



**Responsible Office:** Office of Human Resources

## **BOARD POLICY 1500**

### **VOLUNTEERS**

#### **PURPOSE**

The Board of Trustees (Board) encourages parents/guardians, family members, and other members of the community to share their time, knowledge, and abilities with the students and employees of the Washoe County School District (District) through volunteer opportunities. Volunteer assistance in schools, departments, and programs throughout the District enriches the educational program, enhances supervision of students, and contributes to school safety while strengthening the Districts' relationships with the community. Through this Board Policy, the Board recognizes the importance of and declares their appreciation for all of the District's volunteers and establishes the commitment of the District to provide a structured program of volunteering within the District.

#### **DEFINITIONS**

1. "Volunteer" refers to any person, aged 18 or older and who is not a District student, who helps or assists a school or the District, regardless of compensation or benefit, with activities, athletics, functions, programs, and tasks, including, but not limited to, in a classroom, on school grounds, at a school/District sanctioned activity, at a school/District-sponsored event, or on a school/District-sponsored trip.
  - a. The term does not include:
    - i. A student who is enrolled at an institution of higher education and is taking a course which requires the student to be present in the classroom of the school on a limited basis to observe and to be observed in the classroom; and is under direct supervision of a teacher or his/her professor at all times while in the classroom; or
    - ii. A parent/guardian who is visiting the classroom or an activity of his/her student but does not interact with other students or assist employees.
  - b. "Unsupervised contact" refers to direct contact or interaction with one or more students who are not under the direct supervision of a District

employee or other person designated by the District as the person responsible for students.

- i. A student is under direct supervision if the District employee or other designated individual:
  - 1) If indoors, is present in the same room as the student or has visual contact with the student; or
  - 2) If outdoors, is within 30 yards of the student or has visual contact with the student.
- ii. An approved volunteer may have unsupervised contact with students if he/she has the potential for only incidental unsupervised contact with students in commonly used areas on the grounds of a public school, with permission of the school administrator.

## **POLICY**

1. The provisions of this Board Policy include volunteers at schools and other District property/facilities, as well as those who serve at District- and school-sponsored programs and activities at off-site locations. District property includes any building, owned or leased by the District, used for instruction, administration, support services, maintenance, parking lots or storage; the grounds and surrounding buildings; bus stops; and all District-owned, rented or leased vehicles.
2. Volunteer services is a core strategic function within the District. The use of volunteers increases the District's ability to achieve its objectives and mission. Partnership with families and outside entities allows the District an extended reach into the community. Such collaboration provides for the effective use of District resources and consistent practice and process. A comprehensive and strategic approach to volunteer and community engagement leverages resources more effectively and enables the District to better meet its mission with comparable or fewer cash resources.
3. The District believes in the use of volunteer programs to:
  - a. Assist schools, departments, and program employees with support services;
  - b. Support academic achievement and District goals, to assist teachers in providing basic skills instruction and enrich quality of instruction, to enhance interpersonal experiences for students, and to assist school employees with support services;

- c. Increase student motivation for learning;
  - d. Support student achievement by providing supplementary instruction such as, but not limited to, tutoring/mentoring;
  - e. Strengthen school/family/community relations through positive participation; and
  - f. Build an understanding of school programs among interested citizens and business/community organization partnerships.
4. Volunteer engagement shall be focused on the needs of the District and the community. Through the volunteer program, the District seeks to identify key priorities within the District and purposefully seek out volunteers with the core skills needed to address those priorities.
5. Application, Background Check, and Approval
- a. All volunteers must be officially registered with and approved by the District prior to performance of the volunteer services. This includes, but is not limited to:
    - i. Completion of a volunteer application, any applicable vetting, and approval of the application by the school or District;
    - ii. Compliance with the District's visitor management protocols, which requires presenting government issued identification to school employees for the purpose of a background check against the active warrants list and state and national sex offender databases
  - b. Volunteers are categorized and defined by the amount of time spent with students, the level of employee supervision, and the type of volunteer opportunity. Volunteers may be subject to an annual background check conducted by the District's School Police Department and, in certain instances, fingerprinting.
  - c. Volunteering for the District is a privilege, not a right. Individuals found to be on a state or national sex offender registry, an active warrants list, or the Federal Bureau of Investigation's terrorist list, or for any other good and proper reason, may be denied the volunteer opportunity.
  - d. The District shall not discriminate in its selection of volunteers based on an individual's race, gender, religion, national origin, age, sexual orientation, veterans or military status, socio-economic status, or disability and seeks to encourage and recruit volunteers who match the diverse nature of the Washoe County community. Immigration status of potential

volunteers shall not be considered as part of the background check process.

- e. The Board delegates to the Superintendent the authority to establish and implement the method by which background checks and fingerprinting shall be gathered, completed, and retained.
6. **Mandatory Reporting.** Volunteers, by virtue of close proximity to and frequent interaction with students, are in a position to assist in identifying the potential abuse and neglect of children. As a result, and in accordance with Nevada state law, all volunteers are mandatory reporters of child abuse and neglect. This includes certain offenses involving sexual misconduct, corporal punishment, and luring of a minor.
  7. The Superintendent may establish administrative regulations necessary to implement the provisions of this Board Policy. This may include, but is not limited to:
    - a. Protocols for the recruitment of volunteers;
    - b. Procedures for the review of volunteer applications;
    - c. Background checks and fingerprinting, to include compliance with state and federal law; and
    - d. Mandatory reporting protocols for volunteers related to suspected bullying, child abuse and neglect.

## **LEGAL REQUIREMENTS & ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS**

1. This Board Policy reflects the goals of the District's Strategic Plan and aligns/complies with the governing documents of the District, to include:
  - a. Board Policy 1505, Visitors to District Property (Meaningful Access); and
  - b. Board Policy 4510, Protection of Students – Background Checks and Mandatory Reporting
2. This Board Policy complies with Nevada Revised Statutes (NRS) and Nevada Administrative Code (NAC), to include:
  - a. Chapter 388, System of Public Instruction; and
  - b. Chapter 391, Personnel
    - i. NRS 391.033, Issuance of Licenses; fingerprinting and investigation into the background applicants.

**REVISION HISTORY**

Date	Revision	Modification
1/15/2019	1.0	Adopted
10/15/2019	2.0	Revised to comply with changes in state law pursuant to SB185 (2019) that changed the definition of volunteer
8/18/2021	2.1	Revised: Updated Responsible Office to HR, format pursuant to BP 9070