

Audio/Visual Monitoring

5.31.1a

As a progressive and innovative school system, Alexander City Schools Board of Education is consistently searching for methods to improve the teaching and learning process within the classroom, as well as seeking new technologies to improve the safety and security of all personnel within our school system. With the emergence of such technologies, Alexander City Schools will implement Audio/Visual devices within its classrooms, hallways, and common areas that will enhance these vital areas (safety, security, teaching and learning).

Inclusive use of Audio/Visual

Audio/Visual devices may be utilized in and around schools, to include classrooms, hallways, gymnasiums, and lunchrooms. Additionally, audio/visual equipment will be implemented on all school buses. Installation, acknowledgement, and use of audio/visual surveillance shall be in accordance with applicable laws pertaining to such use. The Alexander City Schools Board of Education shall also comply with applicable laws related to maintaining and securing recordings from said devices. The superintendent or designee is directed to develop regulations and guidelines governing the use of the audio/visual equipment, use, and subsequent recorded footage with applicable law and Board policy.

Exclusions of Audio/Visual use

Audio/Visual monitoring is **not** permitted in areas where there is a reasonable expectation of privacy (locker rooms, restrooms, conference rooms, and office spaces). Recording of teacher instruction for the purposes of completing a formal personnel performance evaluation is not intended to be covered by this policy and shall not be permitted except as provided by Alabama State Department of Education or mutually agreed upon by teacher and administrator with approval of the superintendent.

Proposed Guidelines/Procedures

Use of Audio/Visual

Placement and notification

1. Audio/Visual Enhancement equipment may be installed in and around schools, district buildings and school transportation vehicles/buses where there is a legitimate need for such equipment, as approved by the superintendent and Board of Education.
2. Audio/Visual Enhancement equipment will not be used or installed in areas where the public, students and/or staff have a reasonable expectation of privacy, such as locker rooms, restrooms, conference rooms, and office spaces.
3. Audio/Visual Enhancement equipment may be in operation 24 hours a day on a year round basis at any and all times, whether or not school is on session and whether or not the facilities are occupied.
4. Monitors depicting view of any Audio/Visual Enhancement images shall not be in view of the general public. Teachers will maintain images and recordings within their classrooms and request permission to release, duplicate, or otherwise use images outside the classroom.

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5. Conduct and comments in publicly accessible places (classrooms, libraries, hallways, customer services areas, lunchrooms, and gymnasiums) may be recorded by Audio/Visual Enhancement equipment.
6. Alexander City Schools District shall notify, staff and the public that Audio/Visual Enhancement equipment is present. This notification will be included in staff and student handbooks, proper signage at location, and school district website.
7. Specific notification will be provided when Audio/Visual recording equipment has been installed and activated within district buildings and vehicles.

Use of Audio/Visual Enhancement

1. The use of Audio/Video Enhancement equipment within classrooms and common areas with school buildings shall be supervised and controlled by the Superintendent or the Deputy Superintendent. The oversight of general security surveillance cameras within and around district facilities shall be controlled in collaboration with the Director of Safety and the Director of Technology. The use of security surveillance equipment located on district transportation vehicles/buses shall be under the direction of the Transportation Director and Coordinator. In the event of "Crisis Management" within Alexander City Schools, approved first responders may have access to Audio/Visual Enhancement equipment to assist in evacuation, security, and deployment of resources to given areas of the facility.
2. Staff and students are prohibited from unauthorized use, tampering with or otherwise interfering with video recordings and/or camera equipment. Violations will be subject to appropriate disciplinary actions.
3. All Directors and appropriate staff will review the use of Audio/Visual Enhancement and security surveillance guidelines annually to ensure all school board employees are knowledgeable of the policies and procedures.
4. Teachers utilizing the Audio/Visual Enhancement equipment for instructional practice may share live and recorded video footage within the school/classroom for instructional purposes only.
5. Audio/Visual recordings **may** be used as evidence that a student, staff member, or other personnel has engaged in behavior that violates state, federal, or local laws, as well as applicable Board policies.

Storage/Security of Recordings

1. The district shall provide reasonable safeguards including, but not limited to password protection, well-managed firewalls and controlled physical access rooms to protect the Audio/Visual Enhancement system from unauthorized personnel.
2. Audio/Visual Enhancement footage shall be stored for 14 days from initial recording. If no authorized request has been submitted during that timeframe, footage shall be deleted.
3. Audio/Visual Enhancement recordings held for review will be maintained in their original form pending resolution of concern/incident. High levels of confidentiality shall be maintained and all recordings shall be maintained in the superintendent's office. Access to recorded footage shall be based on appropriate policy and applicable law.
4. Audio/Video Enhancement recordings held by the district as student educational records and/or personnel records shall be maintained in accordance with applicable law and Board policy.

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The implementation of the Audio/Visual Enhancement Classroom Initiative is twofold. First, the installation and implementation of 24/7 security video feed allows for enhanced safety and security for students, teachers, and administrators within the district's facilities. Secondly, the technology associated with the Audio/Video Enhancement equipment provides teachers a professional learning tool that allows them to record instructional delivery to improve upon and share best practices. The following outlines the current procedures for this initiative.

To preserve the integrity of and the professionalism of classroom teachers, as well as, comply with student privacy rights afforded by FERPA, the 24/7 Security feature cannot be accessed by school administration or the general public. The Superintendent or Deputy Superintendent of Alexander City Schools are the only authorized personnel to access and view the security feed. In the event a "crisis" occurs within the building, approved Alexander City Police and first responders may access the security feed. The security footage is recorded 24/7 and stored within the system for 14 days. Video footage is not available after 14 days.

The administrative procedures for requesting security footage by administration or teachers are as follows:

1. A written and signed request must be submitted to the superintendent or deputy superintendent. The request should stipulate the reason for the request, date and time of concern, as well as any key players associated with the reason. Any request should consider the timeframe to ensure request is processed within 14 days.
2. If the request is approved, the superintendent or deputy superintendent shall have the footage pulled, saved to a file, and review the concern. The saved footage will be placed in a file where it will be numbered, dated, and stored. Viewing of the footage will be done in the privacy of the Central Office.
3. To ensure compliance with FERPA and student privacy rights, school administration and teachers do not have authority to share or allow others to view video footage without written permission from the superintendent or the Alexander City Schools Legal Counsel. In addition, FERPA compliance guidelines prevent Alexander City Schools from releasing security video footage as a result of an Open Records Request (ORR) unless ordered to do so by subpoena or court order.

The administrative procedures pertaining to Audio/Visual Enhancement security footage are in place to ensure appropriate process are communicated and followed by Alexander City School personnel.

REFERENCE(S):

**FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT OF 1974
FERPA
ACS STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT
ACS TEACHER HANDBOOK**

HISTORY:

ADOPTED: JANUARY 23, 2020