

Administrative Procedure 490 - Volunteers

Background

The Division values the contributions of volunteers in enhancing learning opportunities for students while still recognizing its responsibility to provide a safe and caring environment for staff and students alike.

Volunteers acting in “the place of parents” are held to a standard of care requiring that they exercise wise and judicious decision making in the best interests of all students.

Definitions

Community Coach is defined as a person other than an employee of the Division who shares his/her expertise with students on a school team, club, or activity for extended periods of time, some of which is outside the school day.

Volunteer is defined as someone who assists the school and/or students in curricular and/or extra-curricular activities, not including Division employees, guest speakers, presenters, special visitors to the school or School Council members in their role as School Council members.

Procedures

1. Volunteers
 - 1.1. The Principal and staff of the school are encouraged to promote the participation of volunteers in the life of the school. Practices regarding staff completion of Criminal Record Check with Vulnerable Sector shall also apply to volunteers.
 - 1.2. Volunteers participating in the activities of schools are expected to:
 - 1.2.1. share relevant areas of volunteer interest or expertise to assist the school in identifying volunteer assignments;
 - 1.2.2. abide by the rules of confidentiality;
 - 1.2.3. act in an assisting capacity with teachers and not assume functions considered responsibilities of the teacher;
 - 1.2.4. seek the counsel and take the direction of the Principal in any decision area(s) which may be unclear to the volunteer;
 - 1.3. The Principal is responsible for:
 - 1.3.1. recruiting and screening volunteers keeping in mind the safety and well-being of students and staff;
 - 1.3.2. ensuring that volunteers act in an assisting capacity and do not assume the teacher functions normally performed by the classroom teacher;
 - 1.3.3. developing school processes and procedures regarding the use of volunteers in schools;

- 1.3.4. approving all volunteer positions in the school, in accordance with this Administrative Procedure and with school-based procedures
 - 1.4. The Principal shall ensure that all volunteers whose service at the school over the course of the year is likely to exceed ten (10) hours of volunteer activity or shall be involved as a volunteer in overnight trips with students or shall be driving students for field trips or extracurricular activities:
 - 1.4.1. complete the Volunteer Registration Form ([Form 490-1](#));
 - 1.4.2. provide a Criminal Record Check with Vulnerable Sector; and
 - 1.4.3. sign a confidentiality agreement.
 - 1.5. An individual approved as a volunteer shall be so informed by the Principal in writing.
 - 1.6. If a volunteer applicant has a criminal record, the Principal, in consultation with the Assistant Superintendent of Human Services, in will review the applicant's suitability based upon the following factors:
 - 1.6.1. the type of charge or offence;
 - 1.6.2. the age of the charge or offence;
 - 1.6.3. the type of volunteer work the applicant is being considered for;
 - 1.6.4. whether the criminal record impacts on the applicant's ability to perform the volunteer duties;
 - 1.6.5. whether the behaviour associated with the offence(s) if repeated, will pose a threat of physical or sexual abuse to children or others; and
 - 1.6.6. any other factor(s) which the Principal deems to be relevant.
 - 1.7. The Principal may deny or revoke permission for a volunteer to work in school(s) if the volunteer is deemed unsuitable for a volunteer position, is in breach of Board policies or administrative procedures, or behaves in a manner that is contradictory to the Division mission, vision and/or principles.
 - 1.8. If an individual has his/her application for a volunteer role denied because of a Principal's decision in clause 1.6 or 1.7 above, the individual may appeal the decision to the Superintendent. In such a case, the decision of the Superintendent shall be the final decision for the Division.
2. Volunteer Community Coaches
 - 2.1. The Principal shall ensure that all persons acting as volunteer community coaches in the Division are expected to know and adhere to all applicable Board policies, administrative procedures and related school procedures.
 - 2.2. All volunteer community coaches shall complete a Volunteer Registration Form ([Form 490-1](#)) at the time of their original request to volunteer.
 - 2.3. For purposes of screening and selection of community coaches, the Principal shall personally interview prospective community coaches, conduct reference checks where appropriate and ask the prospective community coach to provide: a Criminal

Record Check with Vulnerable Sector and complete the Division's confidentiality agreement.

- 2.4. An individual approved as a volunteer community coach shall be so informed by the Principal in writing.
- 2.5. If the volunteer community coach is not working directly with or under the supervision of a staff member, the Principal must accept responsibility for the activity.
- 2.6. Principals must ensure that persons acting as community coaches have the knowledge, skills and attributes necessary to perform their described role. The Principal shall discuss the following with the volunteer before assigning them to the supervision of student activity:
 - 2.6.1. any school philosophy regarding the participation of students (i.e. selection, playing time, behaviour expectations, etc.);
 - 2.6.2. use of school facilities and equipment;
 - 2.6.3. supervision expectations;
 - 2.6.4. discipline and referral procedures;
 - 2.6.5. communication with parents;
 - 2.6.6. finances and fund-raising;
 - 2.6.7. transportation procedures;
 - 2.6.8. in-service opportunities;
 - 2.6.9. participate in health and safety courses as determined by the Assistant Superintendent of Human Services;
 - 2.6.10. awareness of [Administrative Procedure 162 Prohibited Recreation Consumables](#);
 - 2.6.11. all policies and procedures pertinent to the supervision of students; and
 - 2.6.12. other items, as identified by the Principal
- 2.7. In addition to providing the approval for a community coach, the Principal may require additional supervisors to accompany the activity before allowing it to proceed (e.g., provision of appropriate gender supervisors for coed activities).
- 2.8. Volunteer community coaches are to be encouraged to avail themselves of appropriate in-service activities, specifically those that will enhance the ability to deal with the needs of students involved in the activity (e.g., coaching certification clinics, first aid programs).
- 2.9. The Principal or designate may deny or revoke permission for a volunteer to participate as a community coach if the volunteer is deemed unsuitable for the role, is in breach of Board policy or administrative procedures, or behaves in a way that is contrary to the Division mission, values or principles.

Reference: Section 11, 33, 52, 53, 196, 197, 222, 256 Education Act
Child, Youth and Family Enhancement Act
Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act

Physical Education Safety Guidelines of Alberta
Effective: 2010-04-15
Amended: 2016-09-22; 2022-01-01, 2023-03-28, 2024-07-09