

# West Fargo Public Schools Volunteer Handbook

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## **WELCOME**

We truly appreciate the offering of your time and talents as a volunteer in the West Fargo School District! The efforts of dedicated volunteers, like yourself, enhance the programs, services, and opportunities that we can offer our learners.

This volunteer handbook is designed to help in your efforts to understand as much as you can about our schools and our district. We trust that each time you volunteer in our schools, the learners will have a meaningful and productive educational experience.

Thank you for your commitment to the education of the learners of West Fargo Public Schools. If we can be of any help, please call the Human Resources Department at (701) 356-2001.

Brittnee Nikle



Director of Human Resources

## **VOLUNTEER SCREENING**

All volunteers in the West Fargo Public Schools must complete the online volunteer screening authorization prior to their first volunteer experience. The link to this is available on the district's homepage at: [www.west-fargo.k12.nd.us](http://www.west-fargo.k12.nd.us) then individuals interested in volunteering should select the Families tab, then Volunteer Procedures.

Generally, as a volunteer, you will only need to complete the screening and partial background check prior to the beginning of your service. If your volunteer roles vary considerably in nature, you may be asked to complete additional background check procedures. This may be the case when the volunteer role takes on additional responsibility for supervision of/interaction with learners.

Once you complete the online process, the Human Resources department will be notified. Some volunteer positions may require additional background check requirements, including a fingerprinting process. Human Resources personnel will contact you if this additional step is required for your volunteer role and will give you further instruction. The Human Resources department will conduct the appropriate background check, review the results, and will hold all results confidential.

## **VOLUNTEER RESPONSIBILITIES**

1. Apply online 1 to 2 weeks prior to the beginning of your volunteer assignment.
2. Check in at the school office at least 15 minutes in advance of the designated starting time for your volunteer assignment.
3. School office personnel will give you a name badge or other ID that you will wear while doing your volunteer work. Depending upon the level of background check assigned to your activity, you may also receive an authorization notification from the online system. You should bring that notification with you to the school office as well.
4. School office personnel will direct you to the appropriate room and supervisor.
5. Volunteers are expected to hold in the strictest confidence any information about the school (learners, parents, educators, principals) which the volunteer might be privy to while on assignment.

## **DISTRICT POLICY-SCHOOL VOLUNTEER PROGRAM**

The district shall operate a volunteer program. The program shall be designed and implemented in a safety-conscious manner but shall in no way overly consume district resources, monetary or otherwise.

### *Job Descriptions*

The Superintendent or designee is charged with developing job descriptions for each volunteer position. Descriptions shall, at a minimum, list all screening prerequisites, the scope of job duties associated with each position, and the title of the district employee charged with supervising the volunteer. Job descriptions for most common volunteer positions are available on the district's website.

### *Volunteer Screening*

Methods used to screen volunteers shall in no way discriminate against any minority group. Anyone wishing to volunteer in district schools shall complete the online volunteer screening process. Completion of this screening is a prerequisite for obtaining permission to volunteer in district schools.

Volunteers shall be subject to the following screening requirements:

1) Volunteers applying for low-risk positions shall submit current residency information and their social security number through the online application system. The Human Resources department shall notify the principal of the low-risk volunteer application, and the principal shall be required to screen that volunteer through the school's LobbyGuard entry system on the day(s) that volunteer activities are to be performed.

2) Volunteers applying for moderate-risk positions shall be subject to the school's LobbyGuard screening as described above. In addition, the volunteer shall be subject to a non-fingerprint-based state background check. The applicant shall also submit current residency information and their social security number through the online application system. The Human Resources department shall order a state criminal courts background check along with a background check of sexual offender registries in all states and counties where the volunteer resided.

3) Volunteers applying for high-risk positions shall be subject to the same background checks as school employees who have unsupervised contact with learners. This shall include all requirements in #1 and #2 above, plus a fingerprint-based federal criminal history background check.

A volunteer is exempt from these screening requirements if they have undergone previous screening through the district in the same school year, met district adjudication standards, was offered a position with the district, and is applying for a position with the same or lower risk level than the position in which they previously served.

The Superintendent or designee shall determine the risk associated with each volunteer position based upon, but not limited to, the following criteria:

- 1) The vulnerability of the individual(s) served by the volunteer;
- 2) The amount of district supervision over the volunteer;
- 3) The degree of potential for the volunteer to have regular unsupervised contact with a learner or learners;
- 4) The degree of potential for a volunteer to build a sustainable and/or trusting relationship with a learner or learners.

#### *Adjudication*

The superintendent or their designee shall adjudicate volunteer applicants' criminal history records, shall make final determinations about suitability for service, and is authorized to offer qualified applicants positions with the district.

The district is not obligated to utilize the services of any volunteer who, in the adjudicator's judgment, exhibits qualities inconsistent with the district's mission, potentially disruptive to district operations, or potentially threatening to district safety.

Volunteer applicants shall be disqualified for service for at least the following reasons:

- 1) The applicant has committed a felony, sexual offense (as defined by NDCC 15.1-13-26), crime against a child (as defined by NDCC 15.1-13-26), or any other offense involving a child victim.
- 2) The applicant falsified, or omitted information submitted during the screening process, including, but not limited to, information concerning criminal convictions or pending criminal charges.

### *Volunteer Rights*

Records obtained by the district for background and other record checks will be used solely for purposes that they were requested and will only be disseminated and retained in accordance with the personnel records policy. The adjudicator shall advise applicants that the procedure for obtaining, correcting, or updating federal records is contained in 28 CFR 16.34 and shall give the applicant a reasonable time to correct and/or complete their criminal history record or decline to do so before making a determination on future qualification for service.

### *Orientation & Training*

The Board shall develop a list of district policies to which volunteers must abide. The building principal and department director shall make volunteers aware of these policies, procedures, and rules before they begin service through a volunteer orientation, volunteer handbook, or other means and shall inform volunteers of the requirement to abide by these policies, procedures, and rules regardless of whether or not volunteers are specifically named in them. Volunteers shall also receive any required training as delineated in the job description prior to performing services.

### *Disciplinary Sanctions & Authority*

Except when an emergency situation would warrant otherwise, volunteers shall perform only those duties that they are assigned and abide by applicable policies, procedures, and rules. Failure to comply with these requirements may result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal from service. The building principal, department director, or Superintendent is responsible for disciplining and dismissing volunteers.

## **GENERAL DISTRICT POLICIES**

[Drug & Alcohol Free Workplace](#)

[Nondiscrimination & Anti-Harassment Policy](#)

[Staff-Student Relations/ Ethical Boundaries](#)

[Tobacco Free School Policy](#)

[Visitors Policy](#)

[WFPS Harassment/Discrimination Complaint Form](#)

## **WFPS RISK MANAGEMENT PROGRAM**

The West Fargo School District is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for all its educators, learners, and volunteers. To facilitate this objective, the West Fargo Public School District has established a safety and risk management program which places a high priority on the prevention of accidents and injuries.

The administration expects individuals, regardless of their role within the district, to cooperate in every respect with the district's safety program. Hazardous conditions and other safety concerns must be reported immediately.