

6550 VOLUNTEER POLICY

I. PURPOSE AND PHILOSOPHY

Weber School District recognizes the many benefits afforded to students through the service of parents, guardians, and other community members who volunteer their time to assist in District activities and programs. The District also recognizes that its students and employees should have the opportunity to learn and work in a safe environment and that some precautions must be taken regarding the individuals allowed to enter schools and provide volunteer service.

II. POLICY

The District must comply with state and federal laws and act to ensure the effective management of its programs and facilities. Therefore, this policy is adopted to outline the parameters of volunteer service within the District and to provide guidance to employees approving and using community volunteers.

III. DEFINITIONS

- A. "Supervising Employee" is an administrator or teacher employed by Weber School District who uses volunteers.
- B. "Volunteer" is a person, whether parent, guardian, or other community member, who donates time and services without pay or other compensation, except those expenses actually and reasonably incurred may be reimbursed as approved by the District.
- C. "Outside service provide and/or observer" includes, but is not limited to, private tutors, evaluators, behavioral health counselors, clinical social workers, psychologists, or other behavioral, mental, or medical professionals, whether licensed or not).
- D. "Third-party partner organization volunteers" means an individual associated with an external organization or entity that partners with the school district to provide services, support, or activities benefiting students, staff, or the school community.
- E. "Permanent volunteer or recurring volunteer" means a volunteer with a third-party organization or an individual who volunteers at the school or a school-sponsored activity more than three times during a school year.
- F. "Qualified Position" means employment in a paid position within the previous three years prior to applying to volunteer in the District.

IV. PARENT/GUARDIAN/RELATIVE VOLUNTEERS FOR SINGLE EVENTS

- A. To be an approved school volunteer, a parent/guardian must read and sign the Parent Volunteer Information Request. A parent/guardian signature allows one to serve as an official school volunteer throughout the applicable school year.

- B. A criminal background check is not required for a volunteer of a single event (field trips, PTA-sponsored activities, field day, etc.) unless the volunteer will be given significant unsupervised access to a student(s).
- C. Volunteers whose duties do not require them to have a background check will be under visual supervision of an employee of Weber School District when they have significant contact with students or will always be with another adult volunteer.
- D. **Volunteers who do not have access to students and are recurring are not required to have a background check.**

V. PERMANENT/RECURRING VOLUNTEER

A. Background Checks

1. All permanent volunteers or volunteers for recurring programs or activities are required to have a background check.
2. All volunteer coaches will be required to have a background check.
3. Volunteers are responsible for the cost of the background check.

B. Reference Checks

1. In addition, before assigning any individual to a volunteer assignment that would give the individual significant access to a student, the District shall determine whether the volunteer was employed in the past three years in a qualifying position, as defined above.
2. If the volunteer applicant has been employed in a qualifying position, the District must request information regarding any employment action taken or discipline imposed for the physical abuse or sexual abuse of a child or student by the potential volunteer.
3. The District may conduct a reference check for potential applicants who were not employed in a qualified position in the previous three years.

VI. THIRD-PARTY PARTNER ORGANIZATION VOLUNTEERS

A. Background Check - All volunteers from partner organizations are required to submit to a criminal background check prior to commencing volunteer service.

B. Reference Checks

1. Before assigning any individual with a third-party partner organization to a volunteer assignment that would give the individual significant access to a student, the District shall determine whether the volunteer was employed in the past three years in a qualifying position, as defined above.

2. If the volunteer applicant has been employed in a qualifying position, the District must request information regarding any employment action taken or discipline imposed for the physical abuse or sexual abuse of a child or student by the potential volunteer.
3. The District may conduct a reference check for potential applicants who were not employed in a qualified position in the previous three years.

C. Miscellaneous

1. Volunteers with third-party partner organizations must complete onboarding training through the Department of Human Resources before assuming volunteer responsibilities.
2. Access to student information, District email, District equipment, and building access cards may be provided to third-party partner organization volunteers on a case-by-case basis depending on the services provided by the organization.
3. Third-party partner organizations that request student data for their grant or other limited purposes must comply with and sign the District's Data Privacy Agreement.

VII. APPROVAL AND SUPERVISION OF VOLUNTEERS

- A. Consistent with District policies, volunteers are selected and approved at the discretion of the supervising employee.
- B. Volunteers serve under the supervision of school officials. The particular services provided by a volunteer, including location, class, students, and duties, are chosen by the supervising employee. Volunteers must follow directives and instructions given by the supervising employee.
- C. Volunteering in District schools is an appreciated service, but it is not a right, even for parents/guardians of District students. The District may decline the offer of service to any individual. Volunteers may be directed to cease their activities and leave District property at any time for any or no reason except a reason prohibited by law.

VIII. SCOPE OF AND RULES FOR VOLUNTEER SERVICES

- A. Volunteers are subject to applicable school and District policies, rules, and procedures. In general, when interacting with students they must adhere to the same standards of conduct outlined for employees. Volunteers must avoid inappropriate boundary invasions and must be honest and ethical in all their volunteer activities. To the extent possible, a volunteer should never be alone with a student.
- B. Volunteers must conduct themselves in a friendly, courteous manner and not show partiality toward any student.

- C. Volunteers must not share or discuss their personal religious or political beliefs with or in the presence of students.
- D. Volunteers who become aware of any potential student disciplinary issue must report the issue to the supervising employee or the building administrator.
- E. Volunteers are prohibited from engaging in any physical contact with a student other than their own child.
- F. Volunteers who use or have access to the District's technology resources must use those resources appropriately, responsibly, and consistent with District policy.
- G. No photos, video or audio recordings are allowed to take place.

IX. CONFIDENTIALITY

- A. Under limited circumstances, volunteers may be given access to student educational records in connection with their volunteer services. Student educational records include all names, addresses, records, files, documents, and other materials that contain personally identifiable information on any student, as well as the personally identifiable information itself (including student grades and test scores). Volunteers must maintain the confidentiality of all student educational records. This means that volunteers may not disclose student records or personally identifiable student information to any person other than the supervising employee or building administrator. Inadvertent access of student educational records must be immediately reported to the supervising employee. Volunteers must never take any confidential information off-campus. Failure of any volunteer to maintain the confidentiality of student records may disqualify the volunteer from further service in the District.

X. LIABILITY PROTECTION AND BENEFITS

- A. Volunteers who are properly recognized by the school or by the District and who are performing an approved service as assigned by the school or District are considered volunteer of the District for the following purposes only, as provided by law:
 - 1. Receiving worker's compensation medical benefits, which shall be the exclusive remedy for all injuries and occupational diseases as provided under the Worker's Compensation Act and the Utah Occupational Disease Act.
 - 2. The operation of motor vehicles or equipment if the volunteer is properly licensed and authorized to do so.
 - 3. Liability protection and indemnification normally afforded to paid employees of the District.
- B. Volunteers must immediately report to the supervising employee or building administrator any occurrence that may result in a claim under this section.

XI. OUTSIDE SERVICE PROVIDERS

- A. The district provides a full school day of instructional activities to all students. All school activities are important for students' progress toward educational achievement. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act require that students with disabilities receive a free appropriate public education (FAPE) in the least restrictive environment (LRE). The district recognizes that parents may choose to independently contract additional services for their children from agencies outside the district and outside of their educational program. It is recognized that these additional services provided for a student are outside of the student's educational program, are paid for by the parent, are not a requirement of FAPE, and are the choice of the parents as an addition to the free and appropriate public education that the district provides for students.
- B. The presence of outside observers is disruptive to the learning atmosphere and violates the confidentiality rights of other students in the classroom. The Americans with Disabilities (ADA) and Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) does not impose any obligation on the district to allow parents or their designated experts to observe in classrooms for evaluative and programming purposes. The district would prefer to help parents obtain the information needed through other means. However, as deemed appropriate by the school administrator, outside observers may be allowed on a limited basis (1 to 2 times per school year) with parent consent and should follow all provisions outlined in the "Classroom Observation and Confidentiality Agreement." To facilitate occasional requests for outside observation, the undersigned parties agree as follows:
1. The observation must be scheduled in advance and held on a date and time convenient for the classroom teacher. Observers must follow school check-in and visitor procedures. School and/or district personnel will also be present during the observation.
 2. The observer must have permission from the parent/guardian before being permitted to observe.
 3. As a guest in the classroom, instruction is not to be interrupted by the observer in any way.
 4. Any observations regarding the above-named student will be shared only with the parent/guardian, or with other appropriate education or agency representatives with the express written consent of the parent/guardian and will be used for educational purposes only.
 5. Observer agrees to maintain confidentiality regarding the identity and other private information of other students in the class. Where relevant, any observations made by the observer regarding the student's interactions with other students in the class will not disclose the identity of those other students.

6. Parent/guardian and observer agree that the observation is not being requested or conducted as part of an independent educational evaluation (IEE) under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and that any request for a classroom observation as part of an IEE must be separately approved by the Special Education Department pursuant to IDEA's procedural safeguards and special education policies and procedures.
 7. No photos or video or audio recordings are allowed to take place.
- C. Except for observations deemed appropriate by the school administrator, for the determined limited duration, schools will not make facilities available for an outside service provider who has not been contracted by the District to provide services to students at school.