

VOLUNTEERS IN SCHOOLS

Background

Parent volunteers are a valuable resource to enhance programs and services in schools. Parents and community members can make a strong contribution to schools in carrying out a wide range of activities within and outside the classroom. Principals and staff are encouraged to invite parents and community members to be involved and to make volunteers feel part of the school team. As well, parents and the community have a responsibility to make their interest in volunteering known to school staff.

Procedures

1. Parent volunteers are to work under the guidance and supervision of the Principal or designate in the school.
2. The Principal has a responsibility to provide a thorough orientation for volunteers which is to include information pertaining to their role, responsibilities, school regulations and the code of ethics for volunteers in the school.
3. Parent and community volunteers are to receive appropriate direction and training for the tasks they have been asked to perform in the school.
4. Parent volunteers are to exhibit an attitude of support for the school staff and school program.
5. When a parent or community volunteer is taking responsibility for a student or group of students, that parent or guardian is to be informed and consent to that contact.
6. Volunteers will provide a confidential disclosure as part of the application for volunteering by responding to the following questions:
 - 6.1 Have you ever held a teacher's certificate or qualification to teach that has been suspended or cancelled?
 - 6.2 Have you ever been convicted of, or are you presently charged with any criminal offense of a sexual nature?
 - 6.3 Have you ever been convicted of, or are you presently charged with any criminal offense involving a minor?
 - 6.4 Have you ever had your driver's license suspended?
7. If a volunteer answers "yes" to any of the confidential disclosure questions, the Principal will ask that volunteer to provide a criminal records check.
8. The Division will provide a letter indicating its need for a criminal record check. If there is a fee levied, the Division will reimburse.

9. On receipt of the criminal records check, the Principal, in consultation with the School Community Council, will determine if the volunteer is to be allowed to participate in the program.
10. Volunteers who are transporting students are to have a valid Saskatchewan operator's license and are to be free from driving convictions that would jeopardize the safety of students.
11. Schools are asked to develop a code of ethics for volunteers in their school which could include the following:
 - 11.1 Provide role expectations before volunteers start.
 - 11.2 Work as part of the school team.
 - 11.3 Accept constructive feedback from school staff regarding work performance and make appropriate changes.
 - 11.4 Treat all students with respect and consideration and use a positive approach in all interactions with staff and students.
 - 11.5 Hold confidential, all privileged information regarding students, school staff or school activities.
 - 11.6 Be professional in dealing with staff and avoid gossip sessions about issues that may arise at the school.
 - 11.7 Use proper channels when offering any criticism of staff of school.
 - 11.8 Be prompt and observe school rules and procedures.

Reference: Sections 85, 87, 108, 109, 175, 231 Education Act