

READING PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Student Services

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PARENT GUIDELINES FOR ARRANGING

OBSERVATIONS IN SCHOOLS

The Reading staff regularly collaborates with parents to provide timely response to requests received for observation of their children's current or proposed special education programs. Observations may be conducted by the parent or his/her designated private evaluator or educational consultant. Reading will provide an opportunity for observation of sufficient duration and extent to enable evaluation of the child's performance in his/her current program or to evaluate a proposed program's ability to enable the child to make effective progress. The following guidelines apply to arranging for such observations:

Parent Request: Parents are asked to submit their observation requests in writing to the building Principal or the Team Chair on the Observation Request Form (Appendix A):

- Student's name
- Parent's name, telephone and/or email contact information
- Student's classroom teacher and assigned grade
- Observer's name, and if the observer is someone other than the parent, any relevant affiliation of the observer, along with telephone number and/or email contact information
- Purpose of the observation, including any particular part of the school day the observer wishes to see

Scheduling: In order to assist in timely scheduling, Reading staff will contact the identified observer directly. Staff will generally be able to offer a time within a week for an observation of

two hours or less. However, if more extensive observation is required, scheduling may take longer.

Staff availability: A school staff member will accompany the observer during the observation period and document their observations. Given the ongoing responsibility of teachers or therapists to serve students, they will generally not be available for conversation during or immediately before/after the observation period.

Restrictions on Scheduling: The district does not generally schedule observations for certain portions of the year such as during MCAS testing or during the first few weeks of school. In addition, because it may not be possible to accommodate all requests during the last few weeks of school, parents are urged to submit any observation request they may have as early as possible in the school year. In addition, school staff retains its right and obligation to restrict program observation where necessary to protect the safety of a child or the integrity of program. The District also expects all observers to avoid disclosing any personally identifiable or confidential information they might obtain during the course of an observation (except that about student being observed, in which case it will be used consistent with the parent's authority and direction.) School staff retains the right to restrict program observations if necessary to protect students from such disclosure.

