

SBISD VOLUNTEER ETHICS, PROCEDURES AND GUIDELINES

Revised 6/7/2019

Our Values: The Spring Branch Way

The foundation of success, for our students and our school system, is rooted in our Core Values and these values define the Spring Branch way.

Our five Core Values affirm who we are, what we stand for, how we treat each other, what we prioritize, and what guiding principles we live by as members of the Spring Branch ISD family. Every member of the Spring Branch family – educators, parents, students, and community members – will adopt and share this set of values as we work to best serve students on their educational journeys.

- **Every Child – We put students at the heart of everything we do.**
 - Every child. Every Day. Every minute. Every way.
 - What’s Best for the Child Drives the Decision
 - Infinite Possibilities Through Education
- **Collective Greatness – We, as a community, leverage our individual strengths to reach challenging goals.**
 - Surpass Expectations
 - Everyone’s Work Matters
 - Diversity Makes Us Stronger
- **Collaborative Spirit – We believe in each other and find joy in our work.**
 - Each of Us is Committed to All of Us
 - Together We’re Better
 - Assume the Best
- **Limitless Curiosity – We never stop learning and growing.**
 - Empowered to Innovate
 - Tenaciously Embrace Challenges
 - Unleashed Potential
- **Moral Compass – We are guided by strong character, ethics and integrity.**
 - Personal Responsibility
 - Kindness and Mutual Respect
 - Trustworthiness

Introduction

The following procedures have been developed by the SBISD Volunteer Advisory Board and are designed to protect both students and volunteers. Acceptance of and adherence to these ethics, procedures and guidelines is mandatory to participate as a volunteer in Spring Branch ISD.

These volunteer guidelines are designed to protect students from harm and to prevent even the appearance of impropriety on the part of the individual mentors, volunteers, students and schools participating in Spring Branch ISD volunteer programs. Please know that we appreciate your participation and that we

appreciate your adhering to these guidelines. If you have additional questions, ask your school principal, campus volunteer coordinator or the Community Relations Department.

Volunteer Procedures.

- **Criminal Background Check.** All current and potential SBISD volunteers must annually complete the SBISD volunteer registration process and authorize the SBISD Police Department and the SBISD Human Resources Department (for mentors and tutors) to complete a criminal background check. The SBISD online volunteer registration is accessible through the district website. Individuals' criminal histories are subject to review by SBISD to determine eligibility to serve as an SBISD volunteer. SBISD reserves the right, in its sole discretion, to refuse and/or restrict an individual's access as an SBISD volunteer based on an individual's criminal history, in accordance with applicable law and SBISD policy, including SBISD Policy GKG (Legal).
- **Training.** Depending upon the volunteer role, you may be required to attend a campus or district training.
- **Sign In.** Sign in and out each time you volunteer on campus using the Raptor check in system as per your campus guidelines.
- **Name Badge.** Wear the school provided identification badge as per campus guidelines.
- **Volunteer Hours.** Record any volunteer hours served off-campus and report monthly as per campus guidelines.
- **Dress Code.** Use common sense in your dress. Neat, conservative attire is preferred and casual dress is acceptable. Remember, you are a role model for students.
- **Non-School Age Children.** Only bring your non-school age children with you if a school permits and if childcare is available.
- **Dependability.** Maintain consistent and regular attendance. Contact the school if you are unable to attend as scheduled.
- **No Smoking or Alcohol.** All SBISD facilities are tobacco free zones, and alcohol consumption is strictly prohibited on SBISD property. This includes parking lots, stadiums and outside fields.
- **Respect.** Volunteers will be respectful of student's and staff's cultural, social, and religious differences. Openness, honesty and respect are expected.
- **Role.** The teacher is in charge of all phases of classroom activity and volunteers will take directions from the teacher or other administrators. Your activities should support the efforts of staff members but not replace them or exceed their authority.
- **Discipline or Other Concerns.** Report discipline, academic or social/emotional concerns to the appropriate administrator or teacher. Student discipline is the sole responsibility of administrators and school staff. Volunteers should not be put in a position of having to enforce discipline.
- **Calendars.** Stay informed of school holidays, field trips, testing, etc. as posted on the district website.
- **Materials and Supplies.** Return any school supplies utilized in your volunteer role and advise the appropriate school personnel of needed supplies as appropriate. District materials and supplies are not to be used for personal use.
- **Pictures and Recordings.** Volunteers should not photograph or record any students who are not their own, without prior permission from the teacher and/or the campus principal. Additionally, volunteers should not photograph or record any students' work without prior permission from the teacher and/or campus principal. Volunteers should never post, distribute, or publish any photograph or recording of any student not their own, even if the teacher or campus principal consents, on any social media site.

- **Removal.** A volunteer may be removed from service from a campus or SBISD any time it is deemed necessary and appropriate to do so. If it is determined that it is in the best interest of the district that the volunteer shall be excluded from service, SBISD will notify the volunteer.

Confidentiality.

All student information should be treated confidentially. Both state and federal law protect the privacy of student information, including the Family Educational Rights & Privacy Act (“FERPA”). Sharing student information with others may be a violation of the law. Confidential information includes any personally identifiable information regarding a student, including, but not limited to, a student’s:

- Scholastic and health records
- Test scores and grades
- Family information
- Discipline or behavioral incident information
- Status or accommodations given an academic or developmental special need

In the course and scope of volunteering, you may obtain information that is otherwise confidential by state or federal law (e.g. FERPA) and/or SBISD policy. As a volunteer, you must not disclose such confidential information except as may be allowed and/or required by law or SBISD policy. You further must exercise due diligence to safeguard against the negligent disclosure of confidential information by ensuring confidential information is not left unattended or unsecured in paper or digital format. If you have any questions about whether certain information is confidential or the disclosure of student information, ask campus administration for clarification.

Do not make a promise to a student that you will not reveal confidential information to a parent or school officials. *It may be necessary to do so* for the welfare of the student and to protect you from violating the law. Although the student is free to share confidential information with you, there are certain things that you are required by law to tell the campus administrator. Any personal information learned from a student or student’s files, should be held in strictest confidence **except:**

1. If a student confides that he or she is the victim of sexual, emotional, chemical or physical abuse;
2. If a student confides that he or she is involved in any illegal activity;
3. If a student confides that he or she is considering homicide or suicide.

Should one of these exceptions arise, you are required to immediately notify the student’s principal or appropriate school personnel and/or appropriate agencies in the case of suspected child abuse or neglect in accordance with applicable law and SBISD Board Policy FFG, within 48 hours of learning of facts giving rise to the suspicion. Note on your calendar when this information was reported and to whom it was given. Remember, this information is extremely personal and capable of damaging lives, so do not share it with anyone except the appropriate authorities. If you have questions, please ask a campus administrator. Any student needs communicated to the volunteer should be referred to an appropriate staff person.

Guidelines for Working with Students

Meeting with Elementary School Students in your role as a volunteer/mentor/tutor:

1. All meetings and/or activities with students must take place on the school campus, or as part of a school-sponsored or school-related activity such as a field trip, concert or athletic game.
2. All activities with a student or students must take place in a room with open visibility to the public or on the school grounds in sight of school staff representatives.
3. Off campus meetings between the volunteer and a student are strictly prohibited unless under the direct supervision of a school official or parent/guardian.
4. Communication with the student through the use of electronic media is prohibited. The term “electronic media” includes all forms of social media, such as text messaging, instant messaging, electronic mail (email), web logs (blogs), electronic forums (chat rooms), video sharing web sites (for example, YouTube), editorial comments posted on the Internet, and social network sites (for example, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn, SnapChat). Electronic media also includes all forms of telecommunication such as land lines, cell phones, and web-based applications. A volunteer may communicate with the parent of a student about volunteer activities by telephone, cellular phone or email. The volunteer will provide a copy of any email communication to a parent regarding volunteer activities to district staff upon request. If requested by the parent or district administrator, the volunteer will cease calls and/or emails to the parent.
5. The volunteer is prohibited from knowingly communicating with students through a personal social network page.

Meeting with High School and Middle School Students in your role as a volunteer/mentor/tutor:

1. All meetings and/or activities with students must take place on the school campus, or as part of a school-sponsored or school related activity such as a field trip, concert or athletic game.
2. All activities with a student or students must take place in a room with open visibility to the public or on the school grounds in sight of school staff representatives.
3. Off campus meetings between the volunteer/ mentor/tutor and the student are strictly prohibited unless under the direct supervision of a school official or parent/guardian.
4. Communication with high school students through the use of electronic media is prohibited except in the limited circumstances described here. The term “electronic media” includes all forms of social media, such as text messaging, instant messaging, electronic mail (email), web logs (blogs), electronic forums (chat rooms), video sharing web sites (for example, YouTube), editorial comments posted on the Internet, and social network sites (for example, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn, SnapChat). Electronic media also includes all forms of telecommunication such as land lines, cell phones, and web-based applications. Under the following limited circumstances, electronic media may be used to contact a student solely regarding mentoring/tutoring issues:
 - a. The parent must consent in writing to the type of contact in the Parent Permission Form.
 - b. If the parent consents, the mentor/tutor may communicate with the student by telephone or cellular phone, including text messaging. There may be no communication between the hours of 9:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. Upon request by the parent, student, or campus administrator, the mentor/tutor will cease communication with the student by telephone or cellular phone.
 - c. If the parent consents, the mentor/tutor may use email to communicate with the student solely about mentoring/tutoring issues. The mentor/tutor must copy the campus mentor program email on all emails to the student. The mentor/tutor may not

communicate with the student by email during school hours or between the hours of 9:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. Upon parent, student, or campus administrator request, the mentor/tutor will cease email communication.

- d. The mentor/tutor is prohibited from knowingly communicating with a student through a personal social network page. The mentor/tutor may communicate with a student through a social network page created by a campus or the district for mentoring and/or tutoring activities.

Pictures and Recordings. Both state and federal law protect the privacy of student information, including pictures and recordings of students. Volunteers should not photograph or record any students who are not their own, without prior permission from the teacher and/or the campus principal. Additionally, volunteers should not photograph or record any students' work without prior permission from the teacher and/or campus principal. Volunteers should never post, distribute, or publish any photograph or recording of any student not their own, even if the teacher or campus principal consents, on any social media site.

Transportation. Transporting a student in your personal car as part of your volunteer activities is prohibited.

- Students must be transported in a school district vehicle for field trips or in the vehicle of a parent or legal guardian.
- Do not put yourself in the position of being alone with any student in any vehicle.
- Sometimes a parent may provide written consent for you to transport the parent's child. That may not protect you from liability because you would not be acting within the scope of your duties as a volunteer.

Physical Contact.

- Restrict physical contact.
- Use common sense.
- Physical contact should be limited to holding a hand, giving a soft pat on the back or sharing a hug in full view of other school officials.
- Remember that what you see as simple, friendly affection between you and the student may be viewed as something entirely different by someone else.

Positive, Respectful Role Model.

- Do not criticize parents, teachers, school personnel or guidelines publicly or with your student. If a problem arises, consult with your volunteer coordinator or the campus principal.
- Do not discuss your students and their problems publicly or with others. If you need help with a student, discuss the matter professionally and confidentially with the teacher, counselor, assistant principal, or principal.
- Address the student directly and with sensitivity, be honest and model an appropriate manner.

- Use discretion in giving gifts to students in alignment with your campus volunteer program policy.

What you should know about Potential Liability.

- A volunteer directly serving a school district is immune from civil liability – in other words, is not personally liable – for conduct that is (1) incident to or (2) within the scope of your duties as a volunteer and involves the exercise of judgment or discretion on your part.
- You are NOT protected from personal liability if you use excessive force or negligence in disciplining a student resulting in bodily injury to a student.
- For purposes of liability, a “volunteer” is a person providing services (1) for or on behalf of the school district (2) on the premises of the district or at a school-sponsored or school-related activity on or off school property and who (3) does not receive compensation in excess of reimbursement for expenses. *See* TEX. EDUC. CODE § 22.053.
- The law concerning volunteers does not limit the volunteer’s liability for intentional misconduct or gross negligence. That is, a volunteer can be liable for intentional misconduct or gross negligence.
- A person who does not provide services for or on behalf of the school district on the premises of the district or at a school-sponsored or school-related activity on or off school property is not considered a “volunteer”. If you are not considered a “volunteer”, you may be subject to liability. A volunteer may be subject to criminal liability on charges for abuse of children.
- A person who volunteers to assist with an extracurricular activity is not liable for civil damages arising out of an act or omission relating to the requirements under Texas Education Code 33.205 regarding safety precautions [see SBISD Policy FM (Legal)] unless the act or omission is willfully or wantonly negligent. *See* TEX. EDUC. CODE § 33.211.

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