

POLICY 240 VOLUNTEERS IN SCHOOLS

The Board of Education of School District No. 83 (North Okanagan-Shuswap) believes that the education of students is an undertaking that should be shared among its employees, parents and members of the community. The active involvement of parents and appropriate use of volunteers as helpers has the potential to provide considerable benefit to the intellectual and social development of students. In addition, the participation of volunteers increases communication and positive relationships between the school, parents and the community. Consequently, the Board encourages the use of volunteers to support the work of employees.

Involvement of volunteers is encouraged in activities for which the volunteer is qualified and which do not interfere or replace employees performing their regular duties (*School Act Section 26.1*). Volunteers shall perform tasks only under the supervision and guidance of staff.

While encouraging the community context of schooling, the Board expects its schools to be a safe and secure environment. Therefore, the use of volunteers must be supported by appropriate safeguards respecting the selection and use of volunteers.

Guidelines

1. Selection of Volunteers

- 1.1. In order to reinforce a sense of community, volunteers are encouraged and welcomed from within the community at large. Efforts should be made to involve a wide representation of the school and community.
- 1.2. Volunteers are to be selected on their ability to interact positively with students, skill in performing needed services, previous related experiences, interest in the activity, and personal character.
- 1.3. The Principal, or designate, is responsible for approving volunteers, and for decisions regarding the continuation or discontinuation of a volunteer's services.
- 1.4. It is the responsibility of the Principal, or designate, to ensure the screening of potential volunteers includes a signed release for a criminal record check and the information acquired is kept absolutely confidential.
- 1.5. Should a record search of a volunteer indicate a criminal offense, the Superintendent, or designate, shall determine if the offense or offenses are such to prohibit participation as a school volunteer.

- 1.6. The cost of the criminal record check required by the School District shall be assumed by the School District.

2. Utilization of Volunteers

- 2.1. A cooperative team approach among staff members for the management of volunteers shall be used.
- 2.2. A program of orientation and training for volunteers shall be arranged by the Principal, or designate.
- 2.3. Volunteers will not provide services that would result in the displacement of an employee or a reduction in their assignment.
- 2.4. Volunteers shall not be permitted access to student records and/or personal or potentially discreet information, with the exception of telephone numbers upon Principal approval. Volunteers are in a position of trust and personal information and behaviour pertaining to students must be treated with the appropriate discretion.
- 2.5. Volunteers shall be covered by School Protection Program Insurance while engaged in activities authorized by the School District or a school.
- 2.6. Volunteers who use a private vehicle in the transportation of students shall be covered by a Special Excess Third Party Legal Liability Insurance policy as provided in Regulation 8050.01R Private Vehicle Use.
- 2.7. Anyone who will be provided access to students is required to have a current criminal record check on file at the site.