VOLUNTEER

A volunteer is a person who renders services for or on behalf of the District on District premises or at a school-sponsored or school-related activity on or off school property and does not receive compensation. [See GKG(LEGAL)]

The District encourages the use of volunteers to complement and supplement District staff. [See GKG(LOCAL)]

REQUIREMENTS FOR VOLUNTEERS

An individual interested in serving as a volunteer with the District must:

1. Be at least 21 years of age, if volunteering as a driver, and at least 18 years of age for other volunteer roles;

2. Complete an application before beginning volunteer activities (applications are located on the District’s website); and

3. Agree to a criminal history record check, using a current driver’s license or another form of photo identification issued by a governmental entity in the United States. [See GKG(LEGAL)]

Information provided on the application must match the information of the photo identification. Examples of valid documents include:

a. Driver’s license from any state in the United States;

b. Photo identification card issued by the state of Texas;

c. U.S. military identification card;

d. U.S. passport;

e. Student/work visa issued by the U.S. government; or

f. Resident alien card

If an applicant is “approved” as a volunteer, the identification must be submitted for verification at the campus the first time the person volunteers on the campus.

EXCEPTION

If an individual does not possess a form of identification containing the person’s photograph issued by a governmental entity in the United States, the District may choose to make an exception and not conduct a criminal history check if:

1. The person is not volunteering as a driver; and

2. The principal or designee approves an exception to the criminal history record check requirement when:

a. The individual is the parent, grandparent, or guardian, and will be accompanied by a District employee while on campus; or
b. The person is volunteering for a single event on campus.

An individual will not be allowed to perform any duties or volunteer work without an approved criminal history record check (or an approved exception to the criminal history record check, if applicable) and approval of the principal or designee. [See GKG(LEGAL)]

**VOLUNTEER DRIVER**

A volunteer who will be providing transportation to students for a school-related activity must have a complete criminal history record check on file and must complete the Volunteer Driver Agreement Form annually. [See GKG(EXHIBIT)] The driver must have a valid Texas driver’s license and insurance coverage and liability provisions as listed on the form.

Any applicant for a volunteer driver position who has a conviction for driving while intoxicated (DWI) or driving under the influence of drugs (DUID), including offenses reduced to obstructing public highway or passageway, will not transport students or drive a District vehicle for a period of ten years from the date of conviction. [See DBAA]

The District will not be liable for any injuries that occur to students riding in vehicles that are not provided by the school.

**CRIMINAL HISTORY RECORD CHECKS**

There is no cost to the volunteer for the initial criminal history record check. If additional verification is necessary, the volunteer must pay all costs associated with any subsequent criminal history record checks.

The District may not release information collected about a person in order to obtain a criminal history record check, including the person’s name, address, phone number, driver’s license number, other identification number, and fingerprint records, except:

1. To comply with Government Code Chapter 22, Subchapter C;
2. By court order; or
3. With the consent of the person who is the subject of the information.

The District will destroy the information not later than the first anniversary of the date the information is received. [See DBAA] Information about individual volunteers and duties they perform should be retained until superseded or date of separation plus three years.

Not all offenses prevent a parent or individual from volunteering. Automatic disqualifiers are convictions for sex crimes and crimes against children.
The District reserves the right not to approve an applicant or to discontinue the volunteer services from any individual, including, but not limited to, those whose criminal history record check indicates an arrest or conviction for a felony, a crime against people, an offense that poses a risk to children, a job-related crime, repeated arrests, or any other criminal activity judged to be inappropriate for a volunteer. [See DBAA]

Criminal history record checks will be completed at least annually as follows:

1. Background investigations will not be initiated without a written request to the director of the office of professional standards or designee.

2. Information contained in criminal history records will not be released unless authorized by the office of professional standards.

An applicant who is not approved to volunteer can contact the office of professional standards for information. [See DBAA]

Volunteers will not replace paid staff. Volunteer positions are designed to provide individuals who want to volunteer an opportunity to offer their skills and time in a way that suits them while benefiting the wider community and themselves.

Volunteers should be used as an integral part of the education of all children, in meaningful and productive roles as support for the campus and the District mission, goals, and needs.

Each campus principal or designee will coordinate the campus volunteer program and ensure that volunteers are recruited, screened, trained, and placed in appropriate activities, in accordance with District policy and campus needs.

The District's volunteer program will include:

1. An effective training program for paid staff and prospective volunteers; and

2. The use of paid staff to plan and implement the volunteer program.

The District volunteer specialist will provide a central coordinating point for effective volunteer engagement within the organization.

The District volunteer specialist will:

1. Implement and maintain a District-wide, outcome-based volunteer program to enhance student achievement and complement the work of the District staff;
2. Provide support to the school-based volunteer program through the development of strategies for recruiting, training, and recognizing volunteers;

3. Collaborate with principals, school personnel, parent organizations, District leadership, and the community to ensure that volunteers serve in an equitable manner throughout the District and where needed the most;

4. Manage a District-wide volunteer database to generate meaningful reports for leadership and staff concerning the work of volunteers and the impact on academic achievement;

5. Ensure compliance with national, state, and District policies and procedures;

6. Train and guide school staff on professional best practices and emerging trends on volunteerism;

7. Support and facilitate informational forums and presentations for families on volunteering; and

8. Make the District a viable and outstanding partner with the faith-based community, nonprofit organizations, and corporate volunteers.

The principal or department head is responsible for all volunteer opportunities at his or her school or department.

The principal or department head will:

1. Designate a staff member to be the campus volunteer coordinator to coordinate, implement, and manage the volunteer program;

2. Ensure that all staff members support and assist the volunteer coordinator in the implementation of the volunteer program;

3. Require front-office staff to verify that the approved volunteer’s photo identification first name, last name, date of birth, and identification number match information provided in the Raptor’s volunteer profile and that the photo matches the holder of the ID;

4. Require front-office staff to scan photo identification into the approved volunteer’s profile the first time the person volunteers on the campus;

5. Require appropriate staff members to attend training related to the volunteer program and volunteer management system;
6. Allow time at faculty meetings to share with staff the volunteer program’s status and its contributions to the campus goals;

7. Assist with the development of volunteer opportunities for special parent populations or community groups;

8. Assign a room, office, or space for volunteers, if available.

9. Provide recognition and awards for volunteers;

10. Submit nominations for the annual District-wide volunteer appreciation event;

11. Evaluate the campus volunteer program with the volunteer coordinator; and

12. Ensure that volunteer program policies and procedures are followed.

The campus volunteer coordinator is a staff member assigned by the principal. Ideally, this individual will have the authority to enlist the cooperation of others and the broad perspective to appreciate the vast potential outcomes of the volunteer program. The volunteer coordinator will:

1. Function as the liaison between the faculty/staff and the volunteers, as well as the District’s volunteer specialist;

2. Manage the volunteer program, including the criminal history record check process;

3. Enlist the help of a parent or community member volunteer to assist with the coordination of the volunteer program;

4. Attend volunteer coordinator training;

5. With the principal’s approval, conduct a volunteer needs assessment with teachers and staff and send a recruitment letter to all parents (letter templates are available in the volunteer coordinator manual);

6. Meet with the principal and PTA/PTO representative to assess the school’s volunteer needs and establish priorities;

7. Ensure that all volunteers receive appropriate training by:
   a. Referring volunteers to District trainings provided by the volunteer specialist;
   b. Conducting a training for volunteers at the campus; or
   c. Making certain that each volunteer reads the volunteer handbook and signs an acknowledgment;
8. Interview volunteers when necessary, and place them in assignments according to the school’s needs and each volunteer’s skills and abilities;

9. Ensure the confidentiality and security of any volunteer information;

10. Submit a monthly report to the principal and volunteer specialist regarding the school’s volunteers, their activities, and the impact on student achievement or campus goals;

11. Plan an appreciation event, with the help of the principal, for volunteers; and

12. Provide input to the principal on potential volunteer award nominations for the annual District-wide volunteer appreciation event.

**FRONT OFFICE PERSONNEL**

1. Welcome and inform current and potential volunteers of the policies and procedures for becoming a volunteer;

2. Use the volunteer management system to check volunteers in and out;

3. Verify that the approved volunteer’s photo identification first name, last name, date of birth, and identification number match information provided in the Raptor’s volunteer profile and that the photo matches the holder of the ID;

4. Scan photo identification into each approved volunteer’s profile the first time the person volunteers on the campus; and

5. Inform and update the volunteer coordinator of all new and potential volunteers.

**TEACHERS AND STAFF**

1. Receive information about the volunteer policies and procedures; and

2. Refer potential volunteers to the volunteer coordinator.

**OFFICE OF PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS**

The office of professional standards will:

1. Conduct criminal history record checks; and

2. Maintain criminal history records pertinent to volunteers for a year.

**VOLUNTEERS**

Each volunteer will:
1. Attend orientation and training sessions appropriate to the type of volunteer service, including information regarding:
   a. General job responsibilities and limitations;
   b. School facilities, routines, and procedures;
   c. Work schedule and place of work; and
   d. Expected relationship with the campus or department staff;

2. Work under the direction and supervision of a teacher or other member of the school or department staff;

3. Use the visitor management system to check in at the front office when arriving, wear a badge while at school, and check out when leaving;

4. Seek the aid of appropriate personnel in case of discipline problems or suspected mental health or drug/alcohol problems;

5. Record hours of service, as directed by the campus volunteer coordinator;

6. Keep any information accessed in the school, department, or classroom confidential [see FL];

7. Report all instances of suspected child abuse or neglect as required by law [see FFG]; and

8. Abide by the rules of the District and the campus [see the volunteer handbook].

**LICENSE AND CERTIFICATION**

Individuals cannot volunteer in positions that require a license or certification.

**PROVIDING MEDICAL TREATMENT**

Volunteers are not authorized to provide any medical treatment or prescribe medication. A volunteer should refer a student needing medical attention or medication to the school nurse or other authorized employee. [See FFAC]

**DRESS AND GROOMING**

The dress and grooming of volunteers should be clean, neat, and in a manner appropriate for his or her assignment and in accordance with any other standards established by the District. [See DH]

**LIABILITY AND INSURANCE**

A volunteer is immune from civil liability to the same extent as a District employee under Education Code 22.0511. However, this section of law does not limit the liability of a person for intentional misconduct or gross negligence. [See GKG(LEGAL)]
Each volunteer must release, discharge, and indemnify the District, their representatives, and employees from any and all liability related to volunteer activities, on District property or off site.

Each volunteer is responsible for his or her own insurance for losses, illness, or injuries that may occur while participating in the program.

**CONFIDENTIALITY**

Each volunteer must maintain confidentiality of all proprietary or privileged information involving any employee, volunteer, student, parent, or District information.

A volunteer is allowed access to student records if the volunteer has a legitimate educational need for the records. [See FL]

A volunteer should not share personal information unless it is necessary for the performance of the assignment.

**STANDARDS OF CONDUCT**

No volunteer should reach out or actively “friend,” “follow,” or correspond with any student through social media platforms, such as Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, or any other social media platform not directly managed by the District. Any social media interaction with students should occur through a District-administered platform as part of the volunteer’s assignment or program and with the consent of the student’s parent or guardian. A volunteer must also refrain from posting photos or information of students on social media. Any professional work done as part of a volunteer assignment will become property of the District and not the volunteer.

The District prohibits harassment, including sexual harassment, of any employee or student. [See DIA and FFH]

Each volunteer will demonstrate exemplary customer service in all interactions with students, staff, parents, other volunteers, and visitors. Customer service is defined as the intentional effort to understand and exceed the customer’s needs in a responsive and positive manner.

Each volunteer should maintain appropriate, professional relationships with students and parents.

Each volunteer must avoid promoting any specific business, commercial products, or brand names.

No volunteer should propose any personal or religious doctrine or belief to students.

Volunteers are authorized to act as representatives of the campus or department only as specifically indicated in their volunteer position descriptions and only to the extent of such written specifications.
Volunteers should refrain from making personal phone calls, texting, or eating during the volunteer assignment, unless authorized by District staff.

For safety and efficiency, a volunteer should not bring children along to volunteer.

Each volunteer must inform the staff supervisor or volunteer coordinator when expecting to be absent, ideally as far in advance as possible, but no less than 24 hours in advance.

**POSITION DESCRIPTION**

A volunteer position description must be in place for each volunteer role to provide volunteers with a clear, complete, and current description of the duties and responsibilities of the position.

Each volunteer will receive specific, on-the-job volunteer training on the information and skills necessary to perform the volunteer assignment. The timing and methods for delivery of such training should be appropriate to the complexity and demands of the position and the capabilities of the volunteer.

**TRAINING**

Staff who will be in a supervisory capacity of volunteers will have primary responsibility for design and delivery of on-the-job training to those volunteers assigned to them.

A volunteer may supervise other volunteers, provided that the supervising volunteer is under the direct supervision of a paid school staff member.

Any volunteer who is reassigned to a new position should be screened and trained for the new position.

Volunteers should be informed of any hazardous aspects, materials, equipment, processes, or persons they may encounter while performing volunteer work and will be trained and equipped in methods to deal with all identified risks.

Each volunteer should be familiar with the District’s emergency and preparedness procedures available on the District’s website.

Volunteers must report any injuries or hazards to the principal, department head, or designee.

**MEDIA INQUIRIES**

Any press inquiries will be referred to the school principal or designee or to the District’s communications department.

**TRS RETIREES**

A person who retires through TRS must wait a minimum of 30 calendar days before volunteering.
A volunteer who has cause to believe that a child’s physical or mental health or welfare has been adversely affected by abuse or neglect by any person shall immediately make a report as required by law.

If the alleged or suspected abuse or neglect involves a person responsible for the care, custody, or welfare of the child, the report must be made to the Texas Department of Family and Protective services. [See FFG]

A person acting in good faith who reports or assists in the investigation of a report of alleged child abuse or neglect or who testifies or otherwise participates in a judicial proceeding arising from a report, petition, or investigation of alleged child abuse or neglect is immune from any civil or criminal liability that might otherwise be incurred or imposed. [See FFG]

A person commits a Class A misdemeanor if he or she is required to make a report and knowingly fails to do so.

The District accepts the volunteer services of its own employees as volunteers if the service is given totally without any coercive nature, involves work outside the scope of normal duties, and is provided outside usual working hours. Employees who volunteer must follow all the usual volunteer procedures.

A volunteer is encouraged to resolve concerns informally with the campus or department supervisor. Volunteers and staff may share concerns with the volunteer coordinator as well. If a concern persists, the volunteer should speak with the principal or designee. If parties involved do not reach a satisfactory resolution at the campus, the volunteer or staff should contact the District volunteer specialist.

A volunteer may be dismissed for continued absenteeism; smoking on campus; carrying a prohibited item on campus; gross misconduct or insubordination; being under the influence of alcohol or drugs; theft of property or misuse of equipment; mistreatment of parents, students, or staff members; failure to abide by policies or procedures; failure to perform an assignment; or for any reason determined to be in the best interest of the District.

A volunteer may be reimbursed for actual and necessary expenses in accordance with District guidelines. [See GKG(LEGAL)]

A system of recognition that includes volunteers and staff should be in place on an ongoing basis. Recognitions may include daily interactions and more formal recognitions of volunteers’ contributions. The recognition system may include:
1. Recognition for staff who work well with volunteers (volunteers and school staff should identify appropriate staff to receive such awards);

2. An annual volunteer recognition event to highlight and reward the contributions of volunteers to the goals of the District and campus; and

3. Ongoing, daily support of volunteers to create a culture of respect and inclusiveness.