

POLICY

SOMERSET COUNTY
BOARD OF EDUCATION

Date Submitted: May 24, 2011	Number: 600-42
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Subject: Use of Video Cameras for Safety and Security	Date Approved: June 14, 2011 September 18, 2012 August 19, 2014 Date Effective: June 14, 2011 September 18, 2012 August 19, 2014

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to safeguard student privacy and establish a framework for ensuring that Somerset County Public Schools' security cameras are managed in a secure fashion. Audiovisual security equipment is used to promote safety and monitor behavior on school grounds, in school buildings and on school buses.

2. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

- A. The Board recognizes that the use of audiovisual cameras on school grounds and on school buses is an important tool in the management of student safety.
- B. Protecting the privacy of students is paramount and must be maintained in accordance with federal, state, and local statutes.

3. PROCEDURE

A) Placement of Audiovisual Equipment:

- 1. Audiovisual devices may be placed on school grounds, in school buildings and on school buses in Somerset County Public Schools at the request of the school principal and with the approval of the Superintendent of Schools. The Supervisor of Transportation and Operations will be responsible for the purchase, installation and maintenance of this equipment .
- 2. Installation within school buildings will be in public areas such as hallways, cafeteria, entrances, etc. Cameras outside of the buildings will be mounted, positioned and operated in a manner that is not directed toward private property. Cameras will not be located in any area where individuals have the right to expect privacy (restrooms, locker rooms, etc.).
- 3. Video monitors shall be located out of view of students and the public to ensure privacy. School buses equipped with digital cameras will also record audio. Anyone observing questionable activity on a video monitor should report it immediately to the school principal (and/or/designee), or when applicable, the Supervisor of Transportation and Operations.

4. Somerset County Public Schools does not guarantee that every location in or around every facility or on every bus will be equipped with audiovisual equipment or that audiovisual equipment will be in operation at a specific time. Cameras that are not functioning and/or that are in need of repair will be reported to the principal and/or the Supervisor of Transportation and Operations. A log will be kept with the date of the report of malfunction and the date of repair. If the repair will take longer than two weeks, the log should include each step taken towards the repair with dates the step was taken.

B) Access to Audiovisual Equipment

1. The monitoring, viewing, printing, saving and copying of images from any surveillance equipment within the school or on school property/buses is under the direct control of the school principal/designee and/or the Supervisor of Transportation and Operations.
2. The school principal shall maintain a list of those individuals who have been authorized to be trained to use, view, retrieve, or copy images or data from surveillance equipment. The principal and the Supervisor of Transportation and Operations will ensure that authorized personnel receive training on the use of the equipment and that they are kept informed of any policies/procedures related to an individual's right to privacy.
3. The Superintendent of Schools may authorize Central Office personnel to have access to data retrieved from the surveillance system.
4. School resource and other law enforcement officers may be identified as authorized personnel. SRO's should not investigate any activity independent of the school principal's investigation unless said activity presents a clear and imminent threat to the safety and security of individual.

C) Notification

1. All students, parents/guardians, and staff shall be notified that they are subject to being monitored by audiovisual devices in public areas of the school grounds, school buildings and on school buses. Notification should include that audiovisual images can be used for disciplinary purposes. This should be placed in Student Handbooks, newsletters, handouts and/or the school website.
2. Signs should be posted on school premises and school buses indicating that audiovisual devices for surveillance are in use.

D). Viewing of Audiovisual Images

1. Audiovisual recordings remain the property of SCPS.
2. Care and caution shall be taken by the principal and those authorized to view, monitor, print, save or access images and information from surveillance equipment to ensure the privacy rights of students, staff and other adults are

protected as required by FERPA guidelines and all local, state and federal statutes.

3. Video images may be used to identify those persons involved in or suspected of an alleged act that violates the SCPS Code of Conduct .
4. The principal or designee shall conduct a thorough investigation and compile written statements from those involved and any witnesses. **Video imagery should not be the sole evidence or basis for disciplinary action.**
5. Parents may request to view a video hard drive pertaining to their child only. Neither parent nor guardian may view images on camera hard drive unless the other students' faces are blurred. No other individuals will be identified by the person authorized to show the video. Only the segments of the video that show the child's direct involvement in an incident may be shown. The opportunity to view the video images must be offered to the other parties directly involved. Bystanders do not have a right to view the video.
6. Requests for viewing of video educational records must be in writing and directed to the Superintendent of Schools or designee. Once a request is made, all pertinent video will be saved for review. All requests for viewing shall be granted or denied within 10 days of the written request. Only the frames and/or footage of the student's involvement in the incident will be shown. Viewing will take place at a school related site and in the presence of the Superintendent or designee.
7. Each of the five (5) representatives of the Somerset County Board of Education may view recordings in connection with any meetings, hearings, or appeals regarding disciplinary, expulsion, suspension or termination hearings where the recordings contain information and/or /evidence relevant to the hearing.
8. Viewing logs will be completed each time an image is viewed by staff other than staff identified in **B (2)**. Viewing logs will be kept for one (1) year as long as no investigations are ongoing.
9. A video recording of the actions of students or staff may be used by SCPS as evidence in any disciplinary or corrective actions.

E). Storage of Audiovisual Images

1. All copies of video hard drives must be kept in a safe and secure location on school premises.
2. Audiovisual documentation **will be** accessible for a 15 day period to clarify the specifics of a given event.
3. If a written request to view audiovisual material is not received within 5 days of notification of disciplinary action, the images may be destroyed or preserved for SCPS use.
4. In a situation where documentation may be needed for legal purposes, specific images will be held by Somerset County Public Schools until final resolution. Copies will only be released upon the receipt of a subpoena.

F). Training of Staff

1. Staff members identified in **B (2)** of this policy should receive annual training in using, viewing, retrieving, or copying images or data from surveillance equipment.
2. Training should include the review of policies related to the privacy rights of students, staff and other adults as protected by FERPA guidelines and all local, state and federal statutes.
3. Training of staff will be under the supervision of the Supervisor of Transportation and Operations. Trainings may occur at individual school sites or at the Central Office. Records of trainings will be kept for one (1) year.