

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.
3. Certain individuals, including school personnel, police and employees of certain state agencies may be granted access to students in the performance of their official duties. This information can be viewed at <https://worcesterschools.org/wp-content/uploads/handbook/Access%20to%20Students%20During%20School%20Hours.pdf>

If any court ordered restrictions exist regarding access to your child, it is imperative that you provide the WPS a copy of the order so that we can comply with the order of the court.

Dismissal of Students

1. Students may only be dismissed to persons specified by parents and/or guardians in writing. Principals may remind families to update student emergency contact information to include a robust network of persons who may be called in case of an emergency.
2. Parents may be provided with a Caregiver Affidavit to designate someone to make educational and/or medical decisions for a child if the child is temporarily living with someone who is not the parent/guardian.

Handling of Students Whose Parents Have Been Detained or Taken Into Custody

If a school receives notification that parent/guardian of a student has been detained or taken into custody by immigration law enforcement officials or agents, the school will take the following steps:

1. Contact the person(s) listed on the student's emergency card to inform the person(s) of the situation and ask if they can retrieve the student;
2. Make arrangements for school counselors to be available to support the student;
3. Contact DCF if there is no responsible adult authorized by parents to receive the student.
4. Consult with the district's homeless liaison if the student becomes homeless as a result of their parent/guardian's detention.