

**DIVISION: PROGRAMS**

**Policy #: PROG-300**

**POLICY NAME**

**VOLUNTEERS IN SCHOOLS**

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**POLICY STATEMENT**

The Newfoundland and Labrador English School District (NLESD) recognizes and supports the important role that parents/guardians and other community members play in supporting the delivery of programs and services in its schools, while maintaining the safety of students and the integrity of programs and services. Therefore, the NLESD shall ensure that, through the school administration, appropriate procedures are in place for the screening, selection, orientation, training, supervision, recognition and evaluation of volunteers at the school level.

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**BACKGROUND**

The NLESD recognizes that volunteers make a valuable contribution to educational programs and services as well as co-curricular and extra-curricular activities, and the school community in general. Volunteers also derive a sense of satisfaction from their involvement and build important skills in becoming contributing community members. The NLESD also recognizes its responsibility to ensure students' safety and security, and that appropriate measures are taken when selecting volunteers.

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**SCOPE**

This policy is applicable to all schools and programs within the NLESD, including co-curricular and extra-curricular programs, and to all those who aspire to volunteer for the various programs and services within and associated with the District's schools.

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**DEFINITIONS**

***VOLUNTEER***

An individual who, with the approval of the principal or district-level personnel, agrees to undertake a task that supports student learning within a classroom, a school or a setting directly related to a school activity. Such a task is undertaken without pay and under the supervision of a school administrator/teacher or educational professional from within the NLESD.

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**APPROVED:** *November 23, 2013*

**EFFECTIVE:** *September 1, 2014*

**AMENDED:** \_\_\_\_\_

#### *LOW RISK SETTINGS/SITUATIONS*

Volunteers who are under the direct and constant supervision of a teacher are considered low risk. A low risk situation might also include the engagement of volunteers in open common areas of the school, where teachers are present, or volunteers who do not come into contact with students (e.g., volunteers assisting a teacher in the Learning Resource Centre, or in the main office assisting with the recess order).

#### *MEDIUM RISK SETTING/SITUATIONS*

Volunteers who might be working with a large group of students in an isolated area of the school with frequent supervision by a school administrator/ teacher or educational professional from within the NLESD are considered to be in a medium risk setting (e.g., a volunteer non-teaching coach for a school team or extra-curricular club who meets with students in the gym or a room within the school where the teacher sponsor does periodic checks on the activities of the group).

#### *HIGH RISK SETTINGS/SITUATIONS*

Volunteers who work with small groups/individual students in an isolated area of the school, coach school teams, or participate in off-site field trips are considered to be in a high risk setting. These volunteers will be under occasional supervision of a school administrator/ teacher or educational professional from within the NLESD (e.g., a volunteer for an offsite fieldtrip to a post-secondary institution, or a volunteer for an overnight trip with a team).

#### *CERTIFICATE OF CONDUCT*

Refers to the screening process of requiring a criminal reference check, including a vulnerable sector query, by a police force including, but not limited to, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) and the Royal Newfoundland Constabulary (RNC).

#### *CRIMINAL OFFENCE DECLARATION (COD)*

A Criminal Offence Declaration is a written declaration by an individual, listing any and all charges and convictions for criminal offences under the Criminal Code of Canada and provincial Acts since last submitting a Criminal Reference Check or Criminal Offence Declaration to the district, up to and including the date of the declaration.

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## **POLICY DIRECTIVES**

- 1) Prior to being approved for volunteer duties, all aspiring volunteers will be required to complete a Volunteer Information Form and a Volunteer Agreement that will be reviewed by the school principal/district-level personnel.
- 2) All aspiring volunteers will also be required to complete a Criminal Offense Declaration to be submitted to the school principal on an annual basis.
- 3) In addition to submitting an annual Criminal Offense Declaration, aspiring volunteers for medium or high risk settings/situations will be required to obtain a Certificate of Conduct, including a vulnerable sector query, from a police force including, but not limited to, the RCMP or the RNC.
- 4) Volunteers for medium or high risk settings/situations must provide an updated satisfactory Certificate of Conduct every two years.
- 5) The NLESD reserves the right to require that any active volunteer provide an updated satisfactory Certificate of Conduct at any time during a school year.
- 6) The principal shall ensure that volunteers are provided with orientation to the district and school/worksite, appropriate to their volunteer roles and responsibilities.
- 7) The principal shall ensure that volunteers are advised of policies and expectations relevant to the volunteer events and tasks.
- 8) The principal shall ensure that volunteers are provided with a level of supervision appropriate to their volunteer roles and responsibilities.
- 9) The personal information of volunteers shall be treated as confidential, and will be collected, maintained, used, disclosed and disposed of in accordance with the *Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act* and district policy.

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