

Visitor Management FAQs

Decatur Public School's new visitor management process will enable each school building to screen all visitors against nationwide sexual offender registries and establish a consistent sign-in process across the district. The goal is to enhance the safety and security of both students and staff by preventing access by those who pose a potential threat.

What is the visitor management process?

During school hours, entry to the school building will be restricted to a single door near the office. Office personnel will check a visitor's driver's license or other state-issued photo ID, comparing information to a national sex offender database, alerting school administrators if a match is found, or issuing a detailed visitor badge if the person is cleared.

What if a match is found?

Driver's license/photo ID information is compared to a database of registered sex offenders from all 50 states. If a match is found, school administrators and law enforcement personnel will take appropriate steps to keep the school, students, and staff safe.

Why is the DISTRICT using this system?

Safety of our students is our highest priority. The new process will provide a consistent system to track visitors and volunteers while keeping away people who present a danger to students and staff members.

What if I forget my ID?

A first-time visitor who does not have a valid ID may be granted access, to be accompanied at all times by an adult member of staff, with the building principal's approval.

Do visitors who are children need a state ID?

Children who do not have a valid ID may be allowed to visit as long as an adult who has completed the check-in process accompanies them at all times.

What other information is the school taking from driver's licenses?

We will only capture the visitor's name, date of birth, and photo for comparison with a national database of registered sex offenders. Additional visitor data will not be gathered, and no data will be shared with any outside organization or authority.

Will DISTRICT employees follow the procedure?

DISTRICT employees who do not have an employee badge visible must follow the same procedure and wear the school-issued badge. Substitute teachers will follow exactly the same procedure as visitors.

Will volunteers have to follow the procedure?

Volunteers must follow the same procedures as any visitor. Identity must be verified with an acceptable form of identification (i.e. driver's license or state photo I.D.).

Will contractors, subcontractors and vendors follow the procedure?

Contractors, subcontractors and vendors must be checked the same as any visitor. If identity cannot be acceptably verified, they will not be allowed on district property. Acceptable forms of identification include driver's license, state I.D., U.S. military I.D., or passport.

Can the DISTRICT require parents to produce an ID before entering the building?

Yes. The district must be sure of who is in our buildings, why they are there, and – particularly if a student is involved (e.g., early pickup) – be able to confirm that an individual is authorized to access the student. We can only do this by knowing exactly who is needing access to our buildings.

What about grandparents/guardians?

Grandparents/Guardians will be checked against the database and the student's enrollment form to see if they have parental permission to access the student.

What about police officers, firemen, and other uniformed or governmental officials?

Law enforcement and other first responders will bypass the sign-in process if responding to an emergency. If there is no active emergency, police/fire/other officials will be checked in and will be asked to show credentials.

Does the district have to give listed sexual offenders and predators access to the school?

Generally speaking, unless the individual is wanted by the police, as long as they have a legitimate reason to be in the building (e.g., visiting a legal dependent) the district cannot prohibit access. However, such individuals will be given only strictly limited access and will be accompanied at all times by an adult representative of the school.

Will the district use the process for after-school activities?

No. The visitor management process will only be used during school hours.