



Northshore  
School District

# Volunteer Orientation

*Update January, 2024*

# Welcome

Welcome to volunteering in the Northshore School District! Involvement by students' families and community members contributes to a successful school experience and has a positive impact on student achievement. When caring adults participate in the education of children, students achieve better grades, have better attendance, complete homework, and show higher aspirations.

There are a variety of ways that you can get involved, including:

- Helping in the classrooms, library, office, lunch room, nurse's office, or on the playground
- Tutoring small groups in reading, writing, math, etc.
- Set-up and take-down for events and projects
- Preparing materials in the school office for teachers
- Sharing talents, skills, interests or careers
- Participating on District committees or task forces
- Special programs like: Art Docent Program, AVID and high school athletics
- And more!

Thank you for volunteering to support our students! Please note, some of these opportunities will not be available during distance learning.

# Why Do You Volunteer?

**“One hundred years from now  
It will not matter  
What kind of car I drove,  
What kind of house I lived in,  
How much money I had in my bank account,  
Nor what my clothes looked like.  
But the world may be a little better  
Because I was important in the life of a child.”  
- Forest Witcraft**

**“Volunteers do not necessarily have the time; they just have the heart.” – Elizabeth Andrew**

**“The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others.” - Mahatma Gandhi**

# Agenda

- Supporting Students, Staff and Our Community
- Being an Effective Volunteer
- Safety, Confidentiality and Boundaries
- Working with Staff
- Volunteering in a Remote Environment
- Chaperoning and Driving on Field Trips
- Helpful Resources for Volunteers

# Getting Started

Upon completion of this orientation, make sure you follow the next steps at the end of this presentation. Items you can expect to complete are:

## **Volunteer Profile (done through Safe Visitor)**

This is a very helpful document for school office and district staff as we assess the needs of students and teachers. Please take your time to fill this out as it will help inform us of your skill set as needs arise. It is our goal to have volunteers complete meaningful experiences that help not only our students and staff but also fulfill your goals as a volunteer.

## **Background Check (Level 1)**

All volunteers who will be supporting students during school hours in a remote or in-person environment with a staff member present will complete a Washington State Patrol WATCH Background Check. There is no cost associated with this background check. For the safety and protection of our students, parents and staff, each applicant's background is checked.\*

## **Background Check (Level 2)**

Volunteers who will have unsupervised interaction with students during the school day, after-school, field trips or during athletic events will be asked to complete a national background check through Safe Visitor. Please note, you will be asked for your social security number in that application and there is a \$12.95 cost to the volunteer. If this cost creates a hardship that will prevent you from volunteering your time, please email [partnerships@nsd.org](mailto:partnerships@nsd.org). After your first year of volunteering, you will be asked to complete a free Level 1 background check at your yearly renewal.\*

\*A criminal conviction will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis and does not necessarily disqualify an applicant from volunteering.

# Getting Started

## Approval Notification

Once you have completed your volunteer orientation, application and background check, approval could be between 72 hours and up to two weeks (or a month for a Level 2). **You will receive an email notification from [info@safevisitorsolutions.com](mailto:info@safevisitorsolutions.com) once your application has been approved, so please be sure to check your junk email.** A criminal conviction will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis and does not necessarily disqualify an applicant from volunteering. If more information is needed to make a decision, you will be contacted.

## Yearly Background Renewal

Eleven months after your approval, you will receive an email from [info@safevisitorsolutions.com](mailto:info@safevisitorsolutions.com) to renew your background check. If you completed a Level 2 background check previously, you will only need to complete a level 1 background check when you renew your background check. Your level 2 background check will carry over.

## High School Athletic Volunteers Only

Make sure to complete [Athletic Volunteer Interest Form](#). Upon completion of this form, the athletic director at your school of choice will be notified of your interest and you will be contacted if a volunteer opportunity becomes available. All gym and sports volunteers must be current on CPR, First Aid, Sudden Cardiac Arrest and Concussion Courses.

As a reminder, volunteers are important to the success of our student, but the Northshore School District reserves the right to place and remove volunteers from service in the District.

Supporting Students,  
Staff and Our  
Community

# Support for Students

In the following slides, you will learn about our commitment to:

- Racial and Educational Justice in Northshore
- Social Emotional Learning (SEL)
- Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS)
- Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports(PBIS)



# Racial and Educational Justice in Northshore

We are committed to supporting and sustaining an educational community that is inclusive, diverse and equitable. The values of diversity, inclusion and equity are inextricably linked to our mission of excellence, and we embrace these values as being critical to development, learning, and success. To fully realize our mission, it is imperative we recognize the institutional barriers, including racism and bias, that contribute to the pervasive, disparate educational outcomes within our school system.

We will take action to eliminate barriers as we strive for educational equity for all student groups. We expect nothing less than an accessible, multicultural community in which civility and respect are fostered, and discrimination and harassment are not tolerated. We recognize that our work to respect diversity and to include all in our community has roots in a history that has privileged certain groups while excluding and oppressing others. In our work with our schools and community, we work to address the detrimental effects of this history through our teaching, practice, training and service.

Moreover, we are vigilant to advance the voices and needs of our marginalized populations, given the existing power differentials within our community and in the larger society.

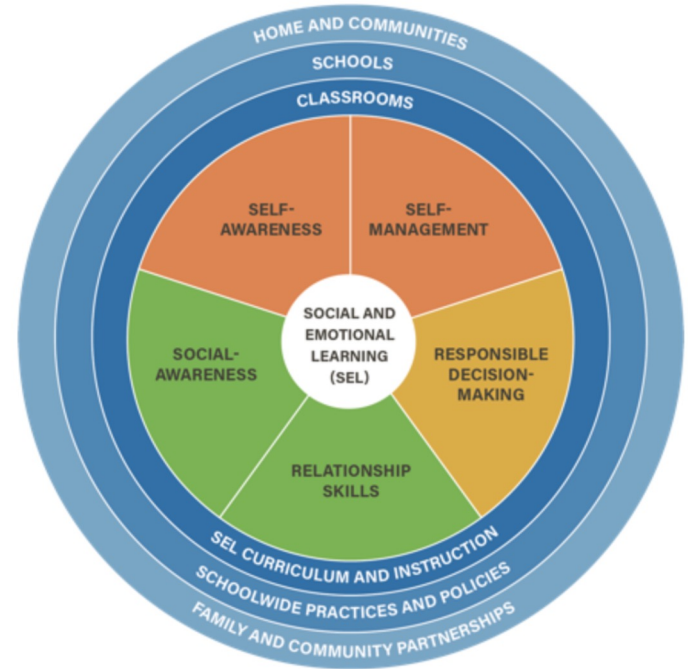
More information about the [Racial and Education Justice Department](#)

# Social Emotional Learning (SEL)

While volunteering, you may hear the term Social Emotional Learning (SEL) used by staff. Social Emotional Learning (SEL) helps students gain the foundational skills to understand multiple perspectives, show empathy, be resilient, celebrate and advocate for themselves and others, take initiative, resolve conflict, practice creative and critical thinking, and be committed to lifelong service and stewardship.

“Social and emotional learning (SEL) is the process through which children and adults understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions.” - Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL)

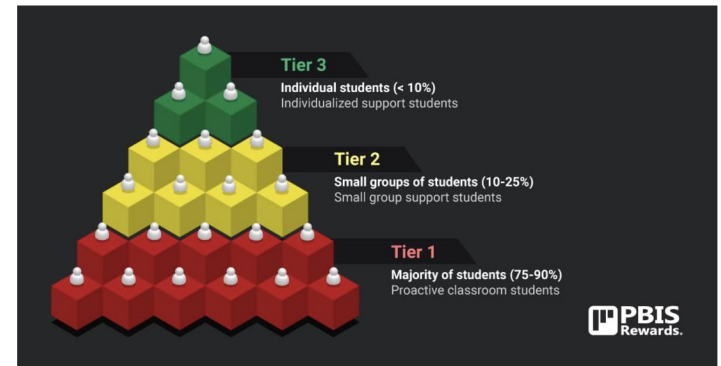
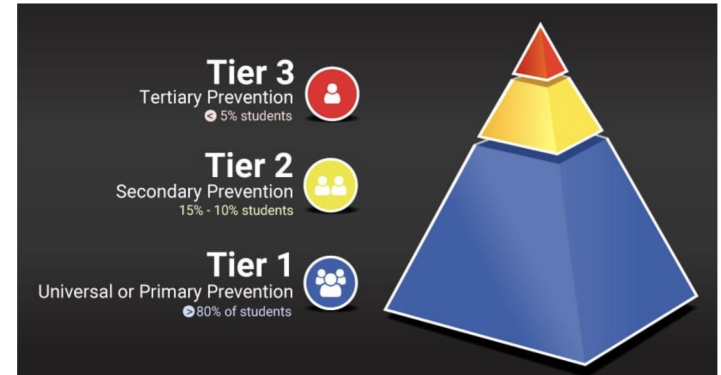
[For more information about SEL, click here.](#)



# Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) & Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS)

**Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS)** is a framework that helps educators provide academic and behavioral strategies for students with various needs. [More information about MTSS can be found here.](#)

**Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS)** is described as methods used to identify and support desired behaviors in the school setting. The goal of PBIS is to create a positive school climate, in which students learn and grow. [More information about PBIS can be found here.](#)



# Being an Effective Volunteer

# How will you show up?

## **Attitude**

- Be enthusiastic. Your enthusiasm can go a long way toward overcoming obstacles and solving problems.
- Take the initiative. This means going the extra distance to finish a job or assist someone who needs your help.
- Have a sense of humor. A good and appropriate sense of humor can light up a life and make everyone's job seem easier. Smile!
- Be sincere. Say what you mean and mean what you say.
- Take pride in your work. No matter what your job, you should take pride in the fact that you're doing your best to help others.
- Respect others. Recognize and appreciate the skills and qualities of the people around you.
- Respect the teacher's role.
- Learn from others. Be open to new ideas and suggestions. Be flexible enough to respond to changes in systems, policies and programs.
- Cooperate with others. A spirit of teamwork is essential to getting things done.
- Enjoy the students. Have a positive attitude and patience with students.

# Communication, Scheduling and Presentation

## Communication

- Ask for clarification on any questions you have about your responsibilities, special needs of students you are working with, timelines and school safety procedures.
- Share your phone numbers and e-mail addresses with teachers and other parents that you are working with.
- Unless it is an emergency, avoid interrupting teachers while they are teaching. Questions and concerns can be addressed following instruction time.

## Schedule

- Be prompt and reliable. If you are volunteering in the classroom, call the school if you are coming in late or will be absent.
- Leave preschoolers at home unless you have teacher's approval beforehand to bring them.
- If you are volunteering from your home, let others who are depending on you know if you are going to be delayed or not able to complete assigned tasks

## Dress Code

- Attire should be neat, clean, comfortable and appropriate for the school setting.
- Be familiar with the school dress code and follow it.

# Discipline and Access

## Discipline Issues

- Most schools have a discipline plan with clear consequences for negative behavior and rewards for positive behavior. Many teachers add to the schoolwide guidelines by making a more specific behavior plan for their classroom. Ask the teacher about their discipline plan.
- Be familiar with school and classroom discipline plans and what role you will play in the plan.

## Supplies

- Ask a staff member about what school supplies you can use.
- Set aside any supplies or materials that you need.
- Carry what you need or set aside a place where you can keep supplies in the school or classroom.

## Staff Lounge

- Be clear on the use of the staff lounge and whether volunteers are welcome to use the lounge for breaks.
- Do not feel insulted or offended if parents or volunteers are not welcomed in the staff lounge. It is often the only place that staff members have to meet informally to discuss confidential issues, such as school policies and issues regarding individual students.

# Safety, Confidentiality and Boundaries



# Safety

## Campus Protocol For In-person Volunteering

- Sign in at the office & wear an ID badge
- No drugs, alcohol, tobacco or weapons are allowed on school property
- All volunteers and campus visitors should sign in at the school's office and wear an ID badge.
- Remember to sign out when leaving.
- The use of drugs, alcohol or tobacco is prohibited on school property.
- No weapons, including knives, are allowed on school property.
- Know the school plans for emergency procedures: earthquake drills; fire drills; and lockdown situations. It is also important to understand the [Building Safety Designations](#), [Reunification Process](#) and [Crisis Plan for the District](#).
- Report any suspicion that a child may be the victim of abuse or bullying immediately to the building principal, school counselor or another school district employee.

# Confidentiality

## Confidentiality

- Federal law prohibits school districts from releasing student information without parent/guardian permission. Disclosing this information is a violation of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA).
- Keep ALL student information confidential, including student names.
- All information concerning students and teachers is strictly confidential and should not be shared with others. Keep ALL student information confidential, including scholastic and health records, test scores and grades, discipline and classroom behavior, and children's character traits.
- Share concerns with appropriate school staff only—not with the child's parents or others.
- No taking images (photo, video, audio or otherwise) of students without authorization from school staff
- Volunteers are restricted from taking, using or distributing images for personal use of students at school, school sponsored events or on field trips. Student images may not be posted on any social media, sent via email or distributed using other communication channels.
- If a volunteer is taking images for school-related use, appropriate district and school procedures must be followed. If you are unsure about these procedures please contact the [partnerships@nsd.org](mailto:partnerships@nsd.org).

# Setting Boundaries

## **Personal Boundaries**

- Children often ask personal questions and it is best to be prepared to answer them in a polite way using acceptable conduct and guidelines as outlined in this handbook.
- Have a clear idea of what your personal boundaries are regarding how you would like the students to refer to you (first name, Mr., Mrs., Ms.). One of the easiest ways to begin setting personal boundaries is to avoid allowing students to call you by your first name.

## **Physical Boundaries**

Touching children carries a risk. A volunteer can be accused of impropriety, unnecessary physical contact, or even sexual harassment. Being alone with a student can prompt an allegation of intimacy if care is not taken. A finding of sexual harassment is just cause for disciplinary action in this school district. Other consequences may include legal action and loss of volunteer privileges.

Please read the [Northshore School District Boundary Invasion – Maintaining Professional and Appropriate Boundaries Between Employees and Students](#)

# Guidelines for Safe Interaction with Students

## **Safe Verbal Communications**

- Avoid sexual comments.
- Avoid sexist remarks.
- Avoid innuendo and double meanings.
- Talk to all students in the same manner.

## **Safe Interaction with Students**

- Avoid being alone with students.
- If alone with a student, be visible and in an open location.
- Treat all students in the same manner.
- It's better not to single out a student through favoritism, gifts or special privileges.
- Do not spend too much time with one student or group of students.
- Maintain appropriate boundaries between volunteer and student.
- If you sense that a student may be developing a personal interest in you, see the principal immediately.

# Areas of Caution

## **Avoid these situations when possible:**

- Asking a single student to come early to set up for a class or gym activity.
- Driving only one student in your car for school-related activities.
- Giving a gift of any value to a student.
- Writing personal cards, notes or letters to students. Be particularly careful of yearbook inscriptions and sign your full name, not a nickname or first name only.
- Participating in social activities with students, such as an invitation to your home or taking one or two students to a movie.
- Using a personal account to originate email, online chat or text messages to students.

## **Other actions are very difficult to explain and could be grounds for discipline:**

- Making any request for affection, such as “give me a hug” or “come sit on my lap.”
- Unnecessary physical contact with students. Avoid lingering touches such as shoulder massages, rubbing, or any other types of touch that could be easily misinterpreted
- Requests for sex or for dates.
- Lewd or sexual remarks, jokes, or other sexual overtures. This means remarks like: “You have great legs.” Comments on appearance or dress are in a gray area; “That sweater was made for you.” or “You’re a pretty girl.”
- Touching girls differently than boys; e.g., hugging girls but not boys. This may not be sexual behavior, but it’s seen as sexist behavior and may be grounds for discipline.
- Sexual contact with any student (even a former student under the age of 18).

# Discrimination, Harassment, Intimidation, Bullying and Cyberbullying

The Northshore School District strives to provide students with optimal conditions for learning by maintaining a school environment where everyone is treated with respect and no one is physically or emotionally harmed. In order to ensure respect and prevent harm, it is a violation of District policy for a student to be harassed, intimidated, bullied or cyberbullied by others in the school community, at school sponsored events, or when such actions create a substantial disruption to the educational process. The school community includes all students, school employees, school board members, contractors, unpaid volunteers, families, patrons and other visitors. Student(s) will not be harassed because of their race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, including gender expression or identity, mental or physical disability, or other distinguishing characteristics.

Any school staff who observes, overhears or otherwise witnesses harassment, intimidation, bullying or cyberbullying or to whom such actions have been reported must take prompt and appropriate action to stop the harassment and to prevent its recurrence.

[Sexual Harassment Resource](#) – What it is and how to stop it.

Prohibition of Harassment, Intimidation, Bullying and Cyberbullying [Policy 3207](#), [Procedure 3207](#) and [Incident Reporting Form](#).

# Working with Staff

# Tips for Working Northshore Staff

Working in the classroom or on a school campus has tremendous rewards. Volunteers should establish a good working relationship with the the Northshore staff they plan to be working with to maximize the experience.

Several topics should be discussed with the teacher prior to beginning a classroom volunteer experience:

- Confidentiality
- Days and times the volunteer will work
- Procedures the volunteer will use to keep in touch, such as email or telephone
- Procedures to follow if the volunteer will be absent
- If working in a classroom, alternate plans for days when the teacher is absent and a substitute is in the classroom
- How the teacher will communicate assignments or duties to the volunteer, such as a folder, note, email or other means
- Where materials and supplies are kept and the location of available workplaces
- If working in a classroom make sure to get to know the teacher's classroom policies, procedures and rules, such as management style, discipline issues and where the volunteer can leave personal belongings
- School procedures for volunteers to follow during fire and earthquake drills, as well as lockdown procedures
- Pertinent background information about the student(s)
- Special needs and strengths of the student(s) and skills that need to be developed
- Tips for working with the student(s), such as learning styles and reinforcement techniques
- Alternate plans if student(s) is/are absent



# Volunteering in a Remote Environment

# Volunteering in a Remote Environment

Engaging with adult volunteers in a remote environment provides students with the consistency and community building that they might not experience while learning at home. Although there are numerous benefits to engaging volunteers in a remote environment, there are many challenges for students, staff and volunteers.

Things to keep in mind:

- Communicating with students on personal accounts or outside of the established volunteer hours supervised by a Northshore School District staff member in hours is strictly prohibited.
- All volunteers are required to complete the District Volunteer Application and background check before volunteering.
- All policies and procedures apply to remote volunteering, including:
  - [Prohibition of Harassment, Intimidation, Bullying and Cyberbullying](#)
  - [Northshore School District Boundary Invasion](#)
  - [Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 \(FERPA\)](#)
  - [Confidential Communications Policy 4110](#)

# Northshore Learns 3.0

## **Northshore Learns 3.0**

Through collaboration and a commitment to our common purpose of creating safe, caring, respectful school environments, Northshore's students will learn at high levels, find their passion, and thrive.

[Click here to learn more about Northshore Learns 3.0.](#)

## **Learning Model Status**

The Northshore School District will begin the 2020-21 school year with 100% distance learning through Northshore Learns 3.0, using our staged approach to reopening. As the numbers of positive COVID-19 cases and deaths continue to rise across our state and in our region, it has become clear at this time that our more robust distance learning model will be the safest way to form the foundation for student learning this fall.

[Click here to view the current status.](#)

## **Technology**

Schoology: Our Learning Management System

Schoology is the District's new learning management system. This tool provides students, parents/guardians and teachers a way to engage with learning materials from home, in the classroom and beyond. Families can access course materials, grades, calendars and more.

# Real-Time Remote Platforms

The Northshore School District may use virtual platforms such as Zoom, Microsoft Teams and others. You will find some helpful information below on engaging with staff and students through these platforms.

## Virtual Meeting Etiquette

- Do not eat while volunteering on screen.
- Stay engaged, do not multitask and avoid distractions.
- Be prepared before joining if the teacher has shared an agenda with you.
- Remember you're on screen and may be recorded.

## Consider your Environment

- Be aware of your surroundings (people, pets, items, TV or radio sound, etc.)
- Consider using a static and plain virtual background, void of any messages, personal viewpoints and distractions.
- Position yourself so most light is coming from in front of you.
- Find a quiet space to meet, shut the door, and mute yourself as necessary.

## Engagement Tips

- Not sure how you come across in a virtual environment? Before you report for your assignment, record yourself on your own time and device, and play it back.
- Do not get too close to your screen or too far.
- Only engage with Northshore students on District approved platforms with a Northshore staff facilitator.

# Real-Time Remote Platforms

More best practices while volunteering in a remote environment with student.

- Volunteers should never be in a virtual environment with students one-on-one.
- Volunteers should not communicate with students outside of the virtual classroom.
- Volunteers can work in small breakout rooms with students as long as the staff is available to monitor that ratios of students to volunteers never meet one-to-one.
- Volunteers can encourage but not require that students have their cameras on.\*
- Staff should be explicitly clear about the behavior expectations in a breakout room and volunteers should adhere to those expectations.\*
- Just like a teacher would monitor small group work in a class, a teacher should, in many cases, roam between breakout rooms to check in on how the small groups are progressing with the volunteer, to make sure students are staying on task, and to discourage inappropriate behavior.\*
- Volunteers will engage in virtual sessions from a location in their home with a neutral background such as a plain wall. Charts, posters, or other classroom-based materials can be present. The display of personal books, photos, paintings, etc, is discouraged. This helps to protect personal privacy. Think: “Check the Room Before You Zoom.”\*
- Volunteers will ensure their clothing is appropriate for school.\*
- Volunteers will remind students about “[Netiquette](#)” and appropriate attire for distance learning sessions.\*

\*Best practice has been adopted from the Northshore School District Steering Committee Memo on Recording Instructions for Educators During Northshore Learns 3.0.

# Chaperoning and Driving on Field Trips

# Field Trip Chaperoning/Adult Supervisors

The primary responsibility for an adult supervisor is supervision of the students on a field trip. Family members, including younger children or friends of the coordinating staff members or adult supervisors shall not participate in a field trip or event without prior approval of the building administrator/designee.

Adult supervisors will be advised of their responsibilities, which must include the following:

- Students must be supervised at all times while at school-sponsored events. Coordinating staff members and adult supervisors must be readily available to respond to student requests and concerns, and to provide balanced supervision.
- Adult supervisors will enforce all school rules. Consequences, as necessary, shall be determined and enforced by the building administrator/designee and/or coordinating staff member.
- No tobacco, drug, or alcohol use by coordinating staff members or adult supervisors is permitted during the trip, at all times. This includes during breaks and time away from students.
- Student information must be kept confidential.

For more information visit:

- [Board Policy 2320 - Field Trips, Extended Field Trips, and Outdoor Education](#)
- [Board Procedure 2320 P - Field Trips and Extended Field Trips](#)

# Driving

If your volunteer work includes driving students, you will be required to complete additional forms. It is the policy of the Northshore School District that all volunteers who wish to drive students should be at least 21 years of age, have at least five years driving experience and have a valid Washington State driver's license.

**Non-employee drivers:** In order to be an approved driver, non-staff members (21 years or older) shall submit to the building administrator/designee an Authorization for Use of Private Automobile (2320 F-6) and a Northshore School District Volunteer Application which includes a volunteer background check, assumption of risk statement, confidentiality statement and criminal disclosure. In addition, they will submit a copy of a current Department of Licensing driving abstract and a valid Washington State driver's license.

## Vehicles

All non-bus-like vehicles transporting students must be equipped with state approved and required restraint devices, including seat belts and booster seats. When private vehicles are used for transportation, the following forms must be reviewed and completed for all drivers:

- Authorization for Use of Private Automobile (2320 F-6)

For more information visit:

- [Board Policy 2320 - Field Trips, Extended Field Trips, and Outdoor Education](#)
- [Board Procedure 2320 P - Field Trips and Extended Field Trips](#)



# Helpful Resources for Volunteers

# Volunteer Resources

As a Northshore School District volunteer, you may find some of the follow resources helpful:

- [Benefits of Volunteering](#)
- [Positive Ways to Communicate with Students](#)
- [Characteristics of Age Groups](#)
- [Interpreter Translation Services for Families](#)
- [WA State Driver Abstract](#)



# Thank you!

Next steps for volunteers during the 2023-24 school year:

School or District Volunteers:

- Complete your [Washington State Patrol Background Check \(Level 1\)](#) and volunteer profile through Safe Visitor here.

Athletic coaches, drivers or chaperone volunteers:

- Complete your [national background check \(Level 2\)](#) and volunteer profile through Safe Visitor here.
- Complete your [athletics interest form](#).