

Book	Policy Manual
Section	900 Community
Title	School Volunteers
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Adopted	June 16, 2014

Purpose

The Board recognizes that community volunteers can make valuable contributions to the educational program. The purpose of volunteers in the schools is to augment the educational and support resources available to students through the use of the diverse talents and skills of community members. The use of community volunteers is endorsed and encouraged by the Board, subject to legal requirements and administrative procedures. The Board also recognizes its responsibility to ensure the safety and welfare of school students and personnel in the Solanco School District.[\[1\]](#)[\[2\]](#)
[\[3\]](#)

Volunteer - a person eighteen (18) years of age or older that offers to perform a service to the school district without compensation. Volunteers may fall into one (1) of two (2) categories based upon the interactions with students: 1) limited contact volunteers; or 2) substantial contact volunteers. School district employees and/or students who volunteer their services to the school district are not subject to the requirement to obtain criminal background clearance checks, but are otherwise subject to remaining requirements of this policy unless otherwise indicated.

Student Contact Categories

1. **Limited Contact Volunteer** - A volunteer who is in direct contact or close proximity of a school district employee while performing his/her volunteer service and there is no time when the volunteer is alone with a student or in a secluded, isolated or remote area with a student

without a school district employee being present.

2. **Substantial Contact Volunteer** - A volunteer who is reasonably likely to have direct contact with a student while performing his/her volunteer service without direct supervision by a school district employee. Direct contact time may include, but is not limited to, coaching an athletic team, advising an extracurricular activity, chaperoning an overnight field trip or competition, and/or providing supplemental assistance to a student without direct supervision by a school district employee.

Authority

The Board authorizes the administration to select and use parents/guardians of enrolled students, community members, and others as volunteers to assist and supplement regular district staff in compliance with this policy.

Under no circumstances shall a volunteer be considered an employee of the school district. A volunteer shall receive no wages or other valuable consideration for the performance of volunteer services. Volunteer service is not a right, but rather a privilege that is extended by the School Board and/or the administration. The school district, in its sole discretion, may discontinue or eliminate the services of any volunteer at any time and for any reason or no reason.

This policy shall be liberally construed to protect school district students and staff from reasonably foreseeable harms that may result from a person being allowed to perform volunteer services. Consistent with this policy, the School Board authorizes the administration to investigate any credible allegations of impropriety against a volunteer, and authorizes the administration to involve the solicitor in any such investigation as deemed necessary and appropriate.

It shall be the policy of the Board that a volunteer, whether directly or indirectly involved in education or in an extracurricular activity, will not have contact with students during school or school-related activities if: 1) s/he has any record that would otherwise prohibit school employment under Sections 111 and 527 of the Public School Code, 24 P.S. §§ 1-111, 5-527 or Section 6355 of the Child Protective Services Law, 23 Pa. C.S.A. § 6355; (2) s/he is prohibited by a court order from having contact with a school district employee, student or volunteer; (3) s/he is prohibited from being present on school district property as a result of a court order or written directive from the School Board or Superintendent of Schools; (4) the school district previously revoked his/her volunteer privileges; and (5) the school district determines the person's volunteer service would have a detrimental impact on its educational or extracurricular programs or adversely impacts its ability to recruit or retain other volunteers. [\[1\]](#)[\[4\]](#)[\[3\]](#)

Guidelines

All substantial contact volunteers shall be required to submit FBI and Pennsylvania State Police criminal background clearance statements as contemplated by Section 111 of the Public School Code, and a child abuse clearance statement as contemplated by Section 6555 of the Child Protective Services Law before performing any such volunteer services for the school district. The cost for obtaining these background clearances shall be incurred by the school district. The Superintendent of Schools is authorized to waive this requirement for a substantial contact volunteer as permitted by this policy; however, the Superintendent shall notify the School Board in writing of any such waiver no later than seven (7) calendar days after it is granted. The School Board, in its sole discretion, may overrule the Superintendent's granting of the waiver and require compliance with the policy. [\[1\]](#)[\[2\]](#)[\[3\]](#)

Volunteers requiring clearances shall supply satisfactory Act 34 and Act 151 clearance reports and an FBI Federal Criminal History Record and be cleared by the school Superintendent or designee before any contact with school students can be allowed. Said reports will be maintained in accordance with the Board's policy on personnel records.

Volunteers are expected to adhere to all rules, regulations, and policies of the district, most importantly those concerning confidentiality of student information and students' rights.

Volunteers shall not be asked to assume the professional responsibilities of the school staff, but may, under the direction of a staff member who has been granted administrative permission, provide assistance in an identified activity that is supportive, reinforcing or enriching in nature.

Volunteers are not to have access to or handle any materials of a personal or confidential nature, unless the volunteer is a school district employee whose job allows such and who has been assigned to do so by the building principal or designee or, as is appropriate, the teacher to whom s/he has been temporarily assigned.

To assure the proper use of volunteers in the school district, the following minimal requirements shall apply:

1. Volunteers, as categorized, must acquire and/or submit the following:

Limited-Contact Volunteer		Substantial-Contact Volunteer	
Board Approval	Clearances	Board Approval	Clearances
NO	NO	**NO	YES

** Volunteers performing duties similar to those positions on the co-curricular salary schedule will require Board approval.

2. All required clearances are to be on file in the school district office and at the school building office in which s/he is volunteering.

Delegation of Responsibility

The School Board authorizes the Superintendent of Schools to make determinations when a limited contact volunteer should be required to obtain criminal background clearance statements and child abuse clearance statements as contemplated by this policy. In making those determinations, the Superintendent shall consider the following factors: (1) the frequency in which the limited contact volunteer is given access to school facilities, school employees or school students; (2) the likelihood that the limited contact volunteer may have inadvertent unsupervised contact with students as a result of frequent volunteer services; or (3) credible reports that the limited contact volunteer may have previously unknown or undisclosed criminal convictions that may make the person unsuitable for volunteer services within the school setting. The Superintendent shall notify the School Board in writing of all instances where a limited contact volunteer is required to obtain such clearance statements.

The Superintendent of Schools is authorized to waive the criminal background and child abuse clearance statement requirements for a substantial contact volunteer, under the following circumstances: (1) the person is the parent, stepparent or legal guardian of a student enrolled in the

school district; (2) the person is seeking to volunteer for a district-sponsored event or activity in which their own child is involved; (3) the event or activity is a single occurrence, not a series of events/activities; (4) the person swears or affirms that s/he is not disqualified from volunteering for any of the reasons set forth under Section 3 of this policy; and (5) the Superintendent has no knowledge of information pertaining to the person which would disqualify the person from serving as a volunteer under this policy.

The Superintendent or his/her designee(s) shall be responsible to develop suitable administrative guidelines to assure adequate and appropriate supervisory control over the volunteers used in the school district.

The principal or his/her designee(s) shall assume general authority and responsibility over all volunteers operating within the principal's area of responsibility.

No volunteer may assist in a school without having been screened by the principal or designee.