



Policy: [Volunteer and Work Study Students - Code B2](#)

Procedural Requirements:

“The Superintendent shall develop administrative rules and procedures to ensure that volunteers and work study students are appropriately screened prior to entering into service in the school district, and that only volunteers and work study students who have been screened and approved by the superintendent have extended unsupervised contact with students.”

Procedure:

It is the intent of MVSU to promote and encourage the use of volunteers in order to expand and enhance parental and community involvement in the schools, and to provide additional resources for students and faculty members. While promoting and utilizing volunteers, we are committed to maintaining a high level of safety and security.

Criminal Background Check

In order to protect the safety and security of students and school staff, all volunteer applicants must submit to varying types of criminal background checks. The process is initiated by an individual completing a volunteer application. The principal/designee at each school will submit to the Office of the Superintendent these volunteer applications as they are completed. The Office of the Superintendent will conduct a ten-year minimum criminal background check on the volunteers by utilizing internet based data or other sources reasonably available. An initial criminal background check must be performed for each volunteer. After initial criminal background checks are completed and approved, volunteers must report any subsequent criminal charges and convictions to the principal. Failure to do so will result in that individual being deemed ineligible to work as a volunteer. At the request of a school principal/designee, volunteers may be subject to annual criminal background checks.

When Fingerprinting is Required

Fingerprinting is required for volunteers having direct contact with students with minimal supervision by school staff on a scheduled basis, who spend solitary time with students, who may be outside the view of school staff or other adults with students for extended periods of time, or who may be used as chaperones on overnight field trips. Some examples of these volunteers could include: participating as a tutor during or after school, acting as a mentor in an unsupervised setting, chaperoning and/or driving for a field trip without a staff member present, or athletic coaching. If the principal can assure that a volunteer will not be alone with any student this process will not need to be conducted.

Requirement/Process	<u>Level I</u> No direct contact	<u>Level II</u> Supervised contact	<u>Level III</u> Unsupervised contact
Volunteer Registration Form	X	X	X
Online background checks through Superintendent's office: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Sex Offender Registry • VT AHS databases • VCIC 		X	X
Fingerprinting		May be requested at discretion of principal/designee and/or Superintendent.	X

Eligibility

Individuals whose background investigation reveals a charge, a series of charges, a conviction of a crime more serious than a traffic violation, or a pattern of charges of behavior which is determined by the Office of the Superintendent to represent a safety or liability issue, shall be ineligible to be a volunteer. Additionally, any individual refusing to submit to a background investigation shall be ineligible to be a volunteer.

Notification

A letter will be sent from the Office of the Superintendent to each applicant whose request for volunteer status has been denied with a copy sent to the school principal/designee. The decision on whether to approve the volunteer candidate shall be based upon the best interests of the school and its students.

Expectations for Volunteers

All volunteers shall abide by federal and state law and regulations, MVSU policy and procedure, and other school rules while on district property. Below is a summary of some of the key policies for your reference.

Sign-In: In order to keep track of individuals' whereabouts in the school building in the event of an emergency, during school hours all volunteers are required to sign-in upon entering the school building, and sign out upon leaving. Visitor sign-in sheets are located and maintained at the school's main office. Upon sign-in, individuals will be issued a visitor ID badge, which must be worn at all times while in the building.

Child Abuse/Neglect: Under Vermont law, any school employee having reason to suspect that a child has been abused or neglected shall report the same to the appropriate authorities. As a volunteer, you should speak directly to the classroom teacher, principal, or designee in his/her absence. You should not speak with anyone else. The child and the family have a right to confidentiality and privacy as well as protection. Under no circumstance should you attempt to counsel the student or investigate further.

Smoking: No smoking is permitted in any school building or on school grounds at any time. ([See B7 – Tobacco Prohibition](#)) The using, dispensing, or transferring possession of tobacco products while on school property or at any school-sponsored activity is strictly prohibited. Additionally, any observed student violation should be reported to the principal or classroom teacher at once.

Alcohol and Other Drugs: The MVSU and its member districts are committed to zero tolerance of alcohol, illegal drugs, and other controlled substances on school property or at any school-sponsored activity (e.g. field trips, sporting events, work internships, dances, etc.). ([See B3- Alcohol and Drug Free Workplace](#)) Being under the influence of, using, or possessing drugs not prescribed for the individual's use while performing duties for the district or while on school property or at any school-sponsored activity is strictly prohibited. Dispensing or transferring possession of controlled substances while on school property or at any school-sponsored activity is also prohibited. Additionally, any observed student violation should be reported to the principal or classroom teacher at once. ([See C2- Student Drugs and Alcohol](#)) If you observe any student who appears to have a substance abuse problem, or if a concerned informant or friend alerts you, you should refer the situation to the building principal or classroom teacher. While it is human nature to try to help and express your concern, just as in child abuse/neglect situations, trained professionals must be the ones to deal with the situation.

Weapons and/or Fireworks: ([See C5- Firearms](#)) In compliance with federal and state law, possession and/or use of firearms, fireworks, or other weapons on school property or at school sponsored events are strictly prohibited. Any observed violation should be reported to the principal immediately. It is also a violation of MVSU policy for any person to make, issue, or communicate by any means, a threat that a weapon has been, or will be placed or used on school property. Encouraging or aiding any employee or student to possess, handle, or transmit any weapon is also prohibited.

Unlawful Harassment and Discrimination: It is the policy of MVSU to maintain a learning and working environment that is free from unlawful harassment and discrimination. ([See B5- Employee Unlawful Harassment](#)) MVSU prohibits any form of unlawful harassment and discrimination on the basis of disability, marital status, national origin, color, race, religion, age, sex, gender identity or sexual orientation. Unlawful harassment includes verbal or physical conduct which has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with a person's performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment.

Sexual harassment is a form of unlawful harassment which consists of unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct or communication of a sexual nature. You should report any instance of harassment or violence to the principal who will see that it is investigated according to MVSU policy.

Political Freedom: The district shall in no way infringe upon an individual's rights and freedoms of political involvement. However, volunteers of the district must not misuse their position in the school to influence the academic process in the interest of their own political ambitions or those of a political group. Volunteers of the district will not engage in political activity on school premises during school hours.

Corporal Punishment: Physical force is not an acceptable means of correction and is against MVSU policy. Physical restraint by trained personnel is authorized only when needed to protect the safety of the individual students and/or other students and employees.

Confidentiality: Information about students is confidential. You should only discuss a student by name with the classroom teacher, principal, nurse, special educator or guidance counselor. Confidentiality applies to all students, both regular and special education. If you know many students and their families, you risk slipping from a "volunteer" to "neighbor" role without realizing it. Your rule of thumb should be "Never discuss specifics of your school district work outside of school." If you have a concern about any aspect of the school program, you should take it up directly with the school principal.

Communicable Disease: MVSU is committed to providing a safe environment for all employees and students. MVSU also recognizes and respects an individual's right to confidentiality. If you are diagnosed with a contagious illness or disease that may jeopardize the safety of our students and staff or put them at risk of exposure, please notify the principal in a timely manner so that the district can implement the necessary safety precautions if deemed appropriate. Your identity shall be kept strictly confidential except as required by Department of Public Health regulations or as necessary to implement district procedures.

Handling Bodily Fluids: Whenever possible, direct contact with body fluids should be avoided. Disposable gloves are available and should be used when direct contact is anticipated. Dispose of used gloves in a plastic bag or lined trashcan. Wash hands thoroughly after any contact with bodily fluids and before contact with others. If blood or other potentially infectious materials come into contact with broken skin, mucous membranes, or by a bite or needle stick, wash or irrigate the area immediately and report to the school nurse. You will be asked to fill out an Exposure Incident Form and will be advised to seek immediate medical attention.

Cooperation with Staff: When providing direct services to students, volunteers are responsible for working cooperatively with the teacher/coach/staff member to carry out the teacher's classroom plan/coaching strategies/district curriculum/etc. Volunteers are expected to discuss with teachers/coaches/ staff members at an appropriate time, away from student questions, about the teacher's/coach's/ staff member's instructional approach. The volunteer is responsible for ensuring prior coordination with the principal, classroom teacher, or other appropriate school staff member regarding their volunteer schedule and assignment.

Professional Relationships and Communication: Volunteers are expected to maintain just and courteous professional relationships with students, parents, staff members, board members, and other internal and external constituents of the district.

Safe and Respectful Environment: Volunteers are expected to place the safety and well-being of students as the first concern of the school system, demonstrate and encourage the highest standard of conduct among students, and strive to create an environment where hazing, harassment, and bullying are deemed unacceptable behavior.

Emergency and Fire Drills: Be familiar with the drill instructions of the school. During fire drills, stay with your classroom teacher's group (or the group for whom you signed in to work with) for attendance purposes. Volunteers are expected to cooperate as directed in emergency-based situations.

Contact with Students: No volunteer shall have unsupervised contact with school children unless specifically authorized to do so by the principal/designee. When specifically authorized to do so, contact with students should be public (never behind closed doors) and in authorized areas only.

Fundraising and Solicitation: No volunteer may solicit funds from school district employees and students within the schools, nor may anyone distribute flyers or other materials related to external fundraisers through the schools, without the expressed approval of the principal.

Technology Acceptable Use: In the event that the school district provides an individual with access to the internet and/or other technologies, those individuals are expected to only use these technologies for educational or school district related purposes. ([See D3- Responsible Computer, Internet, and Network Use](#)) Individuals may not use district-provided technologies for product endorsement, political lobbying, or private business or enterprise purposes. Transmission of any material in violation of any federal or VT state statute or regulation is prohibited (e.g. copyrighted material, threatening or obscene material, or material protected by trade secret, etc.). In addition, to ensure a smooth operation of the network, individuals must adhere to the acceptable use standards and rules of conduct related to the efficient, ethical, and legal uses of the network and other technology resources.