



ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATION FOR SCHOOL VOLUNTEERS

The Lafayette Parish School System encourages family members, retired employees, and other community members to volunteer in schools and other district sites to share their knowledge and assist in reaching the strategic goals set for students and schools. Volunteers are essential to fulfilling the district's mission and vision, assisting staff, and contributing to school safety and security.

This regulation is promulgated pursuant to Board Policy IFCD, *School Volunteers*, to establish the framework and procedures for a safe and successful volunteer program and experiences for students, staff and volunteers. The safety of our students and staff is our highest priority. The district appreciates the involvement of its volunteers and their understanding and support of enhancing school safety protocols in our schools and district.

Who Is A Volunteer

A “volunteer” is an individual who provides a service without compensation for the benefit of a district school, staff, or students, subject to the direction and control of the school's principal or designees. Examples of services volunteers may provide include, but are not limited to: tutoring, leading small group activities, helping teachers/staff with organizational tasks, chaperoning or supervising students on field trips or extracurricular activities, working special events, and coaching student athletes.

Parents or guardians who are visiting their child's classroom only for a class party or academic observation, meeting with a teacher or administrator, attending an activity involving their student or having a meal with their student, do not have to apply/register as a volunteer, but must sign in as a visitor at the school, present a valid ID, and abide by other school and School Board rules regarding school visitors, including LPSB Policy KG, *Visitors to the Schools*. Parents or guardians assisting students other than their own or helping with the execution of a school-wide activity, such as field day or field trips, must apply/register as a volunteer.

In order to help ensure appropriate oversight of school activities and the welfare and safety of staff and students, every individual who wishes to serve as a volunteer, including parents and guardians, must apply, qualify, and register as a volunteer within the district.

Levels of Volunteer Services

There are two basic levels of interaction that occur between volunteers and students. Those different levels of interaction call for a different screening process. One level is not “better” than another. Volunteers are simply placed in a “level” based on the activities they indicate on the application form in which they would like to participate. That level then determines the next step in the process to approve the volunteer for work in the district.

Level 1

Level 1 volunteers are non-district personnel who will have only supervised or no interaction with students. Level 1 may include activities:

- that always take place with supervision by school staff or, otherwise, with no student interaction;
- that take place in a classroom or other group setting;
- in which staff and other adults can enter and observe at any time;
- that consist of no solitary time with a student; and/or
- that are within the continuous, unbroken view of school staff although the ability of the staff to monitor may be limited by other responsibilities.

Some examples of Level 1 volunteer services include, but are not limited to, volunteers assisting with facilities projects, library/office/clerical volunteers, committee volunteers, reading aides, non-parent adults dining with students, individuals working with small groups or a whole class under the teacher's constant supervision, lunch helpers, room parents, or other volunteers who work under the direct supervision of district staff.

Individuals who wish to serve as Level 1 volunteers: (1) must be at least 18 years of age, (2) must complete and sign a Volunteer Application Form and the Lafayette Parish School Board Volunteer Agreement, (3) must provide a valid ID, and (4) will be screened through state and national sex offender registry databases. Registered sex offenders will not be allowed to volunteer at any level.

Individuals under the age of 18 may be allowed to serve as a Level 1 volunteer only on a case-by-case basis by the sponsor(s) or supervisor(s) of the activity with written approval from the Superintendent. Under no circumstance shall any person under the age of 18 be left with students unsupervised. Persons under the age of 18 will only be allowed to volunteer or assist in a classroom or at activities while under the direct supervision of a certified district employee, and they must be in direct line-of-sight supervision at all times.

Level 2

Level 2 volunteers are non-district personnel whose interactions with students may not be directly supervised by district staff at all times. This may include activities:

- that involve direct student contact with limited staff supervision;
- that take place in a classroom or other group setting; and/or
- that may be outside of the school staff's view for brief periods.

Some examples of Level 2 volunteer services include, but are not limited to, chaperones on field trips or overnight school-sponsored trips, volunteer athletic coaches or assistants, or any other volunteers who may have interaction with students without direct supervision of school staff.

Individuals who wish to serve as Level 2 volunteers must: (1) be at least 21 years of age, (2) complete and sign a Volunteer Application Form and the Lafayette Parish School Board Volunteer Agreement, (3) provide a valid ID, and (4) consent to be fingerprinted and undergo a criminal background check. Individuals (including parents) who are excluded from Level 2 volunteer activities due to a disqualifying offense on the background check may be disallowed from participation in Level 1 volunteer activities.

Application, Registration, and Requirements for Volunteers

The volunteer registration process shall be conducted in accordance with the following procedures:

1. Adults over the age of 18 who wish to serve as volunteers must first complete and sign a Volunteer Application and the Lafayette Parish School Board Volunteer Agreement, both of which may be found on the district's website. Forms are also available at each school.
2. Volunteers may submit these two (2) forms to a school Principal or to the district's Human Resources Department. All applications will be forwarded to and reviewed by the designated Volunteer Coordinator in Human Resources. The volunteer applicant will be contacted by the Volunteer Coordinator if additional information and/or a criminal background check is required.
3. Volunteers will be screened according to the level of volunteer services for which they are applying. Volunteers should check the boxes on the Application Form for the activities in which he/she plans to volunteer. The selected activity(ies) will determine the level and the required screening.
 - a. Level 1: State and National Sex Offender Registries – individuals who wish to serve as level 1 volunteers will be checked against the state and national sex offender registry databases.
 - i. Louisiana Sex Offender Registry: <http://www.lsp.org/socpr/default.html>
 - ii. National Sex Offender Registry: <https://www.nsopw.gov/>
 - b. Level 2: Criminal Background Checks – individuals who wish to serve as level 2 volunteers will be fingerprinted and required to undergo a criminal background check conducted through the Louisiana Bureau of Criminal Identification and Information (LBCII) and FBI.
4. Information collected during the volunteer application and background check process will be maintained by the district and, to the extent permitted by law, considered confidential.
5. LPSS reserves the right to deny an application or decline the services of a volunteer at any time for any reason. Possible reasons for denial or dismissal of volunteers include, but are not limited to:
 - Most felony convictions
 - Two or more DUI convictions in the last five (5) years
 - Any domestic violence convictions
 - Any child abuse or reckless endangerment convictions, including neglect
 - Any outstanding criminal warrants
 - Any current felony or abuse-related charges where the court date is outstanding
 - Any felony convictions involving the illegal sale, distribution, or possession with intent to distribute a controlled substance in the last seven (7) years
 - Any convictions involving unlawful behavior (sexual or otherwise) involving a minor child
 - An active restraining or protective order that limits or prohibits access to any LPSS site, staff member, or student
 - Involvement in a custody dispute that limits or prohibits access to an LPSS site or student
 - Any other information that suggests an applicant's volunteer service may be incompatible with the protection of student health, welfare, or safety

For purposes of this policy, "conviction" means a conviction by a jury or a court and includes pleas of no contest or the imposition of a deferred or suspended sentence.

6. The district's designated Volunteer Coordinator will notify both the volunteer applicant and the school Principal/school volunteer manager, via email, if the volunteer's application has been approved and the level for which the volunteer has been approved. A copy of the Volunteer Application and the Volunteer Agreement will be attached to such email for both the volunteer's and the school's records.
7. Volunteers approved for Level 1 only are not approved for Level 2 and must re-apply if they wish to volunteer for Level 2 volunteer services.
8. Individuals who wish to volunteer as an athletic coach or assistant shall be subject to additional requirements as may be set forth by state law, Board and/or school policies or guidelines, and/or Louisiana High School Athletic Association (LHSAA) or other regulations, including but not limited to completing annual concussion recognition education training and the NFHS "Fundamentals of Coaching" course.
9. Security clearances for volunteers must be renewed every three (3) years, and volunteers will be required to submit a new volunteer application/renewal to be approved/continue as a volunteer in the district. However, registered volunteers are subject to screening and/or background checks at any time at the discretion of the district.
10. All volunteers are required to show valid identification when they arrive to volunteer at a school or other site. The form of identification can include, but is not limited to, a valid state-issued driver's license, a state issued ID card, a valid military-issued ID card, or a valid passport. Once a volunteer signs in, he or she will be issued a badge that includes his or her name and status as a volunteer, including level (1 or 2). This badge must be worn at all times while engaging in any LPSS volunteer activities. All volunteers are required to sign out when they finish volunteering and leave a school or other site. The badge can be removed after signing out as a volunteer and leaving the site.
11. School volunteers shall not have access to confidential personnel or student information or records.
12. To the extent necessary to perform services assigned by the Principal or his/her designee, volunteers may be authorized to use district computers and receive Internet access. A volunteer's use of district computers and Internet shall be subject to the terms and conditions of LPSS policies and guidelines, including Policy EFA, *Employee Computer and Internet Use*, and Policy GAMIA, *Electronic Communications Between Employees and Students*.
13. Volunteers are not allowed to bring another person with them when performing volunteer services (for example, volunteers chaperoning field trips may not bring their other children on the trip).
14. Volunteers shall comply with all applicable Board policies, rules, and regulations, all applicable school rules and procedures, and with all directives from authorized district officials.
15. Volunteer status may be granted, denied or revoked at any time at the district's discretion.
16. Examples of possible reasons a volunteer may be dismissed include but are not limited to:
 - Not adhering to the rules and procedures of LPSS
 - Violating the LPSB Volunteer Agreement
 - Being under the influence of drugs or alcohol

- Acting in a manner that is incompatible with the protection of student health, welfare, safety or morals
- Abuse or mistreatment of students, staff or other volunteers

Procedures and Guidelines for Schools

Each school Principal or his/her designee is responsible for managing volunteers and volunteer services at his/her school. The designated volunteer manager for each school shall be reported to the district's Volunteer Coordinator and will be the district's contact for that school's volunteer-related matters.

When a volunteer application is received at the school, the school's volunteer manager shall forward it to the district's Volunteer Coordinator along with the applicant's signed LPSB Volunteer Agreement and a copy of the applicant's valid ID. The forwarded information will be reviewed, and a determination will be made by the Human Resources Department. The Volunteer Coordinator may request additional information from the applicant and/or the school in order to complete the review. If a background check is required, the district's Volunteer Coordinator will contact the applicant.

The Volunteer Coordinator will notify both the volunteer applicant and the school volunteer manager, via email, if the volunteer's application has been approved and the level for which the volunteer has been approved. A copy of the Volunteer Application and the Volunteer Agreement will be attached to such email for both the volunteer's and the school's records.

The Principal and the school's volunteer manager are responsible for verifying that all volunteers have applied, registered, and been approved for the requisite level of volunteer services by the district's Human Resources Department before they are allowed to volunteer at the requested level in the school. Security clearances for volunteers must be renewed every three (3) years; therefore, approval/expiration dates should be verified as well.

The Principal and/or Principal's designee(s) shall identify appropriate services for volunteers serving each school and shall train volunteers as necessary to perform such services.

The use of volunteers at any school or district activity shall not conflict with or replace any regularly authorized personnel staffing allotment.

At all times, it is the responsibility of the school Principal, the designated school volunteer manager, the supervising teacher and/or other supervising employee to ensure that no Level 1 volunteer has or is given unsupervised contact with students. Failure by district employees to comply with supervision requirements may subject such employees to disciplinary action.

Denials and Appeals

If a volunteer's application is denied, he/she will receive a denial letter from the district's Human Resources Department. A copy of the volunteer's Application Form will also be returned to the school's volunteer manager (if applicable) marked "denied" for the school's records.

If a volunteer applicant receives a denial letter, he/she may request reconsideration by completing the following steps:

1. Send a written letter to the Volunteer Coordinator stating the reasons for seeking reconsideration. You should include any additional information and documentation that would clarify items that have been revealed on your background check. This letter can be mailed or hand-delivered to: Volunteer Coordinator, Human Resources Department, 113 Chaplin Drive, Lafayette, Louisiana 70508. This letter must be received by the district within 10 days of your receipt of the denial letter.
2. Once your letter is received by the Volunteer Coordinator, it will be reviewed and you may be contacted for additional information and/or to schedule a meeting with appropriate district officials to discuss the reasons for the denial.
3. If a meeting is scheduled, you must attend this meeting to answer questions and provide documentation that supports your request for reconsideration.
4. Following review and/or such meeting, you will be notified in writing of the final decision. If the denial is upheld, you will not be eligible to reapply for a volunteer position in the district for one calendar year.