

AP 490 – VOLUNTEERS

Background

The use of volunteers within Division schools has been a positive component of our programs for many years. Volunteers have provided valuable assistance to both students and staff alike in numerous facets of daily programming. The many hours of assistance they provide each year is highly commendable and widely appreciated. Volunteers include parents and community members who are willing to share special talents and gifts to enhance learning environments within the schools.

Being an in-school volunteer carries certain responsibilities and expectations. The opportunity to provide volunteer help within the school setting is a privilege, not a right. Volunteers are required to maintain a standard of ethical responsibility to the school, individual students, and staff members. Failure to do so is damaging to the climate of the school and can strain relationships within the building and community. If volunteer expectations are not met, concerns will be immediately forwarded to the school administration. If the concerns are investigated and substantiated by the school administration, the volunteer may be requested to discontinue his/her assistance within the school.

Procedures

1. The Principal must approve all uses of volunteers in school activities.
 - 1.1 The need for a volunteer position will be identified in consultation with the teacher based upon educational programming, extra-curricular activities and school events, or school services.
 - 1.2 No volunteer will be assigned to a teacher without the teacher's consent.
 - 1.3 Volunteers will complete the Volunteer Understanding Form (Form 490-1) prior to volunteering.
 - 1.4 Volunteer orientation and training will be conducted by the Principal, or designate, using the Volunteer Handbook (Form 490-3.)
2. The use of volunteers must have a specified purpose. Volunteers normally perform one or a combination of the following roles:
 - 2.1 **Resource Volunteers** – persons who have a relevant area of expertise and/or experience and who are involved on a short-term basis to enhance the educational program. Their visits are planned, supervised and evaluated by a certificated teacher;
 - 2.2 **Support Service Volunteers** – persons who directly or indirectly assist teachers in achieving educational objectives by providing non-educational services, (examples may include: school lunches, classroom special activities/events, school trip supervision, field day leaders, chaperones, etc.); and/or,
 - 2.3 **Extra-curricular volunteers** – persons have relevant area of coaching expertise and/or experience and are involved on a short-term basis to enhance the extra-curricular educational program.

3. Volunteer Screening:

3.1 One-Time Volunteers at a School Event:

- 3.1.1 Volunteers do not have to complete a Criminal Records Check if they are assisting a teacher for a one-time event, such as parents volunteering for career day, book fairs, school or classroom activities/event, etc.
- 3.1.2 While at the school for the one-time event, volunteers must be under the supervision of a LCSD employee at all times.
- 3.1.3 Volunteers under this section who are exempted from completing the background check must still provide a copy of their government issued identification to the Principal.
- 3.1.4 If a volunteer wishes to assist with more than one event at a school during the school year, (e.g. to chaperone a field trip or participate in other volunteer events) the individual must then complete the background check required in Section 3.2 below.

3.2 Background checks – All Other Volunteers:

- 3.2.1 Volunteers who will be involved in direct supervision of children (i.e. they may provide their services on a one-to-one basis with a student) will be required to provide the Principal with a current Police Information and Criminal Records Check including a Vulnerable Sector search. The cost for this check may be reimbursed by the school or central office using the volunteer, if the appropriate form is resubmitted (Form 490-2.) The background check must be completed at least 14 days in advance of the volunteer activity.
- 3.2.2 The volunteer's background check does not expire provided the parent/guardian registers for volunteer activity with LCSD each year. The prospective volunteer must provide a copy of the stamped background check receipt to the school or division office for record keeping and audit purposes. All documentation submitted by the volunteer shall be forwarded to the Human Resource Manager.
- 3.2.3 The volunteer shall resubmit all required information listed in Section 3.2.1 if their volunteer service is inactive in the school for a period of 12 or more months.
- 3.2.4 If a prospective volunteer is known to be a former employee of LCSD, the school principal must first communicate with and receive approval from the Human Resource Office that the former employee is eligible to be a volunteer.

3.3 Exceptions:

- 3.3.1 One-time volunteers at school events are exempt, as provided under Section 3.1.

- 3.3.2 Parents are not considered a volunteer when meeting the requirement of parent engagement in the classroom defined as part of school programming (e.g. Pre-Kindergarten, Little Learners, etc.).
4. Ineligibility:
 - 4.1 As a general guideline, if volunteers have charges, convictions, or concerns that would render them ineligible for employment by LCSD, they would also not be eligible to serve as a volunteer.
 - 4.2 LCSD will not knowingly approve or retain any individual to serve as a volunteer if the individual has been convicted of a crime deemed inappropriate for child support services or inconsistent with the LCSD mission statement and values.
 - 4.3 It is deemed the responsibility of the volunteer to provide immediate notification to the Principal if charged with a crime by the RCMP. The Principal will immediately consult with the responsible Deputy Director regarding any possible administrative action concerning the status of the volunteer's services.
5. Volunteer Orientation
 - 5.1 Principals will organize an orientation for volunteers appropriate to the volunteer's role and involvement in the school.
 - 5.2 The orientation must include:
 - 5.2.1 A review of AP490 – Volunteers and related materials including AP490, Volunteer Understanding F490-1, and the Volunteer Handbook F490-3.
 - 5.2.2 An explanation of the scope, role and expectations of the task/assignment.
 - 5.2.3 A review of school division policies and procedures around privacy and confidentiality, human diversity and protocols around disclosure of abuse of a student.
 - 5.3 The Volunteer Handbook (F490-3) guides the review of school rules and routines relevant to the volunteer assignment such as emergency procedures, the student code of conduct, procedures related to student discipline, bell times, notification of absence, workplace health and safety, use of equipment and school communication protocols.
 - 5.4 Where necessary, the supervising staff member will provide additional “on-the-job” training, opportunities to learn through experience and an ongoing communication link.
6. Supervision
 - 6.1 All volunteers must sign in at the school office when arriving and sign out when leaving.
 - 6.2 Volunteers must work under the supervision of a school division employee, with the exception noted in Section 6.3 below.
 - 6.3 With the approval of the principal, an approved community coach may sole-supervise practices and games at the home school and in the community within which the school is located provided the LCSD staff member responsible for the team is on-site. A teacher supervisor assigned by the principal must accompany teams or groups to all offsite competitions, tournaments and activities and all overnight activities.

- 6.4 Principals shall ensure all volunteer community-based coaches meet the requirements of the Saskatchewan High School Athletic Association (SHSAA) for LCSD sports teams registered in Saskatchewan or the Alberta High School Athletic Association (AHSAA) for LCSD sports teams registered in Alberta.
 - 6.5 The supervising staff member is responsible to provide any necessary direction or instruction related to the volunteer's assignment, with particular attention to procedures related to student and workplace safety.
7. Reporting and Monitoring Process:
 - 7.1 It shall be the primary responsibility of the school principal to ensure that any volunteer working at the school has completed the requisite background check under Administrative Procedure 490.
 - 7.2 Principals shall retain on file a copy of the background check and compile an updated list of those individuals eligible to participate in a volunteer role described in Section 2 of this Administrative Procedure and forward all documentation to the Human Resource Manager.
 - 7.3 In the event that the Human Resource Manager determines there is a pending charge, conviction, or other concern disclosed through a background check or child protective service clearance, the Human Resource Manager shall immediately notify the Deputy Director with supervisory responsibility of the charge, conviction, or concern.
 - 7.4 The Deputy Director shall notify the school principal to advise the volunteer of their ineligibility to provide volunteer services to LCSD. Strict confidentiality must be maintained of all information disclosed through any Background Check, Commercial Background Check or Vulnerable Sectors Check.
 8. Requirements on LCSD Property
 - 8.1 Volunteers must sign in and out each time they enter and exit schools.
 - 8.2 Volunteers who work with students in a school must, at all times, be in the view of others, may not work behind locked doors, and may not work in a room with a closed door without a window or outside of public view.
 - 8.3 Volunteers who work in a school may not:
 - 8.3.1 Use student restrooms;
 - 8.3.2 Date, have intimate relationships, or have inappropriate interactions with students;
 - 8.3.3 Discipline or threaten to discipline students; or
 - 8.3.4 Access confidential student or personnel records.
 9. Volunteers are bound by:
 - 9.1 The same code of confidentiality expected of all employees of the Division. It is inappropriate to discuss students collectively or individually outside the school as a result of information gained as a volunteer.
 - 9.2 The same employee expectations outlined in AP 480 – Employees – Alcohol and Drugs.

10. Volunteers will be considered agents of the Division and under the Division insurance plan while engaged in their volunteer tasks.
11. Principals have the right to request volunteers to withdraw their services where it is deemed to be in the interests of the students or school to do so.
12. The Principal shall ensure all requirements defined in AP 260 – Student Travel are met in the event a volunteer may be transporting students for school programming or school related, sanctioned events or activities.

Reference: Sections 85, 87, 108, 109, 175 Education Act