Volunteer Guidelines 2023-24

Shakopee Public Schools greatly appreciates the tremendous efforts of our many volunteers. These guidelines have been created in an effort to provide clarity in terms of expectations while volunteering and to help our volunteers navigate our school systems.

- We depend on our volunteers to maintain **confidentiality** of our students, staff, and volunteers. Any concerns, observations, or information about a child should be shared only with the person in charge (example: teacher, administrator, or building volunteer facilitator). If there is a breach of confidentiality a volunteer's privileges may be revoked.

- Notify a teacher, principal, or individual in charge if a child gives you information that causes alarm (e.g., they are unable to eat, do not have a place to sleep, inappropriate touch). Volunteers must report suspected child abuse to the building social worker, counselor, or principal. (State law requires you to report such suspicions.)

- Avoid being totally isolated with a child (e.g., in a room with a closed door).

- School volunteers and staff must avoid touching students whenever possible. It is the district's expectation that all physical contact between volunteers must be professional and appropriate.

- Be aware of any sensitive issue to a child (e.g., in discussing fire safety, a child may be uncomfortable as a fire destroyed their home). Follow the clues children give.

- Volunteers should use **physical intervention** only when you believe that a child will hurt themselves or others. If at all possible, volunteers should call another adult for assistance. If you must intervene physically, immediately inform a teacher, principal, or individual in charge of the event that you did so. If you must intervene, limit verbalization with a child (i.e., do not argue the issue, do not discuss). Remain calm, do not overreact, isolate the situation. If a situation escalates verbally or physically, call a staff person.

- In each situation, do not participate in the activity if you feel uncomfortable or are unsure of what is going on.

- An **identification badge or name tag** must be worn by volunteers to identify them to students, staff, and other volunteers.

- Sign-in each time you participate in a volunteer activity. Sign-in books/computers are kept in the school office for your convenience.

- Notify a staff person or person in charge of the activity if you will be late or if you will not be able to participate in your volunteer activity.

- Shakopee Public Schools will provide students, employees, and volunteers with an environment for learning and working that is free from sexual harassment or sexual violence, and prohibits any form of sexual harassment or sexual violence. A complete copy of the District's guidelines on sexual harassment/sexual violence is available from the Director of Human Resources.

- Discipline is the teacher or staff person's responsibility. Volunteers are not expected to discipline a student or classroom. Contact a staff person to help with a discipline issue. A copy of the student handbook is available in the school office.

- For the safety of one-to-one volunteers and the student(s) with whom they work, all interaction between student(s) and volunteer are to take place only at scheduled times in the schools or during school activities.

- Volunteers should not give **gifts** (e.g. candy, treats, birthday gifts, holiday gifts) to students or their families.

- All volunteers must work under the direct supervision of a paid staff person. The direct supervisor will communicate with the volunteer and provide direction when needed.

- The distribution, possession or use of tobacco, alcohol or controlled substances by staff, students, visitors or volunteers is prohibited on school grounds.

- Adult volunteers (18 years of age or older) are subject to a criminal history **background check**. If a volunteer assignment warrants a background check, the volunteer will need to complete an additional authorization form.

- Any **accident or injury** should be immediately reported to the volunteer's direct supervisor or the school office.

- Documentation is available for volunteers who wish to report hours of service for academic or employment purposes.

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