

Community Relations

School Volunteers

CREC recognizes that volunteers can make many valuable contributions to our schools. The Council endorses a program encouraging community members taking active roles in improving schools and becoming school volunteers in schools, subject to suitable regulations and safeguards. Appropriate recognition of volunteer services shall be made by the school's administration.

CREC, through the Executive Director and/or designee, shall establish procedures for securing and screening volunteers. No person who is required to register as a sexual offender, or whose name is listed on the Department of Children and Families (DCF) Child Abuse and Neglect Registry may serve as a volunteer in any district school.

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes

10-4g Parental and community involvement in schools; model program; school-based teams

10-28b School volunteers

10-235 Indemnification of teachers, board members, employees and certain volunteers and students in damage suits; expenses of litigation.

54-250 et seq. Registration of sexual offenders.

P.A. 97-290 An Act Enhancing Educational Choices and Opportunities

Policy adopted: November 17, 2004
Policy revised: January, 20, 2016

CAPITOL REGION EDUCATION COUNCIL
Hartford, Connecticut

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Securing and Screening Volunteers

The Building Principal or his/her designee directs the use of volunteers within the school. Specifically, the Principal or designee directs volunteer recruitment, screening, placement, and training within the following perimeters:

1. **Qualifications.** Volunteers may come from all backgrounds and all age groups. The main qualification for a volunteer is the desire to give his/her time and talent in order to enrich the school community and student learning opportunities.
2. **Persons Not Allowed to Serve as Volunteers.** No person who is a “registered sex offender,” or is on the Department of Children and Families (DCF) Child Abuse and Neglect Registry may serve as a volunteer. Every time a new notification/online posting of registered sex offenders is received, the Building Principal or his/her designee shall review it for any person's name who has submitted a volunteer information form during that school year. Whenever someone submits a new volunteer information form, the Building Principal or designee shall review the sex offender list and DCF Child Abuse and Neglect Registry.
3. **Recruitment.** School personnel may recruit volunteers.
4. **Role.** Volunteers serve only in an auxiliary capacity under the direction and supervision of a staff member; they are not a substitute for a member of the school staff. Volunteers do not have access to confidential student school records.
5. **Selection, Placement, and Supervision.** Volunteer selection and placement shall be on the basis of the volunteer’s qualifications and availability and the school’s needs. A volunteer will be assigned to a staff member only with the staff member’s consent. The relationship between a volunteer and staff member should be one of mutual respect and confidence.
6. **Screenings.** Screening volunteers is critical because of the vulnerability of the population the school district serves.

The level of background checks depends on the volunteer level:

Level One - Supervised volunteers

These are individuals who perform services for CREC for a single event, a consecutive series of days, or several nonconsecutive days for a period of one (1) week or less. Supervised volunteers do not have unsupervised access to CREC students and are not required to submit to a background check.

Level Two – Unsupervised volunteers

These are individuals who, while at all times under the direction of a CREC employee, may have some unsupervised access to students while providing assistance with tutoring, athletic, classroom, or overnight trip activities. Level Two volunteers must submit to both the national background check and fingerprinting.

Persons wishing to serve as volunteers must complete a Volunteer Application and Registration and a Waiver of Liability form. Additionally, Level Two volunteers must complete a background check agreement form.

Once a volunteer has completed the application process and has been approved, (s)he must register in the school's main office at the beginning of each visit and wear a name tag while in the building. Approval to volunteer, unless otherwise rescinded, will remain in effect for one academic year.

A request to volunteer or to continue volunteering will be denied and an approval to volunteer will be rescinded if the volunteer behaves in any manner that demonstrates he or she is not a good role model or is otherwise detrimental to the school environment. Examples of such behavior include: swearing, failing to be dependable, failing to follow the supervisor's instructions, committing any criminal act on school grounds or at a school activity, touching a student in a rude or overly forceful manner, failing to dress in an appropriate manner, or violating any school rule.

A principal may at any time remove a volunteer from service. Any time a person is denied permission to serve as a volunteer or has been removed as a volunteer, the Superintendent shall be notified.

7. **Training.** Each academic year, when a person first completes the volunteer registration form, the Principal or designee should give the person a copy of this administrative procedure along with other pertinent information. The staff member to whom the volunteer is assigned is responsible for explaining his or her expectations of the volunteer. The Principal or designee should arrange appropriate training opportunities for those volunteer activities requiring a skill or knowledge base, e.g., working in the computer lab.

Regulation approved: November 17, 2004
Revised: October 21, 2015

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Volunteer Information Form and Waiver of Liability

Only one form needs to be completed by a volunteer each school year. Please print clearly in ink:

Information Form

Name: _____
Last First Middle Telephone

Address: _____
Street City Zip Code

Personal physician: _____ Phone _____

Emergency adult contact: _____ Phone _____

Are you now or have you ever been a school volunteer? _____
At which school? _____ Year? _____
The name of any child or ward attending this school: _____

Criminal Conviction Information

Are you a sex offender? _____
Have you ever been convicted of a felony? _____
If you answered YES, list all offenses

Offense(s): _____
Date(s): _____
Place(s): _____

If requested, are you willing to consent to a criminal background investigation? _____

Waiver of Liability

CREC does not provide liability insurance coverage to non-district personnel serving as volunteers. The purpose of this waiver is to provide notice to prospective volunteers that they do not have insurance coverage by CREC and to document the volunteer's acknowledgment that they are providing volunteer service at their own risk.[However, C.G.S. 10-235 provides that the district must indemnify and hold harmless volunteers from civil liability in most situations as long as the volunteer is approved by CREC to carry out a duty prescribed by the Council and performs

services under the direction of a certified teacher. Therefore the district must pay any damages awarded to a plaintiff in an action brought alleging negligence or other act resulting in injury, including infringement of that person's civil rights.]

By your signature below:

You acknowledge that CREC does not provide insurance coverage for the volunteer for any loss, injuries, illness, or death resulting from the volunteer's unpaid service to the School District.

Date: _____ Signature of Volunteer: _____
Printed Name of Volunteer _____

For School Use Only

General description of assignment(s):

- supervising students as needed by a teacher
- supervising students during a regularly scheduled activity
- assisting with academic programs
- assisting at the resource center or main office
- other _____

Name of supervising staff member: _____

"Sex offender list" checked by _____ on _____ (mandatory).

Is a criminal background check necessary (the individual will be working over a long period of time in direct contact with students where no staff member is continuously present or in other situations where a check would be prudent)? *(to be answered by Principal)*

If "yes," and provided the individual authorized the check,

- the date on which the check was requested? _____
- the date on which it was received and reviewed. _____

Reviewed by: _____
Signature Date