

<i>Policy</i>	<i>Title</i> <b>OBSERVATIONS OF SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS</b>	<i>Code</i> <b>IHBAA</b>
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***HOLLISTON***

1. Parents’/Guardians’ request to observe their child(ren), current program, or a potential placement must be made at least five (5) school days in advance with the Student Services Director or designee and/or Principal, absent any extraordinary circumstances. All requests should be made in writing utilizing the Parent Guidelines for Arranging Observation in Schools form.
2. The Student Services Director or designee shall contact the parent(s)/guardian(s) for initial scheduling conversation within five (5) school days of receipt of the parents’/guardians’ written request.
3. When a parent/guardian requests an observation of a student with special needs or a program, the Student Services Director or designee will seek approval from the Student Services Administrator and the building principal before it is processed. Such approval may only be withheld or limited for those reasons outlined within law and DESE advisory.
4. The Student Services Director or designee and/or Principal will work with the classroom teacher and the observer to set up the specifics of the observation (including, but not limited to, scheduling and placement of the observer in the classroom).
5. The number, frequency, and duration of observation periods will be determined on an individual basis in accordance with law and DESE advisory. The start and end time of observation periods and a schedule of observation periods will be stated in advance.
6. If the observer is not the parent/guardian, the parent/guardian must sign a release for the individual to observe.
7. The number of observers at any one time may be limited in accordance with the law and DESE advisory.
8. The observer will be informed that he/she is not to interfere with the educational environment of the classroom. If his/her presence presents a problem, he/she will be asked to leave. This notice is particularly important, since the presence of parents/guardians can influence both the performance of their child(ren) and those of others.
9. The observer will be informed that he/she is there to evaluate the appropriateness of a specific educational program to meet the needs of an individual child. He/she is not there to evaluate a teacher’s ability to perform his or her contractual job duties.
10. The observer will be instructed regarding the disclosure of confidential or personally identifiable information relating to other children. Videotaping and photography are prohibited during observations, in an attempt to reduce disruption to the program being observed and to protect the privacy of students in the program. Staff must be mindful of removing materials which may be part of students’ records from plain view. In the event that removal is not possible, the observer may be asked to sign a non-disclosure agreement.
11. A school administrator, or designee, also will accompany any observer during the observation period.

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Legal References:	MGL Chapter 71B, Section 3
Policy Cross Reference:	KI – Visitors to Schools; Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Educational Technical Assistance Advisory SPED 2009-2 dated January 8, 2009
Procedure Reference:	