

Board of Education Policy 5.0150
Administrative Procedure

Guidelines and Requirements for Volunteers

Volunteer Screening

No single screening process is suitable for all volunteer positions. The screening used will be based upon the specific task(s) assigned, the relationship of the volunteer to the school system (i.e., employee, parent, non-parent) and the risks associated with the performance of those tasks.

Relationship of Risk to Thoroughness of Screening

Risk is determined by the setting in which the volunteer activity takes place and the intensity of the relationship between the volunteer and student(s). Intensity is defined as the solitary time with the client, exclusivity of relationship, amount of time (frequency) and length of time (duration) in contact and level of vulnerability. The thoroughness of the screening increases as the risk of the contact increases.

Recommended Screening Procedures According to Volunteer Role

Teachers, principals and other professionals are expected to use their professional judgment in reviewing the position descriptions and in determining the appropriate level of screening needed for volunteer roles. Volunteers who are referred through other agencies are subject to screening requirements consistent with those listed below. However, these requirements may have been satisfied through prior screening by the referral agency or the volunteer's place of business. In such cases, it is not necessary to re-screen the volunteer. When accepting another agencies' screening, care should be taken to determine that the tools used were appropriate screens for the role the volunteer will fill in the school.

Job Descriptions

Although job descriptions do little to reduce the risk of harm to students, they provide a framework for matching volunteers to tasks for which they are qualified. Therefore, the development of job descriptions is recommended as a first step in incorporating volunteers into the school program.

Screening Tools

Screen tools which may be used (as applicable) include:

- Applications/registrations
- Orientation
- Interviews
- Reference checks
- Attendance at training sessions
- Record checks (criminal history)

Nametags

Schools may require volunteers to register in the school office at the beginning of each school visit and wear a nametag while in the building. Nametags may be color-coded to indicate the level at which the volunteer has been screened.

Mentoring Programs

Mentoring activities represent one of the highest risks to students and will incorporate the most intensive level of screening. The nature of the mentoring concept is to develop a sense of trust and support that extends over a school year or longer on a one-to-one basis.

School staff members will employ screening procedures that are sufficient to reduce the risk to students to a minimal level. Specifically, schools should strive to (a) protect children from individuals who may wish to become mentors for immoral or illegal purposes; (b) provide training so that mentors understand and adhere to guidelines for appropriate interactions with children that show respect for the child's culture, religious upbringing, and family values; and (c) provide support to mentors to increase the likelihood that the relationship will be sustained over time.

District Wide Support

The instructional department and personnel office will provide assistance as needed.

Confidentiality

Volunteers are held to professional standards for maintaining confidentiality of student records. Likewise, schools should take action to keep volunteer records confidential.

SEE 50150.AP1 FOR TABLE

Guidelines for Developing a Volunteer Role Description For Any Level

The purpose of a role description is to define what the person is supposed to do, which helps to clarify expectations and provides the foundation for the screening process. Role descriptions can be brief or lengthy, depending on the complexity of the role.

Role descriptions must indicate:

- The volunteer's duties
- The setting in which the volunteer will work
- The number of students with whom the volunteer will work simultaneously
- When the volunteer is needed
- Specific qualifications required (e.g., education, training, background, experience)
- Teacher or supervisor responsible for volunteer
- Required screening

Schools may also choose to provide the following information on the role description:

- Level of screening required, according to school board policy
- Title of volunteer job
- Desired results
- Other relevant characteristics of students, such as age or grade

Role Description for (Title of role)

Optional for levels 1 and 2, Required for level 3

The volunteer will: (describe volunteer's duties)

Setting in which the volunteer will work (e.g., classroom, library, athletic field):

Number of students with whom the volunteer will work simultaneously: _____

The volunteer is needed:

Fall Semester Spring Semester Other, specify _____

Day(s) of week and time (e.g., 10:00 – 10:55) volunteer is needed:

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
AM					
PM					

Training/Orientation required:

Other qualifications required:

Teacher/supervisor responsible for volunteer:

Screening required: (Staff: Check appropriate boxes and strike through those that do not apply to this volunteer role.)

- Registration
- Interview
- Personal references
- Criminal background check
- Other, specify: _____

**Guidelines for Developing a Volunteer Registration Form
Level 1 and 2 Volunteer Roles
(Required only for non-parent volunteers)**

The purpose of the registration form is to obtain information that will enable the school to identify the volunteer and communicate by phone or in writing. Because Level 1 and 2 volunteers are always within the sight of school staff or multiple adults, minimal information is needed.

Level 1 and 2 Volunteer Registration Forms must:

1. Ask the volunteer to provide the following information:
 - Full name
 - Full address
 - Phone numbers, both home and work

2. Provide an opportunity for the volunteer to indicate that he or she:
 - Pledges to abide by the policies of the Catawba County Schools. (The form should specify school policies and/or procedures that are particularly significant).
 - Has never had a charge of child abuse or neglect or domestic violence substantiated by Social Services

(School Name)
Sample Registration Form
For use at Level 1 and 2

Full name: _____

Address: _____

_____ city state zip code

Phone (hm): _____ (wk): _____

Emergency contact: _____ Ph: _____

- The Catawba County Schools are smoke-, alcohol-, and drug-free zones.
- No one other than school staff may take a student off campus without written permission of the parents and the school principal.
- Unless otherwise authorized, all volunteers must remain within sight of a school staff member.
- No one other than approved school staff may administer medicines.
- Students, staff and volunteers should refer any injury or accident to the classroom teacher who will follow the proper procedures.
- Information received as the result of an individual's activities in the school is to be kept strictly confidential.

Indicate by checking the box below if you:

- have been convicted of a crime involving drugs, sex or physical violence
- have a history of child molesting
- currently use illegal drugs or abuse alcohol
- have been substantiated by Social Services for child abuse or neglect or domestic violence

If you have checked any of the above, the school will call you to discuss further.

Please sign the following pledge:

I agree to abide by the policies, procedures, and regulations of the Catawba County Schools. I certify that all information given above is true and accurate.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Guidelines for Developing Volunteer Registration Forms For Level 3 Volunteer Roles

Because Level 3 volunteers have the potential for solitary time with a student and/or access to confidential information, it is necessary to ask questions designed to determine that the volunteer is well suited for the role. Registration serves as the first step in the screening process, and persons reviewing registration forms should be sensitive to red flags such as:

- Frequent, unexplained moves
- Gaps in employment
- Over-investment in youth activities to the exclusion of social activities with other adults

Level 3 volunteer registration forms must:

1. Ask the volunteer to provide the following information:
 - Full name
 - Full addresses for the past three years
 - Phone numbers, both home and work
 - Employer's names, addresses and phone numbers for the past three years
 - Interests, hobbies and leisure activities
 - Experience, training, and education relevant to the role the volunteer will fill
 - Any physical limitations that would interfere with the volunteer's ability to perform certain types of work

2. Provide an opportunity for the volunteer to indicate that he or she:
 - Pledges to abide by the policies of the Catawba County Schools. (The form should specify school policies and/or procedures that are particularly significant.)
 - Has never had a charge of child abuse or neglect or domestic violence substantiated by Social Services
 - Has never been convicted of a crime that would automatically exclude them from volunteering (e.g., crimes involving children, drugs, sex or physical violence)
 - Does not have a history of child molesting
 - Does not use illegal drugs or abuse alcohol
 - Certifies that the information provided is true and accurate

If references will be checked, the following information is needed:

- Names, addresses and phone numbers of three non-family references
- Volunteer's relationship to each reference (e.g., friend, employer)
- Length of time volunteer has know reference
- Authorization for the Catawba County Schools to conduct record checks as required by the role

If there is a chance that the school will check the volunteer's criminal or driving history, the following information will also need to be collected:

- Gender
- Race
- Birthdate
- Driver's license number
- Social Security number
- Authorization for the Catawba County Schools to conduct record checks as required by the role

(School Name)
Sample Volunteer Registration Form

Indicate any physical limitations that would interfere with your ability to perform certain types of activities required by your volunteer role:

Indicate by checking the box below if you:

- have been convicted of a crime involving drugs, sex or physical violence
- have a history of child molesting
- currently use illegal drugs or abuse alcohol
- have been substantiated by Social Services for child abuse or neglect or domestic violence

If you have checked any of the above, the school will contact you to discuss further.

If the role you will fill requires background and/or reference checks, please provide the following information:

Three non-family references:

1. Name _____ Relationship _____
Address _____
street city state zip
Phone: _____ How long have you known this person? ____
(area code) number

2. Name _____ Relationship _____
Address _____
street city state zip
Phone: _____ How long have you known this person? ____
(area code) number

3. Name _____ Relationship _____
Address _____
street city state zip
Phone: _____ How long have you known this person? ____
(area code) number

**Volunteer Interview Record
For Level 3 Roles**

Date: _____

Volunteer's Name: _____

Interviewer's Name: _____

Review the registration form. Correct any misinformation.

Ask the following questions and indicate responses below.

1. What reasons do you have for wanting to volunteer in our schools?

2. What type of volunteer role would you most like to fill in our schools? (What age or type of child do you feel most comfortable with? Are there groups of children with which you would not feel comfortable working? Do you feel more comfortable working one-on-one with children or in a classroom setting? How do you feel about working closely with small groups of children?)

3. How do your qualifications and training prepare you for the role you wish to fill?

4. Tell me a little more about your interests, skills, and hobbies.

5. What is your philosophy on discipline?

6. Describe your temperament.

7. What other information would you like to share about yourself?

8. What questions or concerns do you have about being a volunteer?

For Level 3 Roles

Introduce yourself and your position and indicate that the person has applied to become a volunteer in your school.

Describe the type of role the volunteer will fill. Indicate that you are screening the volunteer to assess his or her suitability for a role that may include unsupervised one-on-one time with children. Tell the reference that we are looking for qualities of caring, consistency and understanding.

Verify the information on the registration form (e.g., dates of employment, position title, duties, etc.) Be aware that some employers are not allowed to give any information other than that needed to verify employment.

1. How would you describe his or her personal characteristics? Probe for immaturity, shyness, introversion, non-assertiveness, indecision, or passive acquiescence.
2. How would you say he/she relates with children? Probe whether or not he/she relinquishes adult role and responsibility, tends to become more like the child, places a premium on one-to-one activities rather than group activities.
3. Have you ever seen him/her discipline a child? If so, please describe what you saw him/her do. The manner in which individuals try to control children's behavior can reveal their true character. Disciplinary techniques used should not be violent or emotionally degrading. They should deal with the issues involved, be constructive, and appropriate for the age of the child being discussed.
4. I'd be interested in knowing if you think there may be any problems or conditions that would interfere with the applicant's ability to care for children or in any way endanger the children under the applicant's care. These problems include substance abuse, mental or emotional illness, or history of child mistreatment.

This interview was conducted via telephone on (date): _____

Signature of interviewer: _____

(Your School's Letterhead)
Sample Reference Check by Letter
For Level 3 Roles

Dear (Name of Reference):

(Name of Volunteer) has applied to become a volunteer at our school. We are screening this volunteer to assess his or her suitability for a role that may include unsupervised one-on-one time with children. Qualities of caring, consistency, and understanding are important in all of our volunteers.

Would you please take a few moments to complete the form below and return it in the enclosed envelope?

We appreciate your assistance in this important process. Not returning this form in a timely manner could delay placement of this volunteer. If you have questions, please contact me at (phone).

Thank you,

(Your Name)

1. In what capacity have you know the applicant?

2. How long have you known the applicant?

3. How well do you know the applicant?

4. How well does the applicant follow through on commitments?

5. Do you believe this applicant would act as a positive, stable role model for a young person? _____

6. How well do you believe the applicant would relate to a child?

7. Would you be comfortable with this person working with your child? Why or why not?

8. Describe the applicant's strong points in working in a one-to-one relationship with a child.

9. To the best of your knowledge, does the applicant have or has s/he ever had a drinking or drug use problem?

10. To the best of your knowledge, does the applicant have any history of child molesting?

11. Do you know any reason that the applicant would not serve well as a volunteer?

12. Is there any additional information you feel would be helpful to us when considering this applicant as a volunteer?

Signature of Reference: _____ Date: _____

Position: _____

Relationship to Individual _____