

COVENTRY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
COVENTRY, RI
SCHOOL VOLUNTEERS

PURPOSE:

This policy shall serve to establish School Committee policy, guidelines, procedures and expectations to govern the involvement of adult volunteers working within the educational environment of Coventry Public Schools.

PHILOSOPHY:

The Coventry School Committee recognizes the inherent value and benefit of the presence of qualified and authorized volunteers working in the school environment to assist teachers in strengthening the learning experiences of students in the various activities of their daily school participation. The Committee further acknowledges the rich and varying resources, special knowledge and particular talents that parents, community members and students have to contribute to the educational program and school community, and in so doing, encourages school personnel to capitalize on the availability of these resources.

In support of this belief, the School Committee sets forth the following policy statement.

POLICY STATEMENT:

Principals in Coventry Public Schools will oversee and administer the use of volunteers within their building for educational enhancement and enrichment.

The Parent Teacher Association in each school provides volunteers in the areas of social programming, fund development, fund support, and overall school community support.

A volunteer shall be defined as a person who works on an occasional or regular basis at a school site to support the efforts of professional personnel. Volunteers serve in that capacity without compensation or employee benefit of any type.

As a school system, the security and safety of all children is a primary concern. It is for this reason that Coventry Public Schools requires all volunteers (parent, relative, community member) wishing to volunteer in any capacity within the schools to first receive a State BCI check. Any exceptions to completing a BCI form will be authorized only by the Principal or the superintendent of schools.

Volunteers shall adhere to rules and district protocol for confidentiality as well as all other rules and regulations observed by the District. Volunteers shall not discuss students/school related issues in the outside community, and shall not access confidential information, files or records. Volunteers who violate confidentiality will be barred from further volunteer work.

Volunteers shall agree to indemnify and hold harmless Coventry Public Schools, its officers, agents and employees from any and all claims, damages and expenses arising out of injuries to persons or damage to property which resulted from any intentional acts, omissions or negligent acts of the volunteer to the extent that the school District's policy of insurance does not cover the acts or omissions of the volunteer.

Volunteers shall be required to execute a volunteer confidentiality, and liability and indemnification form. Prior to being eligible to serve as a volunteer, the individual shall complete an orientation provided by the Principal or his/her designee and demonstrate an understanding and agreement to comply with such rules, regulations and protocols to the Principal's satisfaction.

Volunteers will be governed by the following:

1. Use of volunteers within the district is not to conflict with or replace any regularly authorized personnel allotment.
2. Volunteers who work with students shall not be used to perform educational functions that are within the bounds of the trained professional educators except if the functions are under the immediate supervision and direction of a certified employee.
3. Volunteers are expected to comply with all rules and regulations set forth by the District.
4. The spirit of donating service to the District will, in all cases, be accepted gratefully, however, it must be understood that this service must be under the direct control of the Principal and the Superintendent of Schools.
5. Volunteers are assigned by the Principal or his/her designee. Volunteers are not guaranteed in a specific classroom or for a particular activity. Placement will be based on school need, numbers of available volunteers, individual skill set, and/or staff selection.
6. Training may be required prior to volunteer placement.
7. PTA volunteers must have approval of the Principal or his/her designee for all school activities, abide by all policies, rules and procedures, and can be subject to the same background checks stated herein.
8. Volunteers must follow the registration or sign-in policy procedure of buildings where they are a volunteer.
9. Volunteering in the schools is a privilege, not a right. Teachers plan activities around the anticipated presence of a volunteer. Therefore, it is imperative that volunteers take their placement seriously, maintain dependable attendance, and communicate with teachers.

EXCLUSIONS:

This policy shall not apply to parents observing classrooms or visiting schools, guest speakers, performers, student mentors who are enrolled in Coventry Public Schools, newspaper reporters, vendors for school related items such as rings, yearbooks, etc. provided they are accompanied by school personnel.

VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK:

Volunteers will be given a volunteer handbook which outlines the duties and responsibilities of a volunteer and also provides a list of opportunities to volunteer in Coventry Public Schools.

First Reading: June 16, 2011

Second Reading: June 28, 2011

Issued: