



PROCEDURE

SO126

Volunteers

Board Received: June 28, 2021 Review Date: September 2025

Accountability:

1. Frequency of Reports - As needed
2. Criteria for Success - Process adheres to Board Procedure
- School Programs are enhanced through adequate volunteers

Procedures:

1.0 Definitions

A volunteer in a school may be a parent or guardian who currently has a child enrolled in the system, a member of the community, a student or a Board employee, including a coach, who agrees to undertake, without pay or for academic credit, a designated task which supports a classroom, a classroom excursion, a school or a system-wide program.

2.0 Roles and Responsibilities

2.1 Role of Principal and Staff

The principal, or designate, is responsible for the following:

- determining the volunteer needs of a school;
- recruitment, selection and screening of volunteers;
- approving and clarifying the tasks and assignments of volunteers in consultation with staff members working with the volunteers;
- training, orientation and supervision of volunteers;
- ensuring volunteer contributions are formally recognized

The principal and staff of the school will ensure that:

- volunteers are not responsible for the supervision of students or the delivery of programs without teacher direction;
- student volunteers have regular direct supervision by Board staff at all times;
- volunteers will not be involved in any assessment and evaluation of students, school personnel or program, and not be given access to personal information regarding students, their families or staff unless it is essential to the performance of their duties as a volunteer;
- parents are informed if volunteers will be participating in classroom or school-wide activities;
- the participation of volunteers will not violate any collective agreement requirements

Administrators shall refer to the Volunteer Checklist located in the Communications and Community Relations Section under Departments on the staff portal to guide individual school volunteer plans in the areas of recruitment, selection, orientation, and recognition.

2.2 Role of the Volunteer

- volunteers will perform their assigned duties as directed by Board staff;
- volunteers will neither be responsible for the discipline or evaluation of students, or for the identification or diagnosis of their learning strengths or difficulties;
- volunteers will maintain in confidence any personal information which is shared with them in the performance of their duties, in compliance with the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*;
- volunteers will follow dress and behaviour codes as established by the school, will report to the school office on arrival, and, if applicable, will wear an identification badge at all times while in the school;
- volunteers will notify their supervising teacher/staff member of any unexpected absence, as far in advance as possible;
- volunteers will follow all Board health and safety rules and ensure that they act in a safe manner for the protection of both themselves and others.

3.0 Screening and Risk Management

3.1 The Principal will:

- arrange a school orientation session for all volunteers, as appropriate;
- provide in-service in relevant school and Board policies for volunteers;
- pursuant to 3.2, obtain from the volunteer the original copy of a Police Record Check (completed within the past six months) that includes a Vulnerable Sector Screening

3.2 Police Record Check:

Volunteers must provide the original copy of a Police Record Check that includes a Vulnerable Sector Search subject to availability, completed within the previous six (6) months and acceptable to the Board, prior to commencement of duties.

- Police Record Checks will remain valid for a three-year period from the date they are received by the school.
- Police Record Checks can be transferred within the three-year period between schools.
- Current employees are not required to provide a Police Record Check.
- The principal shall provide the prospective volunteer with a copy of the appropriate forms to be taken to the Police Service in the jurisdiction in which the volunteer resides.
- The volunteer is responsible for the cost of the Police Record Check.
- The principal shall retain the original, or a true copy taken from the original copy of the Police Record Check, in accordance with Section 5.0.

The principal will not knowingly offer a volunteer position to any person with a record of criminal conviction for which a pardon has not been granted. The following offences, regardless of whether a pardon has been granted, are considered to compromise the safety and well-being of students, employees and other volunteers:

- any sexual offence under the *Criminal Code*;
- any violations under the *Controlled Drug and Substances Act*;
- any criminal offence involving minors;
- crimes of violence which include, but are not limited to threats, assaults, and use, possession or concealment of a weapon or imitation of a weapon;

- propagation of hate literature or incitement to hatred;
- possession, distribution or sale of any pornographic or violent material;
- other offences specifically related to the job.

Where evidence is received of a criminal conviction or other relevant conviction, the principal will consult with the appropriate Superintendent, or designate, to consider the following factors before deciding whether or not to accept the volunteer:

- specific duties and responsibilities of the volunteer position and relevance of the police record, charge or conviction to that position;
- the length of time since the offence(s);
- any involvement of children and/or sexual activity and/or violence and/or acts of dishonesty in the offence(s);
- the volunteer's attitude towards the offence(s);
- any treatment, counseling or other services received since the offence(s);
- other steps taken to rehabilitate;
- any likelihood the offence(s) will be repeated;
- if alcohol or illegal drugs were a factor in the commission of the offence(s);
- the level of risk posed to the safety and security of students, staff, other volunteers and Board property.

4.0 Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) Training

All volunteers are required to complete an online AODA training module. Once a volunteer completes the training, they will receive a certificate acknowledging completion which can be printed and taken to the school, or emailed directly to the school. A photocopy of the certificate of completion may be used if the volunteer offers their services at more than one location.

Training will include:

- The purpose of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act.
- Which disabilities are covered by the Act.
- How to interact and communicate with people who have disabilities.
- Which assistive devices and service animals are used by people with disabilities.
- How to use equipment and assistive devices available on our School Board's premises.
- What to do if a person with a particular type of disability is having difficulty accessing the Board's services.
- Policies, practices and procedures required by the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07.

If a volunteer has documentation of AODA training completed in another context this can be accepted by the Principal.

5.0 Record Keeping

A volunteer's Police Record Check (original or true copy) that includes a Vulnerable Sector Search will be kept in a secure location in the principal's office. Files will be accessed by the principal, vice-principal or designate only.

Files will be maintained while the volunteer provides services to the school and for a two-year period thereafter, after which time they will be shredded.

6.0 Volunteers Acting in the Capacity of Coach

6.1 All facilities, equipment and activities have inherent risks. Supervisors must be trained to manage those risks. The principal shall appoint a “coach liaison” who is a teacher or administrator for every team with a volunteer coach(es). The “liaison coach” will provide supervision for all practices, games and competitions.

6.2 A staff member must accompany and be responsible for any team/individuals participating in out-of-town sanctioned competitions. All out-of-town trips will comply with the Board’s Out of Classrooms Field Trips and Excursions Policy (SO15). A supervisory adult, as approved by the principal of the school and of the same gender as the athletes, must be present and on site for the duration of the competition.

7.0 Volunteer Drivers

The Board requires all volunteer drivers to complete the “Volunteer Driver” form as required in Out of Classrooms Field Trips and Excursions Policy (SO15): Volunteer Drivers Information and Vehicle Liability Insurance.

8.0 Insurance

8.1 Volunteers are insured under the Board’s Public Liability Insurance Policy when performing assigned duties in good faith and in a reasonable manner. Volunteers should be aware that the Board’s insurance does not include a loss of income provision (i.e. Workers’ Safety Insurance Board) should the volunteer sustain an injury that prevents him/her from resuming normal employment.

8.2 The Ontario School Boards’ Insurance Exchange (OSBIE) is able to provide information regarding credentials, in addition to those of teachers, which could satisfy risk concerns around liability insurance for volunteers. OSBIE can be reached at 519-767-2182 or toll-free at 1-800-668-6724. For more information, visit www.osbie.on.ca.

9.0 Termination

Volunteers who do not adhere to the policies and procedures of the Grand Erie District School Board, or undertake an unauthorized role, or fail to satisfactorily perform their volunteer assignment, may have their assignment terminated at the sole discretion of the principal or the appropriate superintendent.