

KANAWHA COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION POLICY
Series: C55 - Volunteers in the Schools

55.1. Purpose. The purpose of this policy is to promote and encourage school volunteers in order to expand and enhance parental and community involvement with schools while maintaining an adequate level of safety and security in Kanawha County Schools.

55.2. Definitions. A school volunteer is defined as a non-paid person functioning within the policies of the Board who shall serve under the immediate supervision and direction of the professional staff of the district to whom he/she is assigned, and who may at times be left alone with students.

A volunteer is an individual who receives no payment for services. An individual who is to receive, or is receiving, a parent stipend or other remuneration is not a volunteer and must be hired and processed through the Human Resources Division.

For the purposes of this policy the requirements for Volunteers do not apply to parents or legal guardians who are accompanying their child on a field trip or other type of extra-curricular activity.

Not covered under this policy are school visitors who are at all times supervised by professional staff of the district and who are also not left alone with students while under that supervision or who have no ongoing individualized interaction with a student or students, including, but not limited to, adults who have been invited to speak at a class or assembly; to judge academic competitions; to give a musical performance; or to strictly provide office help, with no ongoing individualized student interaction.

55.3. Policy.

55.3.1 School Volunteers Shall be Approved by the Principal. An individual who wishes to volunteer at a school shall be interviewed and approved by the principal prior to serving at the school. The principal's decision on whether to approve the volunteer candidate shall be based upon the best interests of the school. A rejected volunteer applicant may appeal the principal's decision to the Superintendent or designee whose decision shall be final. Prospective school volunteers shall be interviewed by the principal and must complete a volunteer application and a background investigation authorization and release.

55.3.2 Criminal Background Check. In order to protect the safety and security of children and school staff must submit to a criminal background check using the person's name, date of birth, gender, race, Social Security number and fingerprints, at the expense of the prospective volunteer. After the initial criminal background check, volunteers must report any subsequent criminal convictions to the principal.

If an individual refuses to submit to the background investigation, that person shall be ineligible to be a volunteer in the Kanawha County Schools. This includes a refusal to submit to all or part of the background investigation. To provide consistency in the district in determining the appropriateness of individuals working with children, the same guidelines currently in place for reviewing criminal conviction(s) or pending charge(s) for employees will be used in determining if a volunteer candidate is accepted or rejected. Any person wishing to volunteer in the schools but has been convicted of any criminal offense which constitutes a felony must be approved by the Board of Education prior to performing any volunteer activities.

55.3.3 Training for Volunteers. Before entering into any of the duties as a volunteer at a school, a prospective volunteer must receive appropriate training in sexual harassment prevention, cultural diversity, English as a second language and safety in the workplace. All volunteers are required to have sexual harassment prevention and cultural diversity training annually. All volunteers must also adhere to the requirements of the Drug Free Workplace Act of 1988 (41 U.S.C. §701 et seq.) Any person who wishes to volunteer as a coach for an athletic team must have received training from the West Virginia Secondary Schools Athletic Commission prior to volunteering.

55.3.4 Volunteer Sign-In and Sign-Out. When a person is engaging in volunteer activities, the person must first sign in at the school office. The volunteer will be issued a volunteer badge, which the individual must wear in a prominent manner at all times when in the school. The individual will be escorted to the location in which he or she will volunteer. When finished with the volunteer activities, the person will be escorted back to the office and will sign out prior to leaving.

Reference: W.Va. Code §18-5-13 Issued: 06.17.2004

Revised: 01.20.2005; 08.02.2021