

# West Fargo Public Schools Volunteer Handbook

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## **WELCOME**

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

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

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

Robin Hill

Director of Human Resources

## **VOLUNTEER APPLICATION**

All volunteers in the West Fargo Public Schools must complete a “Volunteer Application and Background Check Authorization” prior to their first volunteer experience. The link to our Volunteer Application, along with various forms and information, are available on the district’s web page. West Fargo’s homepage is at [www.west-fargo.k12.nd.us](http://www.west-fargo.k12.nd.us) . Go to Families/Volunteer Procedures.

Generally, as a volunteer, you will only need to complete this online application form and undergo a background check one time per school year, 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 students.

You will complete the Volunteer Application and Background Check Authorization online at the District’s Website, under Families/Volunteer Procedures. Your application will then be processed by the Human Resources Office. Some volunteer positions may require a background check that includes a fingerprinting process. Human Resources personnel will contact you if this additional step is required for your background check, and will give you further instruction if needed. The Human Resources Department will conduct the appropriate background check, review the results and will hold all results in a confidential file at the district office.

## **VOLUNTEER RESPONSIBILITIES**

1. Apply online at least 48 hours 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 (pupils, parents, teacher, principal) 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 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. A volunteer's agreement to follow the job description shall be required at the time the District offers a position to the individual.

### *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 a volunteer application. Completion of this application is a prerequisite for obtaining permission to volunteer in district schools. The application shall be developed by the Superintendent and shall, at a minimum, supply requested references, and attest that they have never been convicted of a crime.

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 order a background check of sexual offender registries in all states where the volunteer resided.
- 2) Final applicants applying for low to moderate risk positions 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 background check along with a background check of sexual offender registries in all states and counties where the volunteer resided.
- 3) Final applicants applying for high-risk positions shall be subject to the same background checks as school employees who have unsupervised contact with students. This shall include all requirements in #2 above, plus a fingerprint-based federal criminal history background check.

A final applicant is exempt from these screening requirements if s/he has undergone previous screening through the District in the last one 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 s/he previously served.

The Superintendent 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 student or students;
- 4) The degree of potential for a volunteer to build a sustainable and/or trusting relationship with a student or student(s).

### *Adjudication*

The Superintendent or his/her 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 application process, including, but not limited to, information concerning criminal convictions or pending criminal charges.

#### *Final Applicant 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 his/her criminal history record or decline to do so before making a determination on qualification for service.

#### *Orientation & Training*

The Board shall develop a list of district policies to which volunteers must abide. The building principal 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 agree in writing to this requirement prior to performing services for the District.

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 or Superintendent is responsible for disciplining and dismissing volunteers.

### **GENERAL DISTRICT POLICIES**

[Drug & Alcohol Free Workplace](#)

[Nondiscrimination & Anti-Harassment Policy](#)

[WFPS Harassment/Discrimination Complaint Form](#)

[Tobacco Free School Policy](#)

[Visitors Policy](#)

## **WFPS RISK MANAGEMENT PROGRAM**

The West Fargo School District is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for all of its employees, students 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, quality health care for injured employees, and a return to work program. This program also aims to improve cost containment through safety training and claims management principles and practices.

The administration expects employees, regardless of their position within the district, to cooperate in every respect with the district's safety program. Personal protection equipment, where required, must be worn by all employees with no exception. Hazardous conditions and other safety concerns must be reported immediately to supervisors. All injuries and accidents must be reported immediately to supervisors and to the Human Resources Office. When necessary, obtain medical treatment without delay. The District has designated specific medical providers to treat work related injury.