

MINNEAPOLIS PUBLIC SCHOOLS

REGULATIONS

Participation by the Public

Volunteer Screening Procedures

Requests to serve as school volunteers or other types of volunteer assistance may be made directly to the school principal, the classroom teacher, other school staff, the Volunteer Services Department, or other District Administrators.

All Minneapolis Public School volunteers working in any setting will be screened. The screening used will be based upon the specific volunteer position description, the risks associated with the performance of that position, and the designation of supervised versus unsupervised student contact. The Volunteer Position Screening Chart sets forth in detail the various position descriptions and the type and frequencies of screening required for each position.

The screening process *must* be completed before any volunteer begins in any school or program.

Adult Learners

Students in the Adult Basic Education Program are considered emancipated adults and their permission must be obtained to work with a tutor. Tutors working with adult learners are not required to be in view of the licensed teacher at all times.

Confidentiality

Volunteers will be informed of the privacy of all student information and will be asked to sign a letter agreeing to maintain the confidentiality of any student information.

Volunteers are to be held to professional standards for maintaining the confidentiality of student records. Volunteers not working under the guidance of school staff will not be given access to student records without parent/guardian permission.

All personal information collected on the Volunteer Information Form is considered confidential and will only be used to process a volunteer's placement.

Code of Conduct

Volunteers shall not engage students, staff or others in political or religious activities while on School District premises and while performing School District duties.

School personnel are responsible for the instruction, safety, and discipline of students and consequently some tasks are not to be performed by volunteers. Volunteers shall not provide the curriculum or the teaching plan, diagnose student needs or evaluate achievement, counsel or discipline students or provide nursing care (i.e. administer medications, treatments, etc.).

E-Mentoring

All e-Mentoring programs must be coordinated through the district Information Media Technology Services Department.

e-Mentoring connects students with caring, supportive adults while providing students with information about careers and the workplace. The program works best, however, when teachers and corporate partners or individuals establish additional objectives aligned with the classroom goals. The program is designed to be academic. It is not simply a pen-pal program. In general, the goals are to increase the rigor of the classroom curriculum.

Ineligible Volunteers

All former employees of the Minneapolis Public Schools who are coded as ineligible for rehire are ineligible to volunteer in Minneapolis Public Schools. Any individual guilty of any offense or behavior that disqualifies individuals for employment will also be ineligible to volunteer unless it's to give a classroom presentation related to the behavior or offense.

Liability

Volunteers will be defended by the District for the purpose of liability for injuries caused by District fault while serving within the scope of duty.

MPS Employees as Volunteers

Current employees are eligible to volunteer in Minneapolis Public Schools and are exempt from the reference check & criminal background check screening procedures as set forth in the Volunteer Position Screening Chart. However, they are expected to submit a standard volunteer information form to be kept on file at the school.

Nametags/Signing In & Out

Volunteers must register and sign in at the school office at the beginning of each school visit and sign out when they leave. Schools shall require that each volunteer wear a nametag while in the building and volunteers shall wear them.

Parental Consent

No student will participate with a volunteer in a *Level 4* activity or ride in a vehicle driven by a volunteer unless the student's parent or guardian has consented in writing.

Responsibility for Screening

The Principal or his/her designee is responsible for assuring that all volunteers are screened. The assigned staff person will review the work a volunteer will be doing to determine the appropriate level of screening. Volunteers who are referred through other agencies are subject to screening requirements consistent with those listed herein. The

Principal or designee must maintain a record of screening data. Department directors or managers are responsible for screening and monitoring volunteers located at their site.

School Partners

Schools partnering with businesses or other groups or agencies must ensure that the partner is a certified MPS community partner, achieved by completing the Community Partners Online (CPO) process. (CPO is a web-based process found at www.mpls.k12.mn.us/CPO.) Certified partners agree to follow the volunteer policies and procedures of the Minneapolis Public Schools.

Screening Methods

Screening methods which may be used, include:

- MPS Volunteer Information Form
- Interviews
- Reference Checks
- Criminal history record checks (criminal history, driving history (for field trips), credit bureau (for bookkeeping, fundraising or financial positions)
- Fingerprinting
- Required attendance at orientations
- Attendance at district/other training

System-wide Support

The staff in the Volunteer Services Department will:

- Publicize needs, recruit, and identify volunteers.
- Provide assistance in developing position descriptions.
- Provide training in the process to implement the screening system.
- Conduct appropriate volunteer orientation and teacher in-service programs.
- Conduct and/or arrange workshops for volunteers in reading, math, and other content specific topics as requested.
- Conduct criminal background record checks for a fee

Volunteers in Community-Based Programs

Schools partnering with community-based volunteer programs must ensure that the community-based program is a certified MPS community partner, achieved by completing the Community Partners Online (CPO) application. (CPO is a web-based application found at www.mpls.k12.mn.us/CPO.) Certified partners agree to follow the volunteer policies and procedures of the Minneapolis Public Schools.

Volunteer Dismissal

Minneapolis Public Schools is an equal opportunity school district and does not discriminate based on any legally protected status under federal, state or local law. The school principal or other district staff does have the right to dismiss any volunteer who is deemed to have engaged in inappropriate behavior including, but not limited to, that described in these policies and regulations.

Legal reference: Volunteers for children Act, 42 U.S.C. § 5119a (1998); Volunteer Protection Act of 1997, 42 U.S.C. § 14501 – 05 (1997)