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**SCHOOL VOLUNTEERING POLICY**

Water’s Edge Village School welcomes, endorses, and encourages the use of school volunteers. The school through its board or teachers shall do a screening of individuals through a Consumer Reporting Agency and provide reasonable supervision of volunteers. Before a volunteer is assigned, he or she will provide a signed Disclosure of Background Authorization for a background check to be conducted by Background Investigation Bureau, LLC, (“BIB”) who may be reached at 9710 Northcross Center Court, Huntersville, NC 28078, or by phone at (877) 439-3900 or by another outside organization that meets the conditions of this policy. Failure to consent will result in rejection of an application. A successful application is dependent on the outcome of the criminal record check.

**Purpose of Screening**

1. The objective of screening is to ensure, so far as is reasonably possible, that students are safe in school environments. Screening of volunteers is crucial because of the vulnerability of the school-aged population.

2. Screening will be used to identify volunteers who may pose an unacceptable risk to students or to the school. The screening process is a means to assess the potential of an individual volunteer to physically or emotionally harm others, to steal or damage property, or to violate Water’s Edge Village School confidentiality procedures.

**Conditions of Volunteerism**

Volunteers are bound by the standards of conduct applicable to school employees. A teacher, the board of directors, or a designee may terminate the services of a volunteer if it is deemed appropriate. Volunteers whose prior history including criminal history poses a risk to the safety or well-being of students will be denied participation in the volunteer program. Conditions for rejecting a volunteer’s participation may include but not be limited to the following:

* A Conviction of or Plea of No Contest to any felony
* A “criminal history," defined as the conviction of a crime, whether a misdemeanor or felony, that indicates the employee (i) poses a threat to the physical safety of students or personnel, or (ii) has demonstrated that he or she does not have the integrity or honesty to fulfill his or her duties as a volunteer.
* A pattern of criminal charges, even if the charges were dismissed, which cause concern that the volunteer may pose a threat to the integrity or safety of the school environment.
* A driving conviction, other than minor traffic offenses, that has occurred within the last three years.
* Conviction of or Plea of No Contest to any sexual offense
* A listing on a sex offender registry.

No individual assigned by the courts or other government agencies to perform community service or other similar service shall be accepted by WEVS unless the assigning agency first submits a criminal background check on the assigned individual.

The Board reserves the right to refuse to accept any volunteer whose criminal background makes him or her unsuitable for service in the schools.

Water’s Edge Village School does not discriminate in its recruitment, screening and placement of volunteers. WEVS through its board of directors administers all policies, education programs, employment activities and admissions to all people regardless of race, color, religion, gender, age, sexual orientation, national origin, marital status, veteran status, socioeconomic status, genetic information, physical characteristics, or disability, except where exemption is appropriate and allowed by law. Additionally, WEVS prohibits retaliation against individuals who oppose such discrimination and harassment or who participate in an equal opportunity investigation.

No applicant is guaranteed a volunteer position, regardless of background information, should no position be available.

**Screening Process**

**The following procedures will be followed for the 2012-2013 school year and thereafter:**

1. Current Volunteers who have completed their *Volunteer Application* **AND** the background check process, DO NOT have to do anything to remain on the current Volunteer Roster.

2. New Volunteers will complete *Volunteer Application* **AND** complete/pay for their background check process through BIB.

3. Only individuals whose BIB return does not conflict with this policy will be permitted to volunteer as outlined here:

* If BIB results are unfavorable, the applicant will receive a Pre-adverse Action Letter.
* Applicant has 10 days to appeal the Pre-adverse Action Letter to the Board of Directors
* If the applicant is not eligible to volunteer and does not appeal, an Adverse Action Letter will sent notifying the applicant in writing of the adverse action preventing him/her from volunteering in the school.

**Exceptions:** Field Day volunteers and EOG proctors (volunteering only during testing sessions) DO NOT need to complete the application OR the background check process.

**Criminal Charges and Convictions While Volunteering**

1. While volunteering, if an individual is charged with any violation of conditions qualifying him/her for possible rejection of volunteer participation, he/she shall notify the teachers or Board of Directors within two business days listing the alleged charges and a narrative of the circumstances surrounding the alleged charges. If the volunteer is hospitalized or incarcerated, the volunteer shall notify the teachers or board of directors within two business days upon release from the medical center or law enforcement detention center. Failure to do so may result in loss of volunteer privileges.
2. While volunteering, if an individual is convicted of any violation of conditions qualifying him/her for possible rejection of volunteer participation, he/she shall notify the teachers or Board of Directors in writing within two business days and shall provide court documentation detailing the disposition of the charges. Failure to do so shall result in the dismissal of the individual as a volunteer with the school district.