

## VOLUNTEER PROCEDURES

### **MCPS Volunteer Procedures:**

All schools welcome volunteers from the community. This may include parents, grandparents, college students and other individuals. In addition, agencies such as Flagship, Missoula Aging Services, University of Montana and many others regularly place volunteers in the District.

MCPS requires that volunteers who have unsupervised access to MCPS PreK-12 students go through a criminal background check (see [Policy 5122](#)) and be approved for this level of work with students. Unsupervised access means that the appointed volunteer will have contact with students while not in the presence of an MCPS employee or other individual that has gone through a fingerprint check (flagship coordinators go through a fingerprint check, so they can supervise volunteers for example). If a volunteer is always working with student while in the presence of an employee, then the volunteer does not need a background check.

The cost for a criminal background check is \$6.00. Volunteers are asked to pay this fee; if there is a financial hardship, the District will pay the fee so that the volunteer is not excluded from service. In addition, each volunteer must register so that they are included in the District's volunteer management database. All MCPS staff can access the volunteer database by obtaining a login from the volunteer coordinator. Access to the database allows MCPS staff to view volunteers' status for supervised/unsupervised access to students.

The District will work with agencies that provide volunteers to schools to ensure the background check procedure is implemented. Some of these agencies already do background checks and the District will facilitate an agreement so that the volunteer does not have to go through duplicate checks.

### **Here is the process for volunteers to register in the District and go through a criminal background check (if applicable):**

1. Volunteers should complete a [Volunteer Registration form](#). This is available either online, as a downloadable [PDF](#), or from any MCPS school or the Central Administration Building. Volunteers may submit a completed form online or directly to the office of the school where they plan to volunteer. If they plan to volunteer at multiple schools, they only need to turn in one copy of these forms. All materials should be sent to the volunteer coordinator, in the Superintendent's Office at the Administration Building.
2. Volunteers should also complete a [Confidentiality Agreement](#) and submit it to the office of the school where they plan to volunteer. The form helps volunteers understand that they should not share information about students to others.
3. Volunteers working unsupervised with students must complete a [Background Check Form](#)\*. This form can be completed online, mailed or hand-delivered to the volunteer coordinator in the Superintendent's Office at the Administration Building.
4. If you are interested in becoming a volunteer/applied learning professional and have not previously registered as a volunteer with MCPS, you must complete the comprehensive [Applied Learning Professional application](#). Information collected, allows MCPS to match professionals with students seeking an applied learning experience. An Applied Learning Professional is anyone with specific job experiences and skill sets willing to mentor, job shadow, or provide an internship for an MCPS high school student. Providing an applied learning experience outside the normal classroom setting.
5. To better understand the policies, procedures and available resources for MCPS volunteers, download the [Volunteer Handbook](#) or pick up a copy at any school.

More information is available on the volunteer program webpage, which is accessible on the District's website.

All newly appointed employees, hired employees, or unsupervised volunteers must submit and pass a criminal based background check prior to beginning their assignment in any MCPS building. In addition, a fingerprint criminal background investigation is also required.

### **In accordance with [Policy 5122](#):**

It is the policy of the Board that any finalist recommended for hire to a paid position or appointed as a volunteer with the District involving unsupervised access to students in schools, as determined by the Superintendent, shall be required to submit to a name-based and/or fingerprint criminal background investigation conducted by an appropriate entity prior to consideration of the recommendation for employment of the Board or appointment by the administration. Any offer of employment or appointment shall be contingent upon the results of the name-based and/or fingerprint criminal background check, which must be acceptable to the Board and/or the administration in its sole discretion. Unsupervised

access to students means that the finalist recommended for hire or the appointed volunteer will have contact with students while not in the presence of an individual who has passed a fingerprint criminal background investigation.

The following applicants for employment, as a condition of employment, shall be required as a condition of any offer of employment to authorize, in writing, a name-based and/or fingerprint criminal background investigation to determine if he or she has been convicted of certain criminal or drug offenses:

- a certified teacher seeking full or part-time employment within the District;
- education support personnel seeking full or part-time employment within the District;
- an employee of a person or firm holding a contract with the District if the employee is assigned to the District and is given unsupervised access to students;
- substitutes (both classified and certified)
- a volunteer who is given unsupervised access to students.

Any requirement of an applicant to submit to a fingerprint background check shall be in compliance with applicable federal regulations. If an applicant has any prior record of arrest or conviction by any local, state, or federal law enforcement agency for any offense other than a minor traffic violation, the facts must be reviewed by the Superintendent or his/her designee, who shall decide whether the applicant shall be declared eligible for appointment or employment. Arrests resolved without conviction shall not be considered in the hiring process unless the charges are pending.