



AMERICAN ACADEMY  
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## Visitor and Volunteer Policy

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*This policy was approved by the American Academy Board of Directors on December 17, 2019*

### Purpose

The purpose of this document is to define the rules and guidelines for American Academy visitors and volunteers.

American Academy encourages parents and other citizens to visit our facility and believes that there are many potential benefits which can result from increased interaction with the public. At the same time, American Academy has an interest in avoiding disruption to the educational process and protecting the safety and welfare of students and staff. As such, a balance must be achieved between the potential benefits and risks associated with the presence of visitors in our school. We have adopted the following policy to help enforce these principles.

### Visitors

#### A. All School Visitors:

- A visitor is defined as any person seeking to enter the school building who is not an employee of American Academy, a member of the Board of Directors or a student currently enrolled in American Academy.
- All visitors shall report to the school office when arriving or leaving the school premises. Notices will be displayed indicating that all visitors are required to register with the school office and obtain authorization in order to remain on the school premises. All visitors shall be required to wear appropriate school-issued form of identification when on school premises.
- Any visitor without proper identification will be directed to the front office.

#### B. Visitors to Instructional Areas:

- Access to particular classrooms or other instructional areas of the school may be restricted at the discretion of the administration.
- Because classrooms and other instructional areas are particularly vulnerable to disruption, visitors to one of those areas must carefully follow the instructions of the staff in charge of that area; failure to follow such instructions may result in the revocation of visiting privileges.

#### C. Special Situations:

- Both custodial and non-custodial parents of a student have the right to visit their child's school unless the school receives a court order restricting such contact.

#### D. Right to Deny Access:

- The Executive Director of Schools, or his or her designee, has the authority to deny visiting privileges to any individual if it is deemed to be in the best interest of the students and/or employees. Any such individual shall be directed to leave the school premises immediately; failure to leave the school premises upon direction may result in the involvement of law enforcement authorities.

## **Volunteers**

All visitors and volunteers to American Academy must agree to abide by the following Volunteer Code of Conduct and submit a signed **American Academy Volunteer Acknowledgement Form** prior to their first visit.

### **Volunteer Code of Conduct**

In order to promote a safe environment in our school, it is essential for all school volunteers to adhere to a professional code of ethics. Each school volunteer is required to follow the rules defined in this policy. Failure to follow these rules may result in a revocation of volunteer privileges.

In order to promote a safe environment in the school, all school volunteers must adhere to the following rules:

#### ***Confidentiality***

Any information pertaining to a child must remain in the classroom. It is never appropriate for a volunteer to discuss a child's progress with anyone other than that child's teacher. Failure to maintain confidentiality of all school and student information, along with any education records to which you are exposed, may disqualify you from further service as an American Academy volunteer.

#### ***Dependability***

Be reliable. The teachers/staff have planned activities for you and the students. If something comes up, please be considerate of those depending on you and arrange for a replacement and call the office. All volunteer work at the school and in the classroom must be scheduled in advance, not on a drop-in basis.

#### ***Communication***

Your volunteer work should be a learning experience for you. When you have questions about policies and procedures, ask the appropriate staff member for clarification.

#### ***Support***

As an American Academy volunteer, you will be in a support position. Your role is to support the classroom teacher and school administration at all times. The administration, teachers and staff are responsible for the education and safety of the students at American Academy and they have asked for your help in achieving their objectives.

#### ***Consistency***

Be consistent with American Academy's and the teachers' rules for behavior and the policies for the school. Always remember that the teacher is the authority in the classroom and must be supported by all the volunteers. Never assume responsibility for the discipline of students. If you witness inappropriate behavior or other infraction of school rules, please report it to a staff member as defined by the Discipline Policy.

#### ***Respect for Learning Process***

Do not use your volunteer time at the school for an informal parent/teacher conference. This can be disruptive to the learning process for all the students. Please make arrangements to discuss your child's progress with the teacher at a different time. While volunteering in the classroom, please be as discreet as possible and do not interrupt the teacher.

#### ***Role Model***

You are a role model for the students when you volunteer. Please act accordingly and dress appropriately (see the Staff Dress Code Policy for guidelines).

#### ***Siblings***

In order to give your full attention to your volunteer job, please do not bring your young children to the school while you volunteer. Please make other arrangements for younger children for the time you plan to be volunteering at the school. (siblings only allowed in designated areas without special permission).

#### ***Building Access***

Please do not enter areas designated as Staff Only, including the staff lounge, unless given explicit permission to do so. The staff lounge is a place for the staff to be able to freely collaborate on their curriculum delivery including the needs and performance of specific students. It is inappropriate for volunteers to overhear or be involved in discussions involving specific students.

**Representation**

As a volunteer, you are not an authorized agent of the school. In the course of your volunteer work at no time may you imply or state that you are a representative of the school. You cannot make commitments on behalf of the school, unless given express written authorization, direction and terms by the Board of Directors.

**Safety Procedures**

All volunteers and visitors are required to follow school safety procedures. Volunteers, as with all visitors, must enter from the school lobby.

**Volunteer Hours**

American Academy requires 40 volunteer hours per year per family. All volunteer hours must be recorded. Volunteers are responsible for tracking all hours spent volunteering for American Academy, including onsite and offsite. Volunteers may use the online system to track hours, via the American Academy website.

**Emergencies**

All volunteers must follow staff direction in the event of a drill or actual emergency. Volunteers and visitors should report emergencies or dangerous situations of any kind immediately to a staff member. In the case of a medical emergency, a volunteer should call 911 first. American Academy has specific procedural guidelines for emergencies.

**Supervision of Students**

A single volunteer shall never be alone with a child or a group of children. If a volunteer is working one-on-one with a student, it must always be within an area where at least one other adult is present or in an open area (or with the door open). This helps to protect the children, as well as adult volunteers, and will help ensure that American Academy will always be a safe environment for the students.

**Field Trip Supervision**

Please refer to the Field Trip Policy for guidelines regarding volunteering on field trips.

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**POLICY HISTORY**

- Original:* approved by the BOD on November 7, 2005
- Revision 1:* approved by the BOD on April 3, 2006
- Revision 2:* approved by the BOD on April 4, 2009
- Revision 3:* approved by the BOD on September 17, 2009
- Revision 4:* approved by the BOD on April 10, 2010
- Revision 5:* approved by the BOD on December 13, 2016
- Revision 6:* approved by the BOD on December 17, 2019