Visitors to Schools**
- c. Author:**
- d. Replaces Policy:**
- e. Date Approved:** **04/03/2017 RSU 63**
- f. Previously Approved:** **04/05/2004**
- g. Policy Expiration:** **Review as Needed**
- h. Responsible for Review:** **Superintendent, Building Administrators & Policy Committee**
- i. Date Reviewed:** **03/06/2017 Superintendent**  
**03/06/2017 Policy Committee**
- j. References:** **15-A MRSA, Chap. 3202-A, 3501**  
**20-A MRSA, Chap. 6001.6804**  
**22 MRSA, Chap. 1071**  
**20 USC, Chap. 1232g**

**k. Narrative:**

The RSU 63 Board of Directors (the Board) believes visits to schools by parents/guardians, community and public members, and members of the Board can provide a positive experience under the following guidelines:

**I. Visitor Procedures:**

- A.** In order to avoid interruption of ongoing educational activities and in an effort to promote student and employee safety, the school building Principal will institute procedures relating to visitors to the school intended to maintain order and protect the safety of students. Procedures may vary from school to school due to the nature of the building, the location of the building, the age of students, and other considerations. If the presence of a parent/guardian is causing a disruption or disturbance, he or she will be directed to leave immediately.
- B.** All persons not employed or currently enrolled at the school will report to the Principal's office to tell them the purpose of their visit, sign in, and receive a Visitor's Pass to wear.
- C.** Someone will be in the office at all times during school hours to greet visitors.
- D.** Entrance(s) to each school building will be limited to prevent unauthorized entrance to the school. Any employee seeing someone not a part of the school staff will ask the visitor, "May I help you?" and escort them to the office.

- II.** If a Court Order exists, which stipulates restrictions regarding access to a student by a parent, and a parent/guardian wishes the school to act in a manner consistent with that Order, it is the responsibility of the Custodial Parent/Guardian to provide a copy of the

Court Order to the school.

- III.** Individual Board members have no governance authority except while sitting as members in a Board meeting or on a Board committee or when authority has been expressly delegated by the Board. Therefore, individual Board members should follow the same procedures applicable to parents/guardians and members of the public. Individual members of the Board should refrain from appearing to direct or evaluate personnel and not become involved with the operating procedures of the school building.

**IV. Unauthorized Visitors and Trespassers:**

- A.** Persons entering the school building without prior authorization from school officials and persons who fail to report to the main office upon entering the building are considered “unauthorized persons.”
- B.** All unauthorized persons will be immediately reported to the designated building administrator(s). The unauthorized person(s) will then be directed to leave the premises should they lack a legitimate school-related purpose.
- C.** Those persons having no school-related purpose who remain on school premises or at school-sponsored events after being directed to leave, will be considered “trespassers.” This will also apply to all students under suspension or expulsion, unless authorized by the school administration. Persons determined to be trespassers will be immediately directed to leave the school premises. Law enforcement will be contacted as necessary when dealing with such persons.

**V. Visits by Law Enforcement Agencies and Department of Health & Human Services (DHHS) officials:**

- A.** School personnel should take reasonable measures to verify the identity of law enforcement or DHHS personnel. Agents of law enforcement agencies or DHHS will provide school officials with written consent from a student’s parent/guardian prior to interviewing or questioning a student on school grounds during regular school hours except as provided by law.
- B.** DHHS may interview a student on school grounds during regular school hours without prior notification of the parents/guardians by school officials, only when DHHS or its employee(s) states in writing that:
- 1.** DHHS has reasonable grounds to believe prior notice to the parent/guardian would increase the threat of serious harm to the student or another person.
  - 2.** The student has contacted DHHS or a person providing services has put the student in contact with DHHS and DHHS is seeking an initial interview with the student.
  - 3.** The interview is necessary to carry out DHHS duties under 22 MRSA Chap 1071.

- C. Law enforcement personnel may interview a student on school grounds during regular school hours without prior notification to the parent/guardian by school officials only:
1. When the law enforcement agent states in writing that he/she has reasonable grounds to believe there is a health or safety emergency that requires the interview without prior parental notice and consent,
  2. In the event of an emergency endangering student or staff safety,
  3. When there is a warrant to arrest a student that cannot be executed outside of school hours, and
  4. In exigent circumstances as authorized by law.

RSU 63 administrators are not obligated to make students or school facilities available to law enforcement for non-school related investigations/arrests.

- D. Prior to removing a student from school without express permission of the parent/guardian, DHHS or law enforcement authorities will adequately demonstrate their legal authority to take custody of the student (e.g., court order, arrest warrant, or when a warrantless arrest is authorized by law. The parents/guardians of any student removed from school by the authorized agency (DHHS or law enforcement) will be notified by that agency.

#### **VI. Release of Students to Persons Other than Parent(s)/Legal Guardians and Authorized Care Givers**

A student will only be released to a parent/guardian or person authorized in writing by the parent/guardian to pick up the student. Where school personnel have reason to question the authenticity of written authorization, they should take appropriate efforts to telephone the student's parent/guardian to confirm the authority of the person seeking to pick up the student. Principals may institute other appropriate procedures regarding release of students to parent/guardian, and unauthorized persons.

- VII. School personnel reserve the right to question the authenticity of any written or verbal communication and to deny the release of students to unauthorized or unknown persons.