

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 school volunteers in schools subject to suitable regulations and safeguards. Appropriate recognition of volunteer services shall be made by the Board and school district administration.

The Board of Education encourages the use of volunteers to: (1) increase students' educational attainment (2) provide enrichment experiences for students, (3) increase the effective utilization of staff time and skills, (4) give more individual attention to students, and (5) promote greater community involvement.

The Superintendent shall establish procedures for securing and screening resource persons and volunteers. No person who is a "sex offender," as defined by Public Act 98-111, An Act Concerning the Registration of Sexual Offenders shall be used.

The Newtown Public Schools follows a two tiered volunteer system.

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes

10-4g Programs to encourage participation in the educational process

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

P.A. 97-290 An Act Enhancing Educational Choices and Opportunities

P.A. 98-111 An Act Concerning The Registration of Sexual Offenders

Policy adopted: May 5, 2015

NEWTOWN PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Newtown, Connecticut

EFFECTIVE: July 1, 2015

Community Relations

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 perimeters:

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.** No person who is a “registered sex offender,” may serve as a volunteer. Every time a new notification/online posting of registered sex offenders is received, the Building Principal or his/her designee shall review it for any person's name who has submitted a volunteer information form during that school year. Whenever someone submits a new volunteer information form, the Building Principal or designee shall review the sex offender list. The Building Principal may request a volunteer submit to a criminal background investigation if the individual will be working over a long period of time in direct contact with students where no staff member is continuously present or in other situations where a check would be prudent.
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. If a staff member, other than the Principal, recruits a volunteer, the staff member must provide the volunteer's name and address to the Principal.
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. Each volunteer must register in the school's main office at the beginning of each visit and wear a name tag while in the building. Unless he or she has already done so during the current academic year, the volunteer must complete an information form and waiver. Absent an indication on the form that the volunteer may not qualify, e.g. the volunteer is a convicted felon, the volunteer may proceed to the assigned activity.

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Securing and Screening Volunteers (continued)

7. **Criminal Background Check.** Volunteers who will be working with students without direct sight-line supervision of staff and volunteers chaperoning field trips will complete a criminal background check before interacting with students.

Regulation approved: May 5, 2015

NEWTOWN PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Newtown, Connecticut

EFFECTIVE: July 1, 2015

Volunteer Information Form and Waiver of Liability

Only one form needs to be completed by a volunteer each school year. Please print clearly in ink:

Name Last: _____ First: _____ Middle: _____

Address: _____ Telephone No. _____

Emergency Contact: _____ Telephone No. _____

Have you ever been a school volunteer? YES NO

If yes, name and location of school: _____ Year(s): _____

Name of child(ren)/ward(s) attending the school(s) where you wish to volunteer : _____

Conviction Information (if applicable):

If you are a registered sex offender, please provide city and state(s): _____

If you have been convicted of a criminal offense; please provide information below:

Offense(s): _____

Date(s): _____

City/State(s): _____

Waiver of Liability

The Newtown 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.

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, 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.

Signature of Volunteer: _____ Date: _____

Printed Name of Volunteer: _____

For School Use Only: Name of supervising staff member: _____

- General description of assignment(s):
- supervising students during a regularly scheduled activity
 - supervising students as needed by a teacher
 - assisting at the resource center or main office
 - assisting with academic programs
 - other: _____

School Administrator Reviewed/Signature: _____