

**Procedure**

**ACCESS TO STUDENTS DURING SCHOOL HOURS**

The Legal Office of the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education has supported the present policy of the Worcester Public Schools regarding permitting persons to meet with students during school hours without parental permission.

The following persons may be granted access to students during school hours:

1. The custodial parent (the parent with physical custody more than 50% of the time) or guardian or personnel or agency legally authorized to act on behalf of the child in place of or in conjunction with the father, mother, or guardian. According to Massachusetts General Law Chapter 71, § 34H, the non-custodial parent must submit a written request to the school principal for such access. For further information, contact your child's principal.
2. A student, age 14 or upon entering Grade 9, may consent to meet with an individual.

The following personnel may be granted access to students in the performance of their official duties:

1. School administrators, teachers, and counselors who work directly with the students.
2. Administrative office staff and clerical personnel who process information for the students' records.
3. The Evaluation Team which evaluates the students.
4. School health personnel when such access is required in the performance of official duties.
5. Appropriate parties including the local police department, and the Department of Children and Families (DCF) in connection with a health or safety emergency, including weapons reports, if knowledge of the information is necessary to protect the health or safety of the student or other individuals.
6. Employees of the Department of Children and Families who investigate child abuse cases may be allowed to interview a child without parental consent if it appears that the child will be placed at risk of further abuse by parental notification. This interview may take place in the presence of a teacher or other school professional to provide help and reassurance to the child.
7. Probation Department employees, Department of Youth Services employees, or an employee from the Bureau of Special Investigation on welfare fraud.