

Policy 5015 School Volunteers

The board recognizes the valuable contributions that school volunteers make to the learning process and the educational goals of the school system. Instructional programs are enhanced through the contributions of students' parents, community members, and local business and industry. These volunteers contribute time, resources, and expertise that assist the school system to reach the goal of providing a sound basic education to all children.

The superintendent shall provide for parents to be notified of their right to take four hours of unpaid leave from their jobs every year in order to volunteer in their child's school as stated in [G.S. 95-28.3](#).

The board encourages school administrators to develop and implement plans and procedures for utilizing school volunteers. The board also encourages school administrators to appropriately recognize school volunteers and their contributions to the school on an annual basis. The superintendent and designees are responsible for implementing and supervising school volunteer programs. School volunteer programs must provide the following:

1. adequate screening of volunteers based upon the amount of contact they will have with students;
2. the requirement that volunteers comply with policy [5020](#), Visitors to the Schools;
3. reasonable supervision of volunteers based at least in part upon the amount of contact they will have with students; and
4. adequate training of volunteers, including familiarizing volunteers with applicable laws, board policies (including policy [4040/7310](#), Staff-Student Relations), administrative procedures and school rules.

All school volunteers are expected to be professional and dependable in their volunteer activities.

Legal References: [G.S. 95-28.3](#); [115C-36, -47, -203 to -209.1](#)

Cross References: Parental Involvement (policy [1310/4002](#)), Staff-Student Relations (policy [4040/7310](#)), Visitors to the Schools (policy [5020](#))

Adopted: January 12, 2009

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Policy 5020 Visitors to the Schools

The board encourages the community and parents to be involved in and support the schools and the educational program of the schools.

Temporary Restrictions on Nonessential Visitors to School Facilities.

In order to secure the health and safety of school system students and employees during the COVID-19 pandemic and in accordance with the requirements of the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), nonessential visitors will not be allowed access to school buildings before, during, or after the school day when school is in session.

This restriction will not apply to visitors or employees who need to access the school system central office in order to process paperwork, to attend meetings with school officials, or who want to attend a meeting of the board of education or other public meetings being held at the central office.

Parents and guardians will be allowed to enter the main entrance of a school facility and access the lobby and/or front office in order to sign a student in or out or to drop off items such as lunches, medication, or items that will be needed during the school day. To the greatest extent possible, parents and school employees are encouraged to arrange conference calls or use other electronic means to conduct conferences and meetings about a student's educational program. However, parents may have access to other locations within a school facility, as needed, to attend scheduled conferences and meetings related to their child's educational needs.

School employees will conduct symptom screening of any person entering a school building, as required by DHHS, including parents, students, and all other visitors.

These temporary restrictions shall remain in effect until repealed by the board or until the applicable guidance from DHHS is rescinded, whichever occurs first.

A. Opportunities to Visit the Schools

To encourage involvement, the following opportunities are provided to visit the schools:

1. visitors are welcome to observe and learn about the educational program at each school subject to reasonable rules developed by school administrators;
2. visitors are encouraged to use school facilities made available to the public, such as media centers or meeting spaces, as provided in policy [5030](#), Community Use of Facilities; and
3. visitors are invited to attend school events that are open to the public, such as athletic events, musical programs, and dramatic productions.

B. Requirements of Visitors to the Schools

While the board welcomes visitors to the schools, the paramount concern of the board is to provide a safe and orderly learning environment in which disruptions to instructional time are kept to a minimum. The superintendent and each principal shall establish and enforce reasonable rules to address this concern.

1. All school visitors during the school day must report immediately to the administrative office at the school to request and receive permission to be in the school. Each principal shall ensure that signs are posted in the school to notify visitors of this requirement.
2. School visitors are expected to comply with all school rules and school board policies, including policy [5025](#), Prohibition of Drugs and Alcohol; policy [5026/7250](#), Smoking and Tobacco Products; and policy [5027/7275](#), Weapons and Explosives Prohibited.

3. Persons who are subject to policy [5022](#), Registered Sex Offenders, must comply with the provisions of that policy.

C. Additional Requirements of Probation Officers

To minimize disruption to student learning and school operations, the board establishes the following additional requirements for visits by probation officers during the school day:

1. Probation officers may not visit students on school property during school hours unless the visit is conducted through the Division of Community Corrections' School Partnership Program.
2. Visits by probation officers must be authorized in advance by the school principal or designee or be the result of a request for assistance by a school counselor or school resource officer. The principal or designee at each school shall coordinate with probation officers to plan and schedule visits to occur at times least disruptive to the student's academic schedule and to school operations.
3. To protect the privacy of students, the principal or designee shall designate a private area for probation officers to meet with students away from contact with the general student population. Initial contact with the student will be made by a designated school employee, who shall direct the student to the private area to meet with the probation officer.
4. Probation officers may not initiate direct contact with any student while the student is in class or between classes.
5. All visits must be conducted in accordance with this policy and any additional guidelines developed by the superintendent or designee.

D. Unauthorized, Disruptive, or Dangerous Visitors

If a school employee becomes aware that an individual is on a school property without having received permission or that an individual is exhibiting unusual, threatening or dangerous behavior, the employee must either direct the individual to the administrative office or notify the principal, designee or school resource officer, depending on the circumstances.

If a school employee suspects that an individual is on school property in violation of policy [5022](#), Registered Sex Offenders, the employee must immediately notify the principal, designee or school resource officer.

Students will be instructed to notify a school employee of any unusual or suspicious behavior by visitors. School employees shall inform the principal or designee immediately of a student's report of suspicious behavior on the part of a school visitor.

When an individual disrupts the educational environment, acts in a disorderly manner, damages school property, or violates board policy or the law, the principal or designee has authority to:

1. order the individual to leave school property;
2. notify law enforcement; or
3. take any other action deemed appropriate under the circumstances.

Failure to comply with a request to leave school grounds may result in the filing of trespass charges or other charges as appropriate against the offending individual.

The superintendent, upon recommendation from the principal, may deny an individual permission to come onto school grounds or enter a school facility for up to one school year if the individual is guilty of

disruptive or dangerous behavior on school grounds.

Legal References: [G.S. 14-132](#), [-132.2](#), [-159.11](#), [-159.12](#), [159.13](#), [-208.18](#); [115C-523](#), [-524](#), [-526](#)

Cross References: Registered Sex Offenders (policy [5022](#)), Prohibition of Drugs and Alcohol (policy [5025](#)), Smoking and Tobacco Products (policy [5026/7250](#)), Weapons and Explosives Prohibited (policy [5027/7275](#)), Community Use of Facilities (policy [5030](#))

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Policy 4040/7310 Staff-Student Relations

The board expects all employees to maintain the highest professional, moral, and ethical standards in their interactions with students. Employees are required to provide an atmosphere conducive to learning through consistently and fairly applied discipline and established and maintained professional boundaries. Employees are expected to motivate each student to perform to his or her capacity while modeling the behavior expected of students in staff-student relationships.

The interactions and relationships between staff and students must be based upon cooperation, mutual respect, and an understanding of the appropriate boundaries between adults and students inside and outside of the educational setting. Employees are expected to demonstrate good judgment and to avoid the appearance of impropriety in their interactions with students. Employees must consult their supervisor any time they suspect or are unsure whether conduct is inappropriate or otherwise constitutes a violation of this or other board policy.

For the purposes of this policy, the terms “staff” and “employees” include independent contractors, school safety officers, and volunteers, but do not include student employees or student volunteers.

A. Romantic Relationships and Sexual Contact Prohibited

All employees are prohibited from dating, courting or entering into a romantic relationship or having sexual contact with any student enrolled in the school system regardless of the student's age. Employees engaging in such inappropriate conduct will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal, and may be subject to criminal action as provided in [G.S. 14-202.4](#) and [14-27.32](#). Further, school system personnel shall provide no assistance to an employee in finding another job, beyond the routine transmittal of personnel or administrative files, if the employee engaged in sexual misconduct with a minor or a student in violation of the law.

B. Restrictions on Electronic Communications

1. In accordance with policy [7335](#), Employee Use of Social Media, employees are prohibited from communicating with current students through non-school-controlled social media without parental permission except to the extent that the employee and student have an appropriate relationship which originated outside of the school setting. Any communication through social media authorized under policy [7335](#) must meet the professional standards established in this policy and must otherwise be consistent with law and all other board policy.
2. Instant messages will be treated as a form of communication through social media subject to the terms of policy [7335](#) and subsection B.1 above, regardless of whether the messaging service is actually provided through a social media service or otherwise.
3. Employees are prohibited from engaging in other forms of one-to-one electronic communications (e.g., voice, voice mail, email, texting, and photo or video transmission) with students without written prior approval of the employee's supervisor and the student's parent. This rule shall not apply, however, if one or more of the following circumstances exist:
 - a. the communication (1) is for an educational purpose, (2) is conducted through a school system-provided platform which archives all such communications for a period of at least three years (this requirement does not apply to telephone or voice mail communications), or is conducted via an electronic video-conferencing platform (e.g., Zoom, Webex, Google Meet) that has been approved by the superintendent or designee for instructional use, and (3) occurs after the employee has given prior notice to his or her supervisor or designee that such communications will occur and when they will occur;

- b. the communication serves an educational purpose and is simultaneously copied or transmitted to the employee's supervisor or designee and, upon request, to the parent or guardian;
- c. the communication is necessary in a bona fide emergency, provided the communication is disclosed to the supervisor and parent or guardian as soon as reasonably possible; or
- d. the communication derives from a relationship or association outside of the school setting and occurs with the consent of the parent or guardian, provided such communication does not otherwise violate this or other board policy.

Any one-to-one electronic communication permitted by this subsection must meet the professional standards established in this policy and must otherwise be consistent with law and all other board policies.

4. It is the duty of every employee to notify his or her supervisor of any unsolicited one-to-one communication, in any form, electronic or otherwise, received from a student when the communication lacks a clear educational purpose. School counselors are excluded from this requirement only to the extent that it conflicts with their professional duties.
5. Violations of this section will be considered unprofessional behavior subject to discipline, up to and including dismissal. Factors that may be relevant to the determination of an appropriate disciplinary response to unauthorized communications with students include, but are not limited to:
 - a. the content, frequency, subject, and timing of the communication(s);
 - b. whether the communication(s) was appropriate to the student's age and maturity level;
 - c. whether the communication(s) could reasonably be viewed as a solicitation of sexual contact or the courting of a romantic relationship, including sexual grooming;
 - d. whether there was an attempt to conceal the communication(s) from the employee's supervisor and/or the student's parent or guardian;
 - e. whether the communication(s) created a disruption of the educational environment; and
 - f. whether the communication(s) harmed the student in any manner.

C. Reporting Inappropriate Conduct

1. Reporting by Employees

Any employee who has reason to believe any of the following shall immediately report that information to the superintendent or designee:

- a. that another employee is involved in a romantic or other inappropriate relationship or has had sexual contact with a student;
- b. that another employee has engaged in other behavior prohibited by this policy; or
- c. that the employee has witnessed behavior by another employee that has the appearance of impropriety, whether or not the behavior may have a valid purpose.

An employee who fails to inform the superintendent or designee as provided in this section may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

2. Reporting by Students

Any student who believes that he or she or another student has been subject to misconduct that violates this policy should immediately report the situation to the principal, school counselor, or the Title IX coordinator designated in policy [1720/4030/7235](#), Title IX Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Sex.

3. Report of Criminal Misconduct

Any principal who has reason to believe that a student has been the victim of criminal conduct shall immediately report the incident in accordance with policy [4335](#), Criminal Behavior.

4. Report to State Superintendent of Public Instruction

Any administrator, including the superintendent, a deputy/associate/assistant superintendent, a personnel administrator, or a principal, who knows or has reason to believe that a licensed employee has engaged in conduct that would justify automatic revocation of the employee's license pursuant to [G.S. 115C-270.35\(b\)](#) or involves physical or sexual abuse of a child shall report that information to the State Superintendent of Public Instruction within five working days of any disciplinary action, dismissal, or resignation based on the conduct. For purposes of this subsection, physical abuse is the infliction of physical injury other than by accidental means or in self-defense, and sexual abuse is the commission of any sexual act upon a student or causing a student to commit a sexual act, regardless of consent and the age of the student. Failure to report such conduct may result in the suspension or revocation of an administrator's license by the State Board of Education.

This reporting requirement applies in addition to any duty to report suspected child abuse in accordance with state law and policy [4240/7312](#), Child Abuse and Related Threats to Child Safety, as applicable.

Legal References: Elementary and Secondary Education Act, [20 U.S.C. 7926](#); Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, [20 U.S.C. 1681 et seq.](#), [34 C.F.R. pt. 106](#); [G.S. 14-27.32](#), [-202.4](#); [115C-47\(18\)](#), [-270.35\(b\)](#); [16 N.C.A.C. 6C .0372](#), [.0373](#), [.0601](#), [.0602](#); State Board of Education Policy [EVAL-014](#)

Cross References: Governing Principle – Removal of Barriers (policy [1700](#)), Title IX Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Sex (policy [1720/4030/7235](#)), Title IX Sexual Harassment – Prohibited Conduct and Reporting Process (policy [1725/4035/7236](#)), Title IX Sexual Harassment Grievance Process (policy [1726/4036/7237](#)), Student and Parent Grievance Procedure (policy [1740/4010](#)), Child Abuse and Related Threats to Child Safety (policy [4240/7312](#)), Bullying and Harassing Behavior Prohibited (policy [4329/7311](#)), Criminal Behavior (policy [4335](#)), School Volunteers (policy [5015](#)), Staff Responsibilities (policy [7300](#)), Employee Use of Social Media (policy [7335](#))

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