

PROTOCOL FOR SECURITY CAMERAS AND VISUALLY RECORDED DATA P5326

The School Committee works to maintain a safe and secure environment for students, staff, and visitors. This also includes the protection of our facilities and school property from theft and vandalism. Persons identified on security cameras in violation of School Committee policies or WPS handbook rules may be subject to disciplinary actions.

Camera Placement:

To help ensure the safety of students, staff, visitors and facilities, the School Committee authorizes the use of security cameras both outside and inside school buildings.

Security cameras may be used in locations as deemed appropriate by the Superintendent of Schools in consultation with school administrators, law enforcement officials, and security experts.

Security cameras may be used in any area, inside or outside of school buildings where there is no reasonable expectation of privacy.

The cameras shall not be placed in areas where there may be a reasonable expectation of privacy (e.g. the interiors of restrooms, locker rooms, guidance and nurse's offices, private offices, department offices, conference rooms, staff lounges).

Signage and Notification:

The district shall notify students and staff through student and employee handbooks that security cameras have been installed and may be used at any time. Students or staff will be notified that anyone identified on security cameras in violations of School Committee policies or WPS handbook rules may be subject to disciplinary actions.

Students, staff and visitors shall be notified that video surveillance will occur on school property through use of the signage. Signage will be posted in public entryways and other conspicuous locations as needed to inform the public. The posted signs will read: Surveillance Cameras in Use.

Limited Access to Recordings:

Only authorized personnel or their designee, including the Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent, school building administration and law enforcement, will have privileges involving viewing, disclosure, retention, disposal, and security of video recordings or photographs from security cameras in accordance with applicable laws and regulations.

A video recording used for security purposes in school district buildings and/or on school property shall be the sole property of the school district.

All video recordings will be stored in their original format and secured to avoid tampering and to ensure confidentiality in accordance with applicable laws and regulations.

Law enforcement and emergency response officials shall be granted access to video recordings or the security system by the School Superintendent/designee in accordance with the Memorandum of Understanding with the Westford Police Department.

Use of Video Data by Authorized Personnel:

Reviewing a stored recording will occur only when a suspected crime or WPS Student Handbook violation is committed inside or outside the building (e.g. vandalism, graffiti, etc.), or there is a claim of an injury or an incident that raises safety or security concerns.

A log shall be maintained and include the following details; the persons viewing the data, what event triggered the viewing, the date/time viewed, what was found on the recording, whether the data was copied or forwarded, and what consequences were imposed as a result of the recorded information.

Parental Access:

Parents may request a viewing through their legal representative.

To ensure the privacy and legally ensured rights of staff and students, neither parents nor members of the public at large may request a viewing without appropriate cause.

Still photos, or “screenshots,” from the feed may at times be shared with a parent or legal representative outside the proscribed legal process to provide evidence for or against a disciplinary dispute that does not rise to the level of police involvement. Such an event will require a request in writing by the parent or legal representative to the district, and will be recorded in the log.

Short Term Data Storage:

Security camera visually recorded data (with the exception of those segments that evidence of a crime being committed or an WPS Rights & Responsibilities Handbook violation, or there is a claim of injury or an incident that raises safety or security concerns within the 30-day retention period) will be maintained for a maximum of 30 days and then deleted. In no case shall WPS be held liable for the failure to maintain any recorded data for any period of time. All such

recordings shall be treated as confidential and shall not be released to individuals or agencies outside of the District except through subpoena or other court order requiring such release.

Any law enforcement agency may be provided with a duplicate of the recorded materials in conjunction with an investigation by that agency. Notification to the Superintendent's office shall take place for each duplication of data.

Access in the Event of an Emergency Situation:

In the event of an emergency situation in a WPS building, the safety of our students and staff supersedes the above policy, and the WPD may access the feed in real time in compliance with the Memorandum of Understanding.

The Superintendent and/or the School Committee may, from time to time, issue further guidance that is consistent with current laws, newly adopted technology, and this policy.

References:

WPS Policy: P5302

WPS Regulation : R5302

MGL

MASC: ECAF

Policy Adopted: November 19, 2018

Policy Reviewed:

Policy Revised:

WESTFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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