

East Providence School Department Building Access Policy

Purpose:

To ensure the safety, security and privacy of East Providence School District students, staff and facilities by regulating access and visitor accompaniment protocols for School Committee members and district personnel.

I. General Access Rules

1. During Normal Business Hours:

- Visitors are allowed entry only if the facility is open to visitors and must remain in the designated area.
- All visitors must:
 - Check in upon entry at the designated point (e.g., main office).
 - Complete the sign-in sheet, if provided.
 - Wear a visitor's badge for the duration of their visit.
 - Have a background check if not fully supervised by school personnel
 - Be escorted by authorized personnel.
- School Committee Members must:
 - Notify the Superintendent that they will be visiting a school.
 - Check in upon entry at the designated point (e.g., main office).
 - Complete the sign-in sheet, if provided.
 - Wear a badge for the duration of their visit.
 - Undergo and maintain a valid background check.
 - Conduct themselves in a manner that does not interfere with any employee's job functions or create a poor or hostile work environment.
 - Recognize that the Superintendent is the sole employee of the School Committee and that all operational and personnel matters fall under the Superintendent's authority. No School Committee member should direct, instruct, or assign any task to district employees.
 - Violations of this section may result in the loss of access privileges and/or disciplinary review by the School Committee.

2. After-Hours Access:

- School Committee members and district personnel with authorized access may enter school facilities **Monday through Friday (school days only)** between **6:00 a.m. and 11:00 p.m.**, corresponding with custodial coverage hours. **No one** is permitted to accompany them during after-hours visits.
- Access outside of these hours, on weekends, holidays, or non-school days, **requires prior approval from the Superintendent.**

- School Committee members are not allowed to direct district employees to unlock areas that are secured without prior approval from the Superintendent.
- Access to Server Rooms is prohibited
- Violations of this section may result in immediate revocation of access privileges and/or disciplinary review by the School Committee.

II. Visitor Accompaniment Restrictions

1. No Accompaniment During After-Hours Access:

- School Committee members and employees of EPSD are strictly prohibited from allowing anyone to accompany them when accessing facilities outside of normal business hours without the express written permission of the Superintendent or School Committee vote.
- This restriction is in place to:
 - Minimize liability risks for the district.
 - Ensure compliance with student and staff privacy regulations.
 - Protect the integrity of facility security.

III. Privacy and Security Compliance

1. Protection of Privacy:

- Unapproved accompaniment during after-hours access infringes on the privacy rights of students and staff, in violation of:
 - **Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)**
 - **Rhode Island General Laws on Privacy and Security**
 - **Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE) Regulations**

2. Liability Considerations:

- Unauthorized access or accompaniment exposes the district to liability.

IV. Disciplinary Actions

1. Enforcement and Consequences:

- Any violation of this policy may result in:
 - Revocation of access privileges.
 - Disciplinary action as per district personnel policies.
 - Potential individual liability in a legal action in the case of willful misconduct or breach of privacy regulations.

V. Review and Compliance

- **Annual Review and Training:**

- This policy will be reviewed annually and updated as needed to ensure compliance with RIDE regulations and applicable state and federal laws.
- Annual training sessions will be conducted to educate School Committee members and district personnel on security protocols, privacy laws and the importance of compliance.
 - Roles and responsibilities,
 - Security protocols, and
 - Professional conduct expectations.

VI. Legal References and Compliance

- **Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE) Regulations**
- **Rhode Island General Laws** on privacy and security in educational settings
- **Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)**
- **Any other applicable state and federal laws**

East Providence School Committee
Policy Adopted: March 26, 2025