

VOLUNTEERS

Thompson School District encourages parents, guardians and other individuals from the community to volunteer their time, knowledge and abilities for the benefit of students in our schools. Authorized volunteers enrich the district's educational programs and extracurricular activities, and strengthen our schools' relationships with families, businesses, public agencies and private institutions. The presence of authorized volunteers in the classroom, on school grounds and at activities away from school also enhances the supervision of students and contributes to school safety.

For purposes of this policy, a "volunteer" is an individual, except a student enrolled in a district school, (a) who provides an act or service without compensation for the benefit of a district school, staff and/or student(s) subject to the direction and control of the school's principal and his/her designees, and (b) whose volunteer service could involve contact with one or more students outside the physical presence of a district employee, even if such contact may occur incidentally by chance at school or a school activity and for only a brief period of time. For purposes of this policy, an "authorized volunteer" is an individual (a) who qualifies as a "volunteer" under the definition in the immediately preceding sentence, (b) is registered as provided in this policy, and (c) is providing service to the district in accordance with this policy. Volunteer service may be granted, denied or revoked at any time at the district's sole discretion. For the purpose of this policy, parents involved strictly in the day-to-day education of their children, are not considered volunteers.

In order to help ensure appropriate oversight of school activities and the welfare and safety of staff and students, every individual who wishes to serve as a volunteer (including parents/guardians) must first be registered by the district, in accordance with the terms and conditions set forth below. This requirement applies to all volunteer service, whether it is only for a single occasion or will occur on a sporadic or regular basis, and regardless of the program, event or activity involved.

The volunteer registration process shall be conducted in accordance with the following procedures:

1. Individuals who wish to serve as volunteers must first complete a volunteer application and agreement, which may be done online through the district's Internet website. Volunteer application and agreement forms are also available from, and completed forms may be submitted to, the district's VITAL office or the building volunteer coordinator at the school for which the individual wishes to volunteer.
2. A background check shall be conducted by the district, at its expense, as part of the volunteer application review process. This background check requirement is not meant to discourage or offend prospective volunteers, but rather to help ensure the safety and welfare of the district's students.
3. All information provided in the volunteer application and agreement, and all information received by the district through the volunteer background check and/or other sources, shall be considered and maintained as confidential personnel file information under the Colorado Open Records Act and not subject to disclosure except on a "need to know" basis as authorized by law.
4. An individual's volunteer service may be denied if the district determines that such volunteer service would be incompatible with the protection of student health, welfare, safety or morals, based on information provided in the volunteer application and agreement, information discovered through a background check, or information discovered by other means.

Determinations in this regard may be appealed to the director of communication and community resources, whose decision shall be final. An individual's conviction of a felony or misdemeanor will not automatically result in denial of volunteer service; each situation will be considered individually. (As used in this paragraph, "convicted" means a conviction by a jury or by a court and shall also include the forfeiture of any bail, bond, or any other security deposited to secure appearance by a person charged with a felony or misdemeanor; the payment of a fine; a plea of no contest; or the imposition of a deferred or suspended sentence by the court.)

5. Registered volunteers shall be issued an identification badge, which must be worn at all times the individual is providing volunteer services.
6. Registered volunteers are subject to follow-up background checks any time the district receives information indicating that it would be prudent to conduct such a background check in the interest of protecting student health, welfare, safety or morals. Registered volunteers are also subject to one random follow-up background check during each three-year period they remain a registered volunteer.

The principal and his/her designees shall identify appropriate services for volunteers serving each school, and shall train volunteers as necessary to perform such services. To the extent necessary to perform services assigned by the principal or his/her designee, volunteers may be authorized to use district computers and receive Internet access. A volunteer's use of district computers and Internet access shall be subject to the terms and conditions of policy GBEG/GBEG-E governing employee use of District information technology. The use of volunteers at any school or school activity shall not conflict with or replace any regularly authorized personnel staffing allotment.

Volunteers shall comply with all applicable Board policies and regulations, as well as with all applicable school rules.

Authorized volunteers shall be covered by, and afforded the protections of, the Colorado Governmental Immunity Act and the Colorado Teacher and School Administrator Protection Act.

The superintendent or superintendent's designee shall establish regulations or administrative guidelines to assist district personnel in the uniform and consistent implementation of this policy.

Adopted January 18, 2012

Legal refs.: 42 U.S.C. 5119a & 5119c 20
U.S.C. 7140(b)(1)(A)(ii)
C.R.S. 22-12-101 et seq. (teacher and school administrator protection act)
C.R.S. 24-10-101 et seq. (governmental immunity)

Cross refs.: GBEG, Staff Use of the Internet
GBJ, Personnel Records and Files
KI, Visitors to Schools