

Administrative Procedure 555

Business Administration

VOLUNTEERS

BACKGROUND

The Westmount Charter Board recognizes the valuable contributions volunteers make to support student learning, school activities, extracurricular opportunities, and a positive school culture. Volunteers enhance the educational experience for students and foster meaningful partnerships among the school, families, and the broader community.

Westmount Charter School (WCS) values volunteer involvement while maintaining safe, respectful, inclusive, and privacy-conscious learning environments. Volunteers are expected to support the school's mission, vision, and values and to conduct themselves in a manner that promotes student well-being, safety, dignity, and confidentiality.

DEFINITION

Volunteers are individuals who assist the school and/or students in educational, extracurricular, or supportive activities under the direction and supervision of a teacher or administrator. Volunteers may support classrooms, extracurricular activities, school events, field trips, and other school-related activities.

Volunteers do not include guest speakers, presenters, visitors to the school, parents assisting only their own child, School Council members, or Charter Board members acting within their governance role.

Activities involving a position of trust or responsibility with students, particularly those involving unsupervised access, recurring interaction, transportation of students, overnight supervision, or direct responsibility for student well-being, may require a Police Information Check (PIC) and Vulnerable Sector Check (VSC), as determined by the Principal or designate. This may include volunteer drivers (see Administrative Procedure 556 - Volunteer Drivers) and other volunteer roles for which the nature of the activity warrants additional screening.

PURPOSE

1. Volunteers provide support to schools and students as resource persons or through supportive services under the direction of school staff.
2. Volunteers who act as resource persons are individuals:
 - 2.1 Who have a relevant area of experience and expertise;
 - 2.2 Who are involved in activities on a short-term basis to enhance the education program; or
 - 2.3 Whose participation is planned and supervised by a teacher or administrator.
3. Volunteers who provide support services assist teachers or groups of teachers directly or indirectly in achieving educational objectives by providing non-instructional services.
4. WCS is committed to ensuring volunteer involvement supports student learning while maintaining student safety, dignity, confidentiality, and privacy in accordance with applicable legislation, including the *Protection of Privacy Act* (POPA) and the *Access to Information Act* (ATIA).
5. A volunteer may not be assigned to support a teacher or classroom without the teacher's knowledge and agreement.
6. All volunteer positions must have a specified purpose and be sponsored by a certificated staff member or administrator.

GENERAL

1. Volunteer Eligibility and Approval
 - 1.1 Any individual participating in a volunteer capacity is required to:
 - 1.1.1 Complete and sign the Volunteer Registration Form obtained from the website or school office;
 - 1.1.2 Review and acknowledge volunteer expectations and confidentiality requirements;
 - 1.1.3 Sign in and out at the school office;
 - 1.1.4 Wear school-issued volunteer or visitor identification, where required; and
 - 1.1.5 Work under the direction of a certificated staff member or administrator.
2. Volunteer Identification and Screening Requirements
 - 2.1 Volunteer identification cards or visitor identification may be issued by the school only after a school administrator or designate, or the Superintendent, has reviewed and approved a complete volunteer application package, where applicable to the volunteer role.
 - 2.2 To be considered complete, a volunteer application package shall include the following, as applicable to the volunteer role:
 - 2.2.1 A completed Volunteer Registration Form;
 - 2.2.2 A current Police Information Check (PIC) and Vulnerable Sector Check (VSC), where required for Category A volunteer activities, as determined by the Principal or designate; and
 - 2.2.3 Disclosure by the applicant of any criminal charges or convictions that may be relevant to the volunteer role.
 - 2.3 Volunteer personal information collected as part of the application and screening process shall be collected, used, stored, and protected in accordance with POPA and Westmount Administrative Procedures.
 - 2.4 The Principal or designate shall determine screening requirements based on the nature of the volunteer activity, degree of student interaction, level of supervision, and position of trust or responsibility involved.
 - 2.5 Volunteer identification cards remain the property of Westmount Charter School and may be revoked at the discretion of the school administration.
 - 2.6 If an applicant or security clearance discloses a criminal record, the Principal and Superintendent shall review the applicant's suitability, considering:
 - 2.6.1 The type and seriousness of the offence;
 - 2.6.2 The age of the offence;
 - 2.6.3 The volunteer role being considered;
 - 2.6.4 Whether the offence impacts the applicant's suitability for the role;
 - 2.6.5 Any risk to the student or staff safety and well-being; and
 - 2.6.6 Any additional factors deemed relevant.
 - 2.7 Volunteer approval may be denied or revoked where concerns exist regarding student safety or the integrity of the learning environment.
3. Notification of Criminal Charges
 - 3.1 Volunteers must notify school administration if charged with a criminal offence while serving in a volunteer role, excluding minor traffic violations.

- 3.2 Depending on the nature of the charge and its relationship to volunteer duties, a volunteer may be suspended from duties pending review.
 - 3.3 Failure to disclose relevant criminal charges or convictions may result in removal from volunteer activities.
4. Confidentiality, Privacy, and Personal Information
- 4.1 Volunteers are expected to protect the privacy and confidentiality of all students, staff, parents/guardians, and school information in accordance with POPA, ATIA, and Westmount Administrative Procedures. While volunteering, individuals act on behalf of WCS and are expected to uphold the same standards of confidentiality and responsible information handling as staff.
 - 4.2 Volunteers may see, hear, or access confidential or personal information only to the extent necessary to support their approved volunteer role and are expected to treat all such information as private and confidential.
 - 4.3 Volunteers shall not:
 - 4.3.1 Discuss student, staff, or family information outside the school setting;
 - 4.3.2 Share confidential information with other volunteers, parents/guardians, or community members;
 - 4.3.3 Access student records, personal files, student information systems, or confidential school records except where explicitly authorized and required to fulfill an approved volunteer role under staff supervision; or
 - 4.3.4 Use information learned while volunteering for personal purposes.
 - 4.4 Concerns regarding students or situations at school shall be directed to the classroom teacher or school administration and shall not be discussed with others.
 - 4.5 Confidentiality expectations continue after a volunteer's involvement with the school has ended.
5. Technology, Photography, and Social Media
- 5.1 Volunteers shall not access student information systems, educational technology platforms, school accounts, or digital systems unless specifically authorized.
 - 5.2 Volunteers shall not photograph, video record, or share images, student work, or school activities using personal devices unless explicitly authorized by school staff for school-related purposes.
 - 5.3 Student information, images, or school activities shall not be posted to personal social media accounts or shared publicly without school authorization.
 - 5.4 Volunteers shall follow school expectations regarding technology use, privacy, and responsible digital citizenship.
 - 5.5 Volunteers shall not download, copy, store, or retain student information, images, or school-related materials on personal devices or personal cloud-based accounts.
 - 5.6 V shall immediately report any accidental access to, disclosure of, or loss of student or confidential information to the school administration.
6. Safety and Duty to Report
- 6.1 Volunteers shall:
 - 6.1.1 Maintain appropriate professional boundaries with students.
 - 6.1.2 Follow school safety expectations and emergency procedures, including fire drills, lockdowns, and evacuations;

- 6.1.3 Immediately report injuries, incidents, or safety concerns to school staff; and
- 6.1.4 Follow visitor access and supervision expectations.
- 6.2 Under Alberta law, any person who has reasonable and probable grounds to believe a child may be in need of intervention has a legal duty to report the concern to Child and Family Services or police. Volunteers are encouraged to immediately notify school administration of concerns regarding student safety or well-being; however, notifying school staff does not replace the legal duty to report.
- 7. Revocation of Volunteer Privileges
 - 7.1 The Principal or Superintendent may suspend or revoke volunteer privileges where a volunteer:
 - 7.1.1 Breaches confidentiality or privacy expectations;
 - 7.1.2 Fails to follow staff direction or school expectations;
 - 7.1.3 Behaves in a manner inconsistent with student safety and well-being;
 - 7.1.4 Violates Board policies or Administrative Procedures; or
 - 7.1.5 Negatively impacts the school environment.

EXPECTATIONS OF VOLUNTEERS

1. All volunteers are expected to act in the best interests of students, staff, families, and the school community.
2. Volunteers shall:
 - 2.1 Treat students, staff, parents/guardians, visitors, and fellow volunteers with dignity, fairness, respect, and professionalism;
 - 2.2 Support safe, inclusive, welcoming, and respectful learning environments;
 - 2.3 Maintain appropriate professional boundaries with students;
 - 2.4 Follow the direction of school staff and established procedures;
 - 2.5 Model respectful language, behaviour, and citizenship;
 - 2.6 Communicate concerns through appropriate school channels; and
 - 2.7 Maintain confidentiality regarding all student, staff, and school information.
3. Volunteers shall not:
 - 3.1 Independently discipline students;
 - 3.2 Supervise students without authorization or staff direction;
 - 3.3 Access student records or confidential school information unless authorized;
 - 3.4 Communicate privately with students through personal email, text messaging, social media, or other personal communication platforms outside approved school-related activities; or
 - 3.5 Represent themselves as employees or spokespersons of Westmount Charter School.
4. Administrators and the Charter Board retain authority to request a volunteer cease activity or discontinue volunteering where appropriate.
5. Volunteers with concerns are encouraged to bring their concerns first to the school administration and, where unresolved, to the Superintendent.

Cross Reference: AP-560 Student Transportation Off-Campus
Protection of Privacy Act (POPA)
Access to Information Act (ATIA)

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APPENDIX A – VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

The following list outlines examples of volunteer activities that may occur within WCS. These examples are intended to provide guidance and are not exhaustive. Volunteer activities are categorized based on the nature of student interaction, level of supervision, and degree of trust or responsibility involved, as defined in Administrative Procedure 555 - Volunteers.

The Principal or designate reserves the right to determine the appropriate volunteer category and screening requirements based on the specific activity, level of supervision, and student contact.

Category A (*requires a Police Information Check (PIC) and a Vulnerable Sector Check (VSC)*):

Volunteer activities that involve a position of trust or responsibility with students, whether supervised or unsupervised, or involve recurring/direct interaction with students, may require a Police Information Check (PIC) and Vulnerable Sector Check (VSC).

Examples include:

- Chaperoning field trips (local, provincial, national, or international)
- Classroom assistance involving direct work with students under the direction and supervision of a teacher
- Working independently or in small groups with students
- Driving students to school-related events (refer to Administrative Procedure 556 - Volunteer Drivers)
- Supporting extracurricular activities, clubs, or athletics involving direct student interaction
- Assisting with assemblies, performances, drama productions, or concerts involving direct work with students
- Learning Commons (library) support involving direct interaction with students
- Overnight field trips or school travel
- Supporting wellness, cultural, leadership, or student engagement activities involving ongoing student interaction

Category B (*do not require a Police Information Check (PIC)*):

Volunteer activities that involve limited or incidental student interaction, are supervised, or primarily support school operations, may not require a Police Information Check (PIC).

Examples include:

- Bulletin board development and maintenance
- Landscape or school beautification projects
- Bottle drives and fundraising activities
- Building or taking down drama sets when students are not present
- Parking support for school or community events (ex. Stampeder games)
- Parent information meeting or workshop set-up
- Staff appreciation events
- Silent auctions or fundraising coordination
- Organizing volunteers for special school projects
- Classroom parent representative for communication purposes
- Textbook issue and collection
- Scholastic Book Fairs
- Learning Commons (library) shelving and organizational support
- Magazine, booklet, or campaign coordination
- Volunteer coordination
- Fundraising coordination
- Assembly or event set-up and clean-up
- Supporting school celebrations, community events, or hospitality functions

Volunteer activities may be reclassified at the discretion of the Principal or designate if the nature of the activity changes or involves increased student interaction, supervision, or responsibility.