

Community Relations

School Volunteers

The Board of Education recognizes that volunteers can make many valuable contributions to our schools. The Board endorses a program encouraging community residents to take an active role in improving schools and to become volunteers in schools subject to suitable regulations and safeguards. Appropriate recognition of volunteer services shall be made by the Board and school district administration.

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes

10-4g Parent and community involvement in schools; model programs; school-based teams

10-235 Indemnification of teachers, board members, employees and certain volunteers and students in damage suits; expenses of litigation.

54-254 Registration of person who has committed a felony for a sexual purpose

Policy adopted: March 19, 2009
 Policy revised: May 21, 2015
 Policy reviewed:

NEW FAIRFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS
 New Fairfield, Connecticut

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School Volunteers

Securing and Screening Volunteers

The Building Principal or his/her designee directs the use of volunteers within the school. Specifically, the Principal or designee directs volunteer recruitment, screening, placement, and training within the following parameters:

1. **Qualifications.** Volunteers may come from all backgrounds and all age groups. The main qualification for a volunteer is that he or she has a desire to give his or her time and talent in order to enrich student learning opportunities and the school community generally.
2. **Persons Not Allowed to Serve as Volunteers.** Whenever someone submits a new volunteer information form, the Building Principal or designee shall enter the volunteer in the electronic database, which also checks the sex offender list. A volunteer must submit to a criminal background investigation if the individual will be working in direct contact with students where no staff member is continuously present or in other situations where a check would be prudent. People who wish to volunteer and have background checks that produce a criminal history record may be disallowed from volunteering, and will only be allowed to volunteer after an interview with and clearance from the Superintendent or her/his designee.
3. **Recruitment.** School personnel may recruit volunteers through the following resources: parent(s)/guardians, parent organizations, retired teachers and other senior citizen groups, community businesses, local volunteer centers, and universities.
4. **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.
5. **Selection, Placement, and Supervision.** Volunteer selection and placement shall be on the basis of the volunteer's qualifications and availability and the school's needs. A volunteer will be assigned to a staff member only with the staff member's consent. The relationship between a volunteer and staff member should be one of mutual respect and confidence.
6. **Screenings.** Screening volunteers is critical because of the vulnerability of the population the school district serves. After the completion of Form 1212, which requires a valid state-issued ID (driver's license, identification card, work VISA or green card) and an initial check of the sex offender list, the volunteer is required to register in the school's main office at the beginning of each visit and wear a name tag while in the building. The volunteer's name will be checked against the sex offender list every time the person enters the building as a volunteer. Upon leaving the building, the volunteer must sign out.

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Securing and Screening Volunteers (continued)

6. **Screenings** (continued)

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.

7. **Policy.** A copy of this regulation is to be attached to Form 1212.

Regulation approved: March 19, 2009
Regulation revised: May 21, 2015
Regulation reviewed: 

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Volunteer Information Form and Waiver of Liability

*Form 1212 needs to be completed by a volunteer **each school year**. The completion of Form 1212 requires a valid state-issued ID (driver's license, identification card, work VISA or green card). Please print clearly in ink:*

Information Form

Name: _____
Last First Middle Telephone

Address: _____
Street City Zip Code

Personal physician: _____ Phone _____

Emergency adult contact: _____ Phone _____

At which school(s) do you wish to volunteer? _____

Include the name(s) of any child(ren) or ward(s) attending New Fairfield Schools: _____

Criminal Conviction Information

Are you a sex offender? _____

Have you ever been convicted of a felony? _____

If you answered YES, list all offenses

Offense(s): _____

Date(s): _____

Place(s): _____

If requested, are you willing to consent to a criminal background investigation? _____

Waiver of Liability

The School District does not provide liability insurance coverage to non-district personnel serving as volunteers for the School District. The purpose of this waiver is to provide notice to prospective volunteers that they do not have insurance coverage by the School District and to document the volunteer's acknowledgment that they are providing volunteer service at their own risk. However, C.G.S. 10-235 provides that the district must indemnify and hold harmless volunteers from civil liability in most situations as long as the volunteer is approved by the Board of Education to carry out a duty prescribed by the Board and performs services under the direction of a certified teacher. Therefore the district must pay any damages awarded to a plaintiff in an action brought alleging negligence or other act resulting in injury, including infringement of that person's civil rights.

Volunteer Information Form and Waiver of Liability

Waiver of Liability (continued)

By your signature below:

1. You acknowledge that the School District does not provide insurance coverage for the volunteer for any loss, injuries, illness, or death resulting from the volunteer's unpaid service to the School District.
2. You agree to assume all risk for death or any loss, injury, illness or damage of any nature or kind, arising out of the volunteer's supervised or unsupervised service to the School District. You agree to waive any and all claims against the School District, or its officers, Board Members, employees, agents or assigns, for loss due to death, injury, illness or damage of any kind arising out of the volunteer's supervised or unsupervised service to the School District.
3. You understand that you will work under the supervision of a member of the New Fairfield Public Schools professional staff and that you will abide by all the rules and regulations regarding the supervision of students.

Date: _____ Signature of Volunteer: _____

Printed Name of Volunteer _____

For School Use Only

General description of assignment(s):

- supervising students as needed by a teacher
- supervising students during a regularly scheduled activity
- assisting with academic programs
- assisting at the resource center or main office
- other _____

Name of supervising staff member: _____

Is a criminal background check a necessity (the individual will be working in direct contact with students where no staff member is continuously present or in other situations where a check would be prudent)? *(to be answered by Principal)*

If "yes," and provided the individual authorized the check,

- the date on which the check was requested _____
- the date on which it was received and reviewed _____

Reviewed by: _____

Signature

Date

WELCOME SCHOOL BUILDING VOLUNTEER

Welcome and thank you for your willingness to be a volunteer in the New Fairfield Public Schools. It is of the utmost concern to our district that we provide and maintain a safe environment for our students. Therefore, we require the following steps to approve you as a volunteer in our schools:

VOLUNTEER INFORMATION FORM - FORM 1212

This form must be completed each school year and returned to the school office in which you want to volunteer. Upon completion of this form a member of the office staff will perform an initial check of the sex offender list. Should the search result in a clean check, you will be placed on the school volunteer list for ~~that building~~ **the district**. The volunteer's name will be checked against the sex offender list every time the person enters the building as a volunteer.

CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECK – FINGERPRINTING

This additional step is required for **any volunteer who will be alone with students for any length of time without a school staff member present**. Examples include but are not limited to supervising lunch in the classroom and field trips. Fingerprint cards must be picked up from the Human Resources department and appointments must be scheduled with the New Fairfield Police Department (203) 312-5701. The \$10.75 cost payable to Treasurer – State of CT will be borne, similar to other districts, by the volunteer.

Even if you have had background checks for any other reason, you must be fingerprinted at the New Fairfield Police Department on the cards provided by the Human Resources department with the notation “AWA Volunteer.”

Fingerprinting will not be required again unless there is a break in the volunteer's service. A break in service is described as a school year in which Form 1212 has not been completed.

Questions regarding whether previous fingerprinting will meet the above requirement:

~~If you have been fingerprinted to be a substitute in New Fairfield schools, does that suffice?~~

~~Yes, provided you are currently an active substitute on the NF Sub List (contact Human Resources to verify). If you are not active, the fingerprints must have been taken within the past 12 months or another background check must be conducted.~~

~~If you have been fingerprinted to substitute or work in another district, does that suffice?~~

~~Yes, if you were fingerprinted by Education Connection or one of its sister organizations (e.g., ACES) within the past 12 months. Given the name and last four digits of the Social Security number, Human Resources can ask Ed Conn for results. If you were printed by a sister organization you must contact that group to have results released to Ed Conn. We do not accept background checks from other municipalities.~~

~~If you have had background checks for any other reason, does that suffice?~~

~~No, you must be fingerprinted at the New Fairfield Police Department on the cards provided by the Human Resources department.~~

We appreciate your willingness to be involved in the educational endeavors of our students and thank you in advance for your adherence to our procedures to ensure that all remain safe and secure.

rev. __/2017