



VOLUNTEER POLICY GOVERNANCE POLICY

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1.0 PRINCIPLES

- 1.1 The South Shore Centre for Education (SSRCE) values the participation of volunteers in its schools and encourages participation and partnership in the school community.
- 1.2 To promote a positive working relationship between the principal/supervisor, staff and volunteers in the school/worksites, it is essential the role, responsibilities and expectations for volunteers are clearly defined and communicated.
- 1.3 The SSRCE believes that, for the protection of students, all volunteers must comply with SSRCE policies and administrative procedures.
- 1.4 A key priority is to have volunteers who are competent and enhance the delivery of programs and services to students in a safe environment.

1.0 POLICY FRAMEWORK

- 2.1 This policy complies with the Education Act and other related provincial acts and policies.
 - 2.1.1 Department of Education and Early Childhood Development's *Volunteer Background Check Policy*
 - 2.1.2 Volunteer Canada's *Safe Steps Screening Program*
 - 2.1.3 Nova Scotia Department of Education and Early Childhood Development's *Best Practice Guide for Screening School Volunteers*

2.0 AUTHORIZATION

The Regional Education Director is authorized to issue procedures in support of this policy.

PROMOTION, PLACEMENT, ACCELERATION, RETENTION ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

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1.0 DEFINITIONS

1.1. There is a distinction between a visitor and a volunteer at the school. For the purposes of this policy, they are defined as:

1.1.1. **Visitor** – an individual who enters the school who is not an employee or volunteer. A visitor includes, but is not limited to, a guest speaker, an individual making a delivery, a community member assisting at annual or one-time school events, a School Advisory Council/Home and School/Parent Teacher Association member, and anyone attending a meeting with school staff.

1.1.2. **Volunteer** – an individual who interacts with students in an environment that is not supervised at all times by the South Shore Centre for Education staff. A volunteer includes, but is not limited to, a coach, an advisor for extra-curricular activities, a driver, a chaperone for trips and social events, a regular classroom/school contributor or helper.

2.0 PROCEDURES

Student safety is a top priority of the South Shore Centre for Education and every effort is made to mitigate student exposure to risk. It is essential that volunteers in the schools understand the role, responsibilities, expectations and standards for volunteering in schools.

Specifically:

2.1. The principal/ supervisor will oversee the selection of and the procedures for all volunteers in the school/worksite.

2.2. The principal/supervisor will ensure that all volunteers who have expressed an interest in working in their school/worksite are screened to ensure the right match is made between the work to be done and the person who will do it. Screening practices are at the discretion of the principal but must adhere to the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development's *Volunteer Background Check Policy*.

2.3. The following steps recommended by Volunteer Canada's *Safe Steps Screening Program* and the Nova Scotia Department of Education and Early Childhood Development's *Best Practice Guide for Screening School Volunteers* should be taken when determining if a person can be approved as a Registered Volunteer in SSRCE's schools.:

2.3.1 Determine the risk; 2.3.2 The requirements of the volunteer position and the respective screening requirements;

2.3.3 Establish a fair, consistent and appropriate recruitment process;

2.3.4 Use a standardized volunteer application form (see Appendix A);

2.3.5 Conduct interviews, where appropriate;

2.3.6 Verify references, where appropriate;

2.3.7 Request a Criminal Records Check (including Vulnerable Sector Check) and Child

- Abuse Register Search be submitted to Human Resources Division before commencing volunteering;
- 2.3.8 Conduct orientation and training sessions, where appropriate;
 - 2.3.9 Support and supervise;
 - 2.3.10 Follow up and feedback to volunteers where appropriate.
- 2.4. The principal/supervisor will ensure that volunteers are screened through the Child Abuse Register Search and complete a Criminal Records Check, in compliance with the SSRCE's policies and administrative procedures on Background Checks. **These screening tools must be updated every three years.** Updating will be done centrally.
- 2.5. The Human Resources Division will maintain a list of volunteers who have been screened for the Child Abuse Register Search and have completed a Criminal Records Check. The principal/supervisor will be advised when the process has been completed. Principals/supervisors may also verify with the Human Resources Department if a potential volunteer has already completed the screening process
- 2.6. In any instance where an invitation to volunteer in the South Shore Centre for Education's schools has been given and the Criminal Records Check or Child Abuse Register Search indicates that the volunteer could pose a risk to students (i.e., the person has a criminal record for acts of child abuse or is found to be on the Child Abuse Registry), the invitation to volunteer shall be withdrawn immediately.
- 2.6.1 In all other cases where there is a criminal record, the Director of Human Resources will make a decision regarding the volunteer's suitability and may consult with the school principal.
 - 2.6.2 It is the responsibility of any SSRCE registered volunteer, after having completed the screening process, to contact the school principal or the Director of Human Resources should they be subject to an investigation or conviction under the Criminal Code of Canada.
- 2.7. Completed Criminal Records Check and Child Abuse Register Search documents will be recorded and filed in the Human Resources Department. All information will be dealt with on a confidential basis.
- 2.8. The principal/supervisor will implement a set of general expectations for volunteers who assist in the schools/worksites.
- 2.9. The principal/supervisor will ensure volunteers working in the school/worksites receive a copy of the school's *Expectations for Volunteers* (Appendix A) and complete a *Volunteer Application Form*. (Appendix B)
- 2.10. Volunteers have a duty to abide with SSRCE policies and procedures and volunteers need to be aware that school staff has a responsibility to report any volunteer behaviour deemed to be inappropriate or pose a risk to student and staff safety.
- 2.11. Volunteers must adhere to the specific responsibilities and expectations defined by the principal/supervisor.

3.0 RESPONSIBILITIES

- 1.1 The Regional Executive Director or designate is responsible for the implementation, monitoring and revision of this administrative procedure.
- 1.2 This administrative procedure will be monitored annually.

Appendix "A"

EXPECTATIONS FOR VOLUNTEERS

The South Shore Centre for Education values the participation of volunteers in its schools and encourages participation and partnership in the school community. To promote a positive working relationship between the principal, staff and volunteers in the school, it is essential the role, responsibilities and expectations for volunteers are clearly defined. The South Shore Centre for Education also believes that, for the protection of students, all volunteers must comply with SSRCE policies and administrative procedures. A key priority is to have volunteers who are competent and enhance the delivery of programs and services to students in a safe environment.

Please review the following guidelines which outline some general responsibilities. Your specific responsibilities will be defined by the Principal or their designate.

1. Volunteers can assist greatly in enhancing student learning and broadening the programs offered by the school. It is critical that all school staff and volunteers work positively, cooperatively and professionally.
2. Volunteers are expected to communicate regularly with the relevant teacher or administrator. Volunteers are expected to take questions, concerns, and suggestions to the relevant teacher or administrator.
3. The school staff fulfills specific roles and is responsible for student learning and discipline. Volunteers are required to refer problems with student behaviour to the relevant teacher or administrator.
4. Volunteers are expected to respect the privacy of the students and are required to maintain confidentiality.
5. Volunteers have a duty to abide with SSRCE policies and procedures and volunteers need to be aware that school staff has a responsibility to report, to the principal, any volunteer behaviour deemed to be inappropriate or pose a risk to student and staff safety.
6. During instructional hours, all volunteers are to sign in at the school office upon arrival and wear an access badge while at the school. This badge must be returned to the office at the end of each visit and the volunteer is to sign out prior to departure.
7. Volunteers are expected to complete a Registration Form including a "Child Abuse Register Request of Search" form available at the Main Office. A Criminal Records Check, including Vulnerable Sector Check, is also required. **These screening tools must be updated every three years.** Requests for updates will come from the Human Resources division.
8. It is the responsibility of any SSRCE volunteer, after having completed the screening process, to contact the Principal or the Director of Human Resources should they be subject to an investigation or conviction under the Criminal Code of Canada.

The South Shore Centre for Education appreciates the services of all of its Volunteers.

Appendix "B"
Volunteer Application / Registration Form

(This form will be kept on file at the school and a copy submitted to Human Resources Division)

In order to ensure the safety of students, all volunteers in the South Shore Centre for Education need to be registered. A volunteer is defined as an individual who interacts with students in an environment that is not supervised at all times by South Shore Centre for Education staff. A volunteer includes, but is not limited to, a coach, advisors for extra-curricular activities, a driver, chaperones for trips and social events, a regular classroom/school contributor or helper. It does not include visitors to the school. Please complete this form to enable the school in which you wish to volunteer.

Volunteer's Name: _____

Volunteer's Role: _____

- I have a child registered in this school and I have the same address found in PowerSchool.

Student Name(s): _____

- I do not have a child registered in this school and my mailing address is:

Mailing Address: _____

Telephone No: (Daytime) _____ (Evening) _____

E-mail: _____

REFERENCES:

1. Name: _____ Telephone _____

2. Name: _____ Telephone: _____

- I am aware that I am required to successfully complete a "Child Abuse Register - Request of Search" form and submit it to the Human Resources Department at the SSRSB Regional Office through the school.
- I am aware that I am required to complete a "Criminal Records Check, (including Vulnerable Sector Check) submit it to the Human Resources Department at the SSRSB Regional Office, through the school, and receive approval prior to volunteering.

By signing this Volunteer Application Form, I am indicating that I have read the Expectations for Volunteers and I am agreeing to the expectations outlined.

Signature: _____ Date: _____