

## **8.8 VOLUNTEER SERVICE**

Philosophy and Expectation: Vanguard Academy believes that parent involvement is key to a successful school and optimal student achievement. Parents who enroll their children in Vanguard Academy should do so with the understanding that their involvement is crucial to the success of their child's education and of the school.

Parents/families are expected to contribute 15 - 30 volunteer hours per school year. Volunteer opportunities are diverse in nature to accommodate individual circumstances. Parents will be expected to put forth their best efforts in contributing volunteer hours at Vanguard Academy. We would prefer parent involvement, but if parents feel they are unable to fulfill this volunteer requirement, the option of a donation in lieu of their volunteer hours at a minimum price equal to cost of the average school aide's hourly rate is available.

### **Responsibilities and Expectations:**

A "volunteer" at Vanguard Academy is any person who donates service to the school without pay or other compensation, except for expenses actually and reasonably incurred as approved by school administration or through the Business Manager.

Volunteers will perform volunteer services under the supervision or direction of an assigned school employee, administrator, or board member and shall have the approval of school administration to perform such volunteer services. Volunteers are expected to follow the direction of those to whom they have been assigned and to conform to all applicable laws, rules, and policies. Failure to do so may give rise to terminating the volunteer from service.

If at any point during volunteer service the assigned school employee, administrator, or board member believes that there is a conflict of interest with the volunteer they are authorized to remove the volunteer from service for the day. The facts leading to temporary removal of a volunteer from service will be reviewed by the Board and Administration. After review of relevant information, the Board and Administration will determine if the person will be authorized to continue providing volunteer service. Once a determination has been made the volunteer will be contacted by the Director, or the Board Chair to discuss the results.

While volunteering at Vanguard Academy, volunteers may handle confidential information. It is the expectation of the school that volunteers shall keep said information in the strictest confidence. As such, when dealing with sensitive information, volunteers will be required to sign a Vanguard Confidentiality Agreement. If a volunteer is not clear as to the confidential nature of documents or information, he/she is expected to ask the supervisor for clarification.

In accordance with state law, students must not be left unattended with anyone not having been fingerprinted or without a background check. Therefore, Vanguard Academy will require all potential volunteers who are given significant unsupervised access to a student in connection with their volunteer assignment to submit to fingerprinting and a criminal background check as a condition of volunteer appointment and as outlined in policy BACKGROUND CHECKS.

The following volunteers will be required to be fingerprinted and have a background check prior to their volunteering their service per our background check policy:

- Any volunteer who assumes the responsibility for the supervision of a student or students for any given length of time. More specifically, this is any volunteer who may be the sole supervisor of a student or students at any given time, such as one-on-one reading tutors, or if the teacher were required to leave the classroom for a period of time.
- Any volunteer who accompanies the class on field trips
- Any volunteer who is involved in after-school programs
- At no time shall any volunteer be permitted to be alone in a room with a student, even those volunteers who have been fingerprinted and had a background check.
- Any parent who plans to volunteer a significant amount of time at the school is highly encouraged to have the fingerprinting and background check done. Vanguard Academy will designate on the school volunteer badge those who have been fingerprinted and have had a background check.

The associated costs are to be paid for by the applicant; however, Vanguard will pay the costs for the background check for any volunteer who qualifies for the free or reduced lunch program. Information regarding fingerprinting and background checks is available at the school office and on the school website. If the background check is returned with anything other than a cleared status, the case will be reviewed by the Board Executive Committee to determine if the individual will be allowed to volunteer at the school.

In accordance with school and state policy, all volunteers must maintain strict neutrality regarding religion while performing volunteer services for a school.

Serving as a volunteer in the educational setting is not an entitlement and schools are not required to utilize volunteer services. The opportunity to volunteer may be denied or terminated by school administration where services are no longer needed or where the presence of the volunteer may be disruptive to the educational environment.

Immunity from Liability: Volunteers performing volunteer services under the general supervision of a school employee shall be immune from liability with respect to any decisions or actions, other than in connection with the operation of a motor vehicle, taken during the course of those services unless it is established that such decisions or actions were grossly negligent, not made in good faith, or were made maliciously.

Approved: 9/9/2015