

Big Spring School District

Volunteer Handbook



Updated 08.2026



BIG SPRING SCHOOL DISTRICT
Office of the Assistant Superintendent
45 Mount Rock Road
Newville, PA 17241-9466
(717) 776-2000

Dear BSSD Volunteer,

I personally welcome you to our schools and thank you for volunteering your services to the students and staff of Big Spring School District. We believe members of our community have a role in preparing our children to be productive members of society. Therefore, the Big Spring School District has re-established and re-defined the volunteer program.

Research clearly states children whose parents are involved in their school activities achieve at higher levels than those whose parents are not involved. We feel that parents are partners in the educational process and sharing their time and talents greatly benefits all of our children.

The safety of our students remains our priority. Therefore, clearances will be required of volunteers that may have regular, direct contact with children. In addition, according to state law, volunteers will be required to have a tuberculosis (TB) test before working with students. Additional information on clearances can be obtained in this handbook or at the offices at each of the schools.

We appreciate your interest and involvement and look forward to working with you in a combined commitment to the children of the Big Spring School District.

Sincerely,
Dr. Nadine Sanders
Assistant Superintendent

Welcome to our Schools

Parents and community members are encouraged to participate in the education of our children by sharing their time and talents in the classroom. It is a proven fact that volunteering greatly benefits our children and your presence at school sends a message that you care about education.

This booklet contains basic guidelines and information which you will need to know when volunteering. Please read the information carefully and then sign, date and return the last page to the school where you will be volunteering.

There are a number of types of volunteers, which are described on the chart below. The chart is only a guide; the Administration reserves the right to categorizes volunteers on a case-by-case basis. Please review Policy 916, Volunteers, for additional information. All types require a TB test while some types depending of the level of supervision, require clearances.

TABLE A – VOLUNTEER LEVEL OF SUPERVISION/CLEARANCE REQUIREMENT

Type of Volunteers	Assistive Volunteer	Independent Volunteer/ Coach/ Sponsor	Clearances Needed
Athletic/Band Booster Club (Concession stands, Programs, etc.)	✓		
Band Trip		✓	✓
Book Fair (TBA)		✓	✓
Chaperones for Field Trips (World Language, band trips, any school trip that has parents or community members as chaperones)		✓	✓
Chaperones for Dances	✓		
Classroom Parent Helpers	✓		
Foreign Trips		✓	✓
Fundraiser Assistants	✓		
Office Assistants (volunteer)		✓	✓
PTO Officers		✓	✓
Picture Day Volunteer	✓		
Senior Class Trip		✓	✓
Tutors (volunteer)		✓	✓
Volunteer Athletic Coaches		✓	✓
Business INCubator Mentors		✓	✓
Business INCubator Coaches	✓		

*Please note this table is only a guide. The Administration reserves the right to categorize volunteers on a case-by-case basis.

Qualifications

The following qualifications are required of volunteers

- Volunteers must be willing to work under the direction of the teacher or principal;
- Volunteers must be dependable;
- Volunteers must have a sincere desire to help and work with children;
- Volunteers must model professional behavior.

Volunteer Guidelines

Working in the Volunteer Program

- Match your interests and time availability with school needs; consult the building office for more details regarding school needs, requirements and scheduling options;
- Know when and whom to contact if problems arise;
- If you cannot fulfill your commitment for any period of time, notify the office and the teacher so other plans can be made, if necessary;
- Follow district and school procedures for signing in/out wearing identification badges, using school materials, collecting money and maintaining health and security standards;
- Know emergency procedures for safety drills, fire, illness, etc.;
- Observe confidentiality regarding information, events and people you deal with in your assignment.

Working with Staff

- Know your area of responsibility;
- Seek advice and direction from those directly in charge;
- Maintain a spirit of partnership and cooperation with all staff members;
- Share appropriate information and suggestions.

Working with Students

- Always be consistent with the specific rules and practices encouraged by the teacher;
- Maintain your position of responsibility and authority at all times;
- Learn names and procedures quickly;
- Be aware of and sensitive to individual student problems, deficiencies and special needs.

General

- Younger siblings are not permitted at the school while you are volunteering;
- All volunteers must sign in and out at the main office and wear Visitor Sticker at all times (Volunteer Coaches will be provided with Temporary Photo Id Badges);

- Pictures and / or videos are not to be taken unless permission is granted by the building principal;
- Cell phones must be turned off while in the building;
- Respect the teaching/learning time by not using you time at school for an informal parent-teacher conference;
- Be open and honest in your communication to staff and administration. If you feel a problem exists, help us to identify them by communicating with us. Please understand that there may be some issues we may not be able to discuss due to confidentiality issues;
- As a volunteer you are not expected to administer discipline to children. If a child is disruptive, seek assistance from the teacher or principal

Suggested Duties and Responsibilities for Volunteers

1. Assist teacher with daily classroom tasks;
2. Provide reinforcement of lessons with practice activities, working in small groups and with children, individually;
3. Develop materials, organize supplies;
4. Listen to children read;
5. Prepare visual aids to be utilized in lessons;
6. Meet with the teacher to review plans;
7. Assist with chaperoning field trips or other special activities;
8. Perform other duties as mutually agreed upon.

Confidentiality

It is the practice of the Big Spring School District to provide our employees or students with a level of privacy and confidentiality with any information concerning any of our employees or students.

In the course of your work, you may have access to confidential information (oral, written or computer generated not otherwise available to the public at large) about employees or students, their families and/or personal business. This information must not be discussed or disclosed outside the school environment. Additionally, confidential information may not be discussed in any forms of social media.

Reporting Child Abuse

Volunteers are mandated reporters of suspected child abuse within the meaning of the Child Protective Services Law and must comply with Board Policy 806, Child Abuse. Volunteers are required by law to report instances of suspected child abuse. Volunteers should visit the helpful website KeepKidsSafe.Pa.Gov to learn more about reporting child abuse.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q - Why volunteer?

A – As schools have increased responsibilities for educating children, a greater need exists for supplemental support. You do not have to have any special training or talents, just an interest in getting involved.

Q – Who is qualified?

A – Anyone interested in contributing his or her interest talents and experience may volunteer.

Q – Are there requirements for volunteers?

A – The state of Pennsylvania requires any individual working with children to have a TB test on record. Additionally, those volunteers who may have regular, direct contact with children will need additional clearances required by state and federal law. See chart on page 3.

Q – Does a volunteer have to obtain a new TB test and clearances each year?

A – A TB test is required once prior to volunteering. For the types of volunteers who will need clearances, these have to be obtained prior to volunteering and then once every five years. However, each year we will ask volunteers to sign an affidavit indicating that there have been no offenses since the initial clearances.

Q – Will I be able to fit volunteering in my busy schedule?

A – While some volunteer positions require regular time commitments, most volunteers contribute according to their own availability. Many needs arise only on a periodic basis and some tasks can be performed evening or weekends.

Q – Are volunteers covered under the School District's liability policy?

A – While performing school obligations in our District, volunteers covered under the school district's liability insurance policy are the volunteers in the Independent Volunteer/Coach/Sponsor category (those who have updated clearances on file).



BIG SPRING SCHOOL DISTRICT

Policy 916 - Volunteers Administrative Procedures

1. Interest in Volunteering
 - a. Any individual interested in becoming a volunteer in one of our district educational, athletic and/or extracurricular programs should contact the building principal, athletic director or program supervisor.
 - b. The building principal, athletic director and/or program supervisor will give the potential volunteer the policy, volunteer handbook, and associated paperwork.
 - c. The potential volunteer should review the information thoroughly, and if interested in pursuing volunteer status, he/she should complete the TB testing and required clearances and return all documents to the building principal, athletic director or program supervisor.
2. Types/categories of volunteers
 - a. Table A – Volunteer Level of Supervision/Clearance Requirements lists the types of volunteers and the clearances needed.
 - b. Volunteer clearances are free of charge at the point of request.
 - c. All volunteers must have a tuberculosis examination and the cost of the exam will be the responsibility of the volunteer.
 - d. Volunteers needing clearances will only have to submit them prior to volunteering. The district will utilize an affidavit to verify clearances is after year one. Clearances must be renewed every five years in order to remain eligible as a volunteer.
3. Principals, Athletic Director, Program Supervisor responsibilities
 - a. Collect all the forms submitted by volunteers;
 - b. Forward copies of the documents via email to Stacy Lehman, Human Resources Coordinator;
 - c. Mrs. Lehman will contact the volunteer to let them know of their status for volunteering;
 - d. When approved, Mrs. Lehman will update the shared spreadsheet of active volunteers.
4. Responsibilities of volunteers
 - a. All approved volunteers will receive a VISITOR sticker upon entering a BSSD location.
 - b. All approved volunteers COACHES will receive a PHOTO ID Badge and should wear this badge at all sporting events and practices
 - c. Volunteers will be required to wear the sticker or identification badge at all times when providing services to the district.
5. Clearances -
 - a. *Act 34 – Criminal Background/Record Check – <https://epatch.state.pa.us;>
 - b. *Act 151 – Child Abuse - <https://www.compass.state.pa.us/cwis/public/home>
 - c. FBI Federal Criminal History Record (unless exempt).
 - * the Act 34 and Act 151 have FREE Volunteer Clearance Versions

Important Note: If a prospective volunteer has clearances that they have acquired for other purposes and they are **less than an year old** - we will accept the clearances. Volunteer clearances are portable provided they are current and can be validated within their respective systems.

ACT 34 - PA CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CLEARANCE

1. New users log onto <https://epatch.state.pa.us/Home.jsp> and select "New Record Check" button for Volunteers Only.
2. Provide required information for clearance processing.
3. For all "No Record" statuses, the certificate must be printed out at your computer. If a request is "Under Review" it will be updated to the status of "No Record" or "Record" within two weeks. A "Request Under Review" response does not necessarily mean that the individual has a record. All "Record" status requests will be mailed to the address provided by the requester.
4. Volunteers may only complete this FREE volunteer process once every 57 months. Additional requests are charged for the current cost of the clearance.

Requester should present a clear copy of the Criminal Record History certificate document (not the receipt or invoice version) to the school district when it is received. Originals should be retained for other opportunities such as church, employment, etc.

ACT 151 – PA CHILD ABUSE HISTORY CLEARANCE

1. New users log onto <https://www.compass.state.pa.us/cwis/public/home>.
2. The initial step is to "Create Individual Account". Volunteers will create a username and password for the website.
3. Provide required information for clearance processing.

Requester should present a clear copy of the PA Child Abuse History document to the school district when it is received. Originals should be retained for other opportunities such as church, employment, etc.

FEDERAL CRIMINAL HISTORY RECORD INFORMATION – (CHRI) – FBI REPORT

NOTE: Some volunteers must also complete the FBI fingerprint-based Federal Criminal History Report unless an exemption applies. The law includes two limited exceptions which, if applicable, will exempt a volunteer from the FBI clearance: (1) the volunteer has continuously resided in Pennsylvania for the previous 10 years, or (2) if not a resident of Pennsylvania during the entirety of the 10 year period, the volunteer has received an FBI clearance at any time since establishing residency in Pennsylvania and provides a copy of the FBI clearance. To receive the exemption, the volunteer must complete and submit the Volunteer Verification form (attached).

1. Registration - The applicant must register prior to going to the fingerprint site. Walk in service without prior registration will not be provided at any fingerprinting location. Registration site: <https://uenroll.identogo.com>
2. Here is an instruction sheet containing the link for registering and scheduling the appointment for fingerprints: <https://uenroll.identogo.com/workflows/1KG6XN>

Requester should present a clear copy of the ACT114 / Federal Criminal History Record Clearance document to the school district when it is received. Originals should be retained for other opportunities such as church, employment, etc.

Returning Volunteer Process – Renewals

Volunteers must re-apply to provide services at the Big Spring School District annually. Clearances will be retained from year to year for previously approved volunteers. A renewal process is required each new school year, beginning on July 1.

As long as a volunteer's clearances are within the 5 year window of being current, the following items are all that are needed to complete this Renewal Process:

1. A completed Volunteer Handbook Signature Page
2. A completed Volunteer Renewal form

Note – Notary services are no longer required for renewals.

Forms should be submitted to the respective building or department office (Band, Athletic Office, etc)

Volunteer Verification *for exemption from FBI Federal Criminal History Clearance*

The Child Protective Services Law requires all volunteers to complete three clearances, including the FBI Federal Criminal History Clearance. However, the Law includes two exceptions which, if applicable, will exempt a prospective volunteer from the FBI clearance: (1) the prospective volunteer has been a resident of Pennsylvania during the entirety of the previous ten-year period; or (2) if not a resident of Pennsylvania during the entirety of the ten-year period, the prospective volunteer has received an FBI clearance at any time since establishing residency in Pennsylvania and provides a copy of the FBI clearance. If you do not meet either of these exceptions, this Verification form does not apply to you. If properly completed, this Verification form will excuse eligible volunteers from the FBI Federal Criminal History Clearance. If you have any questions about this Verification or your eligibility, you must contact the Superintendent before submitting the Form.

Select 1 or 2 below:

1. _____ I swear and affirm that I have been a resident of Pennsylvania during the entirety of the previous ten-year period; or
2. _____ I swear and affirm that I have received an FBI clearance since establishing residency in Pennsylvania, and I will provide a copy of the FBI clearance before volunteering.

I swear and affirm that:

1. I have never been named in the statewide database as the perpetrator of a founded report of child abuse committed within the last five (5) years.
2. I have never been arrested or convicted of the following offenses under the Pennsylvania Crimes Code or an equivalent crime under the laws or former laws of the United States or one of its territories or possessions, another state, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico or a foreign nation, or under a former law of this Commonwealth:

Chapter 25 (relating to criminal homicide).
Section 2702 (relating to aggravated assault).
Section 2709.1 (relating to stalking).
Section 2901 (relating to kidnapping).
Section 2902 (relating to unlawful restraint).
Section 3121 (relating to rape).
Section 3122.1 (relating to statutory sexual assault).
Section 3123 (relating to involuntary deviate sexual intercourse).
Section 3124.1 (relating to sexual assault).
Section 3125 (relating to aggravated indecent assault).

Section 3126 (relating to indecent assault).
Section 3127 (relating to indecent exposure).
Section 4302 (relating to incest).
Section 4303 (relating to concealing death of child).
Section 4304 (relating to endangering welfare of children).

Section 4305 (relating to dealing in infant children).
A felony offense under section 5902(b) (relating to prostitution and related offenses).
Section 5903(c) or (d) (relating to obscene and other sexual materials and performances).
Section 6301 (relating to corruption of minors).
Section 6312 (relating to sexual abuse of children).

The attempt, solicitation or conspiracy to commit any of the offenses set forth above.

A felony offense under the Controlled Substance, Drug, Device and Cosmetic Act, committed within the five-year period immediately preceding verification.

I make this statement and submit this Verification under penalty of perjury as more fully set forth in 18 Pa. C.S. § 4904.

Prospective Volunteer Signature

Prospective Volunteer Printed Name

Name of School Building

Date

Volunteer Handbook Signature Page

I have received, read, and understood the volunteer handbook and will abide by the policies and guidelines outlined in this document and Board Policy 916. By signing and returning this slip, I am in agreement of the District's guidelines and will be diligent in following them. Furthermore, I understand that all volunteers must have a TB test and some are required to obtain state, federal, and child abuse clearances which must be on file with the Big spring School District.

Building/Department

Teacher/Coach

Print Name

Signature

Date

Email address

Phone Number

----- *For office use only* -----

Date received

Signature of individual receiving form(s)

_____ Proof of TB testing

_____ Act 34 Criminal Background Check (for certain categories of volunteers)

_____ Act 151 Child Abuse (for certain categories of volunteers)

_____ Federal Criminal History Record Information (unless exempt)

Approved: _____