



PROCEDURE

SO-046

VOLUNTEERS	
Superintendent Responsible: Superintendent of Education	Initial Effective Date: 2015/10/26
Last Updated: 2020/02/24	Next Review Date: 2024/04/15

Purpose:

To outline the process and expectations for participating as a school volunteer.

Guiding Principles:

The Grand Erie District School Board (Grand Erie) recognizes and values the Importance of volunteers in schools. The support of volunteers enhances school life and students' educational experiences. School volunteers contribute to positive school, home, and community partnerships. Grand Erie welcomes and encourages participation of volunteers In Its schools.

1.0 Definitions

A volunteer in a school may be a parent or caregiver who currently has 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.

2.0 Roles and Responsibilities**2.1 Role of Administrator and Employees**

The Administrator(s), 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 school employees working with the volunteers
- Training, orientation and supervision of volunteers
- Ensuring volunteer contributions are formally recognized

The Administrator(s) and employees 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 school employees 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 employees unless it is essential to the performance of their duties as a volunteer
- Parent(s)/caregiver(s) 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 will 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 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 member 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.

3.0 Screening and Risk Management

3.1 The Administrator(s) will:

- Arrange a school orientation session for all volunteers, as appropriate
- Provide in-service in relevant school and Grand Erie 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 will 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 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 Administrator will retain the original, or a true copy taken from the original copy of the Police Record Check, in accordance with Section 5.0

The School Administrator(s) 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 Administrator(s) will consult with the appropriate Superintendent of Education, 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, employees, other volunteers and Grand Erie 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.

4.1 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 Grand Erie premises
- What to do if a person with a particular type of disability is having difficulty accessing Grand Erie 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 Administrator(s).

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 Administrator's office. Files will be accessed by the Administrator(s) 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 should be trained to manage those risks. The Administrator(s) will 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 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 the Field Trips and Excursions Policy (SO-15) and Field Trips and Excursions Procedure (SO-015). A supervisory adult, as approved by the Administrator(s) of the school and of the same gender as the athletes, will be present and on site for the duration of the competition.

7.0 Volunteer Drivers

Grand Erie requires all volunteer drivers to complete the "Volunteer Driver" form as required in Field Trips and Excursions Policy (SO-15) and Field Trips and Excursions Procedure (SO-015): Volunteer Drivers Information and Vehicle Liability Insurance.

8.0 Insurance

8.1 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.

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 Grand Erie, 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(s) or the appropriate Superintendent of Education

Reference(s):

- Field Trips and Excursions Policy (SO-15)
- Field Trips and Excursions Procedure (SO-015)
- [Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, S.O. 2005, c. 11](#)
- [Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, O. Reg. 429/07](#)
- [Controlled Drugs and Substances Act, S.C. 1996, c. 19](#)
- [Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. M.56](#)
- [Ontario School Boards Insurance Exchange \(OSBIE\)](#)

VOLUNTEER PORTFOLIO AND CHECKLIST

Recruitment | Selection | Orientation | Recognition

Learn more about the definition and role of the volunteer, the roles and responsibilities of the School Administrator/employees, screening and risk management, expectations of the Police Record Check, and insurance and termination information by accessing Administrative Procedure SO-046 – Volunteers.

Recruitment: Volunteers may be a parent or guardian, a family or community member, or even a student. Administrators can recruit volunteers through their School Council, by accessing parents of the school, through seniors' organizations, local universities, community colleges and secondary schools, local volunteer centres or service clubs.

Before you begin:

- Have you considered the school program/activity area that your volunteers will be engaged in?
- Have you determined the types of skills/interest that will be useful to carry out the assignment?
- Are you prepared to keep an inventory/database of your volunteers?
- Have you arranged a location where you can store the personal information of your volunteers to ensure the requirements of privacy and information management are met?
- Have you considered a School Volunteer Information Sheet? This includes: volunteer name, address, contact numbers, interests/skills, languages spoken, program or activity area they wish to volunteer, availability of days and times preferred by the volunteer, etc.

Selection: The most significant requirement in the selection process is the Police Records Check and a Vulnerable Sector Search. An individual must have the Police Record Check and Vulnerable Sector Screen complete and approved before they are able to volunteer.

In addition to the Police Records Check and Vulnerable Sector Screening, you may consider one or more character reference checks. Some suggested questions to consider asking when inquiring about a volunteer include:

- How long have you known this person and in what capacity?
- Is this person reliable and punctual?
- Would you consider this person for a volunteer position?

Orientation: A well-prepared orientation is a key component to outline expectations. Orientations may be conducted individually or in a group. September may be an optimal time for the orientation and training.

Consider the following in your orientation:

- Provide a copy of SO-046-Volunteers
- Review School Policies
- Code of Conduct
- Identification (name tags)
- School Tour
- Employee Introductions
- School Council Information
- Fill in a School Volunteer Information Sheet
- Sign a School Volunteer Agreement*
- Discuss the importance of confidentiality

**School Volunteer Agreements can be useful resources. Information on an agreement may state friendly terms based on the expectations of the school and the volunteer. An agreement*

may also include: duties and responsibilities, time commitment, statements that respect confidentiality, starting date and ending date, and a procedure for reporting absences. The volunteer and Administrator sign the agreement.

Recognition: The recognition of volunteers for a job well done should be an integral part of the volunteer experience at a school.

Recognition can be shown in a friendly gesture or during a formal celebration. Some items to consider may include:

- Host a Volunteer tea or luncheon at any time or during National Volunteer Week in April
- Hold a special year-end ceremony to honour school volunteers
- Issue Certificates of Appreciation (Contact: Manager of Communications)
- Display photos of volunteers working in the school with students on a Bulletin Board
- Newsletter inserts to profile, recognize and/or recruit volunteers
- Contact the Manager of Communications and Community Relations to share a story about one of your volunteers on the Grand Erie website and via social media
- Use the Submit an *Event* feature when you have an event that celebrates volunteers