2025-26

CEDAR HILL ISD

VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK

Cedar Hill ISD Volunteers & Supporters,

On behalf of Cedar Hill ISD, I want to extend my heartfelt gratitude to each of you for your time, energy, and commitment to our scholars. Your decision to serve as a volunteer reflects the very best of our community—people who care deeply about our students and are willing to step forward to support their learning, growth, and success.

Whether you're helping in classrooms, supporting campus events, mentoring students, or lending a hand behind the scenes, your presence makes a meaningful impact. You help us bring to life our shared vision of empowering resilient scholars who excel academically and are inspired to serve.

At Cedar Hill ISD, we believe in *Every Student, Every Time, All the Time*—and your dedication plays a vital role in making that promise a reality.

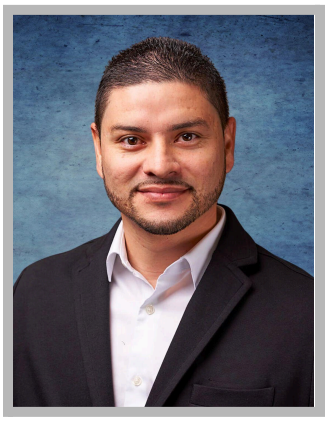
Thank you for being a part of our mission and for choosing to invest in the lives of our future leaders.

Sincerely,

Dr. Maria Gamell

Dr. Maria Gamell,
Superintendent of Schools
Cedar Hill Independent School District

CHISD Family & Community Engagement Office



Thank you for choosing to share your time, heart, and energy with the students and staff of Cedar Hill ISD. As Director of Family and Community Engagement, it brings me great joy to see individuals like you stepping forward to serve and support our schools in such meaningful ways.

Volunteers are the heartbeat of our community. Your presence helps create a stronger, more connected learning environment for all. You show our scholars what it means to lead, give, and care.

This handbook is just a small part of helping you feel prepared and empowered in your role—but never forget that what you bring can't be measured on paper. Your support helps us live out our promise of *Every Student*, *Every Time*, *All the Time*.

We are proud to have you as a part of the Cedar Hill ISD family. Thank you for making a difference.

Eduardo Conde,
Director of Family and Community Engagement
972.291.1581 ext. 4238
eduardo.conde@chisd.net

Family and Community Engagement (FACE) Mission:
To strengthen the partnership between schools, families, and the community to execute programs that increase student success.

Vision:
Unlocking Every Longhorn's Potential
Mission:
To develop resilient scholars who excel academically and are empowered to serve
Motto:
Educate. Empower. Inspire.

Volunteering in Cedar Hill ISD

Who is a Volunteer?

"Volunteer" is defined as an adult (18 years or older) who freely contributes to the achievement of scholars, teachers, administrators, and other district staff in classrooms, schools, and other district offices and does not receive compensation for their work.

- Volunteers can include parents, guardians, adult family members, and business and community members.
- Volunteers give their time before, during, and after school and on the weekends. Volunteers enter schools and/or sites and assist one time or on a regular and recurring basis.
- Volunteers should always be supervised by at least one district employee; however, some volunteer situations involve one-on-one or small groups with scholars, which is why the district requires a criminal background check to ensure scholar and staff safety and welfare.
- Student volunteers (aged 13-17) and current CHISD employees are permitted to work as district or campus volunteers in the same capacity as adult and community volunteers but do not require a criminal background check.

What Volunteer Opportunities Are Available?

Each school's specific needs determine volunteer assignments. Schools are encouraged to consider each volunteer candidate's skills, interests, and preferences in deciding the best placement within the building.

The following is a list of possible volunteer opportunities, varying from campus to campus. Some opportunities may not be available at each campus or be restricted in the future due to need or safety concerns, which will be handled at the discretion of the school and/or district.

Teacher Support: Work with a teacher or librarian/media specialist and perform tasks such as putting up bulletin boards, organizing materials for teachers, photocopying, and other jobs that will give the teacher more time to plan for and

work with scholars.

Classroom Learning Support: Work with the teacher to support learning, such as reading a book to a scholar or listening to a scholar read, providing tutoring services, visiting a class and sharing your talent, or assisting scholars with STEM activities or fine arts.

Campus/Office Operations Support: Work with the campus on a range of activities or duties, such as maintaining the campus marquee, greeting students in the morning, school office support, cafeteria monitoring, assisting with campus newsletter articles and photos, and serving on a school-based committee.

Parent & Scholar Support: Work with All Pro Dads, PTA groups, and booster Clubs to assist with parent engagement/encouragement, fundraising, and scholar encouragement.

Event Support: Work with CHISD district offices and campuses for specific events planned during the school year. These events include but are not limited to Back to School Rally or other district-sanctioned event support, book fairs, field trip chaperones/assistance, serving as a judge or coach for academic competitions, guest speakers for career fairs, and employee appreciation days/weeks.

What is Expected of CHISD Volunteers?

- Review the Volunteer Handbook
- You can digitally sign a Volunteer Agreement annually as long as you wish to volunteer at the same school where the agreement was signed.
- Keep any information about scholars confidential.
- Keep the volunteer/scholar relationship restricted to the school setting on campus, an approved CHISD activity, or a CHISD virtual environment.
- Comply with the no smoking and no tobacco policy
- Sharing personal or religious beliefs with scholars is not allowed while volunteering.
- Do not provide medical treatment unless designated as a trained clinic volunteer
- Seek the aid of school personnel in case of any discipline problems
- Do not lend money to scholars while actively serving as a volunteer
- Avoid promoting any specific business, commercial product, or brand name
- Should not be alone and unsupervised with a scholar, either in-person or virtually

Volunteer Attire: Smart, Casual Dress Code

CHISD volunteers serve as role models for scholars and are expected to present themselves positively. Please remember to wear appropriate clothing for the campus setting and volunteer duties to which you are assigned.

Communication Guidelines and Expectations

Do NOT:

- Call or text scholars at home or elsewhere
- Initiate social activities with scholars
- Take a scholar or scholars on private outings
- Follow the scholar on social media, allow the scholar to follow you, or attempt to view a scholar's social media for any purpose other than appropriate volunteer/scholar interaction.
- Say or write things to a scholar that you would be uncomfortable sharing with the scholar's parents, district/school administrators, or the educator you are working with
- Make any comments that are based on gender or could be construed as sexist
- Make any comments and/or innuendos that are sexual in nature or could be construed as sexual
- Make inappropriate jokes
- Initiate conversations or correspondences of a private and/or personal nature with scholars, including via digital means.

Volunteer Arrival and Dismissal

CHISD believes in maintaining adequate safety and security at all our campuses. Under NO circumstances can a visitor enter a school without going through the Voly/JDP or Raptor process.

Volunteers are asked to:

- Arrive at the designated location/campus and enter through the front or office or main entrance
- Sign in with the front office or designated staff and provide your ID for it to be scanned through the Raptor system
- Wear the assigned visitor sticker printed by Raptor and the volunteer lanyard issued by office staff at all times

- If asked, show your email from face@chisd.net congratulating you for being approved to volunteer (this means they passed their background check).
- Silence all electronic devices and try to avoid unnecessary interruption while volunteering
- Confirm the location of the nearest adult restroom and employee break room
- Work your complete volunteer shift and let the principal or point of contact know if you need to leave early
- Return your sticker and volunteer lanyard to the front office or an employee who can return it on your behalf

Volunteer Schedule

Please show up to volunteer opportunities at least 15 minutes before the start of the activity and notify campus staff or appropriate district staff as soon as possible if you are unable to fulfill your volunteer duties. If you cannot make your scheduled volunteer time, please call the school so the teachers and scholars know you will not be there.

Approval Process to Volunteer in CHISD

To help keep our scholars and staff safe, Cedar Hill ISD must adhere to the district's volunteer guidelines. The district uses three systems to approve, track, and schedule volunteers.

Voly and JDP

Any person entering the school building to volunteer with or be in the same room as a scholar **MUST** complete the Volunteer Application in Voly and submit to a criminal background check through JDP.

When does Voly/JDP have to be used?

- Ongoing volunteer or support opportunities
- Working with scholars one-on-one
- When a volunteer can potentially be alone in the same room as a scholar
- Chaperoning field trips and/or traveling with scholars

Raptor

Raptor is the campus visitor system that uses your state-issued ID to run a soft background check and print out a visitor sticker for identification purposes. It also runs checks against the Registered Sex Offender database and keeps a real-time log of visitors on campus.

When can Raptor only be used?

- One-time events where the volunteer will not be in the same room alone with any scholar (i.e., Read Across America Day, All Pro Dads, and/or PTA breakfasts)
- Eating lunch with their scholar

Volunteer Application Steps (See Appendix D for a photo guide)

1. All volunteers must be approved through cedarhillisd.voly.org in order to volunteer in CHISD.
2. Applicants will receive an email from face@chisd.net confirming a Voly online application has been received.
3. Once a Voly account has been created, you will be asked to complete your preferred volunteer application and check the option to submit for a background check through JDP.
4. Applications may take up to 5 business days to process and approve. If an account is flagged for any reason, approval could take up to 2 weeks. If you have any questions, please email face@chisd.net.
5. Applicants are encouraged to select the school(s) you wish to volunteer for during the application process to receive specific volunteer opportunities and show up as a volunteer for that campus.

Confirmation and Approval of Completed Volunteer Applications

- Please note that the district and/or campuses reserve the right to refuse or remove volunteers without verbal cause or future legal retaliation.
- Successful applicants will receive a second email notifying them that the Volunteer Application has been approved.
- If you do not receive an approval email within 72 hours, please email face@chisd.net to determine the cause.

Once volunteers receive their approval email, they can search for volunteer opportunities via the Voly site or through the campus. Campuses can automatically allow volunteers to sign up for opportunities in Voly or manually approve them. If your volunteer shift is not automatically approved, please reach out to the listed point of contact for the specific opportunity.

Common Issues that Delay Volunteer and Background Check Approval

- Not completing the Volunteer Application—After you create your account in Voly, you must select the appropriate application to associate with it. Failure to do so will delay processing the account and moving on to the background check.
- You are not submitting for the background check itself. Once you create your volunteer account and select the appropriate application, you must check the box to run the background check.
- No middle name is entered. If you do not have a middle name, enter None.
- Name – if you have a common name, use Jr. or Sr. (etc.), have changed your name, or have multiple last names, it may take longer to process your background check.
- County searches – if, for some reason, the system opts to run county searches for you, the approval process will take longer. The system first conducts a National Search, and sometimes that is the only search. But there are times when more information is needed to complete the search.
- An incorrect email address was used. Please be sure to double-check the email address used to create your Voly account. If you attempt to access it using a different email address, your Voly profile will have missing or incomplete requirements.
- You failed to acknowledge that you have read and reviewed the Volunteer Handbook in Voly. In order to complete all steps in Voly, you must select that you have reviewed the Volunteer Handbook. If you do not, your application will not be considered complete.

Volunteer Appeal Option

If you fail the background check, you may appeal the ruling using the Appeal Forms found here. Appealing does not guarantee your ruling will not stand. However, discretion determines whether the reported offense can be appealed, and factors such as the date of offense and offense type will be considered.

Reapply in July.

It is highly encouraged and recommended that you apply to be a CHISD volunteer beginning in July during the "Reapply in July" timeframe. This way, there will be no need for last-minute applications and background checks to be submitted throughout the school year. Additionally, becoming a volunteer early allows you to attend volunteer training before the school year begins and receive volunteer orientation at the district level. Campuses may also provide volunteer training specific to that school. Those who complete their volunteer application and background check early will be contacted in late July to participate in a summer orientation by face@chisd.net.

What Can I Expect from the Campus Principal & Front Office Staff?

Principal

- Ensure the school staff and families are aware of volunteer policy and procedures.
- Principals have the authority to accept or decline any volunteer's service offer. If it becomes necessary to discontinue a volunteer's service or programming, please follow the guidelines outlined in the policies and procedures section.
- Principals are responsible for ensuring front office staff follow district policies and procedures. *Volunteers must sign in and out of the building using the Raptor visitor/volunteer management system.*
- Principals must address staff concerns about volunteer programs, especially those related to respect for confidentiality, health and safety, liability, and supervision.

- Extends an invitation to parents and families to volunteer in their school by passing out flyers at school events
- Recognizes and shows appreciation for volunteers
- Principals should contact the F.A.C.E. office regarding any challenges that may arise.

Front Office Staff

- Ensure the visitor/volunteer management system is up and running every morning.
- Ensure that volunteers sign in and out using the volunteer management system and the appropriate lanyard and name tag to identify them as

volunteers.
- Ensure that the volunteer management system is being used to track volunteer hours.
- Enter campus volunteer opportunities into Voly or ensure they are entered by the staff designated by the principal (e.g., Parent and Community Liaison)

CHISD Parent Organizations

All Pro Dads
John Mays, APD Affiliate Leader
All Pro Dads Email:
chisdapd@gmail.com
Website

Council of PTAs

Website

Connect with your Campus PTA/PTSA/PTO at the email addresses provided below:

Elementary Schools

Collegiate Prep Elementary - president@chcppta.org
High Pointe Elementary - highpointepta1@gmail.com
Highlands Elementary - highlandptachisd@gmail.com
Lake Ridge Elementary - lakeridgeelempta@gmail.com
Plummer Elementary - plummerespta@gmail.com
Waterford Oaks Elementary - admin@waterfordoakspts.org

Middle Schools

Bessie Coleman Middle School - bessiecolemanpta@gmail.com
Permenter Middle School - permenterptapresident@gmail.com

High Schools

Cedar Hill High School - longhornptsa@gmail.com
Collegiate Academy and High School - collegiateptsa@gmail.com

CHISD Volunteer & Visitor Contacts

For more information about the CHISD Volunteer Application Process and Guidelines:
Eduardo Conde: Director, Family and Community Engagement (FACE)
face@chisd.net or
Eduardo.Conde@chisd.net

For more info about the CHISD Raptor Visitor Monitoring System and Emergency Procedures:
Chris Santos
Emergency Operations Coordinator
chris.santos@chisd.net

For more info about the CHISD Student Code of Conduct and Handbook:
Dr. Norbert Whitaker
Executive Director of Student Services
norbert.whitaker@chisd.net

Appendix A

FAQs - Frequently Asked Questions

What if a volunteer threatens the safety and orderly operation of the campus learning environment?
If a principal feels the volunteer is interfering with the learning environment, they must notify the district by emailing face@chisd.net and get written statements from everyone involved. The FACE staff will review the information with Student Services and CHISD PD. After careful consideration, FACE will email the principal of the decision. If the recommendation is to remove the volunteer, FACE will then call and send a physical letter to the volunteer letting them know they are no longer able to volunteer. The volunteer will be deactivated from the volunteer management system and asked not to return to the school.

What if a volunteer does not have access to a computer or internet? Can they use a paper application?
Applications are online only to protect volunteer information and identities. Campuses can make computers available to sign up volunteers.

Can parents attend their child's field trip if they still need to submit a volunteer application or have been denied?
Under no circumstances is this permitted.

How frequently must a volunteer application be submitted?
Volunteers have to submit a new application every school year. You can submit your application beginning on July 1. The application is active until June 30 of that school year.

Who is denied volunteer privileges?
Volunteers who have charges of weapons, theft, fraud, drugs, DWIs/DUIs, assault, endangering a child, sex offenses, etc., will be denied via Voly. Certain charges may be appealed depending on the year and severity of the offense.

What do I do about student discipline?
Scholars rarely have behavior problems while working with volunteers. However, our schools have detailed discipline plans, and the responsibility for discipline rests with the professional staff. Volunteers may need to discipline scholars. Make the teacher aware of any discipline problems while working with a scholar.

Should I tell my neighbor if I see her child misbehaving at school?
Adults in the school environment are responsible for maintaining the child's confidentiality. Sharing tidbits about a child's behavior or academic progress at school is inappropriate and could be detrimental to a child who is still learning to control him or herself. Even sharing "good stuff" can be damaging. We ask that our volunteers respect each child's privacy as required by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), which governs student information.

What if I observe something about which I am concerned? Do I tell the parents? Not. It is not a volunteer's job to contact the parents about anything occurring in the classroom or school. Please let the teacher, principal, or district personnel know your concerns. Multiple legal obligations and restraints govern teachers. The teacher's responsibility is to decide when it is necessary to take further action.

How do I find out what volunteer opportunities are available?
Volunteer opportunities are displayed via Voly at https://cedarhillisd.voly.org/. Campuses may also offer volunteer opportunities through other means.

What should I do during the campus emergency drills?
Schools regularly conduct drills so they can be prepared for emergencies. If you are in the building at a time when drills are conducted, you are expected to participate in the exercises. Follow the lead of the staff member as to what to do. Your scholar may also be helpful, as they have practiced more times than you have. Refer to the building map in this handbook for exit routes and assembly locations.

I would like to volunteer, but I have a preschool-aged child. Can I bring my child with me?
We love children but want to protect them from hazards in the campus work area (hot laminating machines, paper cutters, scissors, etc.). We ask preschool children not to accompany you when you volunteer for their safety.

What should I do if I suspect or see grooming or sexual misconduct?
Sexual abuse is defined as any welcomed or unwelcomed sexual advances, request for sexual favors, and other oral, written, physical, or visual conduct of a sexual nature. Grooming is preparing or training someone for a particular purpose or activity. The physical contact of the private body area of a minor for gratification will always be considered sexual abuse. Volunteers who suspect a student may have experienced prohibited harassment must report their concerns to a Campus Administrator. All allegations of prohibited harassment of a student will be reported to the student's parents and investigated. Failure to report suspected abuse to a staff member within 48 hours of obtaining knowledge is a crime *(19 TAC Chapter 61.1051, Subchapter EE)* and is punishable by a fine, imprisonment, or both (*Family Code 261.101; 216.103)*.

Can I transport scholars or staff in a vehicle when I am volunteering?
No. It is not advisable to allow anyone who is not a District employee to operate anything with wheels, such as a bus, white fleet van, 4-wheelers, lawnmowers, etc. while engaging in volunteer work.

What happens if I get injured while serving as a volunteer?
The District is immune to any damages/liability due to Tort Law. The only time the District may have some liability is if the volunteer is injured while operating a vehicle or machine with wheels. However, see previous question and answer. Additionally, since volunteers are not employees, an injury would not be considered under workers' compensation.

Where can I view the Student Code of Conduct?
The most recent Student Code of Conduct can be viewed by clicking here.

Where can I view the district's approved calendar?
The current year's District Calendar can be accessed here.

Appendix B

Board Policy
State law (Texas Education Code 22.053), CHISD Board Policy GKG, and administrative regulations set specific standards for all staff and volunteers to follow so that the safety and well-being of our scholars are ensured while they are attending school.

Appendix C

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)
Release of Student Directory Information to the Public and/or Military Recruiters

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents certain rights regarding their students' education records.

For FERPA, Cedar Hill ISD has designated certain information as "directory information," which may be disclosed for any purpose without prior consent. The primary purpose of this designation is for district use of the information for these types of purposes:

- School and district newsletters and other printed or electronic official publications
- News releases to area newspapers
- School district website and official social media sites
- A playbill or music program showing your student's role in a performance
- Honor roll or other recognition lists
- Graduation programs
- Yearbooks
- Sports activity programs, such as wrestling, show the weight and height of team members.

According to federal guidelines, directory information can be disclosed to outside organizations without written consent. Outside organizations include, but are not limited to, companies that manufacture class rings or publish yearbooks.

In addition, two federal laws require local educational agencies (LEAs) receiving assistance under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA) to provide military recruiters, upon request, with three directory information categories—names, addresses, and telephone listings—unless parents have asked the LEA not to disclose this information without their prior written consent.
Cedar Hill has designated the following information as directory information:

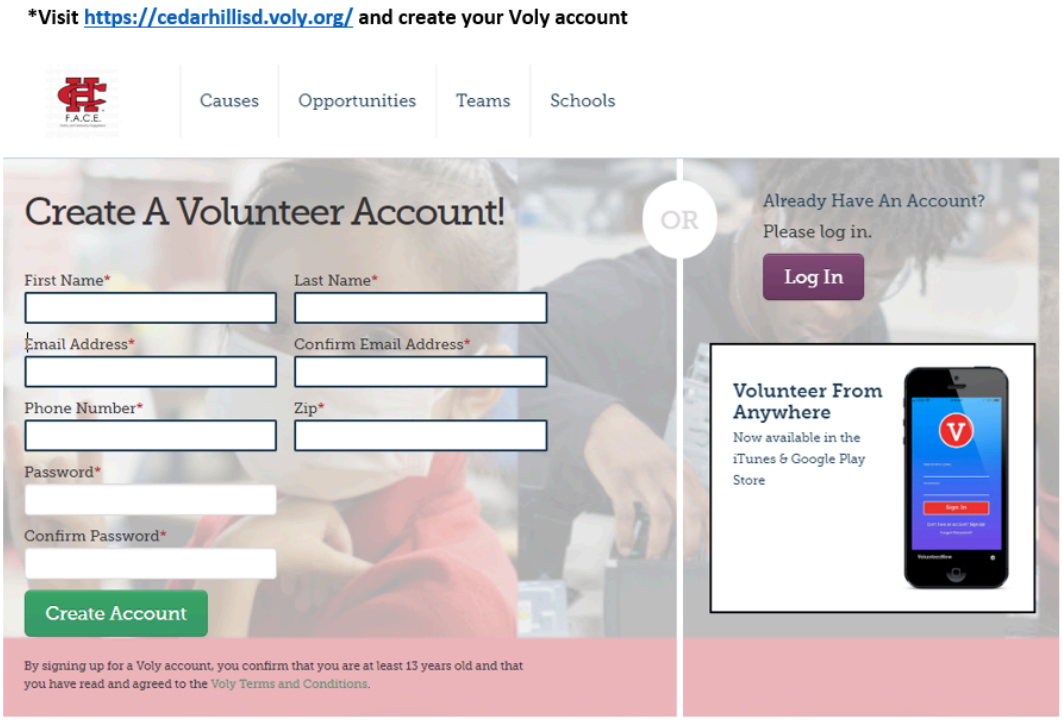
- Student name
- Parent name(s)
- Address

- Telephone listing
- Electronic mail address
- Photograph
- Video images
- Audio recordings
- Date and place of birth
- Dates of attendance
- Grade Level
- Participation in officially recognized activities and sports
- Weight and height of members of athletic teams
- Degrees, honors, and awards received
- The most recent educational agency or institution attended

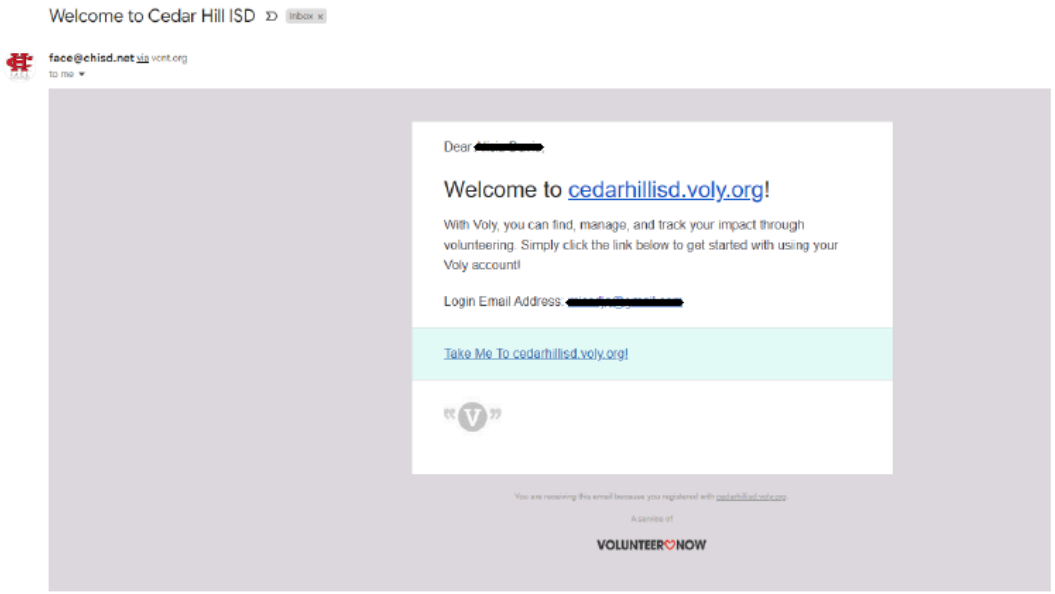
For instructions on requesting the non-release of directory information, click here.

Appendix D

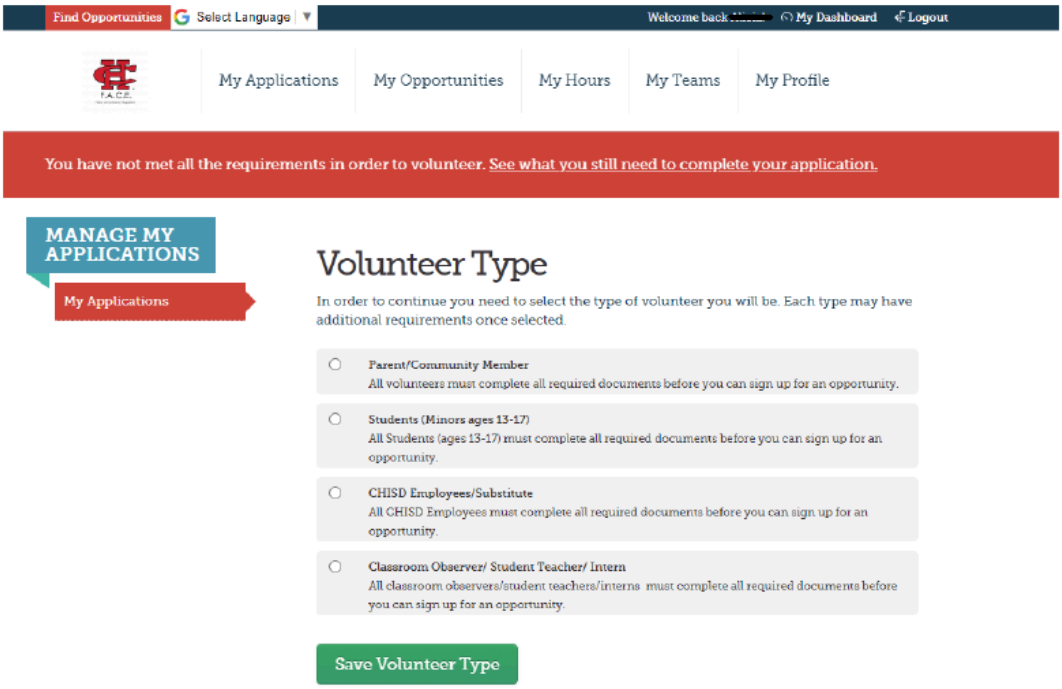
Step-by-Step Volunteer Approval Photo Guide



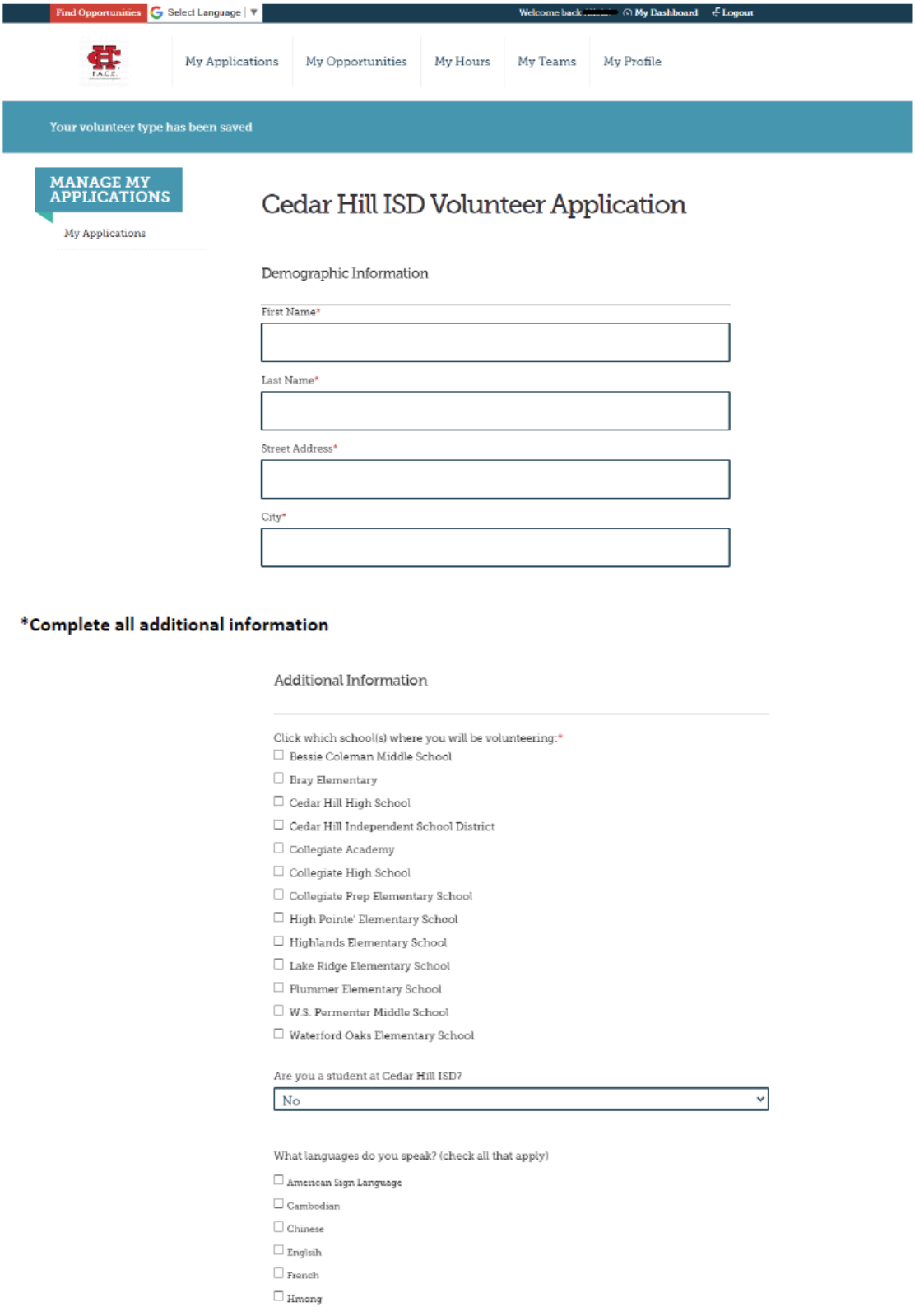
***Once you create your account, you will receive the email below from face@chisd.net welcoming you to Voly**



***Complete the Appropriate Volunteer Application Type**



***Complete demographic information**



***Complete all additional information**

***Complete all additional information**

Which day(s) are you available to volunteer? (check all that apply)

- ☐ Monday
- ☐ Tuesday
- ☐ Wednesday
- ☐ Thursday
- ☐ Friday
- ☐ Saturday

Which volunteer activities are you interested in? (check all that apply)

- ☐ Athletics
- ☐ Campus Based Events
- ☐ District Opportunities
- ☐ Parent Opportunities
- ☐ Special Events
- ☐ STEAM

Background Information

Do you have any disciplinary action or investigation pending by an employer, other organization, professional association, or licensing body, for violence, sexual misconduct, or misconduct involving children?*

No

Have you ever been disciplined from any volunteer position or employment for any reason or following an allegation of sexual misconduct, physical aggression, verbal aggression, or other inappropriate behavior or conduct?*

No

Have you ever been reprimanded, or asked to leave or end your membership in an organization in which you were working or volunteering?*

***Complete all additional information, check the box and select Save & Continue**

Have you ever been convicted of, pled guilty to, or pled no contest (nolo contendere) to a criminal offense involving a sexual offense relating to children?*

No

Have you ever been convicted of, pled guilty to, or pled no contest (nolo contendere) to a criminal offense relating to a crime of violence or assault?*

No

Have you ever been required to report or been reported to any organization or registry for abuse or misconduct involving children?*

No

Do you now or have you ever sought out or intentionally viewed child pornography?*

No

Signature

I hereby confirm that Cedar Hill ISD Volunteer Application is complete.

First Name* [redacted]

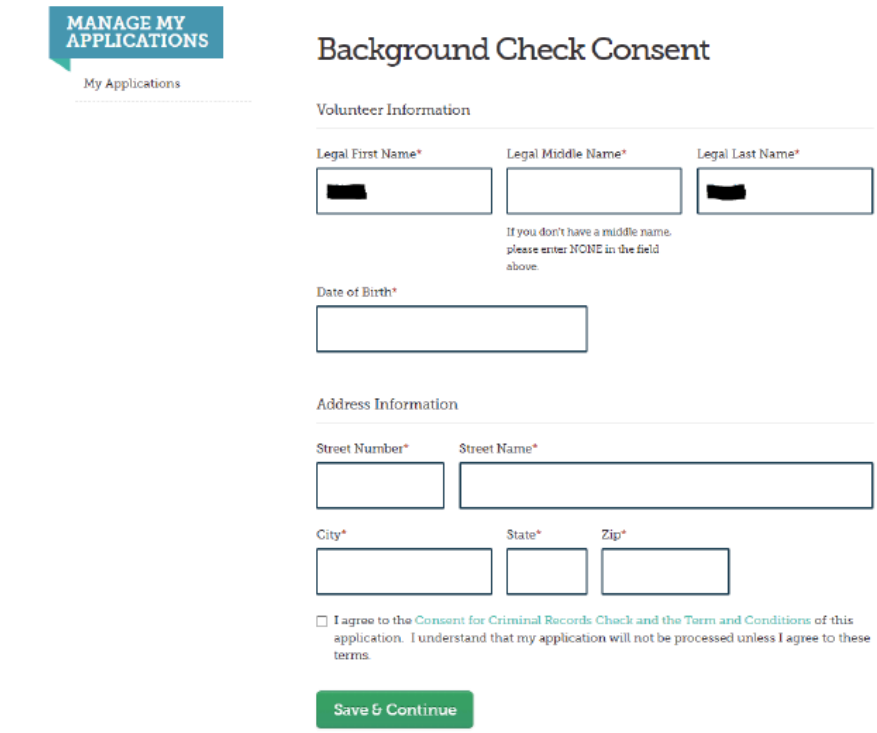
Last Name* [redacted]

Today's Date* [redacted]

☐ By clicking, I am providing my electronic signature.*

Save & Continue

***Complete demographic information for background check, check the box to submit for the background check, and select Save & Continue**



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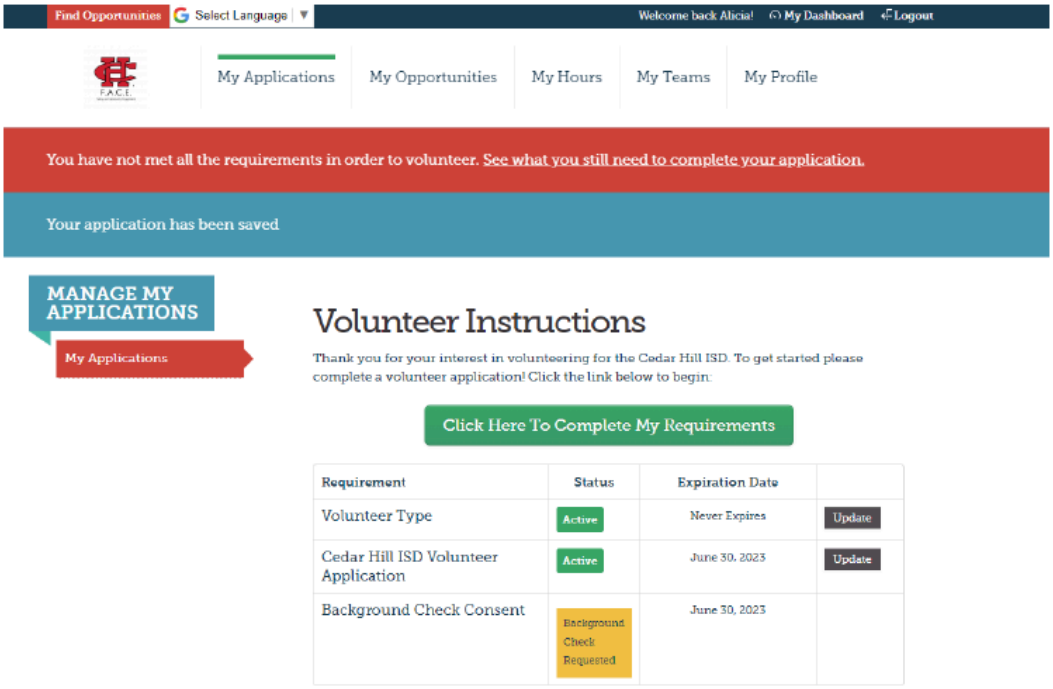
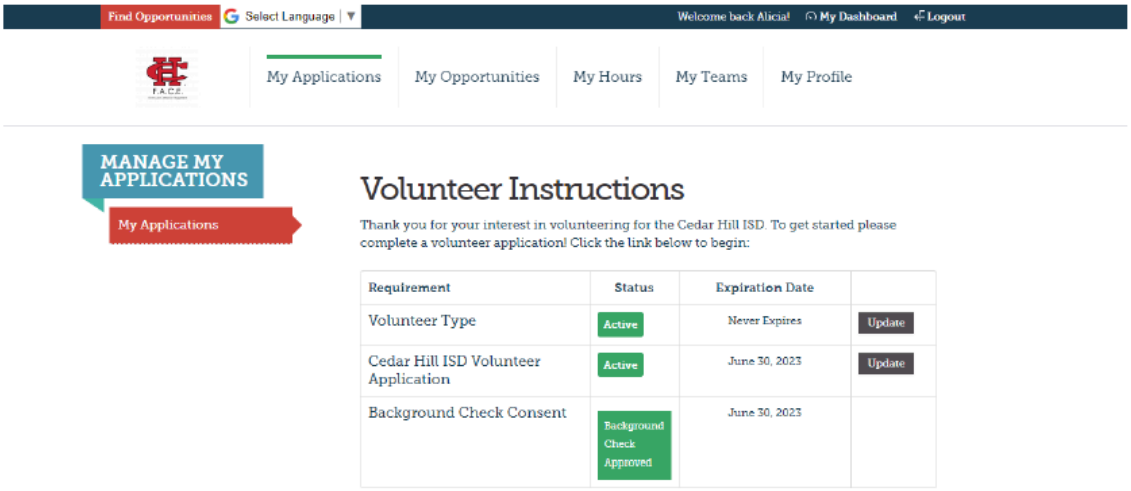
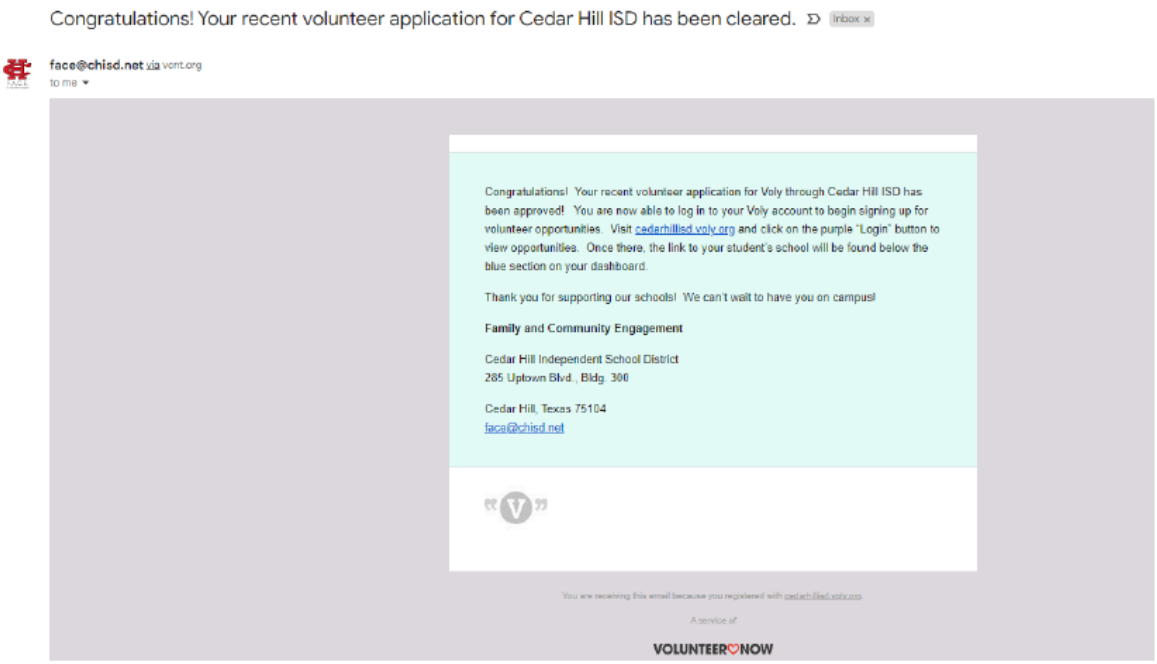


***Refresh the page and the screen below may appear; the yellow turns green when you pass – many people pass immediately**



***Or check your email to see if you've received the message below from face@chisd.net – it indicates you have passed your background check and are cleared to volunteer in Cedar Hill ISD**



***If you fail the background check, you will receive the email below from face@chisd.net with a follow-up instructions included in the body of the email:**

Thank you for your interest in volunteering with Cedar Hill ISD. Unfortunately, we are unable to clear you to volunteer at this time. Since the background check conducted was based on a name search and not on actual fingerprint results, we ask that you contact face@chisd.net if you have any questions or need further details, would like to appeal, or can provide additional information that may assist the District in making a final decision on your volunteer status.

Family and Community Engagement

Cedar Hill Independent School District
285 Uptown Blvd., Bldg. 300

Cedar Hill, Texas 75104
face@chisd.net

If you would like to appeal the decision, please follow the link below:

CHISD_Volunteer_Appeal_Form_English.docx

CHISD_Volunteer_Appeal_Form_Spanish.docx

[redacted]

You are receiving this email because you registered with cedarhillisd.voly.org, which is a service of

VOLUNTEER NOW

[redacted]