

Warrior Run School District Volunteer Handbook

Guidelines and expectations for serving as a volunteer

Revised 04/21/26



Purpose of School Volunteers

The Board recognizes that community volunteers can make valuable contributions to the educational program. The use of community volunteers is endorsed by the Board, subject to legal requirements and administrative procedures.

Definition of a School Volunteer

Volunteer – any individual who voluntarily provides services to the school district in connection with school district activities, including but not limited to an individual who does any of the following: (1) works under the general direction and supervision of a coach, teacher or administrator employed by the district; (2) chaperones an overnight field trip; (3) directly supervises or instructs students engaged in an activity or may, from time to time, be reasonably expected to have direct contact with students; (4) serves on the coaching staff of an athletic team; or (5) is responsible for a student's welfare.

Authority of School Volunteers

Direct contact with students-the care, supervision, guidance or control of students, or routine interaction with students.

You Are Part of an Education Team

Volunteers who are committed to helping students be successful are important members of the school team. These individuals are essential to bringing the outside world to the school. Students need contact with individuals who can share experiences and bring other perspectives into the classroom. They need adults who can guide them through the learning process.

Goals:

- Enrich the curriculum
- Enrich students learning opportunities
- Provide help for individual students
- Provide opportunities for meaningful service
- Establish a school and community partnership for quality education
- Enhance all aspects of the educational process

Working closely with the classroom teacher and school staff includes:

- Following the direction of a school staff member
- Accepting direction and suggestions from teachers
- Respecting the privacy of teachers and students by not discussing school matters away from the classroom
- Understanding that evaluation of a student's learning can only be done by the teacher
Committing to working in a classroom to support and improve education for all students
- Seeking help from the teacher when you need additional information or instruction
- Referring to the classroom teacher or regular school staff member for final solution of any student problem which arises, whether of an instructional, medical or operational nature

Enjoy working with students by:

- Finding ways to establish a good rapport with students
- Providing help and assistance without doing the work for students
- Showing a genuine interest in each student
- Accepting each student and encouraging the best from him or her
- Using patience and kindness

Volunteer Expectations

Volunteers are expected to:

- Sign in and wear a visitor badge on school grounds at all time
- Wear professional attire
- Show respect for all staff and students
- Share concerns regarding students with the school staff only

Please do not bring younger children to the school during your volunteer hours. You will also be asked to turn off your cell phone while you are volunteering in the classroom and are discouraged from making personal calls while on the school campus.

Ground Rules for School District Facilities:

- No smoking or tobacco allowed, including on athletic fields and in district vehicles
- No weapons allowed
- No drugs or alcohol allowed
- Do not use school equipment for personal purposes

Maintain Student Confidentiality

Volunteers are expected and required to keep all student information that they obtain while working as a volunteer for the district confidential. In fact, federal law strictly prohibits school districts and district volunteers from releasing any student information without parent/guardian permission.

Student information includes all academic, medical and personal information. Volunteers cannot take photos of students during their volunteer activities and post them publicly without authorization from the school. Student work, like artwork or papers, is also protected by law and cannot be shared publicly without written permission. Disclosure of student information by a volunteer is a violation of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA) and may subject the volunteer and the district to civil liability. It is very important that you keep information about students confidential. It is important that you do not discuss students or their progress with others –even their parents. Do not make references to students' abilities in front of other students. The only person who should be told about a student's work is their teacher. If parents ask about their students' progress, suggest in a friendly way that they contact the teacher.

Harassment

The Board strives to provide a safe, positive learning climate for students in the schools. Therefore, it shall be the policy of the district to maintain an educational environment in which harassment in any form is not tolerated.

The Warrior Run School District Harassment Policy calls for a commitment to an educational environment that is free from all types of discrimination and harassment, including sexual harassment, bullying and intimidation. Volunteers are expected and required to respect and uphold the Warrior Run School District Harassment Policy. The district asks you to review this policy in detail prior to volunteering. Policies can be located under "District" on the district website. Please refer to Policy #248 – Unlawful Harassment.

What Are the Differences between a Volunteer and a Visitor?

A volunteer is any individual that has direct contact with children and has the possibility of care, supervision, guidance AND routine interaction with children. Routine interaction is defined as regular, repeated and continual contact that is integral to a person's employment or volunteer responsibilities. A visitor is any individual that has limited contact with children and does not have routine interaction with children.

Examples of Volunteers:

- Chaperoning repeated school activities
- Helping with plays or musicals
- Assisting students at the school on a regular basis (assisting in classrooms, etc.)
- Chaperoning a field trip

Examples of Visitors:

- Joining a student for lunch or special holiday meal
- Reading to a class during Read Across America Day
- Serving as a guest speaker to a class or presenting at a school assembly
- Attending activities at the school during the school day to watch students
- Chaperoning a dance

Important Guidelines

Safe Interaction with Students:

The school board expects that all staff and volunteers will strive to set the kind of example for students that will serve them well in their own conduct and behavior and contribute toward a school atmosphere that is friendly but has a degree of formality.

General Guidelines for Safe Interaction with Students:

All interactions with students should be professional and focused on teaching and learning. These guidelines protect both the student and the volunteer.

Do Not:

- Take a student or students on private outings
- Initiate social activities with students
- Have a prolonged verbal exchange with students if you have an impromptu encounter at a public place
- Engage in Social Networking with students via Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, Vine or Twitter or any other social networking website to initiate or maintain relationship(s) with any student that is not consistent with appropriate professional behavior and/or boundaries

Communication

Do not say or write things to a student that you would be uncomfortable sharing with the student's parents, district/school administrators or the teacher you are working with.

Do Not:

- 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 jokes that belittle or diminish another person
- Give students compliments that focus on physical attributes
- Initiate conversations or correspondence of a private and/or personal nature with students

Working Alone with Students at School

- Always keep the door open and lights on
- Do not post anything on class windows that would obstruct a clear view into the room

Physical Contact with Students

It is the District's expectation that all physical contact between volunteers and students must be professional and appropriate.

Field Trips and Off-Campus Activities

There will be times when classes will be taking field trips to support academic topics. All chaperones must be board approved volunteers. Selection will be solely the responsibility of the classroom teacher and in consultation with the building principal. Please refer to the Field Trip Policy in the Warrior Run Elementary Handbook for more information.

Extracurricular and Enrichment Activities

Schools often provide before and after-school programs. All extracurricular and enrichment activities must be organized under the authority of Warrior Run School District or its parent teacher support organizations and comply with all applicable rules and regulations.

Report Suspected Abuse or Neglect

As a volunteer and mandated reporter, you are in a unique position to observe students. If you suspect that a student may be the victim of abuse or neglect, report it immediately to the

principal, school counselor or another school district employee. Nondiscrimination Notification
The Board declares it to be the policy of this district to provide an equal opportunity for all students to achieve their maximum potential through the programs offered in the schools regardless of race, color, age, creed, religion, gender, sexual orientation, ancestry, marital status, national origin or handicap/disability. The district shall provide to all students, without discrimination, course offerings, counseling, assistance, employment, athletics and extracurricular activities. The district shall make reasonable accommodations for identified physical and mental impairments that constitute disabilities, consistent with the requirements of federal and state laws and regulations.

How Do I Become a Warrior Run Volunteer?

Volunteers are parents or community members who voluntarily offer a service to the District without compensation. The following steps must be completed prior to starting actual volunteer services:

1. You will need to obtain your clearances which include the Pennsylvania State Police Criminal Records Check, the Child Abuse History Clearance and completing the Federal Criminal History Background Check.
2. You will need to complete the Act 126 Mandated Reporter Training and submit proof of completion prior to volunteering. The training may be accessed through a free website: <https://www.reportabusepa.pitt.edu/>. Once the website is accessed, please register, print your certificate upon completion, and present the certificate to the principal.
3. Original copies of clearances must be presented to the principal. Copies will be signed and dated, then forwarded to the District Business Office.
4. Your name will then be placed on the School Board agenda for approval.

Clearances

As a volunteer, state law requires clearances every three years. You will need to pay for the clearances, but at this point in time, the PA Child Abuse History Clearance and the PA State Police Criminal Record Check are provided at no charge to volunteers.

PENNSYLVANIA CHILD ABUSE HISTORY CLEARANCE INSTRUCTIONS

<https://www.compass.state.pa.us/CWIS>

Directions:

- a. After Clicking on the link above, Click “Create New Account” (Unless you already created an account for recent clearances).
- b. Read the Welcome and then Click “Next”.
- c. Create your own “Keystone ID” and answer the questions on the page including the security question (use an email account you can access because they will send you a temporary password that you will need to complete the process).
- d. Check your email for the temporary password they will send to you.
- e. Go back to the main page using the link above (compass.state) and this time click “Log in”.
- f. Then Click on “Access My Clearances”.
- g. Read the information and then click on “Continue”.
- h. Type in your username and the temporary password that was emailed to you.
- i. Then it will ask you to create a new password and click “Continue”.
- j. Select “Volunteer” as the reason from the drop down list of choices and then fill in the remaining information requested on the screen. It is a secure site so you can enter your social security number.
- k. You can select to have a paper copy mailed to you but you will get an electronic version that you can print off so it is your choice.
- l. You will need to list every permanent address you have lived at since 1975. If you do not remember all the specifics such as zip, or street address just fill in as much as you can. If parents/grandparents are deceased you do not need to put an age in for them.
- m. You will need to list everyone you have ever lived with this includes your parent(s), spouse, ex-spouses, etc. You will need to select how they are/were related to you.
- n. You then need to click to verify that what you are submitting is correct.
- o. After submitting, usually within a few minutes, your results should appear right under the account number in a green box that will say “To view the result, click here”.
- p. The pdf of the certificate should show up, print out a copy then at the top of the page click “Log Out”.

PENNSYLVANIA STATE POLICE CRIMINAL RECORD CHECK INSTRUCTIONS

<https://epatch.state.pa.us/Home.jsp>

Directions:

- a. Click on the link above.
- b. Click in the middle right of the page on “Submit a New Record Check”.
- c. Read the information and click “accept”.
- d. Fill in the information requested. For Reason, Scroll down to “School District”.
- e. Verify your information and click “Proceed”.
- f. After submitting, usually within a few minutes, your results should appear, click on view results and print out a copy.

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION (FBI) CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECK INSTRUCTIONS

<https://uenroll.identogo.com/>

Directions:

- a. Click on the link above.
- b. Enter your Service Code to get started, code: 1KG6XN
- c. Click "GO"
- d. Choose "Schedule or Manage Appointment".
- e. Fill out the Demographics Information then click "Next".
- f. Select method of ID.
- g. Select a Location
- h. Choose a Date and Time that works for you "Submit".
- i. You will receive a confirmation and UE ID number (Universal Enrollment ID Number)
- j. Fill in your credit card information to pay the \$27.00 Fee and click "pay".
- k. Proceed to the appointment date and time that you have scheduled with the ID that you have selected
- l. Keep the receipt that is given to you when obtaining your fingerprints, it will have a UEID code to retrieve a copy of your report.
- m. Applicants will then visit <https://uenroll.identogo.com/> and check the status of their file by providing personal information and the UEID from the receipt.
- n. Applicants will receive an unofficial copy of the report. Print this and keep it in a safe place (you are only given one opportunity to get this report)

To Receive Your Results:

1. When an email address and security question and answer are provided, an email notification will be sent. If any result has a record associated with it, those results will not be electronically available and can only be transmitted by US Mail. Current mailing address timelines take at least 7-10 business days to arrive. All results will still be transmitted by US Mail to all applicants.
2. Once you as the volunteer receive your results via email, or by US Mail it is your responsibility to bring those results to the school office in which you are looking to volunteer.