

## **VOLUNTEERS**

Thompson School District encourages parents, guardians and other individuals from the community to volunteer their time, knowledge and abilities for the benefit of students in district schools. Authorized volunteers enrich the district's educational programs and extracurricular activities, and strengthen the schools' relationships with families, businesses, public agencies and private institutions. The presence of authorized volunteers in the classroom, on school grounds and at activities away from school also enhances the supervision of students and contributes to school safety.

For purposes of this policy, an "authorized volunteer" is an individual, except a student enrolled in a district school, (a) who provides an act or service without compensation for the benefit of a district school, employee and/or student(s), (b) is subject to the direction, supervision and/or control of the school's principal and his/her designees, (c) is registered as provided in this policy, and (d) is providing service to the district in accordance with this policy. An authorized volunteer's service could possibly involve contact with one or more students outside the physical presence of a district employee. Such contact could occur incidentally by chance at the school or a school activity and for only a brief period of time. Volunteer service may be granted, denied or revoked at any time at the district's sole discretion. For the purpose of this policy, parents involved strictly in the day-to-day education of their children, are not considered volunteers. Guests specifically and directly invited by district employees to become part of the classroom experience are not considered to be volunteers under this policy and are governed under Board policy KI.

In order to help ensure appropriate oversight of school activities and the welfare and safety of employees and students, every individual who wishes to serve as an authorized volunteer (including parents/guardians) must first be registered by the district, in accordance with the terms and conditions set forth below. This requirement applies to all volunteer service, whether it is only for a single occasion or will occur on a sporadic or regular basis, and regardless of the program, event or activity involved.

The authorized volunteer registration process shall be conducted in accordance with the following procedures:

1. Parents and guardians who wish to volunteer must complete a volunteer form at the school. Individuals from the community who wish to volunteer must first complete a volunteer application. Applications may be completed online through the district's Internet website or in person at the district VITAL (Volunteers in Thompson Assisting Learners) office. In addition, applicants may request the application be mailed to them.
2. A background check shall be conducted by the district, at its expense, as part of the authorized volunteer registration/application review process. This background check requirement is not meant to discourage or offend prospective volunteers, but rather to help ensure the safety and welfare of students.
3. All information provided in the authorized volunteer registration/application and all information received by the district through the volunteer background check and/or other sources, shall be considered and maintained as confidential personnel file information under the Colorado Open Records Act and not subject to disclosure except on a "need to know" basis as authorized by law.
4. An individual's volunteer service may be denied if the district determines, in its sole discretion, that such volunteer service would not be in the best interests of the district or would be incompatible with the protection of student health, welfare, safety or morals, based on information provided in the authorized volunteer registration/application information discovered through a background check, or information discovered by other means. Determinations in this regard may be appealed to the public information officer whose decision

shall be final. An individual's conviction of any of the following will automatically result in denial of volunteer service: any felony, domestic violence, child abuse/reckless endangerment, or two or more DUI convictions. (As used in this paragraph, "convicted" means a conviction by a jury or by a court and shall also include the forfeiture of any bail, bond, or any other security deposited to secure appearance by a person charged with a felony or misdemeanor; the payment of a fine; a plea of no contest; or the imposition of a deferred or suspended sentence by the court.)

5. Authorized volunteers shall be issued an identification badge at the school(s), which must be worn at all times the individual is providing volunteer services.
6. Authorized volunteers are subject to follow-up background checks any time the district receives information indicating that it would be prudent to conduct such a background check in the interest of protecting student health, welfare, safety or morals. Authorized volunteers are also subject to one random follow-up background check during each three-year period they remain an authorized volunteer.

The principal or designees shall identify appropriate services for authorized volunteers serving each school, and shall provide training as necessary to perform such services. To the extent necessary to perform services assigned by the principal or designee, authorized volunteers may be allowed to access the Internet and electronic communications. An authorized volunteer's use of the Internet and electronic communications shall be subject to the terms and conditions of Board policy GBEE. The use of authorized volunteers at any school or school activity shall not conflict with or replace any regularly authorized personnel staffing allotment.

Authorized volunteers shall comply with all applicable Board policies and regulations, as well as with all applicable school rules. Authorized volunteers shall be covered by, and afforded the protections of, the Colorado Governmental Immunity Act and the Colorado Teacher and School Administrator Protection Act.

The superintendent or designee shall establish regulations or administrative guidelines to assist district employees in the uniform and consistent implementation of this policy.

Adopted January 18, 2012

Revised March 20, 2013

Legal refs.: 42 U.S.C. 5119a & 5119c 20  
U.S.C. 7140(b)(1)(A)(ii)  
C.R.S. 22-12-101 et seq. (teacher and school administrator protection act)  
C.R.S. 24-10-101 et seq. (governmental immunity)

Cross refs.: GBEE, Staff Use of the Internet and Electronic Communications  
GBJ, Personnel Records and Files  
JJA, Student Organizations  
KI, Visitors to Schools