

<u>Section I:</u> Instructional Goals and Objectives	Knox County Board of Education Policy		
	Descriptor Term: School Volunteers	Descriptor Code:	Issued:
		I-260	7/95
		Reviewed:	Revised:
	5/17	8/12	

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The Knox County Board of Education welcomes the assistance of volunteers in supporting a high quality educational experience for students in our school system. The Board recognizes that school volunteers can enhance student learning and achievement in a variety of ways. We gratefully acknowledge that the involvement of volunteers, coupled with other family and community engagement activities, can be critical to our success in effectively educating every child in the Knox County Schools. The Board appreciates the willingness of committed and qualified individuals to serve in our schools as volunteers, and this policy seeks to define the parameters for productive, educationally-beneficial and safe volunteerism in our schools.

The Board endorses a volunteer program in the schools¹ and encourages principals to welcome volunteers in their school to augment and assist the school staff in providing an excellent education for all students. Each school is expected to have a parent-teacher-volunteer support group unless excused by the Director of Schools and the Chair of the Board.

For the purposes of this document, a volunteer is defined as an individual not paid by the Knox County Schools (KCS) who spends time in direct contact with either an individual or group of students at any time on school grounds or who may provide time free of charge to support school related activities.

All volunteers must be approved by the principal and shall serve under the supervision and direction of the professional personnel of the school to which they are assigned. Volunteers may assist Knox County Schools' staff in the execution of their teaching and administrative duties, but school staff members retain the responsibility for the appropriate conduct of all activities. Volunteers may not provide instruction unless under the immediate oversight of a certified teacher. The primary instructional role of volunteers should be to reinforce skills taught by the professional staff.

School principals will approve appropriate tasks and activities for volunteers, which may be offered by teachers or other staff at the school level. The principal or the principal's designee shall be responsible for training and orienting both volunteers and certified staff in the appropriate use of volunteers to support the educational mission of the school. Volunteers should receive orientation or training for the specific tasks they will be asked to perform.

To protect the KCS students and staff, the Knox County Schools reserves to right to collect certain information about volunteers who enter the school building and may potentially be in contact with students. Depending on the type of volunteer activity proposed, volunteers must submit to a background check and/or provide information about themselves.² The Director of Schools will establish a procedure that delineates the type of background information that is collected for specific volunteer activities.

Volunteers working within the Knox County Schools are expected to adhere to the following standards of conduct:

- Volunteers shall treat all students equally regardless of gender, race, religion, or culture and refrain from any comments that can be construed as racist, sexist, or harassing.

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- Disciplinary issues should immediately be referred to the student’s teacher.
- Should a student disclose to a volunteer instances of brutality, neglect, physical or sexual abuse or intent to harm himself or herself, the volunteer must report that to the school principal or teacher immediately.³
- Volunteers may not be in the possession of or under the influence of alcohol or illegal substances.⁴
- Volunteers will respect all statutory and regulatory requirements concerning student privacy and will not share any student information to which they may be exposed in the course of their duties.

The Board of Education may, at its discretion, defend and/or indemnify volunteers against loss, damage, or claims, depending upon the facts and circumstances of each instance. Volunteers shall at all times cooperate with the Board of Education’s investigation and defense of any such loss, damage, or claim. The Board may withdraw its indemnification or defense if the volunteer does not cooperate or continue in such cooperation.

Volunteers serve at the pleasure of the Knox County Schools. The Director of Schools or any school principal may decline the services or continued service of any volunteer at any time.

The principal of each school should ensure that volunteers receive appropriate recognition for their services.

Legal Reference:

1. TCA § 49-6-7001.
2. T.C.A. § 49-5-406 & 413
3. T.C.A. § 37-1-403 & 605
4. T.C.A. § 39-17-432, 715