

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Richland School District One Volunteer Program Regulations, Guidelines and Procedures</b></p>
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### **Purpose**

The purpose of Richland One's volunteer program is to establish nurturing relationships between students and adults in order to enhance self-concept, decrease discipline referrals, reduce absenteeism, motivate students to improve academic performance, and build a constituency for public education and child advocacy.

Policy IJOC School Volunteers - Issued 05/00

### **Volunteer Code of Conduct**

The volunteers of Richland School District One, believing in the worth and dignity of each human being and in the concept of equal educational opportunity for all, accept the responsibility of attaining and maintaining the highest possible standards of volunteer conduct. In fulfillment of the obligations to the school, volunteers shall make every effort to maintain the high standards of conduct set by the district and school by following and supporting these statements of responsibilities.

### **Regulations & Guidelines**

1. All volunteers will record their volunteer hours by signing in and out of the V-Soft system, including those who serve on school boards, committees and other planning groups. Documentation of hours not collected by V-Soft must be recorded by the school and submitted to the Volunteer and Mentoring Programs Coordinator by the end of the school year; however it is recommended to submit them monthly throughout the school year. Volunteers can record hours by signing in and out at the school or on-line through V-Soft's Virtual Volunteer (volunteers must input their e-mail address when signing into the system to access virtual volunteer). Volunteer hours not submitted through these methods can't be considered. If volunteering outside of school hours, volunteer hours must be submitted to the School Volunteer Liaison. Liaisons will report volunteer hours to the Volunteer and Mentoring Programs Coordinator.
2. Any volunteer who will or may work with a student one-on-one or in groups three or more times a school year must complete the volunteer application process. This includes completing the volunteer application forms, attending a new volunteer orientation, and have background checks conducted (SLED, National Sex Offender Registry, DSS Child Abuse and Neglect Registry and web-based networking systems).
3. Any volunteer applicant that does not disclose his or her criminal background will not be eligible for service.
4. Volunteers who remain active do not need to submit an application annually. Volunteers without documentation of service for one full school year will be removed from the list of approved volunteers and filed inactive.
5. If a volunteer applicant is unwilling to agree to the requirements of the Volunteer Agreement, the Volunteer and Mentoring Programs Coordinator will inform the applicant that Richland One will not use the applicant for volunteer services.
6. Volunteers will not receive any compensation from Richland School District One or the individual or anyone else for serving as a volunteer.

7. Parents/guardians must give permission for students to participate in the volunteer program.
8. The Richland One Volunteer Program is a school-based program. Volunteers interested in doing activities in the community with the youth must connect with the student's parents/guardians to arrange and will not be covered by the Richland One. The Volunteer and Mentoring Programs Coordinator can assist with referrals to community-based volunteer programs. Richland One does have agreements with community based volunteer organizations that bring volunteers into schools.
9. The National Network of Partnerships Schools (NNPS) considers audiences of student performances or events volunteer hours. Schools may report the number of attendees by length of the meeting or performance as volunteer hours.
10. Under the First Amendment, public schools must be neutral concerning religion in all of their activities. Students have the right with parent/guardian permission, to engage in, or decline to engage in, religious activities at their own initiative, so long as they do not interfere with the rights of others. Public schools may arrange for the use of its facilities by private landholders, including religious institutions, if they meet applicable health and safety codes.
11. Volunteers are helpers only. The direction of the students, particularly in core content areas, is the responsibility of the teacher and cannot be turned over to a volunteer. A volunteer supports the instructional objectives of the teacher.
12. Volunteers should never give students gifts. A volunteer's time, talents and support are all that is needed.
13. Disabled individuals needing reasonable accommodations to participate in and enjoy volunteering, programs and activities of Richland One are required to notify the administrator at the school or location of service or program is offered, in advance to request reasonable accommodations.
14. Richland One commits itself to nondiscrimination in all its education and employment activities. Further, the board affirms the right of all students and staff to be treated with respect, to have due process and to be protected from intimidation, discrimination, physical harm and/or harassment.
15. The teacher is in charge of the classroom at all times; and teachers will provide any discipline that is required. If a volunteer has any questions about a policy or procedure, he or she should follow the proper channels within the school and ask the appropriate person: the teacher or staff person they report to, the school/site volunteer liaisons, principal, or district volunteer and mentoring programs coordinator. It is best to start with the teacher or staff person.
16. Volunteers are asked to make other arrangements for young children in their care while volunteering. Volunteers agree to focus on the volunteer assignment without distraction and liability insurance does not cover non-students and non-volunteers.
17. Volunteers and volunteer organizations handling money and fundraising efforts must adhere to board policy and administrative rule for Foundations/Booster Clubs and other organizations (see board policy DIBA and DIBA AR). All volunteers handling funds should have a background check conducted and thorough training on policies and procedures to reduce opportunities for errors.

**Definitions:**

“Volunteer” refers to a person (individual or part of a group) who has been approved after completing the volunteer application process and provides goods or services of his/her own free will to Richland One, without receiving any financial payment for such goods or services. Under federal statute, Foster Grandparents also are considered volunteers.

A “volunteer hour” is one for which the school or district pays no monetary remuneration. A volunteer may serve in any manner determined appropriate by the school. NNPS defines audiences as volunteer service so schools are asked to submit the time (length of the event multiplied by the number of individuals in audience).

Volunteers supplement and enrich Richland One programs and services but will not substitute for employee activities and functions. It is important to remember that the use of volunteers often results in making the educational program more flexible and student-oriented. Increased personal attention and assistance to the individual students generally creates positive results.

**Volunteer Opportunities:**

There are two broad reasons for using volunteers in the school program. The first is that their use makes it possible for the school to provide students enriched or additional learning experiences, through the special skills and interests of parents and other adults in the community. The second is that volunteers, in many instances, relieve teachers of certain routine duties and thus free teachers to devote more time to strictly professional duties.

AR IJOC-R School Volunteers – Issued 6/01

Volunteer positions and duties vary across the district in order to meet each school’s, departments’ or student’s specific needs. The capacities in which volunteers may be used are far too numerous to list here. However, the following are representative of some of the volunteer roles.

- Provide individual help as a tutor (math, reading, science, social studies, foreign language, etc.)
- Listen to students read or read to students
- Mentor! A mentor is a caring adult who is willing to be a good listener and non-judgmental friend
- Become a lunch buddy (typically groups of 10 or more) are volunteers that are matched one-on-one with a student to share lunch, fun and friendship twice a month throughout the school year
- Assist teachers with copying, bulletin boards, etc.
- Be a classroom or homeroom support volunteer
- Be a school support volunteer (help with newsletter, landscaping, etc.)
- Serve on a School Improvement Council, PTO/PTA/PTSO, Advisory Committee, or Booster Club
- Volunteer to help supervise halls, bus loading and unloading, playground, etc.
- Help in learning centers, computer labs, libraries, cafeterias, offices, etc.
- Speak on specific topics to students, staff and families (careers, motivational, informational, etc.)
- Greet visitors in the front office
- Lead a specific project or event (book fairs, graduations)
- Attend a school production or celebration
- Monitor testing
- Assist with career fairs or presentations
- Help with school productions (build sets, make costumes, etc.)
- Assist with student clubs and publications
- Assist in a district department

## **Safety, Health and Legal**

**Sign-in/check-out:** Each time a volunteer is volunteering on a Richland One campus, he or she must sign-in the volunteer component of V-Soft, wear a nametag and sign-out when leaving. This requirement is necessary for the following reasons:

1. Safeguarding our students and campus security is a priority.
2. In case of an emergency, the volunteer can be located.
3. While volunteering at a school for a specific purpose, individuals are covered by the district liability insurance if they are an approved volunteer and signed in.
4. Volunteer hours (individual and collective) are required for District, local, state and national award nominations.

**Mandated Reporters:** South Carolina Law (S.C. Code An. Section 63-7-310) requires certain professionals and other individuals, including volunteers, to report suspected cases of child abuse or neglect.

When a volunteer has a reasonable belief that a child's physical or mental health may be or has been adversely affected by abuse or neglect, they must report it to D.S.S. or to law enforcement.

- Report to the Richland county Department of Social Services when a parent or guardian is the alleged perpetrator (803-714-7444 – 24 hour hotline)
- Report to local law enforcement when the alleged perpetrator is not a parent, guardian or a person responsible for the child's welfare (Richland County Sherriff – 803-576-3000 or City of Columbia Police 803-535-3500).

A person who is required to report and fails to do so is guilty of a misdemeanor. Person convicted may be fined up to \$500, imprisoned for up to six months, or both.

**Safety:** Volunteers should be aware of the playground and classroom regulations, fire drill and lockdown procedures, and any specific classroom, school or program safety needs.

### **Volunteer Contact with Students:**

Citizens wishing to volunteer must complete the volunteer application process and be orientated prior to service. Richland School District One is entrusted with one of the communities most valued resources, the education of children through public funding. Approved volunteers are an important part of the process of educating all children to their highest potential. However, supervisors of volunteers must be diligent in all situations involving children so that personal conduct and judgment of volunteers can be monitored and deemed worthy of the public's trust while ensuring the safety and confidentiality of all. Volunteers should always be within sight and sound of staff.

**Hazardous Weather:** In the case of hazardous weather, volunteers should follow the same procedures as school staff. Information about the delayed opening of schools or early dismissals will be communicated to the local media, shown on Richland One TV (ROTV) on Time Warner Cable Channel 12, the district's Web site and recorded on Infophone at 231-7512.

**Bloodborne Pathogens:** Richland One volunteers should never come in contact with blood or other body fluid. If any situation occurs where bodily fluids are present, volunteers must obtain immediate assistance from a school staff person. The district has prepared and implemented a model exposure-control plan for all employees. This plan includes appropriate training for all employees as well as universal precautions that all employees must take when dealing with blood and other bodily fluids.

**Tax Deductions:** Volunteers may deduct the cost of transportation (gas, oil and parking) to and from home/work and the service site. See Internal Revenue Service Publication #526 for more information.

**Liability Insurance:** Approved Richland One volunteers that have signed in V-Soft and have completed the Volunteer Agreement are covered by the same liability insurance that covers district employees. School staff must report all liability claims to the risk management office and volunteer and mentoring programs coordinator.

**Personal Insurance Coverage:** District liability insurance does not cover injury or illness. In the event of injury or illness, the volunteer will be responsible for the payment of his or hers incurred medical expenses.

### **Field Trips and Transportation**

Board policy regarding supervision on field trips states: *Activity and field trips will be under the direct supervision of a school or district certified employee. The employee may ask parents/legal guardians to assist as chaperones. The employee will brief chaperones before each trip as to their responsibilities.*

*All field trip chaperones must be an approved Richland One Volunteer, even if only volunteering once during a school year.*

School board policy for chaperones on field trips requires a minimum ratio of one adult chaperone to ten students for all grade levels. For overnight field trips the ratio is increased to one adult chaperone to five students.

In order to maintain the safety and security of students, while on field trips it is important that following procedures are followed:

- All volunteers, including chaperones, must complete and submit a Richland One Volunteer application and be approved prior to service (even if only volunteering once during the school year as a chaperone). This process can take six- eight weeks. Individuals who do not complete this process will not be allowed to chaperone.
- Volunteers must wear identification when escorting students and adhere to all schedules and directions communicated by the school staff person in charge.
- Volunteers must follow all volunteer regulations and considerations when serving as a chaperone.
- No students are to be transported in a personal vehicle.
- Volunteering as a chaperone involves supervision on the school bus and volunteers are expected to travel on the bus with students from the school to the destination and from the destination to the school.
- Chaperones are expected to supervise all students put in their charge and not just those they are related to.

Please review AR IJOA-R Field Trips (Issued 4/09) for additional information.

**Richland School District One**  
**Volunteer Program Background Check Procedures**

1. Potential volunteers interested in volunteering should obtain a volunteer application form from the school/site they desire to volunteer with or download from [www.richlandone.org](http://www.richlandone.org) (click on the departments tab and select volunteer and mentoring programs). Submit the completed applications *a minimum of one month* prior to service to the school/location. New volunteers must have their ID scanned into V-Soft (Richland One visitor and volunteer tracking system). Applications submitted to the volunteer and mentoring programs coordinator will be forwarded to the school or returned to volunteers. Volunteers volunteering more than three times a school year must complete the volunteer application procedure. Chaperones must complete the volunteer application procedure, even if only volunteering once or twice a school year.
2. **Some circumstances that are similar to volunteer service are processed through alternative processes:**
  - *Volunteers and coaches (paid and unpaid) working with athletic teams are processed through Human Resources. Volunteers who help in the coaching of interscholastic athletics must meet the S.C. High School League's requirement of being employed by the board. (See board policy IDF-R.).* Please call 231-7418 for more information.
  - Individuals who are participating in field service internships and practicums are processed by Human Resources. Please call 231-7423 for more information.
  - Richland One employees desiring to participate in any duties/activities outside of their paid job description will complete the Volunteer Employee Form (found on the Intranet) and obtain advance permission from their immediate supervisor.
  - Businesses and organizations seeking to partner with a school or department in primary activities other than volunteering should contact the dropout prevention and community partnerships coordinator. Please call 790-6763 for more information.
3. The designated volunteer liaison at each site will review the application, ensure potential volunteer has been entered in V-Soft, identify a volunteer position that matches the interest, approve the use of district allocated funds to process the background checks and submit the application to the district volunteer and mentoring programs coordinator.
4. Richland School District One School Board Policy requires appropriate state criminal background checks on any individual recommended to be employed in a paid or volunteer position (*Board Policy GBEBDA*). Background checks will include, but not be limited to, SLED, Department of Social Services Child Abuse and Neglect Registry, National sex offender and web-based networking systems.

The cost of the volunteer background checks will be paid by the district; each site is allocated a number of volunteer background checks funded by the Office of Communications. Potential volunteers willing to fund their background checks can submit a check or money order with their application. Fees: \$16.00 (SLED \$8.00 and DSS \$8.00). Schools are responsible for issuing receipts when funds are received to process volunteer background checks.

*The district will conduct background checks on all new volunteers prior to their service in the same process as for new employees.*

The district volunteer and mentoring programs coordinator will conduct the necessary background checks, **a process that typically takes three - five weeks**. Schools and volunteers will be notified immediately if any concerns are identified.

**\*\***The District reserves the right to deny a request for volunteer services if a determination is in the best interest of student(s). This determination is within the sole discretion of the district.

### **State Law Enforcement Division (SLED) background checks**

The district will obtain a name-based criminal record history check from SLED on all persons prior to their initial employment (*or volunteer service*). The district will consider the results of all criminal record history checks on an individual basis. In determining how the information obtained impacts the individual's ability to be an effective employee (*volunteer*), the district will consider such things as severity of offense, age of the individual, direct impact of the offense on children, length of time since conviction or plea, restitution, conduct or remedial actions during probation, and participation in pre-trial intervention and/or expungement.

The district will not employ (*engage in volunteer service*) an individual who has been convicted of or plead guilty to a violent crime as outlined in law. Also, when making employment (*approval for volunteer service*) decisions, the district will carefully consider information relative to felony convictions as well as information that could result in the revocation or suspension of a professional certificate "for cause" as outlined in law.

### **National Sex Offender Registry checks**

State law mandates school districts perform a National Sex Offender Registry check on all new employees, whether employed on a full-time, part-time, regular, interim or temporary basis, and *all volunteers* who work in a school on an interim or regular basis as mentors, coaches, chaperones or any other capacity resulting in direct interaction or contact with students.

The district will not permit individuals whose names appear in the National Sex Offender Registry or individuals who have been required to register as sex offenders pursuant to state law to work or serve in the district in any capacity. V-Soft conducts and documents the required National Sex Offender Registry check.

*(Cf. [GCF](#), [GCG](#), [IJOA](#), [IJOJ](#)) - Adopted 7/27/10*

Should a potential volunteer's criminal background check raise any questions or concerns, the application will be shared with district hiring staff for consideration. If it is determined that the volunteer is not appropriate for service, the volunteer coordinator will mail a letter to the individual and notify the school/site volunteer liaison via e-mail. All information will be kept confidential.

If an applicant desires to contest the determination of denied for volunteer service, they may do so in writing and include additional documentation for consideration. If it is determined that the volunteer is not appropriate for service, the volunteer coordinator will mail a letter to the individual and notify the school volunteer liaison via e-mail.

5. Volunteers must be at least 18 years of age. Persons under the age of 18 may be allowed to provide volunteer service provided they are: A) Approved by the Principal/Director where services will be provided, B) Have submitted a signed letter of permission from their parent/legal guardian and, C) Submitted a signed letter of reference from an adult that is not a family member (teacher, coach, pastor, etc.).
6. Volunteers over the age of 18 but without a social security number may be permitted to volunteer if they have: A) Been interviewed by someone at the school, B) Provided two signed reference letters with contact information and, C) Attended an orientation. Schools may contact references for further information. Volunteers in such a circumstance may be students from another country studying at an institution of higher education or non-citizen employees of an organization working temporarily in the United States.
7. Upon receipt of a clear background check, the volunteer and mentoring programs coordinator will send an email (or letter) of approval to the volunteer and copy the volunteer liaison. A file will be prepared containing the completed Volunteer Application (Richland One and DSS forms) and approve the volunteer in V-Soft. The file will be maintained in the Office of Communications in a locked filing cabinet.
8. School volunteer liaisons will coordinate with school staff to oversee the volunteer's service at the school. This coordination includes placement/assignment, orientation, supervision, periodic evaluation, timely recognition and the necessary termination of volunteers when applicable.

All Volunteers will be orientated on the following:

- Mission
- Purpose of volunteer program and partnerships
- Volunteer guidelines and code of volunteer conduct
- Safety and security issues
- Confidentiality
- Transportation
- Dress code
- Liability insurance coverage
- Volunteer Agreement
- Points of contact
- Mandated Reporting
- First Amendment

Confidentiality is imperative. Sharing stories about the experiences in schools is important for community support of education and the recruitment of volunteers; however, it cannot be done in a manner that is harmful or conflicts with established volunteering requirements. Volunteers must protect the rights and privacy of any students' academic or personal information.

In order to be considered an approved volunteer, new volunteers are required to attend a new volunteer orientation at the site of service and read and sign the "Volunteer Agreement".

9. Volunteers must sign-in V-Soft during school hours, wear a nametag and sign-out before leaving each act of service. Volunteers serving outside of the school day shall sign-in and out as instructed by their staff supervisor. The National Network of Partnership Schools considers

audiences of student performances or events volunteer hours. Background checks are not necessary for audiences.

10. If a volunteer's driver's license is scanned in and is matched against the National Sex Offender Registry, office personnel will compare the identification to the picture of the database.
  - If the picture is unclear, check the date of birth, middle name, and other identifying information, such as height and eye color.
  - If the pictures or identifying characteristics are clearly not of the same person, press NO on the screen.
  - The person will then be issued a badge and general procedures will be followed.
  - *Note: If there is a false positive, the alert will come up the first time they visit each campus. Please make any staff member operating Raptor aware of this false positive result.*

If it appears that there is a match:

- Compare the ID with the database. If they appear to be the same person, press YES. A screen that says, "Are you sure?" will pop up, press YES again.
- Remain calm and ask the person to take a seat and refer to designated school official(s). Do not go into detail or give further explanations.
- The visitor may ask for his/her ID back and want to leave – comply with this request.
- Appropriate parties (the School Resource Officer, Law Enforcement, and district/campus administrators) will automatically be notified by e-mail, text message or on their cell phones of the problem and will respond. Standby for instructions.

*Updated July 2015*