

SCHOOL VOLUNTEERS

The District recognizes the valuable contributions made to the school programs by the volunteer assistance of parents and other citizens. The Superintendent is responsible for developing and implementing procedures for the selection and utilization of volunteers. The Superintendent may also develop such additional training requirements as he/she deems appropriate for volunteers and may establish such health and medical screening criteria and standards as he/she deems appropriate for volunteers. School district employees who desire the assistance of a volunteer should request a volunteer through proper administrative channels.

Guests

A guest is an invitee of the District for the purpose of a single presentation or occasional event. Guests shall always be accompanied by staff while in a school building. No guest shall be permitted to be alone with a student or students during the school day or any school activity. Guests shall only be admitted in schools in accord with the building visitor procedures. Any guest who presents a risk to student health or safety shall be considered a trespasser and shall be required to vacate the school premises.

Procedure for School Volunteers

All school volunteers will be required to undergo a background investigation and a criminal records check prior to volunteering. "School Volunteer" means any individual who provides a service to the District without pay or any form of compensation, and includes, but is not limited to, the following: (*here and after titled "volunteer"*)

1. Comes in direct contact with students, meeting regularly without the direct supervision of a Merrimack School District employee;
2. Volunteers who will be involved in extended overnight trips;
3. Any other volunteer so designated by the Superintendent or his/her designee;

All school volunteers are subject to the provisions of Policy GBCD – Background Investigation and Criminal Records Check. No individual shall be considered a volunteer unless they have been approved to serve as a volunteer by a school district administrator.

School Volunteer Application and Selection

Persons wishing to volunteer at the District must complete a *Volunteer Application*, describing their skills, interests and availability. Also, the volunteer shall fill out a *Confidentiality of Student/Employee Information Agreement*. Such forms will be made available at the school/district website or upon request at the school or district office. The Superintendent is authorized to develop additional procedures for selecting and approving Volunteers.

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Every school volunteer must complete the Merrimack School District's two Risk Management courses through Primex (*or other trainings identified by the Superintendent*) titled: *Anti-Bullying for Schools K-12* and *Understanding Sexual Harassment*. Volunteer applicants must share their certificates of completion of both of these courses with the Principal's office before their application can be accepted.

Volunteer selection will be made based on the qualifications and availability of the volunteer. They shall be assigned only to those teachers who have requested volunteer assistance. Staff should request volunteers through administrative channels for selected activities and as resource persons.

Volunteer assignments shall be made by the school administrator or designee.

Volunteers will be notified yearly of their responsible supervisor.

Volunteers shall be provided appropriate training at the building level consistent with their tasks and existing district standards. This training shall be developed under leadership of the principal. Exceptions would be district-wide programs established by the administration whereby general volunteer programs would be defined.

Volunteers serve at the pleasure of the District's administrators and shall reflect and model the character traits and moral conduct that are expected of the District's staff and shall comply with all applicable laws, regulations and District policies, including but not limited to, the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), Pupil Safety and Violence Prevention Act.

A volunteer may be asked to terminate his/her services when circumstances, in the judgement of the administrator, necessitate termination. Any volunteer who is insubordinate, incompetent, presents a risk to student health or safety, fails to act in a manner consistent with the Code of Conduct and Ethics for educators, engages in any criminal conduct, engages in any discriminatory conduct, or fails to meet the expectations of their volunteer position or the applicable policies of the District may be dismissed. The decision of the school administrator shall be final and there shall be no appeal.

School Volunteer Duties

Selected volunteers will serve in the capacity of assistants and will not be assigned to roles that require specific professional training. Instructional services shall be rendered only under the supervision of certified staff.

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All volunteers will sign a confidentiality agreement and shall refrain from discussing the performance or actions of a student except with the student's teacher, counselor, Principal, or other school district personnel who has a legitimate educational purpose for discussing such information. The Confidentiality Agreement is included as Appendix IJOC-R.

Volunteers will refer to their immediate supervisor or other designated employee for any concern(s) which may arise, whether of an instructional, medical or operational nature.

The district will incur the cost of the fingerprinting requirements for school volunteers. No volunteer will be considered a "school volunteer" until the completion and return of the criminal records check and all required coursework/training. The Superintendent may waive this requirement under special circumstances and to the extent permitted by law.

No New Liability

Nothing in this policy or any procedure shall be interpreted to create any new liability or obligation on the part of the District.

Legal References:

RSA 189:13-a, School Employee and Designated School Volunteer Criminal History Records Check

Appendix: IJOC-R

1st Reading: October 19, 2020

2nd Review: November 2, 2020

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