



DAVIDSON

COUNTY SCHOOLS

Your future. Our focus.

Volunteer Handbook

Mission

To create a *rigorous* and *relevant* learning environment built on strong personal *relationships* that empowers ALL students for *future success*

Vision

To prepare students to enter the world ready to navigate challenges and to construct successes

Core Beliefs

- Students must be taught more than just standards and exposed to various opportunities to become informed and contributing members of our society.
- A supportive environment fosters growth for all.
- Learning experiences should include development of skills to help students in their everyday lives.
- The more connected the learning, the deeper it goes and the longer it lasts.
- Learning experiences should be varied to meet all learners.
- Communicating and maintaining high expectations lead to higher levels of student achievement.

It is important to the leadership for Davidson County Schools that all efforts by students, staff, and volunteers work to support our mission, vision, and beliefs. However, of greater importance is our number one priority to keep all who spend time on our campuses safe. This is a monumental task and one that we do not take lightly. The purpose for this handbook is to help familiarize those who give their time to enhance the educations of students in Davidson County Schools. But this handbook also outlines expectations, guidelines, and non-negotiables expected of volunteers as we seek to protect our most valuable members of this community, our children.

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Board of Education Policies

All persons operating on school grounds or in any capacity related to school business are required to remain in compliance with board of education policies and all local, state, and federal laws. The entire Davidson County Board of Education Policy manual can be found online at www.davidson.k12.nc.us > Administration > School Board > School Board Policy. This handbook includes **excerpts** from a few policies immediately and directly related to the role of a school volunteer. **All volunteers are expected to review DCS Board of Education policies prior to engaging in the role.** If you have any questions, you are encouraged to speak with an administrator at the school or district level.

4.11.3 Staff-Student Relations

For the purposes of this policy, the term “staff” and “employees” include independent contractors, school safety officers, and volunteers, but do not include student employees or student volunteers.

A. Romantic Relationships and Sexual Contact Prohibited

All employees are prohibited from dating, courting, or entering into a romantic relationship or having sexual contact with any student enrolled in the school system regardless of the student’s age.

B. Restrictions on Electronic Communications

In accordance with policy 4.28, Personnel Internet Use, employees are prohibited from communicating with current students through non-school-controlled social media without parental permission except to the extent that the employees and student have an appropriate relationship which originated outside of the school setting. Any communication through social media authorized under policy 4.28 must meet the professional standards established in this policy and must otherwise be consistent with law and all other board policy.

4.11.5 Confidential Information

Much of the educational information for students is protected as private and confidential by federal law. Accordingly, those who spend time in our schools and classrooms must adhere to protecting that information. All volunteers must sign a confidentiality agreement and any breach of this agreement will result in termination of an individual’s privilege to serve as a volunteer in Davidson County Schools.

4.17 Drug-Free and Alcohol-Free Workplace

PROHIBITED ACTIVITIES

The board prohibits employees from possessing, using, selling, delivering, manufacturing, or being under the influence of any narcotic drug, hallucinogenic drug, amphetamine, barbiturate, marijuana, anabolic steroid, alcohol, stimulants, synthetic cannabinoids, counterfeit substance, or any other controlled substance as

defined in (1) Schedules I through VI of the North Carolina Controlled Substances Act or in (2) Schedules I through V of section 202 of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 812) and further defined by regulation at 21 C.F.R.1300.01 through 1300.04 and 21 C.F.R. 1308.11 through 1308.15 at any time this policy is applicable. Employees are prohibited from possessing, using, selling, delivering, manufacturing, or being under the influence of a substance containing cannabidiol (CBD) or tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) at any time this policy is applicable, regardless of whether it constitutes a controlled substance under state or federal law. Employees must not, at any time this policy is applicable, be impaired by the use of substances intended to induce exhilaration or euphoria or alter mood or behavior or be impaired by the excessive use of prescription or nonprescription drugs. This policy is not violated by an individual's proper use of a drug lawfully prescribed for that individual by a licensed health- care provider.

4.21.1 Child Abuse-Reports and Investigations

The board of education supports all employees who in good faith make a report of suspected child abuse, neglect, dependency, or death as a result of maltreatment. Any school employee who knows or has cause to suspect child abuse, neglect, dependency, or death as a result of maltreatment is legally required to report the case of the child to the director of social services. The employee also shall immediately report the case to the principal.

Any doubt about reporting a suspected situation must be resolved in favor of reporting, and the report must be made immediately.

8.1.3 School Volunteers

The board recognizes the valuable contributions that school volunteers make to the learning process and the educational goals of the school system. Instructional programs are enhanced through the contributions of students' parents, community members, and local business and industry. These volunteers contribute time, resources, and expertise that assist the school system to reach the goal of providing a sound basic education to all children.

The superintendent shall provide for parents to be notified of their right to take four hours of unpaid leave from their jobs every year in order to volunteer in their child's school as stated in G.S. 95-28.3.

The board encourages school administrators to develop and implement plans and procedures for utilizing school volunteers. The superintendent and designees are responsible for implementing and supervising school volunteer programs. School volunteer programs must provide the following:

1. adequate screening of volunteers based upon the amount of contact they will have with students;
2. the requirement that volunteers comply with policy 8.6, Visitors to the Schools;
3. reasonable supervision of volunteers based at least in part upon the amount of contact they will have with students; and

4. adequate training of volunteers, including familiarizing volunteers with applicable laws, board policies, administrative procedures and school rules.

All school volunteers are expected to be professional and dependable in their volunteer activities.

The Superintendent, or designee, may in their sole discretion deny an individual's request to serve as a school volunteer or may terminate an individual's privilege to continue to serve as a school

8.2 Smoking and Tobacco Products

All employees and other persons performing services or activities on behalf of the school system, including volunteers, and contractors, as well as students and visitors, are prohibited from using any tobacco products at any time in any school building, in any school facility, on school campuses, and in or on any other school property owned or operated by the school board.

8.6 Visitors to the Schools

The board encourages the community and parents to be involved in and support the schools and the educational program of the schools.

OPPORTUNITIES TO VISIT THE SCHOOLS

To encourage involvement, the following opportunities are provided to visit the schools.

1. Visitors are welcome to observe and learn about the educational program at each school subject to reasonable rules developed by school administrators.
2. Visitors are encouraged to use school facilities made available to the public, such as media centers or meeting spaces, as provided in policy 3.7.4, Community Use of Facilities.
3. Visitors are invited to attend school events that are open to the public, such as athletic events, musical programs, and dramatic productions.

REQUIREMENTS OF VISITORS TO THE SCHOOLS

While the school board welcomes visitors to the schools, the paramount concern of the board is to provide a safe and orderly learning environment in which disruptions to instructional time are kept to a minimum. The superintendent and each principal shall establish and enforce reasonable rules to address this concern.

1. All school visitors during the school day must report immediately to the administrative office at the school to request and receive permission to be in the school. Each principal shall ensure that signs are posted in the school to notify visitors of this requirement.
2. School visitors are expected to comply with all school rules and school board policies, including policy 6.11, Rule 6: Narcotics, Alcoholic Beverages and Stimulant Drugs (Including Drug Paraphernalia) and Other Prohibited Substances; 8.2 Davidson County Tobacco-Free School Policy;

and policy 6.11, Rule 5: Weapons, Bomb Threats, Terrorist Threats, and Clear Threats to Safety.

3. Persons who are subject to *policy 8.5, Registered Sex Offenders, must comply with the provisions of that policy.*

UNAUTHORIZED, DISRUPTIVE OR DANGEROUS VISITORS

If a school employee becomes aware that an individual is on a school property without having received permission or that an individual is exhibiting unusual, threatening or dangerous behavior, the employee must either direct the individual to the administrative office or notify the principal, designee or school resource officer, depending on the circumstances.

If a school employee suspects that an individual is on school property in violation of policy 8.5, Registered Sex Offenders, the employee must immediately notify the principal, designee or school resource officer.

Students will be instructed to notify a school employee of any unusual or suspicious behavior by visitors. School employees shall inform the principal or designee immediately of a student's report of suspicious behavior on the part of a school visitor.

When an individual disrupts the educational environment, acts in a disorderly manner, damages school property, or violates board policy or the law, the principal or designee has authority to:

1. order the individual to leave school property;
2. notify law enforcement; or
3. take any other action deemed appropriate under the circumstances.

Failure to comply with a request to leave school grounds may result in the filing of trespass charges or other charges as appropriate against the offending individual.

The superintendent, upon recommendation from the principal, may deny an individual permission to come onto school grounds or enter a school facility for up to one school year if the individual is guilty of disruptive or dangerous behavior on school grounds.

Volunteer Criteria

Volunteers...

- Must be 18 years of age
- Must be approved through Davidson County Schools Human Resources staff
- Must be approved by the principal of the school(s) in which they plan to volunteer their services

Volunteers can...

- participate in non-teaching duties that do not require the instructional judgement or evaluation of students
- assist with academic programs under a certified teacher's immediate supervision
- provide supervision of students in study halls, in cafeterias, on school trips (provided the chaperone guidelines form has been signed), etc.

Volunteers may not...

- substitute for a member of the school staff
- impose, administer, or enforce student discipline
- administer medication
- access student record information
- grade or correct student assignments
- counsel students

Volunteer Opportunities

Opportunities for volunteering vary across our schools and our levels (elementary, middle, and high schools). Here are several ideas for volunteer options which may or may not be needed at any individual school:

- provide tutoring assistance
- serve as a guest lecturer
- assist with supervision of students
- assist with clerical tasks for teachers or office staff
- be a "lunch buddy"
- chaperone school-sponsored events
- coach for an athletic team
- provide language support for non-English speakers
- assist with campus beautification efforts

Volunteer Responsibilities

In order to create the most conducive relationship and atmosphere for volunteers and school staff, the following are expectations for volunteers:

- assist in maintaining a safe environment at all times and report any and all concerns about safety to the principal immediately
- adhere to all rules, procedures, and policies, from the school and district, AND all local, state, and federal laws
- become familiar with the school's rules and procedures
- be dependable and prompt
- respect the school and classroom environment and setting
- sign in and receive a *Volunteer* badge—sign out and return the badge
- maintain confidentiality and protect the privacy of students and adults
- be an ambassador for Davidson County Schools and public school in general
- serve as a positive role model for students in behavior, interactions, and attire
- treat all students with respect and fairness
- follow the direction from the school staff member with whom you are assigned
- refrain from taking photos or videos while in the school or on school grounds
- do not use school equipment for personal purposes

The superintendent, or designee, may in their sole discretion terminate an individual's privilege to serve as a school volunteer

Chaperone Guidelines

The role of chaperone varies from volunteer in that a chaperone may be asked to accompany and supervise students without the immediate presence of a school staff member on a school trip. The following outlines expectations for chaperones:

- Prior to assuming the role of chaperone, you must be approved by the DCS Human Resources Department. Background check applications are available at each school. Once the application is complete, the school will send these to Human Resources, and school personnel will notify you when approval is complete.
- Chaperones may be directed to supervise a group of students on the school trip. Agreeing to chaperone duties expresses agreement to supervise other students, not just your own child.
- Chaperones are expected to comply with expectations established by Davidson County Schools staff and by any venue visited on the school trip. Attention to strict time schedules is extremely important.
- Chaperones are expected to adhere to all the same policies, procedures, and expectations that govern Davidson County Schools staff members. As such, use of inappropriate language, alcohol, tobacco, and other banned materials is prohibited.

- The school trip sponsor will address any disciplinary matters that arise. In the event a chaperone experiences a student behavior concern, the chaperone should immediately contact the school trip sponsor.
- In the event a student needs to take medication while on a school trip, only a school trip sponsor will administer it. Additionally, if a student becomes ill or has an accident while under the supervision of a chaperone, the school trip sponsor should be notified immediately.
- Chaperones must adhere to expectations concerning confidentiality during and after participation in the school trip.

The school trip sponsor is responsible for ensuring that each chaperone has signed a Davidson County Schools Guidelines for Chaperones form.

Chaperones who will be responsible for supervising a group of students should not bring other children who are not members of the school trip group.

Each school principal can enact additional stipulations for chaperones to increase and improve the safety and security of students.

If an overnight school trip will include chaperones who are not DCS employees, the school trip sponsor must host a meeting to provide the DCS School Trip Chaperone Guidelines for non-DCS chaperones to establish expectations for supervision.

Confidentiality Agreement

Disclosure of student information by a volunteer is a violation of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA). Accordingly, volunteers are expected and required to keep all student information that they obtain while working as a volunteer for the district confidential. During your interactions with teachers and students, you may be exposed to sensitive and personal student information which should not be shared with anyone other than the designated district personnel. This includes a student's own parents or guardians. For the purposes of this agreement, student information includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Student work
- Information/documents concerning students' academic standing
- Test scores and grades
- Attendance records
- Financial records/information
- Family/Personal information
- Health information/records
- Disciplinary information/records

At no time should student information/records be removed from the school or shared with others, unless expressly authorized and approved by the building principal and/or their designee.

Affidavit:

As an approved volunteer for Davidson County Schools, I declare that I will not discuss the confidential information of any student with persons (including the student's parents) other than designated district staff members and/or administrators during or following my role as a volunteer. Should I witness or suspect a breach of this confidentiality agreement, I will report it to the building principal or his/her designee as soon as possible. I understand that any violation of this confidentiality agreement may result in my termination as a volunteer.

Signed _____ Date _____

Name (Printed) _____