

CONNECT CHARTER SCHOOL SOCIETY

Policy Title: **Volunteers**

Policy No. **7.03**

RATIONALE: Volunteers provide an important contribution in supporting classroom teachers with activities inside and outside the school. The school community is strengthened through active and intentional volunteer involvement.

POLICY: The Board recognizes the value of volunteers and supports their role in maintaining the school's capacity to deliver dynamic educational experiences for students, while ensuring that safety is a foremost consideration.

DEFINITIONS:

Volunteers are people who freely offer their time for a service or undertaking at Connect Charter School.

PRINCIPLES:

1. The Principal will ensure adequate procedures are designed and implemented to determine the suitability of a volunteer to support school activities.
2. Any person wishing to participate in a volunteer capacity during a school activity that potentially involves unsupervised interaction with students must obtain a Security Clearance from the Calgary Police Service.
3. The Principal must approve all volunteer applications and will exercise discretion in determining the eligibility of a volunteer.
4. Court issued documents relating to access and custody of children attending Connect Charter School take precedence over an electronic Police Information Check (ePIC) in determining volunteer eligibility.
5. All volunteers are expected to maintain confidentiality in all matters relating to their role working with students, teachers and other parents and will comply with the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FOIPP).
6. The collection of all information under this policy complies with the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FOIPP).

First Reading November 4, 2008

Adopted November 4, 2008

Amended December 16, 2014

Amended May 9, 2017

PROCEDURES

Screening Process

- a) The volunteer screening process should be completed as soon as possible after school registration. Doing so allows sufficient time for processing volunteer applications, which include a confidentiality clause, prior to the outdoor education excursions that take place very early in the school year.

Driver's Abstract

- a) Volunteers who may be required to drive students in the course of field trips or student participation in extracurricular activities (such as sporting events or fine arts programs) will, in addition to the ePIC procedures outlined in #1, also be required to fill out a *Driver Authorization Form* (available from the school office), provide proof of insurance, including \$2,000,000 liability insurance, and submit a driver's abstract prior to the volunteer activity. Abstracts may be obtained from an Alberta Registry office at the school's expense. This process must be completed each school year.

Notification

- a) Upon receipt of a satisfactory ePIC result and driver's abstract (if required), the Principal will consider the application and the potential volunteer will be notified of their eligibility to participate on school sponsored educational trips. **It is important for parent volunteers to understand that eligibility to participate does not guarantee involvement on any given excursion as the number of volunteers often exceeds the number of positions available.**
- b) In the event that a potential volunteer discloses a prior criminal conviction for which they haven't received a pardon, or the ePIC result comes back indicating the possibility of a criminal charge or conviction, the Principal may invite the individual to meet and discuss the nature of the offence and whether there is a risk to engaging that person as a volunteer at Connect Charter School. The Principal will make a determination as to the suitability of engaging that parent as a volunteer and will notify them accordingly. Alternatively, the potential volunteer may be asked by the Principal to complete the screening process by attending the police station for fingerprinting and a positive identification.

Frequency

- a) Individuals wishing to volunteer on a school activity that involves interaction with students must complete the screening process at least once every three years.
- b) Individuals will be notified by the school of the need to renew security clearance and vulnerable sector check forms.
- c) Individuals who have been charged with or convicted of any criminal offence since their last ePIC, and who wish to volunteer on a school activity, must disclose the charge or conviction to the Principal prior to volunteering (this disclosure will be on the volunteer application form).

Volunteer Orientation and Handbook

- a) Individuals wishing to volunteer in school activities are strongly encouraged to attend the annual general volunteer orientation and become familiar with the volunteer handbook available on the school's website.
- b) Those individuals who are interested in volunteering for an overnight camp or off site excursion must attend a volunteer orientation session, where the following information will be shared:
 - Volunteer policy and selection criteria,
 - Guidelines and expectations of volunteers,
 - Roles and responsibilities of volunteers,
 - Specifics of the main annual volunteer opportunities (fall camps, Fort Steele, Winter Camp, Bamfield Marine Sciences Center, Rocky Mountain Tour, Southern Alberta History Tour),
 - The Security Clearance process for volunteers at Connect,
 - Implications of the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FOIPP)* regarding student information that volunteers may become privy to in the course of their duties,
 - The requirement to submit a driver's abstract if they will, or may be, transporting students.