



Book	Policy Manual
Section	900 Community
Title	School Volunteers
Code	916
Status	Second Reading
Adopted	April 17, 2002
Last Revised	September 27, 2021
Prior Revised Dates	2/25/2019

Purpose

The Board recognizes that community volunteers can make valuable contributions to the educational program. The use of community volunteers is endorsed by the Board, subject to legal requirements and administrative procedures.

Definitions

Volunteer – adults serving in unpaid positions in which they are individually responsible for the welfare of a child or have “direct contact with children” (care, supervision, guidance or control of children, and routine interaction with children).

Adult – an individual eighteen (18) years of age or older.[\[1\]](#)

Certifications – refers to the child abuse history clearance statement, the state criminal history background check; and where applicable, the federal criminal history background check, required by the Child Protective Services Law.[\[2\]](#)[\[3\]](#)

Direct volunteer contact - the care, supervision, guidance or control of children and routine interaction with children.[\[8\]](#)

Person responsible for the child's welfare - a person who provides permanent or temporary care, supervision, mental health diagnosis or treatment, training or control of a child in lieu of parental care, supervision and control. [\[8\]](#)

Routine interaction - regular and repeated contact that is integral to a person's volunteer responsibilities.[\[8\]](#)

Visitor - a parent/guardian, adult resident, educator, official or other individual who is not a school employee or independent contractor, and who visits a school or attends or participates in an event or activity at a school, but whose role is less substantial than would be sufficient to meet the definition of volunteer for purposes of this policy.[\[11\]](#)

Volunteer - an adult, whose role is more than that of a visitor, who voluntarily offers a service to the district without receiving compensation from the district. A volunteer is not a school employee.

The two (2) classifications of volunteers are:

1. Position Volunteer - an adult applying for or holding an unpaid position with a school or a program, activity or service, as a person responsible for the child's welfare or having direct volunteer contact with children. Examples include, but are not limited to, field trip chaperones, tutors, coaches, activity advisors, recess or library aides, etc.

2. Guest Volunteer - an adult who voluntarily provides a service to the district, without compensation, who: (1) works directly under the supervision and direction of a school administrator, a teacher or other member of the school staff; and (2) does not have direct volunteer contact. Examples include, but are not limited to, volunteering to assist in classroom celebrations, school assemblies, or school concerts; reading to students; collecting tickets at sporting events; working concession stands; participating in "Career Day," etc.

Authority

The Board prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, marital status, creed, religion, ancestry, handicap/disability, age, sex, sexual orientation or national origin in the school environment and all district programs for volunteers. [2][3][4][5][6]

The Board directs that all volunteers shall be informed of conduct that is prohibited and the disciplinary actions that may be applied for violation of Board policies, administrative regulations (where applicable), rules and procedures.[1]

The Board authorizes the selection and use of parents/guardians, community members, and others as volunteers to assist and supplement regular district staff. The basic requirement of volunteer service will be an interest in the educational program, enjoyment in helping children, and a sincere belief that by volunteering, a contribution will be made to the learning process.

Any school volunteer program that will require additional financial support from the district budget will require a formal recommendation from the Superintendent and approval by the Board prior to implementation.

The administration is given authority to arrange with the district's liability insurance carriers for appropriate liability insurance coverage for the volunteers to cover them in the performance of their volunteer services.

All volunteers shall be expected to maintain professional, moral, and ethical relationships with district students that are conducive to an effective, safe learning environment.[4]

Delegation of Responsibility

The Superintendent or designee will develop a Volunteer Manual to assure the proper support for the volunteer programs of the district.

Guidelines

General

Each prospective volunteer shall complete and submit a volunteer application.

The names of all volunteers shall be submitted for approval by the designee of the Superintendent.

Upon approval, volunteers shall be placed on the Board list of approved volunteers.

Approval shall be required prior to beginning service as a volunteer.

A student, eighteen (18) years of age or older, who is volunteering for an event or activity sponsored by the school in which the student is enrolled and occurring on the school's grounds, shall not be required to submit certifications except when the event or activity is for children in the care of a child-care service or the student will otherwise be responsible for the welfare of a child.[10]

Certifications

State law requires all school volunteers having direct contact with children to obtain the following clearances:

1. PA Child Abuse History Certification – dated less than sixty (60) months old.
2. PA State Police Criminal History Record Information – dated less than sixty (60) months old.
3. Disclosure Statement for Volunteers – which is a statement swearing or affirming the applicant has not been disqualified from service by reason on conviction of designated criminal offenses or being listed as the perpetrator in a founded report of child abuse.[2][3][5]
4. If a volunteer has not been a resident of Pennsylvania during the entirety of the previous ten (10) year period, the volunteer must also submit the Federal Criminal History Report - dated less than twelve (12) months old.[3]

Such clearances as listed above must be repeated every sixty (60) months.[6]

If, under the pertinent laws or regulations, his/her criminal history/child abuse report would preclude him/her from being hired as an employee, that person may not be a volunteer.

Tuberculosis Test

Prior to participating in student activities, volunteers shall undergo a test for tuberculosis, when required by and in accordance with the regulations and guidance of the Pennsylvania Department of Health.[7][8]

Arrest or Conviction Reporting Requirements

Volunteers shall report to the Superintendent or designee, in writing, within seventy-two (72) hours, an arrest or conviction for any misdemeanor or felony or notification that the volunteer has been named as a perpetrator in a founded or indicated report pursuant to the Child Protective Services Law.[5]

The Superintendent or designee shall immediately require a volunteer to submit new certifications if the Superintendent or designee has a reasonable belief that the volunteer was arrested for or has been convicted of an offense required to be reported by law, was named as a perpetrator in a founded or indicated report, or has provided written notice of such occurrence.[5]

Failure to accurately report such occurrences may subject the volunteer to disciplinary action up to and including denial of volunteer service and criminal prosecution.[5]

Child Abuse Reporting

All volunteers who have reasonable cause to suspect that a child is the victim of child abuse shall make a report of suspected child abuse in accordance with applicable law, Board Policy 806 and any administrative regulations.[9][10]

Supervision

Each building administrator who uses volunteers in any capacity will be responsible for training said volunteers to perform the specific duties associated with their assignments.

The building administrator or designee will assume general authority and responsibility over all volunteers serving at that site.

Volunteers will not be asked to assume the professional responsibilities of the school staff. Volunteers may provide assistance that is supportive, when under the direction of a staff member.

Volunteers will not be permitted to directly administer student discipline nor will they be permitted to administer first aid, except in the case of an emergency.

Under no circumstances will a volunteer be considered an employee of the district. A volunteer will receive no wages from the district. The volunteer position is not a right, but rather a privilege that is conferred by the Board and the administration. As such, any volunteer position may be eliminated at any time for any reason. In addition, any volunteer may be removed from a volunteer position for any reason.

Volunteers shall attend orientation and training sessions, including specific training to the nature of their volunteer service, where appropriate. When training is provided for school employees relating to the legal obligations of employers and educational institutions, consideration shall be given to which volunteers should also receive that training.

Confidentiality

No volunteer shall be permitted access to confidential student information unless the supervisor has determined that such access is necessary for the volunteer to fulfill his/her responsibilities. Volunteers with access to confidential student information shall maintain the confidentiality of that information in accordance with district policies and procedures and applicable by law. If a volunteer has questions about the confidentiality of student information, the volunteer should consult with the building principal. [11]

Transportation

Volunteers who transport students in personal vehicles are not covered by insurance provided by the school district. Insurance coverage in this situation is through the volunteer's own insurance carrier.

Reimbursement for Expenses

Volunteers may be reimbursed for expenses incurred in the course of their volunteer service only when authorized in advance by the Superintendent or designee.

Registration Procedures

All volunteers will register with the Community Relations Office. A record of all cleared volunteers and required clearances will be maintained by the district Community Relations Office.

Volunteers will meet any standards that may be established by federal, state or local government, or by the Board or administration, from time to time. The volunteer must agree to be bound by all applicable privacy laws and regulations. In addition, the volunteer will adhere to all rules and regulations and administrative regulations governing the conduct of the district's professional employees.

Acknowledgment

Each volunteer shall affirm in writing that they have been provided with a copy of, have read, understand and agree to comply with this policy.

Senior Volunteer Tax Credit Program

Senior volunteer tax credit programs have been shown to provide necessary supports for academic programs while reducing the burden of property taxes on senior citizens who participate in such programs. The positive contributions of senior volunteers and their teamwork with teachers and students can result in a rewarding experience for all.

The Board establishes a Senior Tax Reduction Incentive Volunteer Exchange Program to allow individuals who are at least sixty (60) years of age, who own real property in the district and have resided within the district for at least ninety (90) days, to receive a real property tax credit in exchange for volunteer service in the district, as permitted by state law and this policy.[\[24\]](#)

The district may seek private and public funding sources to support the program.[\[25\]](#)

The Board may adopt and enforce reasonable rules and regulations governing the acceptance and participation of individuals in the program, in accordance with applicable law and Board policy.[\[1\]](#)[\[3\]](#)

All participants in the Senior Tax Reduction Incentive Volunteer Exchange Program shall comply with the guidelines set forth for other volunteers in the district, including, but not limited to, background check certifications, reports, training and confidentiality requirements.[\[3\]](#)[\[26\]](#)

Participants receiving other compensation from the district for their services shall not be eligible for the tax credit. Each volunteer service hour provided by an eligible participant shall be provided with a real property tax credit valued at no less than the minimum hourly wage, as required by law.[\[3\]](#)[\[27\]](#)[\[28\]](#)

The rate of a real property tax credit for a participant shall be established by the Board and may not exceed the total amount of real property taxes that are owed.[\[3\]](#)

The types of services that participants provide through the program must enhance and provide a direct public benefit to the academic program of the district.[\[3\]](#)

The program may not replace or supplant existing employee positions in the district.[\[29\]](#) Real property tax credits shall not be transferable to another individual.

Only one (1) participant per household shall be permitted in the program per fiscal year.

The Board reserves the right to suspend or discontinue the program at any time; however, participants who have earned real property tax credits shall be entitled to use them in accordance with this policy.

Legal

1. 23 Pa. C.S.A. 6303
2. 23 Pa. C.S.A. 6344
3. 23 Pa. C.S.A. 6344.2
4. Pol. 824
5. 23 Pa. C.S.A. 6344.3
6. 23 Pa. C.S.A. 6344.4
7. 24 P.S. 1418
8. 28 PA Code 23.44
9. 23 Pa. C.S.A. 6311
10. Pol. 806
11. Pol. 216
- 23 Pa. C.S.A. 6301 et seq
- 24 P.S. 510
- Pol. 123
- Pol. 123.1
- Pol. 123.2
- Pol. 907