VOLUNTEER SERVICES
REGULATION

The Oklahoma City Public Schools believes in maintaining an adequate level of safety and security in all schools and sites of the Oklahoma City Public School district. The superintendent hereby authorizes the Community Relations department to be responsible for recruiting community volunteers, reviewing their capabilities, and making appropriate placements. Additionally, this designee will process all volunteer applications, including background checks, and make approval and/or denial decisions based on board policy. Therefore, before entering a school or site to volunteer, every potential volunteer must first complete the volunteer application and receive district approval. The volunteer application process is free and can be found online at [www.okcps.org](http://www.okcps.org). To protect an applicant’s identity, paper applications are no longer provided nor processed by the district. A volunteer is defined as an adult (18 years of age or older) who sincerely contributes to the achievement of students, teachers, administrators, and other district staff in classrooms, schools, and/or other district offices and does not receive compensation for that work. Volunteers enter schools and/or sites and provide assistance on a regular and reoccurring basis.

Examples of Volunteer Activities that require a background check:

- Visiting your child’s classroom or having lunch with your child five (5) or more times per academic year
- One-on-one student interactions with a child other than your own (e.g. tutoring or mentoring)
- After-school programs approved by the district
- Coaching, assisting a coach, or other athletic activities
- Supervising a group of children on a field trip (including overnight)
- Assisting with parent-led group events during the school day (i.e. committee meetings, selling popcorn, pancake breakfasts, holiday parties, decorating for events, etc.)

Visitors are individuals who enter schools and/or sites on an irregular and infrequent basis. Visitors typically visit schools and/or sites for reasons such as having lunch with their children, attending an assembly or extra-curricular activity, or participating in parent-teacher conferences. Visitors should never be one-on-one with students without supervision. Visitors are not required to submit a volunteer application and/or criminal background check.

Examples of visitor activities that do not require a background check:

- Visiting your child’s classroom or having lunch with your child fewer than five (5) times per academic year
- Serving on Parent Teacher Associations (PTA) or Community Action Boards (CAB)
- Attending special school and district-sponsored events like student performances or family activities
- Accompanying your child on field trips (driving separately) and not supervising other children
- Attending parent-teacher conferences and parent nights

The following process will be used to conduct background checks on volunteers:

OKCPS contracts with an appropriate law enforcement agency to determine whether a prospective volunteer has criminal history. The background check includes a national sex offender registry search. A prospective volunteer will be asked to provide their name, Social Security number (if applicable), and date of birth to the agency conducting the background check on the district’s behalf. This agency shall determine whether a prospective volunteer has a criminal history that would prevent him/her from volunteering with the district. Once prospective volunteers have completed and
electronically signed the online application, they authorize OKCPS to run a background check. The following chart outlines the district’s criminal history guidelines:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OFFENSE</th>
<th>TIME PERIOD</th>
<th>CAN VOLUNTEER?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Felony conviction or deferred felony sentence that does involve a violent act, sexual misconduct, child abuse, child neglect, or child endangerment</td>
<td>Ever</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Felony conviction or deferred felony sentence that does not involve a violent act, sexual misconduct, child abuse, child neglect, or child endangerment</td>
<td>Three (3) years or more</td>
<td>Application will undergo further review by OKCPS Risk Management &amp; Legal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fewer than three (3) years</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Misdemeanor conviction or deferred misdemeanor sentence that involves a violent act, sexual misconduct, child abuse, child neglect, or child endangerment</td>
<td>Ever</td>
<td>Application will undergo further review by OKCPS Risk Management &amp; Legal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Misdemeanor conviction or deferred misdemeanor sentence which involves dishonesty, fraud, misrepresentation, deceit, or offenses which involve drugs or alcohol</td>
<td>Three (3) years or more</td>
<td>Application will undergo further review by OKCPS Risk Management &amp; Legal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fewer than three (3) years</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Misdemeanor conviction or deferred misdemeanor sentence that does not involve a violent act, sexual misconduct, child abuse, child neglect, child endangerment, dishonesty, fraud, misrepresentation, deceit, or offenses which involve drugs or alcohol</td>
<td>Ever</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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</table>

1. If the background check does not reveal anything that could prevent the volunteer from volunteering with the district, in accordance with this regulation, the volunteer will appear in the volunteer/visitor kiosk sign in for each school.
2. If the background check reveals information that may keep an individual from being accepted as a volunteer in accordance with this regulation, the Community Relations department will then notify the school’s principal that the volunteer is ineligible to volunteer for the district. If a potential volunteer is denied based on the results of the criminal background check, the individual has thirty (30) business days from the date of the denial letter to appeal the decision. In the appeal, the individual must provide a clear rationale for the appeal, which may include court documents which contradict the criminal background check, proof of inaccurate identity, or other official documentation. This rationale shall be submitted to the Community Relations Department. The rationale shall be reviewed by a team consisting of members from the Family Engagement department and the General Counsel's office, and the background agency may also be contacted. The review team shall provide a decision to the denied volunteer within fifteen (15) business days of receipt. If the appeal is upheld, the Community Relations Department will notify the principal of the error and update the volunteer/visitor management kiosk. The review team's decision shall be final.
3. Background searches are run annually on volunteers each academic year. Background searches will be run after July 1st of each school year to ensure that all volunteer information is current.
Volunteer Responsibilities

Principals and administrators are responsible for coordination and supervision of volunteers and/or visitors at their school and/or site. They are responsible for identifying appropriate tasks for volunteers. The principal is encouraged to delegate duties or assign a school site volunteer coordinator to coordinate and supervise volunteers. No volunteer should be permitted to access, review, disclose, or use confidential student information, or participate in conversations in which confidential student information is discussed. Volunteers are held to the same standards of conduct as district staff and must observe all board policies.

Volunteers are expected to:

• Fill out an online application and be approved by the Community Relations department to volunteer.
• Follow the “Terms and Conditions” outlined in the volunteer application.
• Sign in and out of the school office and always wear a volunteer badge while on school grounds.
• Maintain appropriate confidentiality of student information, and share concerns regarding students with the school staff only.
• Wear appropriate professional attire.

The district does not provide any type of health insurance to cover illness or accident incurred while serving as a volunteer, nor are volunteers eligible for workers’ compensation. Community partner groups are required to provide a certificate of insurance naming Oklahoma City Public Schools as an additional insured at the request of OKCPS Risk Management.

Pursuant to board policy, all visitors, volunteers, employees, and students shall not possess the following items on OKCPS facilities and grounds:

• Alcohol, illegal drugs, and controlled substances or any form thereof
• Dangerous weapons, including, but not limited to, knives, firearms, and explosives

OKCPS administrators reserve the right to suspend the visitation privileges of any person(s) who may threaten the peaceful and orderly operation of the school system’s environment. Oklahoma law sets forth specific criminal statutes which allow the administration to remove an individual from school premises who has interfered with the peaceful and orderly conduct of school business as per 21 O.S. §§ 1375 and 1376. The statutory timeline for removal is six (6) months.

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