



# Grand Erie Volunteer Guidebook



## Introduction

We appreciate your willingness to volunteer your time, energy and talents to make our school a better place for our children.

This booklet will help you become familiar with your role as a school volunteer. If you have any further questions or items to discuss, please do not hesitate to contact the school Administrator.

Grand Erie follows **Volunteers Procedure SO-046** available at [granderie.ca](http://granderie.ca).

Grand Erie values, supports and expects the involvement of school volunteers to enhance all aspects of school life for the benefit of students. Grand Erie believes that the presence and participation of school volunteers contributes to more effective partnerships between a school and its community.

## Definition

A volunteer in a school may be a parent or caregiver who currently have a child enrolled in the system, a member of the community, a student or a Grand Erie 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.

### Why Do We Have a Volunteer Procedure?

Parents/caregivers of children in our schools want assurances that the adults interacting with their children, whether it be in organized sports, leisure or learning activities, are respectful and have the best interests of their children in mind.

These expectations apply to the many volunteers who generously donate their time and talents to work in our schools.

### Why Do We have School Volunteers?

- To increase opportunities for students to receive support, services and experiences by working with skillful, responsible adults.
- To supplement the school's personnel with the special knowledge, talents and time of caring parent/caregiver and community members.
- To expose students to adults who vary in age, culture, background and interest.
- To create a mutually rewarding experience for employees, students and volunteers.

## Who Benefits?

Students, employees, volunteers, the community and the school!

### Liability

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

## Roles and Responsibilities

Administrators will refer to their Volunteer Checklist to guide individual school volunteer plans in the areas of recruitment, selection, orientation, and recognition.

### Role of the Volunteer

- Volunteers will perform their assigned duties as directed by a Grand Erie employee
- 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/Grand Erie employee of any unexpected absence, as far in advance as possible
- Volunteers will follow all Grand Erie health and safety rules and ensure that they act in a safe manner for the protection of both themselves and others.

**Please note:** the school Administrator retains the authority to accept or decline any volunteer's offer of service, and to halt, without appeal, a volunteer's involvement in an activity



## How to Become a School Volunteer

- Arrange a school orientation session with the school Administrator, as appropriate
- Share your areas of interest in school volunteering and your availability
- Submit your completed Volunteer Information Form
- Complete any required training for at the relevant school and Grand Erie procedures for volunteers
- Obtain a Police Record Check (completed within the past six months) that includes a Vulnerable Sector Screening
- Volunteers will be required to complete an online Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) Training.

### Police Record Check:

Volunteers will provide the original copy of a Police Record Check that includes a Vulnerable Sector Search, completed within the previous six months and acceptable to Grand Erie, 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 Administrator will 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 school Administrator will retain the original, or a true copy taken from the original copy of the Police Record Check.

# Questions and Answers

## What do Volunteers Do?

- Work with students under teacher/employee direction/supervision (class trip supervision, learning centres, reading, writing, math, computers, etc.)
- Assist with fundraising, special events, etc.
- Assist with extra-curricular student activities under teacher/employee direction/ supervision (clubs, teams, breakfast programs, etc.)
- Assist with other tasks in or for the school at the discretion of the Administrator.
- Who is the Volunteer Contact?
- The Administrator will approve your volunteer application and connect you with an employee who will serve as your volunteer contact

## What about Confidentiality?

School volunteers are required to maintain the confidentiality of personal information regarding employees and students at all times. This includes, but is not limited to, respecting the privacy/confidentiality of student's academic and/or personal well-being and behavioural observations. Please see the school Administrator to discuss any concerns.

## What Preparations Should a Volunteer Have?

- Become familiar with the Student Conduct Code and Safe School Plan (available from the school Administrator)
- Spend time with your assigned volunteer contact to review aspects of your work, expectations and safety procedures prior to beginning to volunteer
- Participate in volunteer orientation and/or training if required
- What Are the Expectations of Volunteers?
- To follow both school routines and Grand Erie policies and procedures
- To perform duties carefully and thoroughly while helping to maintain a positive, professional and cheerful atmosphere
- To contact the school as quickly as possible when you are unable to volunteer at your scheduled time

## What Preparations Should a Volunteer Have?

- To maintain confidentiality at all times by reporting any concerns to the volunteer contact or Administrator
- To refrain from disciplining students

## Volunteers Acting in the Capacity of Coach

All facilities, equipment and activities have inherent risks. Supervisors should be trained to manage those risks. The Administrator will appoint a **Coach Liaison** who is a teacher or Administrator for every team with a volunteer coach. The coach liaison will provide supervision for all practices, games and competitions.

A school employee will accompany and be responsible for any team/individuals participating in out-of-town sanctioned competitions. All out-of-town trips will comply with relevant Grand Erie policies. A supervisory adult, as approved by the Administrator of the school and of the same gender as the athletes, will be present and on site for the duration of the competition.

## Volunteer Drivers

Grand Erie requires all volunteer drivers to complete the Volunteer Driver form as required by Grand Erie policy. Please see your school Administrator for this form.

## Safety At School

- Be sure to sign in and out, using the Visitor's Book (located in the main office), each time you visit the school
- Remember to wear a Volunteer Badge for identification whenever you are in the school.
- Ensure that you are familiar with the Emergency Plans (including fire exits) specific to the settings in which you are working
- Inform the Administrator/volunteer contact of any cases of suspected abuse
- Report issues related to student behavior to your volunteer contact immediately. Grand Erie employee will determine and carry out any necessary follow up
- Please inform the Administrator of any medical conditions that may impact your ability to volunteer (i.e., allergies, medication, chronic conditions) and provide emergency contact details.

## Termination

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



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