



Kenmore-Town of Tonawanda UFSD

Volunteer Handbook

The Kenmore-Town of Tonawanda UFSD (KTUFSD) Volunteer Handbook includes guidelines, rules, and expectations for all volunteers interested in supporting staff, students, and the school system. As a part of safety efforts, KTUFSD has instituted a volunteer support system to ensure that all volunteers receive proper training and information. Please use the information in this handbook as a guide to support you as a member of the KTUFSD community. Information for volunteers is also posted on the KTUFSD website.

WELCOME

Thank you for your willingness to give your time and talents to the benefit of the Kenmore-Town of Tonawanda Union Free Union District. Volunteers provide opportunities that help us enhance the educational experiences for students. Whether you volunteer one hour per week, one hour per year or for specific events or activities, your sense of citizenship and commitment to education are appreciated.

This handbook is designed to help you make a smooth transition into your volunteer responsibilities. It outlines the District's volunteer policy, includes a copy of the Volunteer form and highlights some standard procedures for volunteers. It is our hope that you will derive a great deal of personal satisfaction from your time in our schools.

As stated in Board Policy 3150, volunteers are persons who are willing to donate their time and energies to assist Principals, teachers, and other school personnel in implementing various phases of school programs. Volunteers shall serve in that capacity without compensation or employee benefits except for liability protection under the District's insurance program.

The Board of Education supports and encourages the use of volunteers to:

1. Assist employees in providing more individualization and enrichment of instruction.
2. Build an understanding of school programs among interested citizens, thus stimulating widespread involvement in a total educational process.
3. Strengthen school/community relations through positive participation.

Board Policy 3150 outlines two (2) levels of volunteer involvement with the schools:

1. Volunteers seeking to assist the schools on an occasional basis, e.g., chaperoning a field trip or helping with a class day activity, should contact the school several days before the event to notify the Principal that the volunteer will be in the building and the purpose for his or her presence. The Principal shall make a note of the volunteer's presence in the building.
2. Individuals volunteering time in school on a regular basis, e.g., monitoring a math lab one (1) morning a week, shall meet with the Principal to discuss the responsibilities of the volunteer, learn about the routines of the building, and provide the Principal with some background about the volunteer and past experiences working with children.

The Board and District promote the use of school volunteers while maintaining a safe and secure environment for the students. An application shall be filled out by each prospective volunteer and will be evaluated by the building principal. The Building Principal will forward his or her decisions concerning selection, placement and replacement of volunteers to the Superintendent or designee, for final evaluation. Following approval from the Superintendent of Schools, volunteers selected for work in the District shall be placed on the list of approved volunteers. However, the Superintendent retains the right to approve or reject any volunteer applications submitted for consideration.

The school Principal or designee will select and assign volunteers within a school building. If a staff member, other than the Principal, recruits someone to act as a volunteer, the staff member must receive authorization from the Principal in accordance with Board Policy 3150. The Principal or designee shall assign volunteer opportunities on the basis of an individual's qualifications and availability and the school's needs. A volunteer shall serve under the supervision of an assigned staff member.

All volunteers shall abide by the applicable District policies and procedures, including, but not limited to all sign-in and identification procedures and the confidentiality, safety, reporting and harassment policies. Volunteers are also expected to attend any applicable training sessions as a condition to serve.

For additional information, please consult the school Principal. On behalf of the students, teachers and staff you will assist, thank you.

WHO CAN BE A VOLUNTEER

An approved volunteer is defined as meeting the following requirements:

1. An adult over the age of 18 years;
2. An individual approved by the Kenmore Town of Tonawanda UFSD to be with children; and
3. An individual selected for a specific activity.

WHAT VOLUNTEERS CAN DO

Volunteers may be used only in an auxiliary capacity under the direction and supervision of a staff member:

- a. in non-teaching duties not requiring instructional judgment or evaluation of students;
- b. in the presence of district personnel, for assisting with the supervision of study halls, long distance teaching areas used to facilitate instructional programs transmitted by electronic media (such as computers, video and audio) and school-sponsored extracurricular activities;
- c. to assist with academic programs under a certificated teacher's immediate supervision;
- d. as a guest lecturer or resource person under a certificated teacher's direction and with the administration's approval; or
- e. as supervisors, chaperones or sponsors for non-academic school activities.

WHAT VOLUNTEERS MAY NOT DO

Volunteers may not:

- a. substitute for a member of the School staff;
- b. establish instructional objectives for lesson plans;
- c. impose, administer or enforce student discipline;
- d. give medication; or
- e. access confidential student records.

VOLUNTEER AGREEMENT AND RELEASE

An individual seeking to volunteer must execute and submit a **Volunteer Application** and **Confidentiality Agreement** at the time he/she first seeks to serve as a volunteer and at least annually thereafter. All regularly scheduled volunteers will, at a minimum, complete an application, provide authorization for a reference check, and be screened and interviewed by the building principal or designee. Occasional volunteers will be screened by the building principal in a manner of his or her choosing, however chaperones will be required to minimally be screened and interviewed by the building principal due to volunteer responsibilities while off-campus. Approved volunteers will go to the KTUFSD Volunteer webpage to access the online volunteer training video and attest that the video has been viewed and the applicant agrees to comply with the contents.

Volunteer opportunities vary by school. Examples of volunteer opportunities include tutoring a small group of students with a teacher present, serving as a guest lecturer, assisting a classroom teacher, assisting with clerical or office responsibilities, chaperoning school-sponsored field trips, preparing instructional materials, or providing technical assistance. There are also many volunteer opportunities for during and after school activities, which may include PTA/HSA or booster-club sponsored events and programs.

VOLUNTEER CODE OF ETHICS

Professionalism

Although the job is voluntary, the commitment is professional. Besides being responsible for maintaining an attitude of mutual respect and confidence, you should also become familiar with the school and classroom policies and practices.

Dependability and Promptness

Dependability and promptness are important to the volunteer experience. Students, teachers, and staff members count on you and rely on the services performed by volunteers. Volunteers who will be late or absent are expected to call the assigned staff person as soon as possible so other arrangements may be made.

Confidentiality

Volunteers must protect the teachers' and students' right to privacy. You may not disclose school affairs or personal matters which have come to your attention. Discuss student problems only with the teacher or staff member you are working with. Discuss other concerns with the teacher, or principal.

VOLUNTEER RESPONSIBILITIES

Mandatory Reporting of Suspected Child Abuse

State law provides that education professionals are mandated reporters of suspected child abuse. A volunteer who has reason to believe that a child has been subject to abuse or maltreatment must report it immediately to the teacher, or a school or district administrator.

Respecting Classroom Activities

The time a volunteer spends in a classroom is important to the teacher and the students. Siblings are not to accompany parent volunteers in a classroom setting.

If you volunteer in your child's class, please do not engage your child's teacher in an impromptu conference while volunteering. You may schedule a teacher conference at any time throughout the year.

Harassment Reporting

Pursuant to Board Policy 7550, 7551, and 6121, no person, the District prohibits all forms of harassment and bullying of students by employees or other students on school property and at school functions. The District further prohibits discrimination against students, including, but not limited to, discriminatory acts based on a person's actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender, or sex by employees or other students on school property and at school functions.

Sexual harassment is behavior that is of a sexual nature and unwelcome. Adult-to-adult, adult-to-student, student-to-student or student-to-adult harassment is prohibited. If you believe you are a victim of harassment or violence, or have information about the harassment or violence of any adult or student, you must report it to the building administrator or staff contact.

Student Discipline

Student Discipline is not a volunteer responsibility. When concerns about disciplining students occur, these concerns should be addressed to the classroom teacher or building administrator.

SIGN IN and SIGN OUT PROCEDURES

Student, staff and building visitor safety is a school and District priority. All volunteers must enter a school building through the single point of entry at Door 1. Volunteers will be asked to provide a driver's license or other government ID for personal identification each time they are on campus. Visitor identification will be reviewed through the Raptor system for validation and against the National Sex Offender Registry. The volunteer's ID will be printed and must be visibly worn by the volunteer at all times while on school premises. It is important for a school to know who is in the building, where to find them, and who to contact in case of emergency. At the end of the assignment, volunteers are asked to sign out at Door 1 by letting the greeter know you are leaving.

STUDENT AND ADULT PRIVACY

Volunteers are bound by the same rules of confidentiality/data privacy (state statute that governs student and employee information) as KTUFSD teachers and other staff. Confidentiality policies include those established by the New York State Education Law 2-d, the Family Educational Rights & Privacy Act (FERPA) and the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA).

All student records and student data are considered confidential information. Student records and student data may not be left where they can be viewed by others. Student records and student data may only be copied with administrative approval. Student information may not be discussed or shared with anyone other than school or District personnel.

Volunteers who have questions or concerns about anything seen or heard should bring these questions or concerns to the attention of the teacher or school administrator. Problems, abilities, behavior, relationships, grades and confidences of students or staff are never to be discussed with anyone other than the student's teacher or site administrator.

SAFETY

Volunteers must immediately report concerns for student safety to the supervising teacher or the school principal. Each school site has emergency procedures. Please follow the instructions of staff in case of an emergency such as a fire, tornado, etc.

IF YOU NEED HELP

If you need more instructions in order to perform a task, please ask the teacher or building administrator. Communicating with the teacher and Principal helps to ensure that a volunteer's valuable time is well-spent.

REIMBURSEMENT OF EXPENSES

The District may reimburse volunteers for approved expenses incurred in providing volunteer services to the District. Prior approval by the school Principal is required for expenses a volunteer may seek to have reimbursed.

RESIGNATION AND DISMISSAL OF VOLUNTEER

Individuals who are unable to continue serving in an assigned volunteer activity should notify the staff contact and school Principal.

Individuals who do not meet appropriate requirements for volunteers working with children, as established by state law and the KTUFSD policy, will not be accepted into the program. If a volunteer does not conform to the guidelines outlined in this handbook, the building Principal or designee may suggest alternative actions or assignments. If this

option does not meet with success, the Principal has the option to terminate a volunteer's placement.

Falsification or omission on the application form is a criminal offense that can be prosecuted and may constitute grounds for dismissal.

The District may, in its sole discretion, terminate a volunteer's services.

CHAPERONE GUIDELINES

School-sponsored field trips provide valuable experiences for students.

Chaperones are volunteers who agree to accompany and assist the KTUFSD staff on school-sponsored field trips. Chaperones provide additional adult supervision and ensure a safe and well-supervised learning experience for students.

Students are expected to treat adult volunteers with a cooperative attitude, courtesy and respect. Teachers and school administrators are responsible for assigning specific duties for chaperones. The following guidelines are specific to volunteers who agree to chaperone KTUFSD sponsored activities and are in addition to those previously outlined in this handbook:

- a. Be familiar with, and follow the *Code of Conduct*. All school rules apply on school-sponsored field trips. Chaperones are expected to comply with school policies, follow the directions given by the coordinating teacher, work cooperatively with other volunteers and school staff members, and model appropriate behaviors for students. The chaperone will follow the trip plan developed by the teacher and school;
- b. Follow the directions of the teacher in charge. Be responsible for the safety and assistance of those students assigned to their charge and be aware of their whereabouts at all times;
- c. Comply with school policy, before or during the field trip. Chaperones:
 - a. may not use or possess alcohol or other drugs
 - b. may not use tobacco or tobacco products (including vape pens) in the presence of, or within the sight of, students
 - c. model appropriate language
 - d. may not administer any medications, prescription or nonprescription, to students;
- d. Supervise students at all times while at a school-sponsored event. As a chaperone, you will supervise a small group of students, helping them learn and make sure they behave appropriately. Students must stay with you, their chaperone, for the entirety of the trip including transportation, accommodations, meals, entertainment and education. Please review the buddy system with students under your care. Account for all participants regularly and before changing activities. Be sure you know when and where to meet the rest of your group at the end of the visit. Chaperones must be readily available, be mindful of safety concerns, and respond to students' needs. Do not use your cell phone for non-emergency or non-trip related purposes. Please do not conduct outside work or

read while you are supervising students. We also ask that you refrain from chatting with other adults while you are supervising children;

- e. Apply all school rules related to student behavior. Go over rules and standards of behavior, safety rules, and any site specific rules with students. Ensure that students do not get involved in any extra activities not pre-approved by the teacher. While you are there to support appropriate behavior, it is the responsibility of the teacher to discipline a student. Chaperones must report student misbehavior to the teacher in charge. At no time will a chaperone discipline a student;
- f. Not place themselves in situations in which they are alone with a student at any time, for the protection of both the student and the chaperone;
- g. Ensure that siblings and family members do not participate in a school sponsored field trip;
- h. Follow the directions of the docents and guides even if other groups do not;
- i. Adhere to the trip itinerary and time schedule arranged by the teacher in charge. All chaperones must leave with the group from school and return to school with the group after the trip. You cannot bring your child separately or leave separately, as chaperones are assigned to multiple students and must supervise during the transport to and from the field trip destination;
- j. Assist the teacher in charge in the event of an emergency. Safety is of paramount importance on trips and the supervising teacher is the final arbiter of any decisions that have to be made;
- k. All chaperones will work cooperatively with other school personnel to meet the needs of students with special needs.
- l. Chaperones are not authorized to administer medicine to students.
- m. Chaperones will maintain student and adult confidentiality.
- n. Chaperones will take necessary and reasonable precautions to protect students.

Transportation

The KTUFSD shall provide transportation for all students and teachers. Students are required to use the transportation provided by the school district as part of the class activity. Chaperones are welcome to ride the bus if space allows. In some instances, chaperones may be asked to drive their own vehicle, at their own expense and liability.

Chaperone Guidelines for Overnight Stays

In the event a chaperone volunteers for a field trip that is extended for overnight stays, provisions to ensure the safety and well-being of all participants shall include:

- a. A chaperone assigned the responsibility for maintaining emergency contact and medical information for participating students and adults must keep this information secure and readily available
- b. No chaperone shall stay in a room alone with a student unless the chaperone is the student's parent or legal guardian
- c. Only same gender students shall share a room
- d. Only same gender chaperones shall share a room
- e. Chaperones will cooperate with the plans made by the trip coordinator to account for weather delays, illness and/or vehicle emergency

- f. Chaperones will organize a system for communicating and performing student counts.
- g. Chaperones may be required to monitor students throughout the night. The supervising teacher will prepare a schedule of reasonably timed shifts in this case.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: I signed up to volunteer last school year. Do I need to sign up again this year?

A: *Yes, you will need to complete the process yearly. If you received a background check, that would need to be renewed every three years.*

Q: I have children at multiple schools. Do I need to fill out multiple application forms?

A: *You will have the opportunity on the application to select up to three schools in which you are interested.*

Q: How soon after completing the training and application can I start volunteering?

A: *You may begin volunteering once you have received notice that you have been approved to volunteer and the school system invites you. If you know that you will be volunteering at some point in the school year, it is advisable that you complete the application and training in the beginning of the year to cut out any lag time between application and approval. The entire process can take a minimum of two weeks.*

Thank you for Volunteering

Thank you again for your interest in volunteering for the Kenmore-Town of Tonawanda UFSD. Please note that applying for a volunteer position does not guarantee that your services will be needed during the school year. Visit the KTUFSD website for more information.