

Department: Human Resources
Section: Employee and Labour Relations

Student safety is a top priority of the Annapolis Valley Regional School Board and every effort is made to mitigate student exposure to risk. It is essential that volunteers in the schools understand the role, responsibilities, expectations and standards for volunteering in schools.

Specifically

- 1.0 The Principal will oversee the selection of and the procedures for all volunteers in the school.
- 2.0 There is a distinction between a visitor and a volunteer at the school. For the purposes of this policy, they are defined as:
 - 2.1 **Visitor** – an individual who enters the school who is not an employee or volunteer. A visitor includes, but is not limited to, a guest speaker, an individual making a delivery, a community member assisting at annual school events, a School Advisory Council/Home and School/Parent Teacher Association member, and anyone attending a meeting with school staff.
 - 2.2 **Volunteer** – an individual who interacts with students in an environment that is not supervised at all times by Annapolis Valley Regional School Board staff. A volunteer includes, but is not limited to, a coach, an advisor for extra-curricular activities, a driver, a chaperone for trips and social events, a regular classroom/school helper.
- 3.0 The principal will ensure that all volunteers who have expressed an interest in working in their school are screened to ensure the right match is made between the work to be done and the person who will do it. Screening practices are at the discretion of the principal and may include, but not limited to, the following steps as recommended by Volunteer Canada's Safe Steps Screening Program and the Nova Scotia Department of Education and Early Childhood Development *Best Practice Guide for Screening School Volunteers*:
 1. Determine the risk;
 2. Determine the requirements of the volunteer position and the respective screening requirements;
 3. Establish a fair, consistent and appropriate recruitment process;
 4. Use a standardized volunteer application form (see Appendix A);
 5. Conduct interviews, where appropriate;
 6. Conduct references, where appropriate;
 7. Request a Criminal Records Check (including Vulnerable Sector Check) and Child Abuse Register Search be submitted to Human Resources Department before commencing volunteering;
 8. Conduct orientation and training sessions, where appropriate;
 9. Support and supervise;
 10. Provide follow up and feedback to volunteers where appropriate.

- 4.0 The principal will ensure that volunteers are screened through the Child Abuse Register Search and complete a Criminal Records Check, in compliance with the Board's policies and administrative procedures. These screening tools must be updated every three years.
- 5.0 The Human Resources Department will maintain a list of volunteers who have been screened for the Child Abuse Register Search and have completed a Criminal Records Check. The principal will be advised when the process has been completed.
 - 5.1 Principal may also verify with the Human Resources Department if a potential volunteer has already completed the screening process and is within the three year window for approval.
- 6.0 In any instance where an invitation to volunteer in the Annapolis Valley Regional School Board's schools has been given and the Criminal Records Check or Child Abuse Register Search indicates that the volunteer could pose a risk to students (i.e., the person has a criminal record for acts of child abuse or is found to be on the Child Abuse Registry), the invitation to volunteer shall be withdrawn immediately.
 - 6.1 In all other cases where there is a criminal record, the Director of Human Resources will make a decision regarding the volunteer's suitability and may consult with the school principal.
 - 6.2 It is the responsibility of any Board volunteer, after having completed the screening process, to contact the school principal or the Director of Human Resources should they be subject to an investigation or conviction under the Criminal Code of Canada.
- 7.0 Completed Criminal Records Check and Child Abuse Register Search documents will be recorded and filed in the Human Resources Department. All information will be dealt with on a confidential basis.
- 8.0 The principal will implement a set of general expectations for volunteers who assist in the schools. Attached as **Appendix A**, are **Expectations for Volunteers** and a **Volunteer Application Form**.
- 9.0 The principal will ensure volunteers working in the school receive a copy of the school's Expectations for Volunteers and sign a Volunteer Application Form. Volunteers have a duty to abide with Board policies and procedures and volunteers need to be aware that school staff has a responsibility to report any volunteer behaviour deemed to be inappropriate or pose a risk to student and staff safety.
- 10.0 Volunteers must adhere to the specific responsibilities and expectations defined by the principal.

Monitoring

- The Director of Human Resources is responsible for the implementation, monitoring and revision of this administrative procedure.
- This administrative procedure will be monitored annually.

Superintendent Approved: June 2/99
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Monitoring Date: Annually
Revised: October 19/05; January 12/15