Welcome! We’re glad you’re here.
Welcome! Thanks for Volunteering!

This orientation is designed to provide school volunteers with an overview of important safety and compliance information. It will summarize key state and federal laws with which you need to be familiar. We will also inform you about your responsibilities as a volunteer.

A wide range of issues will be addressed, however the common thread is school safety - ensuring a safe and positive learning environment for students as well as a positive work environment for staff and volunteers.
Don’t Hesitate to Ask!

What do you need to know?

The first thing to remember is if you have any questions about safety, school policies or your responsibilities, please just ask! You can ask your supervisor, school office staff, or any district office staff member.

Thanks for helping to maintain a safe and secure learning environment for the staff and students of our district!

Let’s get started!
Appropriate Volunteer Behavior
Volunteers are expected to observe all of the same professional boundaries as staff.

- Volunteers must be drug and alcohol-free while volunteering and must be professional in their words and behaviors.
- Volunteers must keep their focus on education, and their actions must have educational purpose.
- When you commit to volunteering, the students are counting on your presence. Keep your commitments to students and staff.
Confidentiality
Confidentiality of Student Information

Federal Educational Right to Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA)

- Student Information is confidential per federal law. FERPA gives parents access to their child's education records, an opportunity to seek to have the records amended, and some control over the disclosure of information from the records.
- In a school setting, you may have access to student names, addresses, phone numbers, pictures, academic information, behavior, discipline records or medical information.
- As a volunteer you are expected to maintain strict confidentiality, even within the building.
Policy for Internet Usage and Digital Communications

- Volunteers should be cautious with Internet-based communication. All communication with students should be as a group, not individually, and should be related to school activity only.
- School staff and volunteers should be prudent in the use of social networking sites. Students, their families and the public are always to be treated with the utmost respect.
- Volunteers should never take pictures of staff or students without explicit direction from staff.
- It would be inappropriate for a volunteer to be a social networking “friend” or to “follow” a student on social media sites.
Harassment, Intimidation & Bullying (HIB)
Harassment, Intimidation & Bullying (HIB) Strictly Forbidden

RCW 28A.300.285 defines “harassment, intimidation or bullying” as any act that:

- Substantially interferes with a student’s educational benefits, opportunities or performance
- Takes place on or immediately adjacent to school grounds, at any school-sponsored event, on school-provided transportation or at any official school bus stop
- Has the effect of physically harming a student or damaging a student’s property, knowingly places a student in fear of physical harm, or creates a hostile educational environment, including interfering with the psychological well-being of a student
- May be based on the “protected class” status (i.e. race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, parents’ marital status, familial status, and/or source of income or disability) of a person
Bullying Is a Common Occurrence in Schools

Bullying hurts - and the longer it goes on, the more pain it causes. People react differently to that pain. Some turn it on themselves, creating a sense of unworthiness that can easily result in a wide variety of self-destructive acts. Other people turn their anger and frustration on others. Bullying endangers the entire school community and can lead to other crimes against school personnel.

Many adults think that bullying is just a part of growing up. This is not true. Bullying is damaging, both to victims and bullies. Ignoring the realities of bullying is dangerous for the entire school community. Bullying is an early step in the continuum of violence. When bullying goes unchecked, it can lead to worse behaviors, such as using weapons, sexually harassing others, and even murder or suicide.
Is it Bullying or Fighting?

Bullying situations have three main characteristics:

- **Harm** - someone gets hurt physically, socially or emotionally
- **Unfair Match** - one person or a group does not have the physical, verbal or social skills to effectively contest the other person or group (and)
- **Repeated** - the harm and unfair match are repeated over a period of time

If you suspect harassment, intimidation or bullying among students, please speak to your supervisor.
Sexual Harassment
The Educator's Guide to Sexual Harassment (Thompson Publishing Group) defines sexual harassment as "an unwanted sexual or gender-based behavior occurring when one person has formal or informal power over the other." While sexual harassment behaviors are not new they are now defined, by recent legislation and court rulings, as illegal and as a form of discrimination. Sexual harassment can be verbal, nonverbal or physical.

The following three key elements determine if a behavior can be considered sexual harassment:

- The behavior is unwanted or unwelcome
- The behavior is sexual in nature or related to the gender of the person (and)
- The behavior occurs in the context of a relationship where one person has more formal or informal power over the other person.
What is Sexual Conduct?

Next, we'll look at sexual conduct between adults and students.

Washington state law defines sexual conduct as "any verbal or physical conduct by a school employee that:

- Is sexual in nature
- Is directed toward a kindergarten through grade 12 student
- Has the effect of unreasonably interfering with a student's educational performance (and)
- Creates an intimidating hostile or offensive educational environment."

Authorities have learned through experience that students rarely fabricate claims of sexual exploitation. Under Washington law, staff-to-student sexual conduct is not tolerated. All school staff members are mandatory reporters of sexual abuse of students. Volunteers should report any such suspected activity to school administration.
Sexual Conduct: Warning Signs

Sexual exploitation typically follows the predictable pattern of abuse. The steps include selection, testing, grooming, sexual activity and, finally, abandonment. Vulnerability seems to be the primary criterion for selection. People abuse children who they believe will not report them.

Staff members who become involved in sexual misconduct often exhibit early warning signs that can be recognized by others such as overly affectionate behavior, inappropriate non-education related contact, inappropriate non-professional behavior, and grooming.

Grooming is the process by which an adult perpetrator gradually builds a sexual relationship with a student whom they have targeted.
Sexual Conduct: Special Categories of Concern

In addition to sexual conduct that may originate in a traditional classroom, you should also be aware of two particular non-traditional teaching situations during which exploitation may occur:

- **Sports and Extracurricular Programs**
  Students involved in extracurricular programs are generally reluctant to report sexual molestation. The student often views the molester as a friend or mentor and is reluctant to get him or her in trouble.

- **Special Education Classrooms**
  Victims are often unable to stop abuse due to a lack of understanding of what is happening during abuse, the extreme pressure to remain silent out of fear, a need for acceptance from the abuser or having a dependent relationship with the abuser.
Sexual Conduct: Reporting Responsibilities

Sexual abuse is criminal sexual conduct involving sexual contact between the abuser and victim, and a significant age difference between the parties. Title IX imposes a duty on schools to protect children from sexual exploitation. School staff members are responsible for taking reasonable steps to provide for the safety and welfare of students.

Washington law requires a person who suspects a child has suffered abuse by a school employee or volunteer to immediately report the information to his/her supervisor or other person designated by the school board. Reporters must also notify CPS or a law enforcement agency within the county.
Child Abuse
Child Abuse: Washington Law

Washington’s Child Abuse Reporting Law, RCW 26.44.030, describes the responsibilities of adults to report suspected child abuse as well as proper procedures for doing so.

Reporting to local law enforcement meets the mandatory reporting requirements in the State of Washington. School employees also have the option to report to a local office of Child Protective Services, instead of local law enforcement.
Child Abuse: Emotional Abuse
Emotional abuse is a chronic act or omission that interferes with a child's psychological and social growth and development. Examples of emotional abuse include rejection, name calling, making excessive demands, exposure to family violence, blaming, threatening severe punishment, shaming and criticizing.

Emotional abuse can hurt as much as physical abuse. Emotional abuse may occur alone, but it often overlaps with physical abuse.

Child Abuse: Sexual Abuse
Child sexual abuse occurs when an adult or an older child forces sexual contact on a child under age 18. It includes touching, fondling, penetration or other sexual acts. Abusers may use bribes, threats, physical force, or may take advantage of the child's lack of knowledge.

Sexual abuse can be difficult to detect outside of a medical setting. Children do not easily disclose sexual abuse. When a child discloses that he or she has been abused, even though the information may be vague, it is usually true.
Child Abuse: Neglect

Neglect is the chronic or repeated failure to provide children with the basic necessities of life: food; clothing; shelter; medical care; attention to physical hygiene; adequate supervision and social and educational opportunities.

More children suffer from neglect in the U.S. than from any other form of child maltreatment.

Harm from neglect is not usually traceable to a single incident. It results from the accumulated effects of the many actions that did not occur for or on behalf of a child.
Child Abuse: How & What to Report

If you suspect that a child is being abused, report your concerns and information about the child to school administrators who will report to CPS or local law enforcement. It is always important to report to the building administrator. He or she will investigate possible abuse and determine an appropriate course of action to ensure the child's safety.

The report should include the following information, if known:

- Child’s name and address
- Name and address of child’s parents, guardians, or caretakers, as well as the names of any siblings
- The child’s age or date of birth
- Nature and extent of the abuse, including evidence of prior abuse
- Location of the child
- Explanation given for the abuse
- Any other information the reporter believes might be helpful
Child Abuse: Confidentiality

CPS or local law enforcement will keep the identity of a reporter confidential. However, this confidentiality may not prevent the reporter from testifying at a hearing if legal action is initiated.

Like most states, the State of Washington imposes penalties on school employees who knowingly and willfully fail to report. In Washington, a mandatory reporter who fails to report may commit a crime and can expect to face criminal penalties, a monetary fine, and/or civil suits for damages. Our district holds volunteers to the same reporting requirements as employees.
If a child discloses direct information to a volunteer, the volunteer should:

- Reassure the child that you, as a volunteer cares, that you believe them and that the abuse is not the their fault
- Let the child know that they have the right to be safe and did the right thing by telling
- Tell the child that action will be taken to get them help (and)
- Immediately give the information to the school official for action

Child Abuse: Timely Reporting
Washington law requires school employees to report suspected child abuse within 48 hours. Schools performing their own fact-finding process may discover additional information to help the student. However, timely reporting is still necessary to fulfill the law. Again, volunteers are held to the same reporting standards as staff in our district.
Bloodborne Pathogens (BBPs)
All school employees and volunteers are at some risk from exposure to bloodborne pathogens (BBPs). Adults in a school environment are exposed to germs, viruses and potentially infectious agents on a daily basis. After all, that’s part of working in any place with a high concentration of people. In particular, bodily fluids - including blood and vomit - carry the risk of disease.

Bloodborne pathogens are infectious microorganisms present in blood that can cause disease in humans. A BBP is carried - and potentially transmitted - through blood or another body fluid that contains traces of blood. BBPs may be present in blood from a wound. They may also be present in other bodily fluids which contain traces of blood such as vomit, saliva, mucus, semen, vaginal fluids and more.

Two of the most common types of BBPs are:
- Hepatitis B - known as IHBV
- Hepatitis C - known as HCV
BBPs can be
- Bacterial, such as staph and strep, or
- Viral, including hepatitis B, hepatitis C and HIV
Here are some facts about BBPs with which you should be familiar:

The viruses with which you are most likely to come into contact at school are hepatitis B (HBV) and cytomegalovirus (CMV).

- Hepatitis B (HBV) is the main focus of OSHA BBP regulations. HBV can be transferred from person to person via blood, saliva, semen or vaginal fluids—even if the fluids have dried.
- Hepatitis C (HGV) is the most recently identified type of hepatitis. It’s a viral disease that leads to inflammation of the liver. HCV’s risk to school staff and volunteers is very small.
- Hepatitis A (HAV) is not a BBP. It’s the most common form of hepatitis, and is the type most often identified with contaminated food in a restaurant or cafeteria.
- HIV is not easily transmitted in a school setting and cannot be transmitted through casual contact, such as shaking hands or working with an infected individual.
Follow Universal Precautions

To protect yourself, ALWAYS treat bodily fluids as if they are infected.

- Use Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) when possible if you come into contact with another person's bodily fluids. An example of PPE is disposable gloves from a first aid kit.

- If you come into contact with body fluids, wash your hands and/or affected body areas with soap under running water for at least 15 seconds. Carefully follow the school district's Exposure Control Plan - including notifying the school nurse or your primary care physician.

- Only specially-trained custodial staff members with proper equipment should attempt to clean up bodily fluids. Keep students away from fluids until trained and equipped staff arrives.
Restraint and Isolation
Restraint and Isolation

- Restraint and other uses of physical force may be used when necessary to prevent or minimize imminent bodily injury to self or others.
- Restraint and other uses of physical force may be used to protect district property if deescalation interventions have failed or are inappropriate.
- Staff will use the minimum amount of restraint and isolation appropriate to protect the safety of students and staff.
- Restraint, isolation, or other forms of reasonable physical force will not be used as a form of discipline or punishment.
As a district, we are grateful to our volunteers. Each year, we have nearly 2000 volunteers working in our school district. We know, as a community, that our combined efforts to provide a safe learning environment for all students is our primary goal. As a district we know that volunteers play a critical role in making sure that every student is known, valued and supported.

If at anytime you are unsure about your time in the classroom, on the playground or on the athletic field, we encourage you to reach out to a supervisor, school administrator or our staff in Human Resources with your questions.

Thank you for volunteering!