

Community Relations

School Volunteers

The Orange Board of Education recognizes that volunteers can make many valuable contributions to our schools. The Board endorses a program encouraging community residents to take an active role in improving schools and to become school volunteers in schools subject to suitable regulations and safeguards.

Principals shall maintain a list of all regular volunteers in their schools (such as, but limited to: chaperones on field trips, aides, library and classroom volunteer assistance, grandparents, field days, etc.). Principals must submit such list to the Superintendent upon request.

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes

[10-4g](#) Parent and community involvement in schools; model programs; school-based teams.

[10-235](#) Indemnification of teachers, board members, employees and certain volunteers and students in damage suits; expenses of litigation.

54-254 Registration of person who has committed a felony for a sexual purpose.

Policy adopted: April 15, 2013

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Securing and Screening Volunteers

The Building Principal or his/her designee directs the use of volunteers within the school. Specifically, the Principal or designee directs volunteer recruitment, screening, placement, and training within the following perimeters:

- 1. Qualifications.** Volunteers may come from all backgrounds and all age groups. The main qualification for a volunteer is that he or she has a desire to give his or her time and talent in order to enrich student learning opportunities and the school community generally.
- 2. Persons Not Allowed to Serve as Volunteers.** No person who is a “registered sex offender,” may serve as a volunteer. Every time a new notification/online posting of registered sex offenders is received, the Building Principal or his/her designee shall review it for any person's name who has submitted a volunteer information form during that school year. Whenever someone submits a new volunteer information form, the Building Principal or designee shall review the sex offender list.
- 3. Background Check.** The Building Principal will request a volunteer submit to a fingerprint criminal background investigation if the individual will be working over a long period of time in direct contact with students where no staff member is continuously present or in other situations where a check would be prudent.
- 3. Recruitment.** School personnel may recruit volunteers through the following resources: parent(s)/guardians, parent organizations, retired teachers and other senior citizen groups, community businesses, local volunteer centers, and universities. If a staff member, other than the Principal, recruits a volunteer, the staff member must provide the volunteer's name and address to the Principal in order to begin the volunteer registration process.
- 4. Role.** Volunteers serve only in an auxiliary capacity under the direction and supervision of a staff member; they are not a substitute for a member of the school staff. Volunteers do not have access to confidential student school records.

5. Selection, Placement, and Supervision. Volunteer selection and placement shall be on the basis of the volunteer's qualifications and availability and the school's needs. A volunteer will be assigned to a staff member only with the staff member's consent. The relationship between a volunteer and staff member should be one of mutual respect and confidence.

6. Screenings. Screening volunteers is critical because of the vulnerability of the population the school district serves. Each volunteer must register in the school's main office at the beginning of each visit and wear a name tag while in the building. Unless he or she has already done so during the current academic year, the volunteer must complete an information form and waiver. Absent an indication on the form that the volunteer may not qualify, (e.g. the volunteer is a convicted felon) the volunteer may proceed to the assigned activity.

A request to volunteer or to continue volunteering will be denied if the volunteer behaves in any manner that demonstrates he or she is not a good role model or is otherwise detrimental to the school environment. Examples of such behavior include: swearing, failing to be dependable, failing to follow the supervisor's instructions, committing any criminal act on school grounds or at a school activity, touching a student in a rude or overly forceful manner, failing to dress in an appropriate manner, or violating any school rule.

7. Training. Each academic year, when a person first completes the volunteer registration form, the Principal or designee should give the person a copy of this administrative procedure along with other pertinent information. The staff member to whom the volunteer is assigned is responsible for explaining his or her expectations of the volunteer. The Principal or designee should arrange appropriate training opportunities for those volunteer activities requiring a skill or knowledge base, e.g., working in the computer lab.

Regulation approved: April 15, 2013