

File: ECA

USE OF SECURITY CAMERAS ON SCHOOL PROPERTY

The School Committee recognizes its responsibility to promote school safety and foster a safe and effective learning environment for students and staff, as well as for the general public who have occasion to use school facilities. To promote safe and secure school facilities, the School Committee supports the use of security cameras in its schools, or on school grounds, as part of an overall security plan. Security cameras will be utilized only in public areas within the schools and on school property where there is no reasonable expectation of privacy. Video-only security cameras may be installed in locations such as major exterior entrances and exits, large gathering spaces including corridors, stairwells, cafeteria, lobbies and libraries, and school parking lots. With prior approval from the School Superintendent/Designee, cameras may at times be temporarily placed in classrooms, staff dining areas, offices, or other areas. No video cameras shall be installed in locker rooms or restrooms. All cameras, including "Pan, Tilt, Zoom" (PTZ) cameras, will be used only for security and safety purposes. The privacy of individuals will be respected at all times. Audio recording shall not be utilized by the School District.

To further the School Committee's objective, the School District's Emergency Response Team shall review the District's school safety and security plan and develop, implement and review District and school level safety practices. The School District Emergency Response Team shall also make recommendations to the Superintendent regarding the implementation and use of security cameras and other security measures as authorized by the School Committee.

Access to video feed and recordings shall be limited to school administration (Superintendent/Designee and School Principals/Designees), Legal Counsel, the Somerville Police Chief/Designee, and, with the permission of the Somerville Police Chief/Designee, other law enforcement agencies. Under no circumstances will the District's video feed or recording be duplicated or transmitted without the approval of the Superintendent/Designee or the Somerville Police Chief/Designee, unless in accordance with a Court order and/or subpoena or otherwise required by law. Video recordings of athletic events, concerts, and plays and other school events do not hold the same confidentiality because they are public events and therefore can be shown.

A video recording used for security purposes in school buildings and/or on school property shall be the sole property of the Somerville Public Schools. The Superintendent/Designee shall be the custodian of the video feeds and recordings. All video feeds and recordings will be secured to avoid tampering and to ensure confidentiality in accordance with applicable laws and regulations. The District shall retain video images for a minimum of 14 calendar days and up to 30 calendar days, unless the circumstances warrant retaining videos for a longer period (for example, if it is anticipated that a video may be needed as evidence in a legal proceeding).

The Superintendent/Designee shall take all necessary steps to ensure that the video security system is operating properly.

Appropriate signage will be posted at entrances to the school campus and/or at major entrances into school buildings notifying students, staff, and the general public of the District's use of security cameras.

Students and staff will receive additional written notification, as appropriate, regarding the use of security cameras in the school and/or school grounds. Such notification may include, but is not limited to, publication in student / parent handbooks and employee handbooks.

Members of the School Administration having normal access to school security camera video recordings will be required to have signed documentation on file with the office of the School Superintendent/designee indicating they will abide by this policy.

All Somerville Police Department protocols will be followed when the Somerville Police Department has access to Somerville Public Schools video feeds or recordings.

Approved: January 5, 2009

Approved as Revised: June 24, 2013