

Community Relations

Volunteers

It is the desire of the Plattsburgh Community Schools to provide a safe environment for our students and staff. In order to ensure this, all individuals providing volunteer services to the District shall have a background check performed prior to volunteering. For the purpose of this policy, a volunteer is defined as follows:

Volunteer: Any person that provides services to the District without compensation and on a voluntary basis. A person is considered a volunteer if they are working with students. An example of this would be a person (to include parents) that assists at school or class functions several times per semester or provides assistance to the teacher or other staff in the presence of students during both instructional or non-instructional school hours. An example of when no background check is required is when a parent visits the classroom during instructional periods on an individual basis to observe their child once or twice a semester. In this case, the person would not be volunteering their services to assist the classroom teacher and would not be considered a volunteer. This exception can be modified on an individual or situational basis by the building principal in consultation with the Superintendent.

All volunteers shall complete a basic form in order to conduct the background check. This information would include name, address, date of birth, social security number, and driver's license number. The form also includes basic background questions as deemed appropriate by the Superintendent. **Credit checks of volunteers will not be needed, with the exception of where the volunteer will have regular duties that require handling money.**

The completed form will be returned to the District Administration either by USPS or in person. If mailed, the parent or volunteer must mark the envelope as "**Confidential**". The completed form will be handled by the Superintendent or his/her designee. The background check will be completed in confidence by the Superintendent or his/her designee.

If the background check and child abuse registry check do not contain information that would put students and staff in a potentially unsafe environment, the potential volunteer would be cleared for volunteering. Items that could prevent a potential volunteer from being approved to work with students may include, but are not limited to, a record of drug possession or distribution, a record of physical abuse, a record of sexual abuse, or a record of child pornography. If an individual is not approved for volunteering, the principal will only be informed that the person did not pass the background check. The principal will not receive specific information about why the potential volunteer did not pass the background check, except for sexual abuse information for which they already have access. Potential volunteers that are not approved may dispute their background check determination via written notification to the Superintendent.

Background checks may not be required when outside vendors are hired to perform services for hire. Generally, employees of these outside vendors are vetted by their employers and they have little direct contact with the students. Governmental agencies, such as police, fire, EMS, and

emergency management personnel may not be required to have background checks when performing their duties due to their having been previously been checked since their positions or certifications require a background check.

The intent of this policy is not to interfere or inhibit a parent's ability to observe their child in a classroom setting on an individual basis or meet with teachers or staff regarding their child's education or needs, but to ensure that reasonable steps are taken to provide a safe environment for our students and staff.

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Reviewed: Mar. 9, 2009, Mar. 8, 2010, Mar. 14, 2011, Dec. 12, 2011, Jan. 14, 2013, Jan. 13, 2014, Jan. 12, 2015, Jan. 11, 2016, Feb. 9, 2017, Jan. 15, 2018, Feb. 11, 2019, Feb. 10, 2020, Feb. 8, 2021, Feb. 14, 2022, Feb. 13, 2023, Feb. 12, 2024