

## **OBSERVATIONS OF SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS**

In accordance with Massachusetts special education law, the Acushnet Public Schools permits parents and their designees (defined by law as parent designated independent evaluators and educational consultants) to conduct in-school observations of their student's current or proposed special education program.

When a parent or designee wishes to conduct such an observation, the following procedures shall be followed:

1. The parent shall contact the Special Education office and indicate that an observation is requested. The parent will indicate the name of the person who will conduct the observation and the affiliation of that person to the child and/or parent.
2. If the request for the observation comes from someone other than the parent, the school district will need to confirm with the parent the identity of the observer and ensure that the parent consents to the observation. If the designee wishes to observe the student's records, the school district must obtain written consent from the parent before allowing the designee to access the student's record in accordance with the Massachusetts student record regulations.
3. Upon notification of the request for the observation, the Principal will be informed of the request and the school district will provide timely access to the student's current or proposed educational program. The school district will contact the parent and/or designee to schedule a mutually convenient time for the observation. Please be advised that there may be certain times of the year, such as when the MCAS is being administered, that the district generally will not schedule observations due to the disruption the observation would cause during these particular time periods. If the observation is requested during one of these time periods the district will work with the observer to find another mutually agreeable time for the observation.
4. The school district will also discuss with the parent and/or designee in advance of the observation a reasonable time allotment for the observation. During an observation, the observer will be accompanied by a district representative. The observer will be permitted to observe both academic and non-academic activities if requested. Observation times will be determined on an individual basis depending on the circumstances of the particular student and/or program to be observed.
5. The school district will also work with the classroom teacher and the observer to setup other specifics of the observation (including, but not limited to, placement of the observer in the classroom).

6. The number of observers at any one time may be limited.
7. If the observer develops a written report of his/her observation, the district asks that the observer provide the district with a copy of his/her report in advance of any follow-up TEAM meeting.
8. The Acushnet Public Schools is responsible for ensuring the safety of its students at all times. If, in the opinion of the school district, the observation threatens to compromise the safety of the students in the observed program, the integrity of the program during the observation, or if there is the threat of disclosure by the observer of confidential or personally identifiable information he or she may obtain while observing the program, the school district may impose reasonable limitations and restrictions on the observation. The school district will discuss these concerns with the observer prior to the observation and the school district will make reasonable efforts to work with the observer around these issues to ensure a safe and productive observation. Any limitation and restrictions imposed pursuant to this paragraph will be done on a case by case basis.
9. The Acushnet Public Schools may exercise its discretion at any time to reschedule or terminate an observation in the event of a building emergency or a disruption that impacts the physical or emotional well-being of the children in the school or the program being observed.

LEGAL REF: MGL 71B:3; Chapter 363 of the Acts of 2008

CROSS REF: KI School Visitors

Adopted: July 6, 2010