A Message from Worthington City Schools   March 2019

As part of our on-going efforts to improve the safety of our schools, Worthington is beginning to implement visitor management systems. Below is an FAQ:

What are visitor management systems?
Visitor management systems are technology solutions that streamline the visitor sign-in process and track specific visitor data such as who is entering the school and when, the reason for the visit and who was visited. Additionally, many systems record photos of the visitors or scan driver's licenses that are presented by visitors not only to help confirm the identity of the presenter, but also to check for persons that should not be permitted to enter for a variety of reasons, including sex offender status, restraining orders or parental rights disputes. Most solutions also can be utilized on contractors that are visiting the building and will print a badge displaying specific times and locations for their visit. Many systems can also manage late student arrival and signing out procedures and print the passes to return to class.

Why is WCS utilizing a visitor management system?
The screening and tracking of guests and contractors is a school safety strategy recommended by safety specialists. Our staff has been trained to approach all visitors to double check that they have a legitimate purpose to be in the building. The badge will confirm that the visitor has been screened and has permission to be in the area making school a safer place for students.

How will WCS utilize the system?
We plan to require all visitors, substitutes, parent volunteers and contractors to sign in using the system. A visitor will scan a state-issued ID and indicate the purpose of the visit. A self-adhesive visitor pass with a photo will be printed. The visitor will check out by scanning the pass. In addition, the system will be used to track students signing in late or leaving school early.

Will an ID be required every time?
First time visitors will have the option of downloading a digital pass to their phone. The pass will allow faster check in during your next visit.

What if a guest doesn't have a state-issued ID?
Our office staff will assist the guest to sign in by collecting some personal information.

After testing two systems in January, we have decided to use the remainder of our state safety grant money to purchase SafeSchoolID systems. Users felt this system's "fast pass" feature would allow parents quicker access following their initial visit, reducing the number of times an actual license would need to be presented. Our goal is to have the system in place in all school buildings and the WEC this spring.

While we will not need new policy, we are working to develop guidelines to utilize this tool while protecting the human interaction and customer service approach our staff provides to visitors.