

## **Community Relations**

### **School Volunteers and Student Interns**

The Woodbridge Board of Education (the "Board") recognizes the importance of school volunteers at all levels of schooling. Volunteers can enhance collaboration between the school and community, broaden the school's educational environment and ultimately enrich students' school experience. The Board further acknowledges that it may, from time to time, be asked to provide learning experiences for student interns within the school environments, which experiences are not part of the teacher preparation program, as defined in section 10-10a of the Connecticut General Statutes. In recognition of the benefit of having volunteers, interns and other such non-employees providing services within the schools, the Board supports the involvement of these individuals in accordance with suitable regulations and safeguards to be developed by the Administration.

Volunteers, interns and other such non-employees working within the schools ("volunteers") must work under the supervision of Woodbridge School District ("District") staff. Volunteers are held to the same standards of conduct as school staff and must observe all Board policies, including applicable policies on the confidentiality of student information.

Volunteers, depending upon their level of involvement, may be required to submit to state and federal criminal record checks and a record check of the Department of Children and Families ("DCF") Child Abuse and Neglect Registry. No person who is required to register as a sex offender under state or federal law, or whose name is currently listed on the DCF registry, may volunteer in the District.

All volunteers must comply with all school health and safety protocols in place at the time, including but not limited to any health screening protocols.

Employees of the District may serve as a volunteer during the school day, approved by the Superintendent or his/her designee based on the specific situation.

Persons interested in volunteering their services should contact the school Principal.

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes

[10-4g](#) Parental and community involvement in schools; model program; school-based teams.

[10-220](#) Duties of boards of education.

[10-235](#) Indemnification of teachers, board members, employees and certain volunteers and students in damages suits; expenses of litigation.

[54-250 et seq.](#) Registration of sexual offenders.

**Policy adopted: October 16, 2023**

WOODBRIIDGE PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
Woodbridge, Connecticut

*Existing regulation, number 1212 adopted 10/16/23, appropriate as written*

## **Community Relations**

### **School Volunteers and Student Interns**

The Board of Education recognizes the importance of school volunteers at all levels of schooling. Volunteers can enhance collaboration between the school and community, broaden the school's educational environment, and ultimately enrich learners' experiences. In recognition of these important aspects of learning, the Board supports the involvement of these individuals in accordance with suitable regulations and safeguards developed by the Administration.

It is important to delineate between a visitor to the school and a volunteer. Visitors and volunteers both contribute in valuable ways to the community feel of a school building. A visitor is defined as an individual who will be spending a short period of time within the building and is under the direct supervision of a Woodbridge employee at all times, often for the purpose of attending a meeting, conference, or special event.

Volunteers for the Woodbridge District will be classified into two groups.

#### **Group I**

Volunteers will be classified in Group I when they assist staff members with school activities in the direct presence of a Woodbridge School District employee. Volunteers in Group 1 may assist with activities including, but is not limited to: reading to a classroom, participating and assisting in a special class event, assisting in a school-wide event, or serving as a room parent. Group I volunteers remain under the direct supervision of a Woodbridge employee at all times. At this time, Group I volunteers do not need to complete the volunteer background checks outlined below.

#### **Group II**

The following procedure has been established for screening Group II volunteers and interns ("volunteers") within the Woodbridge School District (the "District"). For the purpose of this regulation, a Group II volunteer is an individual who will remain working directly with students at Beecher Road School for a longer period of time or over a duration of more than a day, and may not always be under the direct supervision of a Woodbridge District employee. Examples might include, but are not limited to, volunteers in the Library Media Center, volunteers in the cafeteria to support ongoing initiatives, volunteers in specific classrooms or departments that volunteer throughout the year for many shorter periods of time, volunteers who are chaperoning a field trip when students will be divided into small groups supervised solely by the volunteer chaperone, chaperoning an overnight field trip, or working directly with students on-site without the direct presence of a Woodbridge Public School employee.

Student interns are classified as volunteers and are individuals currently enrolled in post-secondary programs for which an authorized internship is required or for which the student maybe granted credit as part of an approved course of study, including student volunteers for specific program credit from Amity High School. As with all volunteers, all student interns must be approved in advance by the building administrator and must be under the direction and direct supervision of a Board employee.

#### **Prior Approval Required**

All school volunteers, Group I and Group II, including student interns working in the schools, must be approved in advance by the building Principal or other administrative designee. The school district, acting

through the appropriate building administrator or his/her designee, reserves the right to discontinue or disallow the services of any volunteer at any time at the discretion of the administration.

**Sign-in Procedure.** All individuals seeking to volunteer in the Woodbridge School District must regularly sign-in with the Main Office and will be provided with identification badges, which shall be displayed during each visit.

Group II volunteers must fill out and sign the Volunteer Registration form prior to beginning volunteering and complete federal and state criminal record checks and a record check of the Department of Children and Families (DCF) Child Abuse and Neglect Registry background check. All results of background checks must be completed prior to any volunteer service occurring. The form and process must be completed annually.

**Persons Not Allowed to Serve as Volunteers.** No person who is a "registered sex offender," or is on the Department of Children and Families (DCF) Child Abuse and Neglect Registry may serve as a volunteer. No person whose name is listed on the Department of Children and Families (DCF) Child Abuse and Neglect Registry or who is registered as a sex offender under state or federal law may volunteer in any District school. Failure to provide complete or accurate information on this "School Volunteer Security Check" form will disqualify an individual from volunteering in any District school.

Employees of the Woodbridge School District may serve as a volunteer in any capacity during the day, approved by the Superintendent or his/her designee based on the specific situation.

**Role.** Volunteers serve only in an auxiliary capacity under the direction and supervision of a staff member; they are not a substitute for a member of the school staff. Volunteers do not have access to confidential student school records and volunteers may not make any curricular or disciplinary actions.

Volunteers are held to the same standards of conduct as school staff and must adhere to all Board of Education policies. The following protocols are in place for all volunteers: (For specific guidelines for visitors to the school, refer to the BOE Policy #[1250](#) and the Beecher Road School handbook available on the District website.) Volunteers shall:

- Be interviewed and approved by a member of the administration.
- Complete fingerprints and background check prior to volunteering in the building. (Group II)
- Adhere to all safety protocols including signing in and out at the Main Office.
- Adhere to all established guidelines as set forth by the Woodbridge Public School District.
- Uphold the rights of all students and staff and adhere to confidentiality while in the building and in public.
- Report to the building administration.

All volunteers must adhere to the above guidelines or there will be cause for immediate removal from the school property as well as a limitation to future visits to the school.

Any questions of the above protocols must be directed to the building administration.

**Selection, Placement, and Supervision.** Volunteer selection and placement shall be decided on by administration and made on the basis of the volunteer's qualifications and availability and the school's needs.

When a criminal record check of a volunteer reveals a criminal conviction, whether disclosed or undisclosed on the volunteer's consent form, the Superintendent will make a case-by-case determination as to whether to allow the individual to volunteer in the District. Prior to any such decision by the Superintendent or designee, the Superintendent or designee shall inform the volunteer and shall provide an opportunity for the volunteer to respond. Notwithstanding the foregoing, the falsification or omission of any information on a volunteer consent form, including, but not limited to, information concerning criminal convictions or pending criminal charges, may be grounds for the Superintendent or designee to prohibit the individual from becoming a volunteer.

**Dismissal.** A request to volunteer or to continue volunteering will be denied if the volunteer behaves in any manner that demonstrates he or she is not a good role model or is otherwise detrimental to the school environment. Examples of such behavior include: swearing, failing to be dependable, failing to follow the supervisor's instructions, committing any criminal act on school grounds or at a school activity, touching a student in a rude or overly forceful manner, failing to dress in an appropriate manner, or violating any school rule.

(cf. - [1250](#) Visitors to Schools)

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes

[10-4g](#) Parental and community involvement in schools; model program; school-based teams.

[10-220](#) Duties of boards of education.

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