



MAGNOLIA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Board Of Directors

Board Agenda Item #	II. C
Date:	01.21.2016
To:	Magnolia Board of Directors
From:	Caprice Young, Ed.D., CEO & Superintendent
Staff Lead:	Terri Boatman, Director of Human Resources
RE:	Approval of Changes to the Home Visit Policy

Proposed Board Recommendation

I move that the Board approve changes to the Home Visit Policy.

Background

It was brought to the attention of Magnolia that the process of compensating employees for Home Visits via expense reimbursement was out of compliance. Reimbursements should be paid as wages since this is for work actually performed and mileage should be compensated as well.

We propose that the Home Visit compensation be changed as follows:

- Employees will be paid \$50.00 for each home visit he/she completes.
- The \$50.00 will be processed on the next payroll cycle following the visit.
- Employees must submit the Home Visit form to the Principal for approval.
- The employee who drives to the home visit should be reimbursed mileage under the Magnolia Mileage Reimbursement Policy.
- Employees should report mileage to the home from the school.
- Copies of a Google Maps supporting the mileage should be included with the Home Visit form.

We believe that this increase in the amount from \$30 to \$50 will actually compensate employees for the time spent in preparation for the home visit, and travel time.

Budget Implications

Schools have already budgeted \$30.00 for home visits. This will increase by \$20.00 for the remainder of the school year.

Name of Staff Originator:

Terri F. Boatman, Director of Human Resources

Attachments

Redlined version of current policy highlighting changes.



MAGNOLIA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

13950 Milton Ave. 200B Westminster, CA 92683

P: (714) 892-5066 F: (714) 362-9588

Redlined changes

MAGNOLIA PUBLIC SCHOOLS (MPS) HOME VISIT POLICY

I. Introduction

Research has shown that one of the keys to successful teaching and schooling is creating personal connections with students inside and outside of school. Knowing the students' outside interests, families, and home routines, and then using this information to connect in meaningful, individualized ways can have huge rewards in helping to create happier, healthier, and smarter kids. Recognizing these facts, MPS uses home visits as one of the important features of its education program to not only improve student and school performance, but also to identify and intervene early with low-achieving students.

II. Why Home Visits?

Research has shown that one of the keys to successful teaching and schooling is creating personal connections with students. MPS teachers visit students at their homes to enhance student learning and involvement. Family visits offer invaluable insights about students. They can provide new understanding about students' learning styles. Visits might also reveal the emotional and social needs and behaviors of students. It is helpful to know if they react to problems with tears, anger, or withdrawal, and how they socialize with peers. Through family visits, teachers can identify students' latest interests or concerns, such as a new hobby, an upcoming trip, or a change in the family.

Family Involvement:

Research clearly shows that school programs, that emphasize family involvement and relate well to their community, have students who outperform those in schools lacking these qualities. Not only do students flourish, but also the schools are strengthened when families seize an active interest in their children's education. The results include (a) improved academic achievement, (b) better attendance, improved behavior, (c) higher quality of education, and (d) safe and disciplined learning environment.

Research by the Southwest Educational Developmental Laboratory found a positive and convincing relationship between family and community involvement and benefits to students, including academic achievement. Studies concluded that students with involved parents, no matter what income level or background, are more likely to have success in school.¹

For most students home and school are two different domains. Especially for minority students even the people, languages, foods, rules, duties, and concerns are different in these two worlds. They do not intersect considerably. Parents and the teachers are critical partners in educating the "whole child." However, parent conferences and other school-hosted meetings do not provide sufficient means for the parties to communicate enough and effectively and to show the student that they are on the same team. Home visits are the teachers' attempt to break the virtual border between the partners, which is most of the time successful.

Personal Connections:

¹ Source: <http://www.sedl.org/connections/resources/evidence.pdf>

Key to a child's school success are the relationships established between the teacher and student, and the teacher and the student's family. Family visits offer a good way to develop these relationships on safe, "home" territory. Research has shown that one of the keys to successful teaching and schooling is creating personal connections with students inside and outside of school (Epstein 1998; Heath, 1983; Moll, Amanti, Neff, & González, 1992). Knowing the students' outside interests, families, and home routines, and then using this information to connect in meaningful ways can have huge rewards in helping to construct happier, healthier, and smarter kids.²

Proactive or Remedial?

MPS aims to be proactive in terms of prevention and teaching appropriate behavior by means of character education and college counseling classes and the active participation of teachers by setting up role models for the students and by effective communication through home visits.

As the famous saying goes, a good start leads to a great finish. The most important time of the academic year for the students is the beginning which mostly determines the end of year results. A home visit in the beginning of the year will help students succeed.

Home visits also ease teachers' job substantially. Spending little time visiting homes of prospective or new students results in saving a lot of time throughout the year which would otherwise be spent on fixing problems and a healthy, stress-free academic year. Teachers can focus on raising the quality of their education instead of trying to minimize problems and maintain a healthy personal life.

III. Home Visit Specifics

Which students?

MPS aims to visit not only low-achieving but all our students because every student benefits from home visits. Often, home visits reveal new ways or opportunities that school can offer to a high-achieving student in order for him/her to thrive more. Visit preferences in the case of limited resources (staff, time, etc.) will be given in the following order:

- New students
- Low-achieving students
- Seniors (for college guidance)
- Subgroups: Foster youth (FY), students with disabilities (SWD), English learners (EL), low income/socioeconomically disadvantaged (SED)
- All other students

Some parents may reject home visits due to their home condition or other reasons. For such parents/guardians, MPS will arrange other ways of communication, including but not limited to, inviting the parent/guardian to school or meeting at a public place.

² Source: <http://crede.berkeley.edu/research/pdd/pb1.shtml>

How often?

Students may be visited once a year or more, depending on circumstances. Each MPS school site will set annual percentage targets for home visits, depending on their resources.

Scheduling

Scheduling can be done in person, through phone, email, mail, or other means. Usually parent orientation meetings, back to school nights, parent-teacher conferences, and other parent involvement activities provide opportunities to schedule home visits in person.

Who Can Do a Home Visit?

Teacher, administrator, counselor, education specialist, nurse, attendance liaison, parent liaison, outreach consultant, and any MPS staff person informed of the home visit policy and procedures.

Compensation

Visits will be compensated until the school budget for home visits has been exhausted. Each staff member will be compensated \$ ~~\$50.30~~ per home visit made ~~for time.~~ Employees will also be reimbursed for mileage driven to and from the home from their school location, and travel. If follow-up visits are made to a family in the same school year, the original visit and one follow-up visit will be compensated. All visits including follow-ups will be compensated. A Home Visit Form needs to be completed and submitted by each staff member in order to receive compensation.

Compensation will be paid on the next pay check following the home visit. Mileage must be submitted in the Paycom system and will paid on the next paycheck following approval.

IV. Home Visit Procedures**➤ Before the Visit:*****Parent/Guardian Notification***

- Contact family a week to 10 days in advance of the visit and follow up with a phone call.
- Convey purpose of the visit.
- Time options and days should be available to best meet the needs of individual parents.
- Home visits must occur in the enrolled child's home unless family feels more comfortable meeting somewhere in the community (i.e., café, library, conference room, etc.)

Review of Student's Background

- Review student's records, family history, and cultural background as available in student's file.
- Check for special needs (translation, etc.)

Developing a Plan for the Visit

- Plan your route to visit and know your destination.

- Leave schedule of home visits with the office staff. Inform them of any changes to your schedule.
 - Take necessary records, forms, paperwork, and informational material with you. Ex: emergency card, attendance record, grade report, resources, brochures, etc.
 - Review the Home Visit Procedures, Etiquette, and Safety Tips.
 - Schedule to be on time.
- **Arrival:**
- Set the tone (warm introduction, thank family for time and participation, etc.)
 - Establish rapport/develop caring relationship.
 - Include all family members in the home who would like to participate.
- **During the Visit**
- Review purpose of visit; allow family input.
 - Keep good eye contact, sit near the parent, look at and relate to them, talk to child(ren).
 - Get to know the family. Ask open ended questions such as “Tell me about your child. What does he/she like best about school? Do you have any concerns?” to elicit feedback from parents regarding child’s interests, concerns, and progress in program and at home.
 - Establish social connection; be a good model when you interact with them by being willing to share about yourself in an appropriate way.
 - Observe family interaction in its cultural context; show enthusiasm and acceptance; reinforce positive parenting.
 - Establish goals.
 - Share school rules and expectations to encourage consistency between home and school.
 - Share resources; answer questions.
 - Provide information about future school activities and events and parental involvement opportunities.
- **Concluding the Visit**
- Summarize visit.
 - Discuss next steps.
 - If applicable, discuss date and plans for the next visit.
 - Provide business cards, contact information. Make yourself available for follow-up and future contact.
 - Make closing remarks, shake hands, thank, and say goodbye.
 - Keep visit to a reasonable amount of time. (30-45 minutes; no more than 1.5 hours.)

➤ **After the Visit**

- Document visit (see Appendix A: Home Visit Form.)
- Evaluate visit and share necessary information with the appropriate staff (grade level team, counselor, administrator, etc.)
- Follow through on referrals, action items, etc.

V. Home Visit Etiquette

➤ **“DO”s and “DON’T”s:**

DO

- Be a good listener.
- Have specific goals or objectives for each visit.
- Be flexible.
- Be prompt to your home visits.
- Realize the limitations of your role.
- Help parents become more independent.
- Keep language appropriate.
- Dress appropriately and comfortably.
- Be confident.
- Remember that small improvements lead to big ones.
- Be yourself.
- Respect cultural and ethnic values.
- Monitor your own behavior-the parent is observing you.

DON’T

- Impose values.
- Bring visitors without the parent’s permission.
- Socialize excessively at the beginning of the visit.
- Exclude other members of the family from the visit.
- Talk about families in public.
- Be the center of attention.
- Expect perfection from the parent.
- Ask the parent to do something you wouldn’t do.

➤ **Safety Tips:**

- Maintain appropriate appearance and grooming in order to protect an image of cleanliness, dress, and neatness. Keep jewelry to a minimum.
- Limit valuables or money on your person when visiting students' homes; leave purse in your trunk.
- Carry necessary cash, keys, and driver license on person. Lock vehicle when traveling and when you return to it after a visit. Check inside and under your vehicle before entering it.
- Remove yourself from dangerous situations.
- Travel in pairs when possible.
- Survey the neighborhood.
- Identify safe areas (i.e., restaurants, telephones, restrooms, police stations.)
- Trust your instincts.
- Consider a neutral meeting location if visit cannot be made safely at home (i.e., library, conference rooms, restaurants.)
- Ask family members to come out to meet you if you feel uncomfortable with the area. Enter a home only after an adult gives you permission to do so.
- Stay alert. Carefully consider your safety before entering a home.
- When there is a suspicion of weapons, illicit drugs, or alcohol present, the home visit is not to be made.
- Staff may request that family members keep animals chained during home visits. If animals are not adequately restrained or if the family member refuses to do so, the home visit is not to be made.
- Keep car in good repair.
- Keep emergency supplies in car, include all-weather gear.
- Attend safety seminars.
- Staff shall carry a cell phone on all home visits. Cell phones shall be set to vibrate and shall not be answered during a visit, unless it is an emergency.

APPENDIX A: HOME VISIT FORM

Person making the home visit:

Date of Visit: _____

Name: _____	School: _____
Title: _____	Email: _____

Student:

Name: _____	Date of Birth: _____	Grade: _____
Check all that apply: <input type="checkbox"/> New student <input type="checkbox"/> Senior		
Subgroups: <input type="checkbox"/> FY <input type="checkbox"/> SWD <input type="checkbox"/> EL <input type="checkbox"/> SED		

Notes:

1. How is the family’s experience about their child’s social, emotional, and academic growth? What questions, concerns or suggestions does the family have?

2. What school resources did I present to the parents? (Tutoring/clubs, homework assistance, etc.)

3. Additional information and/or follow-up needed:
