Use of Audio and Video for School Security

I. PURPOSE

The Mohawk Trail Regional School District School Committee authorizes the use of audio and video systems in specific areas of the Mohawk Trail Regional School District for the purpose of enhancing school safety and security. Our goals are to foster a safe and secure teaching and learning environment for students and staff, to ensure public safety for community members who visit or use our school property, and to diminish the potential for personal and district loss or destruction of property.

II. GENERAL PROTOCOLS

Signage and Notification:

Signage will be posted at school buildings and buses that notify students, parents, staff and the general public of the District’s use of video and audio systems. Students, parents and staff will receive additional notification at the beginning of the school year regarding the use of video and audio security systems in the schools, buses and on school grounds. Such notification will include, but not be limited to, staff handbooks and student handbooks.

Security System Placement:

The security video and audio systems may be installed in public areas only. These areas include, but are not limited to, the computer room (in accordance with the Memorandum of Agreement with the Mohawk District Education Association), buses, grounds, exterior entrances or exits to school buildings and large gathering spaces such as corridors, cafeteria, lobby and main entries. Audio recording will only be used on buses and other transportation vehicles.

Video and audio security systems will not be used where there is a reasonable expectation of privacy, including but not limited to restrooms, changing rooms, private offices, nurse’s offices, or locker rooms. In addition, video and audio security systems will not be used in classrooms except the computer room as noted above.

Viewing:

There will be no monitoring of live recordings, except for monitoring all exterior entrance/exits doors and in the case of a suspected emergency or safety concern. Reviewing the recordings will occur only when a suspected incident is committed inside or outside the building, on buses, etc. (e.g. vandalism, graffiti, misconduct, etc.).

Viewing the data is to be performed by authorized personnel that have been expressly designated by the principal or Superintendent of Schools.

A log book shall include the following details: the persons viewing the data, what event triggered the viewing, and the date/time viewed. The logbook shall be maintained by the building principal and will be made available to the Superintendent of Schools.

Surveillance system misuse shall be addressed on a case-by-case basis by the Superintendent of Schools.
There shall be no repercussions for the free exchange of ideas in civil discourse (that may be recorded) anywhere in the District.

**Limited Access to Recordings:**

Any video or audio recordings used for security purposes in school buildings, buses or grounds are the sole property of the District. Release of such videos will be made only as permissible pursuant to applicable laws and with the permission of the Superintendent or his/her designee. Access to video and audio recordings from security systems shall be limited to school administrators (Superintendent/designee, Principal/designee). Law enforcement officials (Chief of Police/designee) shall be granted access to video and audio security system recordings after giving prior notice to the School Superintendent/designee.

**Data Storage:**

All video and audio security recordings and logs are stored in a secure place to avoid tampering, and ensure confidentiality in accordance with applicable laws and regulations.

Recordings will be saved for thirty (30) days and automatically deleted, unless being used in an ongoing investigation.

Legal References: US Department of Justice, Office of Programs Published Research Report, Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act

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Mohawk Trail Regional School District
School Committee