



POLICY 2.53

4-M I recommend that the Board adopt the proposed revised Policy 2.53, entitled "Volunteers in Public Schools."

[Contact: Nat Harrington, PX 48227.]

Adoption

CONSENT ITEM

- The Board approved development of this revised Policy at the development reading on February 25, 2009.
- This revision outlines enrollment procedures for school volunteers, including a requirement for such volunteers to undergo a criminal background screening. The costs of the background screening of prospective volunteers will be borne by the School District. See paragraphs 4 and 6.
- Any prospective volunteer who has been convicted of criminal offenses as provided for in the recently enacted *Ethics in Education Act*, Chapter 2008-108, Laws of Florida, is prohibited from volunteering in positions with direct contact with students. See paragraph 6.
- The revised policy does not apply to an individual who visits a school for a one-time special event, such as guest speakers, celebrity readers, attending student performances, parents or family members who have lunch with their own child, career day special guests, and attendance at parent conferences. In such instances, the individual is viewed as a school visitor. See paragraph 2.
- It also sets forth the responsibilities for coordination, supervision and tasking of volunteers. See paragraph 7.
- Volunteers are prohibited from engaging in political or religious activities on district property.
- This revision also updates statutory references.

POLICY 2.53

VOLUNTEERS IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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3 1. **Purpose.** -- The purpose of this policy is to promote and encourage school
4 volunteers in order to expand and enhance parental, community and civic
5 involvement within schools while maintaining an adequate level of safety and
6 security in the schools of the School District. This policy establishes the framework
7 of volunteers serving in schools through the Palm Beach County Schools Volunteer
8 Program known as VOLUNTEERS IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS, hereafter referred to as
9 VIPS. The name of the Palm Beach County School Volunteer program shall be
10 VOLUNTEERS IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS, hereafter referred to as VIPS.

- 11 2. **Applicability and Scope.**
 - 12 a. This policy applies to all volunteers and prospective volunteers in Palm Beach
13 County District Schools.

 - 14 b. This policy shall not apply to: (1) adults who visit a school but have no ongoing
15 individualized interaction with a student or students, including, but not limited
16 to, adults who have been invited to speak at a class or assembly, to judge
17 student or academic competitions, to give a performance, or to participate in
18 other school programs; (2) a parent or legal guardian who is accompanying his
19 or her child on a field trip or another type of occasional extra-curricular activity;
20 and (3) members of the school advisory council and other school support
21 organizations. A person who visits a school for a one-time special event,
22 such as guest speakers, celebrity readers, attending student performances,
23 parents or family members who have lunch with their own child, career day
24 special guests, and attendance at parent conferences. These people are
25 considered school visitors. They must sign in as visitors in the main office and
26 school staff should provide them with appropriate direction. Under no
27 circumstances may visitors or volunteers be left alone with students.

- 28 3. **Policy.** The School Board believes that the use of volunteers in schools of the
29 District enhances the educational process for students and promotes community
30 involvement in education. The School Board of Palm Beach County encourages
31 volunteer participation by individuals and groups in School Board sponsored
32 programs in local schools, in district central and area offices, and for School Board
33 sponsored and supervised off-school campus activities before, during, and after
34 regular school hours.
 - 35 a. A volunteer is a non-paid person functioning under the sponsorship of the
36 Palm Beach County School District.

 - 37 b. The School Board of Palm Beach County authorizes the Superintendent or

38 his/her designee to approve volunteers to assist in organized school programs
39 following the submission of an application, completion of a background check
40 as provided herein, and upon successful completion of a volunteer orientation
41 and training program as outlined in Florida State School Board Rule 6A-1.070
42 6A-1.70. in accordance with State Board of Education Rules and Laws of the
43 State of Florida.

44 4. **Enrollment Procedures for Volunteers.** Prospective volunteers must complete
45 all VIPS registration forms and volunteer release as provided by the Department of
46 Public Affairs/Office of Community Involvement.

47 5. **Status of Volunteers.** Volunteers may be used to assist district personnel in local
48 schools and district programs. However, the instructional personnel retains
49 responsibility for supervising, diagnosing, prescribing, instructing and evaluating
50 students.

51 a. The acceptance and utilization of the services of any person on a voluntary
52 basis shall be at the discretion of the School District, and the utilization of such
53 services may be discontinued by the School District at any time.

54 b. Volunteers shall not engage in political or religious activities while on district
55 premises and while performing district duties.

56 6. **Criminal Background Investigation.** In order to protect the safety and security
57 of students and staff, volunteers must submit to a background screening as
58 required by §943.04351, Florida Statutes, as now or hereafter amended. ~~Level 4~~
59 ~~criminal background investigation.~~

60 a. ~~An individual who has been convicted of any of the criminal offenses~~
61 ~~enumerated in Section 1012.315, Florida Statutes, is prohibited from any~~
62 ~~volunteer activities which have direct contact with students.~~

63 7. **Responsibility.**

64 a. Principals and administrators are responsible for coordination and supervision
65 of volunteers.

66 b. Principals and administrators are responsible for identifying appropriate tasks
67 for volunteers.

68 c. The Department of Public Affairs/Office of Community Involvement is
69 responsible for coordinating the background checks on volunteers.

70 d. The Superintendent shall issue directives concerning school volunteers
71 included but not limited to more stringent guidelines for screening as deemed
72 necessary.

73 STATUTORY AUTHORITY: Fla. Stat. §§ 1001.41, 1001.42, 228.041(24), FS; ~~230.2311-~~
74 ~~2312, FS; 236.0873, FS; 6A-170, FAC~~
75 LAWS IMPLEMENTED: Fla. Stat. §§ 110.504, 768.28, 1001.43, 1012.01, 440.02,
76 943.04351-SBER 6A-170
77 STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION RULE: Rule 6A-1.070 and 6A-1.0502
78 HISTORY: 4/23/86; ___/___2009

Legal Signoff:

The Legal Department has reviewed proposed Policy 2.53 and finds it legally sufficient for adoption by the Board.

Attorney

Date