

Policy Statement: The Western School District recognizes values and supports the positive contributions that individuals make while volunteering in our school communities.

1. Application

This policy applies to all schools and programs within the jurisdiction of the Western School District, and to all those who aspire to volunteer within those schools and programs.

2. Rationale

Western School District also recognizes its responsibility to ensure our students are cared for properly, and that appropriate measures are taken to select volunteers.

3. Definitions

Volunteer: An individual who, with the approval of the principal or District personnel, agrees to undertake a task that supports student learning within a classroom, a school or a setting directly related to a school activity. Such a task is undertaken without pay and under the supervision of a school administrator/ teacher or educational professional from within the District.

Low Risk Settings: Volunteers who are under the direct and constant supervision of a school administrator/ teacher or educational professional from within the District are considered to be in a low risk setting. A low risk setting might include the engagement of volunteers in open common areas of the school, or volunteers who do not come into contact with students, (e.g. volunteers assisting a teacher in the Learning Resource Centre, in the main office assisting with the recess order, or volunteers assisting with a Breakfast Program).

Medium Risk Settings: Volunteers who might be working with a large group of students in an isolated area of the school with frequent supervision by a school administrator/ teacher or educational professional from within the District are considered to be in a medium risk setting (for example; a volunteer non-teaching coach for a school team or extra-curricular club who meets with students in the gym or a room of the school where the teacher sponsor does periodic checks on the activities of the group).

High Risk Settings: Volunteers who work with small groups/individual students in an isolated area of the school, coach school teams, or participate in off-site field trips are considered to be in a high risk setting. These volunteers will be under

occasional supervision of a school administrator/ teacher or educational professional from within the District (e.g. a volunteer for an offsite fieldtrip to a post-secondary institution, a volunteer for an overnight trip with a team, etc.).

Certificates of Conduct: Refers to the screening process of requiring a criminal reference check by a police force including, but not limited to, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) and the Royal Newfoundland Constabulary (RNC).

1. Guidelines

1.1 Screening and Selection of Volunteers

- a) The school principal/District personnel shall assume responsibility for the overall screening and selection of volunteers.
- b) In selecting volunteers, attention shall be paid to the qualifications of volunteers and the age and number of children with whom the volunteers will interact.
- c) No volunteer activities shall take place until all forms required by policy are received and approved.
- d) Volunteers in low risk settings shall be required to complete a Volunteer Information Form and a Volunteer Agreement that will be reviewed by the school principal/ District personnel. A Certificate of Conduct will not be required for low risk volunteers.
- e) Volunteers in medium and high risk settings shall be required to complete a Volunteer Information Form and a Volunteer Agreement that will be reviewed by the school principal/ District personnel.
- f) Volunteers in medium and high risk settings shall also be required to obtain a Certificate of Conduct, including a vulnerable sector query, from a police force including, but not limited to, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) and the Royal Newfoundland Constabulary (RNC).
- g) A Certificate of Conduct is valid for a two-year period from date of issue.
- h) In the event a record of criminal offense is noted in the Certificate of Conduct, it is the responsibility of the volunteer to obtain a document from the provincial court which outlines the nature of the conviction.

- i) Upon receipt of the document outlining the nature of the conviction, the principal/ school board personnel shall contact the Director of Education or designate immediately to ask for direction. In such cases, no volunteer activities shall take place until direction is received from the Director of Education or his/her designate.
- j) The Western School District, as a public body, is governed by the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy (ATIPP) Act. The Western School District is committed to the protection of personal information in its custody or control. All forms and personal information collected through the volunteer screening process shall be treated as confidential, and will be collected, maintained, used, disclosed and disposed of in accordance with the Western School District Privacy Policy.

1.2 Orientation, Supervision, Evaluation and Recognition of Volunteers

- a) The school principal/ District personnel shall assume responsibility for the overall orientation, supervision, evaluation and recognition of volunteers.
- b) Where necessary, a school administrator/ District personnel/designate shall conduct an orientation which informs volunteers of applicable policies and procedures respecting discipline, confidentiality, disclosure of abuse, and other related matters.
- c) In all volunteer activities, a school administrator/ District personnel / designate shall be onsite and responsible for the overall supervision and evaluation of volunteers. Supervision will reflect the level of risk: low, medium, and high.
- d) The school administrator/ District personnel /designate shall determine an appropriate activity to recognize the value and efforts of volunteers. (e.g. Volunteer breakfast, evening social, certificate, etc.).

1.3 Conduct of Volunteers

- a) School records and data are confidential and access to this information shall be restricted to authorized employees of the school district. Volunteers shall not be permitted access to confidential information unless the information raises a health/safety concern and parents have given consent.

- b) The Western School District is governed by the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy (ATIPP) Act and the Western School District Privacy Policy. As such, any information gathered by a volunteer shall remain confidential. All information gathered shall only be used in the context of the volunteer activity, and not for any other purpose.
- c) Volunteers shall treat others with dignity and respect and will adhere to the guidelines and policies of the school and the school district.
- d) Volunteers complement the work of the educational professionals, but are never considered substitutes for the staff. More specifically, volunteers shall not be used as replacements for paid District personnel.
- e) There shall be no contractual commitment made with any volunteer relating to monetary compensation for volunteering in the school.

1.4 Liability and Insurance

- a) Volunteers are insured under the Commercial General Liability Policy while acting at the direction of, and within the scope of their duties for the Western School District.
- b) Volunteers should be aware that the District's insurance policy does not include a loss of income provision should the volunteer sustain an injury that prevents him/her from resuming normal employment.
- c) The transportation of students by a volunteer using their own vehicle or any other vehicle driven by the volunteer shall be governed by the district's Student Transportation policy. The school administrator shall ensure the guidelines and procedures of the Student Transportation policy are strictly adhered to.

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