

Title: Volunteer Programs in Schools

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Effective: April 17, 2000

Amended/Reviewed: June 30, 2026

This procedure must be interpreted, applied, and implemented in ways that uphold Indigenous and human rights and responsibilities, promote accessibility, and prevent and address (and do not reinforce) discrimination/discriminatory barriers.

1.0 RATIONALE

The Durham District School Board (DDSB) welcomes parents, caregivers, and community members into schools as valued partners. The lived experiences, interests, expertise, and commitment of volunteers enhance the programs, services, and educational opportunities for students while enabling volunteers to contribute to their communities, gain experiences, and support their personal growth. This procedure establishes a transparent, safe, and equitable process for the invitation, selection, and coordination of volunteer programs.

2.0 DEFINITIONS

- 2.1 Board:** Refers to the Board of Trustees for the DDSB.
- 2.2 District:** Refers to the corporate entity of the DDSB.
- 2.3 Principal:** Refers to the principal, vice-principal, or principal designate.
- 2.4 Staff:** Refers to employees of the DDSB.
- 2.5 Volunteer:** A person who serves without remuneration or for the completion of secondary school credits, including senior and adult students.
- 2.6 Police Record Check (PRC):** Also known as a “background check” is a search of police records on an individual conducted in accordance with the *Police Record Checks Reform Act, 2015*. These checks are often used as part of a screening process for paid work, employment, student placement, or volunteering. Police Record Checks mitigate risks associated with those working with the vulnerable sector, which includes students.
- 2.7 Criminal Record and Judicial Matters Check (CRJMC):** Required for employees and other individuals who will have regular contact with students but will not be in a position of trust or authority.
- 2.8 Vulnerable Sector Check (VSC):** A Vulnerable Sector Check is a type of police check restricted to applicants seeking employment and/or volunteering in

a position of trust or authority in relation to students.

- 2.9 Offence Declaration:** A written declaration signed by an individual listing all Criminal Code (Canada) convictions not previously disclosed to the Board and for which a pardon has not been granted.

3.0 RESPONSIBILITY

The Superintendent of Family and Community Engagement is responsible for the implementation and monitoring of this Procedure.

School principals (or Managers at a Board site) are responsible for determining volunteer needs and overseeing the selection, coordination, supervision, and assignment of volunteers at the school or during school-related activities and may delegate these responsibilities to a vice-principal or supervisory staff, as appropriate.

Operational responsibility for the collection, storage, and compliance monitoring of Police Record Checks (PRCs), in accordance with DDSB Police Records Checks Policy and Procedure, is delegated to principals for school-based community volunteers, and to principals and department managers for volunteers and students on placement with the Board. All delegated authorities shall ensure compliance with legislative requirements and Board policies. All records shall be collected, stored, and monitored in accordance with the Board's Records and Information Management (RIM) processes, retention schedules, and information governance requirements.

4.0 APPLICATION AND SCOPE

This procedure applies to all DDSB staff, students, and community members involved in school-based volunteer programs. It covers the invitation, screening, training, and termination processes for all individuals serving as volunteers within the District.

5.0 PROCEDURES

5.1 Indigenous Rights, Human Rights Commitment

Volunteers must adhere to the principles, requirements, and expectations outlined in the DDSB's code of conduct and its':

- Indigenous Education Policy
- Human Rights, Anti-Discrimination and Anti-Racism Policy
- Safe and Respectful Workplace and Harassment Prevention Policy

5.2 Selection and Screening

The principal is authorized under the Education Act to assign and determine, without remuneration, volunteer duties based on the needs of the school ([Education](#)

Act, Section 171(1)).

5.2.1 Invitation: Volunteer opportunities shall be communicated to the greater school community through appropriate communication channels. Invitations may be extended to parents/caregivers, community members, adults, and senior students to volunteer in their schools.

5.2.2 Promotion: Schools are encouraged to promote volunteer opportunities in ways that are inclusive, accessible, and that invite participation from the diverse communities the school and the DDSB serves.

5.2.3 Criteria: Selection shall be based on lived and other experiences, the requirements of the volunteer role, including relevant skills, knowledge, availability, and any applicable screening requirements.

5.2.4 Application: Interested individuals must submit a Volunteer Application Form (Appendix B).

5.2.5 Risk Assessment Screening: Principals/managers are responsible for identifying volunteer activities using the Volunteer Risk Assessment Matrix (Appendix A) within their schools and assessing the associated risk level. Based on the volunteer's role, level of supervision, and potential impact on student safety, principals/managers will determine the appropriate level of screening and screen volunteer candidates accordingly. If a volunteer's role changes, the principal/manager must reassess the risk level and update the screening requirements. All risk assessment decisions and associated screening requirements shall be documented and retained in accordance with applicable Board records management requirements.

5.2.6 Police Record Checks: Principals/managers must comply with the DDSB's Police Records Checks Policy and Procedure for the collection of Police Record Checks, consisting of either Criminal Record and Judicial Matters Check (CRJMC) or Vulnerable Sector Check (VSC) for new applicants (Appendix A) and an annual Offence Declaration (Appendix E) every year for returning volunteers not submitting a new Police Record Check.

5.2.7 Duties: The principal, manager and /or designate must clearly define and describe the volunteer duties, tasks, and expectations for the volunteer. Volunteers shall not participate in overnight activities, unless supervised by staff supervisors.

5.2.8 Documentation Retention: Police Record Checks, Offence Declarations, and related screening documentation shall be collected, stored, retained, and disposed of in accordance with applicable legislation, Board procedures, and Records and Information Management requirements

5.3 Orientation and Training of Volunteers

5.3.1 Expectations: Approved volunteers must sign the Volunteer Expectations (Appendix C) to acknowledge they understand their duties and parameters of involvement.

5.3.2 Training: Approved volunteers shall receive orientation appropriate to their assigned role. Orientation may include relevant legislation, Board policies, procedures, confidentiality requirements, health and safety practices, reporting obligations, emergency procedures, commitments to upholding Indigenous rights and human rights, and the protection of school-related information.

5.4 Staff Supervisors

5.4.1 Staff will maintain a "duty of care" under the Education Act; while duties can be delegated to volunteers, staff cannot divest themselves of this primary responsibility.

5.4.2 Staff supervisors are responsible for ensuring awareness of the DDSB Volunteer Procedure, including the completion of required application forms and Police Record Checks and Offence Declarations, where applicable, by all volunteers prior to the commencement of any volunteer activities.

5.4.3 Staff supervisors are responsible for participating in the orientation of volunteers, as appropriate, and for providing ongoing training and support to volunteers in the performance of their duties.

5.4.4 Staff supervisors are responsible for supervising volunteers in accordance with the direction provided by the principal or manager.

5.4.5 Staff supervisors are to provide relevant student information to volunteers, where necessary, to support their volunteer activities. All such information must be protected, returned, securely destroyed, or otherwise managed in accordance with applicable privacy, confidentiality, and records management requirements upon completion of the volunteer activity.

5.5 Volunteers

5.5.1 Volunteers provide a signed Volunteer Expectations and Confidentiality Agreement (see Appendix C) prior to the start of any volunteer activity and provide the appropriate police checks and/or offence declarations as per the DDSB's Police Records Check Policy and Procedure (see Appendix D and E).

5.5.2 Volunteers will participate in required orientation and training provided in relation to their assigned volunteer duties, or as required.

5.5.3 Volunteers carry out volunteer duties under the direction of the staff supervisor, principal, or manager, and comply with all applicable legislation, Board policies, and the DDSB Code of Conduct while working under the direct or indirect supervision of a staff member.

5.5.4 Volunteers report all accidents or injuries to the teacher/supervisor/principal/manager as soon as possible.

5.6 Insurance for Volunteers

5.6.1 While acting within the scope of their duties on behalf of the board,

volunteers are insured under the board's liability insurance policy.

5.6.2 The board does not carry medical or Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB) coverage for volunteers. It is up to the volunteer to purchase these types of coverage if desired.

5.6.3 All injuries involving a volunteer must be reported to the principal, manager, or supervisor, who will ensure an OSBIE (Ontario School Board Insurance Exchange) Incident Report is completed and submitted in accordance with Board reporting requirements.

5.7 Access to and Protection of Student Information

5.7.1 Volunteers are not to have access to Ontario Student Records (OSRs) or school student records.

5.7.2 Volunteers may be provided with relevant student information such as medical information or emergency contact phone numbers for the purpose of assisting staff and protecting student safety.

5.7.3 Volunteers must maintain the confidentiality and security of all student and staff information, use such information only for its intended purpose, and return all related documents to the teacher or supervisor at the conclusion of the volunteer activity. This obligation survives even after the volunteer ceases to act as such.

5.8 Termination of Volunteers

5.8.1 The principal or manager retains the authority to accept, decline, or terminate a volunteer assignment in accordance with applicable legislation, Board policies, and operational requirements. ([Education Act, Section 171\(1\)](#)). A rationale for the decision will be provided upon request.

5.8.2 Any obligation owed by a volunteer that expressly or implicitly survives termination, including as to confidentiality, shall continue to bind the volunteer.

5.9 Recognition of Volunteers

5.9.1 The school principal will make every effort to recognize the efforts and assistance of volunteers, including nominating one for the annual DDSB "Volunteer of Distinction Ceremony" (Appendix F).

5.10 Review of School Volunteer Program

School volunteer programs should be reviewed periodically by the principal or manager to assess effectiveness, participation levels, screening compliance, safety considerations, and opportunities for continuous improvement. Findings may be used to inform future volunteer recruitment, training, and program administration.

6.0 APPENDICES

Appendix A – DDSB Volunteer Risk Assessment Matrix

Appendix B – DDSB Volunteer Application Form
Appendix C – DDSB Volunteer Expectations and Confidentiality Agreement Form
Appendix D – Police Records Check Letter
Appendix E – DDSB Annual Offence Declaration Form for Volunteers
Appendix F – DDSB Volunteer of Distinction Award

7.0 REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

- [Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act \(AODA\)](#)
- [Anti-Racism Act, 2017](#)
- [Education Act, R.S.O. 1990](#)
- [Ontario Human Rights Code](#)
- [DDSB Multi-Year Strategic Plan](#)
- DDSB P HRA 01 Human Rights, Anti-Discrimination and Anti-Racism Policy
- DDSB P IND 01 Indigenous Education Policy
- DDSB P HUM 02 Police Records Check Policy
- DDSB PR HUM 02-01 Police Records Check Procedure
- DDSB P HUM 04 Safe and Respectful Workplace and Harassment Prevention Policy