

VIDEO SURVEILLANCE

Background

The District supports a variety of programs and practices to improve student safety and the protection of school property. The District is aware that each year significant funds from the District operation budget are spent to repair school property damaged from vandalism. The need to reduce and prevent damage to property and hazard to personnel is to be balanced with a commitment to providing a learning environment for students and a working environment for staff and others that recognizes the right to assemble and associate without undue intrusion on personal privacy.

For reasons of enhancing the safety of students and others on school premises and deterring destructive acts, the District authorizes the use of video surveillance equipment on District property, where circumstances have shown that it is necessary for these purposes and its benefit outweighs its impact on the privacy of those observed. This Administrative Procedure does not apply to student digital recording for educational purposes.

In dealing with surveillance of students, the District recognizes both its legal obligation to provide appropriate levels of supervision in the interests of student safety and the fact that students have privacy rights that are reduced but not eliminated while the students are under the supervision of the school. Thus, video surveillance, like other forms of student supervision, must be carried out in a way that respects student privacy rights.

A digital recording is recognized to be subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act.

Procedures

1. Use
 - 1.1. Video cameras may be used to monitor and/or record.
 - 1.2. Video surveillance camera locations must be authorized by the building administrator (Principal or site Supervisor), or the officers of the District. Any change in camera location must be authorized in the same manner.
 - 1.3. Before video surveillance is introduced at a new site, a report must be provided to the Superintendent describing the circumstances that indicate the necessity of having surveillance at that site, including a discussion of less invasive alternatives.
 - 1.4. The Parents' Advisory Council (PAC) of an affected school must approve of any permanent video surveillance camera installation and proposed locations before any authorization is granted (excluding investigative use). Any change in camera location must be authorized in the same manner. If the Parents' Advisory Council makes a recommendation to the Board for installation of video surveillance in a school facility or on school land, the Board will refer the request to the building administrator or request a report from the building administrator. The periods of surveillance of public areas are

to be minimized.

- 1.5. Public notification signs, clearly written and prominently displayed, must be in place in areas that are subject to video surveillance. Notice must include contact information of the building administrator or designated staff person who is responsible for answering questions about the surveillance system. Any exception to this, such as for a time-limited specific investigation into criminal conduct, must be authorized by the Superintendent on the grounds that covert surveillance is essential to the success of the investigation and the need outweighs the privacy interest of the persons likely to be observed. Covert surveillance may not be authorized on an ongoing basis.
- 1.6. Video surveillance is not to be ordinarily used in locations where appropriate confidential or private activities/functions are routinely carried out (eg. bathrooms, private conference/ meeting rooms). Any exception to this must be authorized by the Superintendent on the grounds that no other supervision option is feasible and that the need is pressing and outweighs the privacy interest of the student or other person likely to be observed. Surveillance of such locations may not be authorized on an ongoing basis.

2. Security

- 2.1. Video cameras will be installed only by a designated employee or agent of the District. Only designated employees or agents and the building administrator shall have access to the key that opens the camera boxes. Only these employees shall handle the camera or digital recordings.
- 2.2. Digital recordings shall be stored on computers with restricted access.
- 2.3. Digital recordings may never be sold, publicly viewed or distributed in any other fashion except as provided for by this Administrative Procedure and appropriate legislation.

3. Viewing of Digital Recordings

- 3.1. Video monitors used to view digital recordings are not to be located in a position that enables public viewing. Recordings may only be viewed by the building administrator or individual authorizing camera installation, by parents and students (clause 3.2 below), or by District staff with a direct involvement with the recorded contents of the specific digital recording, or employees or agents responsible for the technical operations of the system (for technical purposes only). If an employee or student is facing any disciplinary action, they may authorize their union representative or other advocate to also view the digital recording.
- 3.2. Parents requesting to view a segment of digital recording that includes their child/children may do so. Students may view segments of the digital recording relating to themselves if they are capable of exercising their own access to information rights under the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act. Student/parent viewing must be done in the presence of an administrator. A student or parent has the right to request an advocate to be present. Viewing may be refused or limited where viewing would be an unreasonable invasion of a third party's personal privacy, would give rise to a concern for a third party's safety, or on any other ground recognized in the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act.

4. Retention of Digital Recordings

- 4.1. Where an incident raises a prospect of a legal claim against the District, the recording, or a copy of it, shall be sent to the District's insurers.
- 4.2. Digital recordings shall be erased within one month unless they are being retained at the request of the building administrator, District officer, employee, parent or student for documentation related to a specific incident, or are being transferred to the District's insurers.
- 4.3. Digital recordings retained under clause 4.2 shall be erased as soon as the incident in question has been resolved, except that if the digital recording has been used in the making of a decision about an individual, the digital recording must be kept for a minimum of one year as required by the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act unless earlier erasure is authorized by or on behalf of the individual.

5. Review

- 5.1. Each building administrator is responsible for the proper implementation and control of the video surveillance system.
- 5.2. Video monitoring is to be carried out in accordance with this Administrative Procedure. The District will not accept the improper use of video surveillance and will take appropriate action in any cases of wrongful use of this Administrative Procedure.

Reference: Sections 22, 65, 74, 85 School Act
Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act
Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Regulation

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