Near North
District School Board

ADMINISTRATIVE GUIDELINE

Title: Volunteers in Schools

Effective Date: TBD

Responsibility: Superintendent of Business

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Rationale

The school is only as strong as the link it forms with its community. The Near North District School Board (NNDSB) welcomes and encourages participation of volunteers in its schools. Our community partners foster citizenship and offer vast opportunities for students to enrich their learning and skills. The NNDSB has the responsibility of providing a safe and secure working and learning environment for students and employees. The NNDSB expects all volunteers to provide a caring and safe environment that recognizes the rights and dignity of all persons to be treated respectfully. The purpose of this guideline is to encourage the use of volunteers in schools, to outline parameters for effective volunteer programs, and to provide pertinent information on the use and supervision of volunteers.

1.0 Hiring Process: See Administrator Manual for Additional Information and Samples

Step 1: Put in a request with School Administration about opportunities via direct email

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Step 2: Obtain a Criminal Record with Vulnerable Sector Check (VSC)

Obtain from your local police agency within the last 6 months. The VSC cannot be older than 6 months. If you need assistance, contact the school.

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Step 3: Complete the Volunteer Online Form

The link will be shared by the principal at the school. Once you have done this and submitted your VSC to the school principal, you will be added to the list of approved volunteers and will receive a confirmation email with next steps.

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Step 4: Renew your Volunteer Status Yearly

To continue to volunteer in the NNDSB schools, you will need to complete the annual offence declaration survey prior to volunteering. Please email the principal if you have not received your yearly form.

1.1 Vulnerable Secor Screening and Annual Offence Declaration

A Criminal Record with Vulnerable Sector Check (VSC) may be obtained from the local or provincial police departments depending on where the volunteer lives. These screenings will provide some assurance to parents, staff, students, and the Board that our volunteers are worthy of the trust placed in them during the time they work in the schools. The NNDSB will not permit volunteers who have criminal records and/or patterns of behavior that may place students at risk, except at the discretion of the principal or designate.

A VSC for one school is valid at other schools. Schools may wish to cover the cost of this for volunteers. Submitted screenings will be filed in a secure location within the school. The principal will collect these and keep them on file along with a copy of the annual offence declaration spreadsheet.

Each year, each volunteer will be required to complete an annual offence declaration as well as indicate their continued interesting in volunteering at the school.

Exemption to Record Check

Co-op students under 18 and the volunteers who accept them into their organizations are exempted from the required VSC. The students are already in the school system and are directly supervised by by the Co-op teachers.

Guests and Guest Speakers

There are times when a guest speaker is invited to a school that does not belong to the community organization. Many community partners have vulnerable sector screening processes in place but some organizations do not.

For school guests, there is a clear process to follow which includes:

- Seeking approval from school administration in advance by the supervising staff member including providing information regarding the classes to be visited, reason for the visit, and a clearly outlined date;
- Guest and speakers must be supervised the whole time by a staff member;
- Guests must sign in at the office and be met by the accompanying staff member before being admitted to the school;
- Guests must be shown where there are washrooms available should they need to access a washroom while at the school as a guest; and,
- Guests must formally sign out in the office when leaving.

Note: The admittance of guest speakers is at the principal's discretion.

1.2 References

New volunteers will be asked to provide the names of at least two people who will provide personal references. These references will be checked and documented before the volunteer assumes any duties at the school. References will be checked by the principal or designate and kept in a secure location in the office.

2.0 Orientation for Volunteers

Subject to the guidelines of the Board and barring direction or intervention by the Superintendent of Program and Schools or designate to the contrary, the principal of the school in which a volunteer is serving will be responsible for determining that any activity to which the volunteer is assigned is a school-sponsored activity.

Volunteers should be familiar with school board administrative guidelines and procedures for organizing, directing, controlling and supervising school activities and/or trips. Areas of focus include:

- Emergency response protocols;
- Safety guidelines – school board's excursion policy, Ontario Physical Activity Safety Standards in Education (OPASSE), and review of Administrative Guidelines that relate to school activities;
- Student code of conduct/behavior review – volunteers should not be responsible for administering discipline and must pass concerns along to the supervising staff member; and,
- Volunteering orientation provided by the lead teacher which communicates what duties are assigned and what is expected of the volunteer.

All provisions of NNDSB Administrative Guidelines and procedures and of negotiated collective agreements supersede any statements regarding the use of volunteers unless specifically noted herein.

The principal or designate has the responsibility to screen volunteers. Training should include playground rules, school code of conduct, issues of confidentiality, and emergency procedures. Volunteers shall be provided with a copy of this guideline and/or a school handbook.

Before a new community volunteer begins a placement, they must complete and submit the following:

- Criminal Reference – Vulnerable Sector Check/Annual Offence Declaration
- Appendix 2: Volunteer Reference Check along with VSC
- Appendix 3: Confidentiality Agreement
- Appendix 4: Volunteer Agreement

3.0 Supervision of Students in Physical Education/Sports Activities

Volunteer coaches may, at the discretion of the principal (or designate) and under the direct supervision of a regular staff member, participate in extracurricular physical education activities. The level of supervision required and specific directives for each physical education sport or activity is specified in the Ontario Physical Activity Safety Standards in Education (OPASSE).

4.0 Liability

In any school-sponsored activity that is undertaken by a volunteer, the NNDSB's liability insurance regarding negligence will apply. Volunteers should be aware that the NNDSB's

insurance does not include a loss-of-income provision should the volunteer sustain an injury that prevents them from resuming their normal employment.

As guided by Ontario School Board's Insurance Exchange (OSBIE), just like teachers or other school board staff, volunteers being asked to assume duties to supervise sports activities would be expected to meet the same qualifications as set out by the sport governing bodies and/or the minimum recommendations set out in the OPASSE Guidelines.

Good training will ensure the safety of volunteers as well as the safety of the students under the supervision of the volunteers. Volunteers are protected by the NNDSB's liability insurance against lawsuits arising out of their duties for the NNDSB. Coverage only applies when the volunteer is carrying out duties assigned by the school authorities (i.e. staff members). Volunteers are not covered by accident insurance nor by the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act through the NNDSB.

5.0 Volunteer Drivers

One area where the NNDSB's insurance will not act as primary coverage for volunteers is for volunteer drivers. Automobile insurance is provincially regulated and it is important for volunteer drivers to understand that there is no coverage provided by the NNDSB's insurance for damage to their vehicles even while being operated for approved NNDSB activities. Volunteer driver forms must be completed, signed, and collected before the excursion, as required, as part of the School Trips Administrative Guideline.

6.0 Appendices

- Appendix 1: Volunteer Application Form
- Appendix 2: Volunteer Reference Check
- Appendix 3: Confidentiality Form
- Appendix 4: Student/Volunteer Agreement
- Appendix 5: Annual Offence Declaration

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Appendix 1

VOLUNTEER APPLICATION FORM
(if not using the online form/database)

Date: _____
Full Name: _____
Street Address: _____
City: _____
Province: _____
Postal Code: _____
Home Phone #: _____
Business Phone #: _____
Email: _____
Emergency Contact: _____
Home Phone #: _____
Business Phone #: _____

Note: You must provide a recent criminal record check with a Vulnerable Sector Check (VSC)

School: _____
Principal/Designate: _____
Team/Activity: _____
Higher Risk (Y/N): _____
Volunteer Classification: _____

References (not a relative):

Name: _____
Position: _____
Phone #: _____

Name: _____
Position: _____
Phone #: _____

Permission to Contact References

I _____, hereby authorize the school principal/designate, to solicit a personal reference from the referees whose names were provided in connection with my application for placement as a school volunteer. I acknowledge that the NNDSB does not provide accident insurance or Workers' Safety Insurance Board (WSIB) coverage to volunteers. I further acknowledge that I have read and understand the above statements and certify that the information provided on this form is accurate.

_____ _____
Signature Date

SAMPLE VOLUNTEER COACHING APPLICATION

1. Please describe your previous coaching experience in _____ (specific sport) as well as coaching experience in any other sport. Include number of years you have coached, age range of players, competitive nature of the league and any other details you believe to be relevant to the position.

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

2. Describe your current certification and/or qualifications you hold which would be relevant to coaching.

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

3. Describe other coaching professional development sessions you possess which would be relevant to coaching.

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

4. Do you have St. John Ambulance Emergency/Standard First Aid Certification or equivalent?

Yes/No: _____
Expiry Date of Certification: _____

5. What are the three primary goals you aim to achieve as a coach?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

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Appendix 2

VOLUNTEER REFERENCE CHECK

Note: Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Release is required before any references may be contacted. Please address each area, noting areas of strength but also of concern, discrepancies and inconsistencies in relation to application and other information gathered. Use follow-up questions as required.

Candidate

Full Name: _____

Position Volunteering For: _____

Name of Reference: _____ Phone #: _____

Request by person providing the reference for confidentiality: Yes _____ No _____

1. How long have you known the candidate? _____

2. Were you aware of your name being given as a reference? _____

3. What is your relationship to the candidate? _____

4. Why would you have been chosen as a reference? _____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

5. If you are the candidate's supervisor (in a paid or unpaid position) please comment on the following (otherwise proceed to number 6):

Duties/Responsibilities: 1 2 3 4 5
Comments: _____
_____
_____
_____

Punctuality/Attendance: 1 2 3 4 5
Comments: _____
_____
_____
_____

Interpersonal Skills: 1 2 3 4 5
Comments: _____

_____
_____
_____

Ability to understand and follow directions: 1 2 3 4 5
Comments: _____
_____
_____
_____

Initiative and Self-Direction: 1 2 3 4 5
Comments: _____
_____
_____
_____

6. Would you feel comfortable with this individual working with students? _____
_____
_____
_____
_____

7. Do you know of any reason why this individual should not be working in close proximity to students? _____
_____
_____
_____
_____

8. Is there anything you would like to add? _____
_____
_____
_____
_____

_____ _____
Signature Date

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Appendix 3

PARENT AND COMMUNITY VOLUNTEERS
CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT

In the course of your volunteer activity with the Near North District School Board, you may be exposed to information about students and their families, staff and/or school or Board information that is confidential in nature.

In accordance with the Municipal Freedom of Information and Privacy Act, the privacy of students, their families, and staff members must be respected and upheld at all times. If confidential information regarding student information and records, school or Board operations, finance, staffing, or any other school community information of a private nature is made publicly known, the well-being of those involved and the operations of the school and the Board as a whole may suffer irreparably.

Confidentiality Agreement

I, _____ have been made aware
(Volunteer Name)
that as a volunteer, I may be privy to confidential information regarding members of the school community, including students and their families, staff and administration. Whether such information has become known to me in the normal performance of my duties or inadvertently, I acknowledge my moral and legal obligation to maintain the confidentiality and privacy of such information.

I understand that all confidential information that becomes known to me in any way shall not be disclosed to any person within or outside the school, unless authorized in writing by the school principal/designate or parent/guardian. I understand that I do not have access to the Ontario Student Record (OSR) and its contents.

If I have any questions or concerns regarding the confidentiality of any information made known to me throughout the course of my duties, or am unsure whether or not certain information should remain confidential, I will contact my immediate supervisor (school principal or designate) immediately for discussion, before sharing this information with any third party.

This confidentiality agreement is not limited by the duration of the visit/volunteer work in the school classroom(s), event, activity, etc. and this will be respected indefinitely. If confidentiality is breached, I will be required by the principal/designate to relinquish my duties.

_____ _____
Volunteer Signature Date

_____ _____
Witness Signature Date

Appendix 4

SCHOOL/VOLUNTEER AGREEMENT

Name of Volunteer: _____
School:_____
Class/Activity: _____
Staff Member Supervising Volunteer: _____

As Principal/Designate, I agree to:

- Provide both initial orientation and ongoing training and support to the volunteer;
- Ensure that volunteers are neither responsible for the supervision of students nor the delivery of programs without teacher direction, nor be involved in any evaluation of students or school personnel or program;
- Ensure that volunteers are not given access to personal information regarding students or staff, unless it is essential to the performance of their duties; and,
- Inform the volunteer in advance of all school schedule changes.

As a Volunteer, I agree to:

- Perform duties as assigned by Board Staff, with no expectation of remuneration or credit;
- Respect the confidentiality of all information made known to me regarding students or staff;
- Neither discipline nor evaluate students;
- Notify the appropriate person at school as soon as possible when circumstances necessitate my absence;
- Abide by all NNDSB administrative guidelines and procedures;
- Follow dress and behaviour codes as established by the school and NNDSB; and,
- Acknowledge that I have been made aware that NNDSB does not provide accident insurance or Workers' Safety Insurance Board (WSIB) coverage to volunteers.

Action Item: The Volunteer has provided the Principal/Designate with a Vulnerable Sector Check (VSC) dated within the last six months and it has been reviewed.

Not required for this position: _____

Starting date: _____

_____ _____
Volunteer Signature Date

_____ _____
Principal (or designate) Signature Date

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Appendix 5

SAMPLE OFFENCE DECLARATION FORM

(If not using an online form)

Full Name: _____
Date of Birth: _____
Volunteer Position(s): _____
Location(s) of Volunteering Activities for NNDSB: _____
_____

I DECLARE, since the last Vulnerable Sector Check (VSC) reviewed by the NNDSB or since the last Offence Declaration given to me by the NNDSB, that:

I have NO convictions under the *Criminal Code of Canada* up to and including the date of this declaration for which a pardon has not been issued or granted under the *Criminal Records Act (Canada)*.

This declaration is dated at _____ this ____ day of _____, 20___.

_____ _____
Volunteer Signature Date

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