



**Date:** November 27, 2024 **Agenda Item:** 8.8  
**To:** Board of Trustees  
**From:** Shawna Warren, Superintendent  
**Originator(s):** Shawna Warren, Superintendent  
**Subject:** **Administrative Procedure 315: Volunteers**

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**Background:**

*Administrative Procedures are the written directives, procedures and assignment of responsibilities established and approved by the Superintendent that direct the implementation of and achievement of desired outcomes of Board policy, Division Vision, Mission and Values, and the effective operation of the Division ([AP 205 Developing Administrative Procedures](#)).*

Administrative Procedures are reviewed and developed on a regularly scheduled basis.

*Administrative Procedure 315: Volunteers*, has been reviewed and updated as part of the regular review schedule. The Administrative Procedure and new Exhibit were brought to the October Administrative Council meeting to gather input from all Principals.

Sturgeon Public Schools recognizes the contributions made by volunteers through assisting, supporting and enhancing school programs. Volunteering in schools is a privilege and not a right, and therefore the Principal or designate may deny or revoke permission for a volunteer to work in school(s). The Division has a legal obligation to ensure a level of Duty of Care and Standard of Care to take reasonable measures to care for and to protect all students to an appropriate level or standard.

Volunteers must maintain the strictest confidentiality about students, staff, parents and the school. This reflects not only the need for volunteers to follow ethical practices but also privacy provisions under the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FOIP). This responsibility is captured in the section 1(e) of the Act:

“employee”, in relation to a public body, includes a person who performs a service for the public body as an appointee, volunteer, or student or under a contract or agency relationship with the public body.

Volunteers have the same duties and responsibilities as regular employees in relation to privacy issues. This means that Sturgeon Public Schools has a responsibility to inform volunteers about our expectations relating to the protection of personal information and privacy.

Volunteers have the same duties and responsibilities as regular employees regarding sexual, physical and psychological harassment or abuse. In addition to the legal mandate above, it is important that volunteers and school staff realize their general responsibilities in the areas of ethics and confidentiality. Volunteers receive the trust of the students, parents, teachers and administrators of the schools in which they work. An important part of that trust is related to ethics and confidentiality.

*Administrative Procedure 315: Volunteers* has been updated to include an Exhibit which is an online form that all Volunteers will fill out each year to ensure all volunteers understand their responsibilities and expectations. Historically, it has been the Principal's responsibility to walk all volunteers through expectations, establish guidelines and ensure that school level practices adhere to legislation, all Division policies and administrative procedures. By adding an online form that all volunteers are required to read and consent to each year, the goal is to ensure clear, consistent and concise communication and foster safe, caring and welcoming learning and working environments across the Division.

**Status & Relationship to Superintendent Leadership Quality Standard (SLQS):**

This report aligns with the [SLQS](#) in the following way:

- |                    |  |
|--------------------|--|
| <b>COMPETENCY:</b> | (1) Building Effective Relationships   |
| <b>INDICATORS:</b> | f. facilitating the meaningful participation of members of the school community and local community in decision-making.  |
|                    |  |
| <b>COMPETENCY:</b> | (4) Leading Learning   |
| <b>INDICATORS:</b> | b. providing learning opportunities, based on research informed principles of effective teaching, learning and leadership, to support building the capacity of all members of the school community to fulfill their educational roles.   |
|                    |  |
| <b>COMPETENCY:</b> | (6) School Authority Operations and Resources  |
| <b>INDICATORS:</b> | e. establishing data-informed strategic planning and decision-making processes that are responsive to changing contexts; and<br>h. implementing programs and procedures for the effective management of human resources in support of mentorship, capacity building and succession planning. |
|                    |  |
| <b>COMPETENCY:</b> | (7) Supporting Effective Governance  |
| <b>INDICATORS:</b> | b. ensuring that all students and staff are provided with a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environment that respects diversity and fosters a sense of belonging.  |

**Governance Implications:****Education Act**

Board responsibilities

33(1) A board, as a partner in education, has the responsibility to

(d) ensure that each student enrolled in a school operated by the board and each staff member employed by the board is provided with a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environment that respects diversity and fosters a sense of belonging.

**Policy 110: Welcoming Inclusive, Safe and Healthy Environments**

The Board believes that all members of the school community, including students, staff members, and community members, have the right to learn, work and volunteer in environments that respect: equity, diversity, inclusion, and human rights. Such environments create the conditions where everyone can prosper.

**Policy 115: Sexual Orientation and Gender Identities**

All members of the school community and those employed by the Board have the right to learn and work in an environment free from prejudice, harassment and discrimination. This right is guaranteed under the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, *Alberta Human Rights Act* and *Alberta Education Act*. As such, these rights are to be supported and enforced so that all members of Sturgeon Public Schools may work together in inclusive, equitable, safe, healthy and respectful environments.

**Administrative Procedure 205: Developing Administrative Procedures**

Administrative Procedures are the written directives, procedures and assignment of responsibilities established and approved by the Superintendent that direct the implementation of and achievement of desired outcomes of Board policy, Division Vision, Mission and Values, and the effective operation of the Division.

Administration is prepared to respond to questions at the November 27, 2024, Public Board meeting.

**Attachment(s):**

1. AP315: Volunteers - [Website Version](#)
2. AP315: Exhibit 1 - SPS Volunteer Guidelines and Confidentiality Agreement - [Website Version](#)
3. AP315: Volunteers - Tracked Changes

## Administrative Procedure 315: Volunteers

Responsible Administrator: Associate Superintendent Human Resources

### PURPOSE

Sturgeon Public Schools recognizes the contributions made by volunteers through assisting, supporting and enhancing school programs.

### DEFINITION

Duty of Care: shall mean a legal principle which identifies the obligations of individuals to take reasonable measures to care for and to protect all students to an appropriate level or standard. Students are vulnerable by default, however, if they cannot protect, defend, or assert themselves, permanently or temporarily because of age, disability, or circumstances, then that duty becomes more intense and the standard higher.

Standard of Care: refers to the degree or level of service, attention, care and protection that one owes another according to the law; usually this is considered with the laws relating to negligence. The required standard varies according to the circumstances of each situation.

Volunteer: Shall mean an individual who assists the school and/or students in curricular and/or extra-curricular activities, not including Division employees, guest speakers, presenters, special visitors to the school or School Council members while in their role as School Council members.

Vulnerable Sector Check: shall refer to an enhanced criminal record check. The type of record check was created in 2000 to protect children and vulnerable persons and is governed by section 6.3(3) of the Criminal Records Act.

### PROCEDURE

1. The school Principal shall establish guidelines for the involvement of volunteers in schools and shall ensure that school level practices adhere to all Division policies and administrative procedures and shall include the following:

1.1 The SPS Volunteer Guidelines and Confidentiality Agreement is completed annually by each volunteer through Rycor.

1.2 Task descriptions for classroom and out-of-classroom volunteers;

1.32 Specific orientation, training, and supervision by teachers for classroom and in-school volunteers;

1.43 Written expectations or specific guidelines including the willingness to be trained, confidentiality, suitability for volunteering and procedures for communicating absences;

1.54 Method of tracking volunteer activities and hours donated;

1.65 Method of recognizing volunteer service.

2. The school Principal shall ensure that volunteers taking part in field trips and in coaching and other responsibilities requiring sole-supervisory responsibility of students will provide the school with a current, within six (6) months, criminal record check and vulnerable sector verification before the volunteer can be assigned to such activities.

2.1 Ideally, volunteer opportunities shall generally be established to avoid the necessity of vulnerable sector verifications.

2.2 Criminal record check and vulnerable sector verification, if applicable, are to be renewed every three years.

2.3 If a volunteer moves schools within the Division, a new criminal record check and vulnerable sector verification, if applicable, is required.

3. Volunteers shall demonstrate a standard of care, expected in individual circumstances, that is of a reasonable or prudent person.

4. The standard of care shall be continuously utilized including a consideration of the following:

4.1 Performing or responding such that a reasonable person of average judgment, skill and experience, would be expected to do - or not do - under similar circumstances.

4.2 Continuously applying a consideration of the risks involved in any situation, given the nature of the activity, the participants, the setting, the availability of support or assistance, and the other relevant factors; and

4.3 Consideration of the consequences of an action - or lack of action - that a reasonable person of average judgment, skills, memory and experience would be expected to foresee.

5. A copy of school level practices will be ~~kept on hand at the school, forwarded to the Deputy Superintendent's office for information.~~

6. Volunteering in schools shall be considered a privilege and not a right, and therefore the Principal or designate may deny or revoke permission for a volunteer to work in school(s):

- a. If, in the opinion of the Principal, an individual is not needed in a voluntary capacity;
- b. If, in the opinion of the Principal, the volunteer is deemed unsuitable for a volunteer position;
- c. If the volunteer is deemed to be in breach of Board policies or Administrative Procedures; or
- d. If the volunteer behaves in a way that is contradictory to the Division's vision, mission or values.

7. The Principal has the final authority with respect to individuals serving in a volunteer capacity.

References:

[Policy 105: Vision, Mission and Values](#)

[Policy 110: Welcoming Inclusive, Safe and Healthy Environments](#)

[AP 300: Security of Personal and Division Information](#)

[AP315 Volunteers Exhibit 1: SPS Volunteer Guidelines and Confidentiality Agreement](#)

[AP870: Responsible Use of Technology Resources](#)

History

2020 Jan 29 Initial Approval

2023 Oct 25 Amended

2024 Nov 20 Amended



## SPS Volunteer Guidelines and Confidentiality Agreement

Please read the following confidentiality requirements for volunteers :

Volunteers must maintain the strictest confidentiality about students, staff, parents, and the school. This reflects not only the need for volunteers to follow ethical practices but also privacy provisions under the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FOIP). This responsibility is captured in the section 1(e) of the Act:

*“employee”, in relation to a public body, includes a person who performs a service for the public body as an appointee, volunteer, or student or under a contract or agency relationship with the public body.*

In accordance with this section, volunteers have the same duties and responsibilities as regular employees in relation to privacy issues. This means that Sturgeon Public Schools has a responsibility to inform volunteers about our expectations relating to the protection of personal information and privacy.

Volunteers have the same duties and responsibilities as regular employees regarding sexual, physical and psychological harassment or abuse. In addition to the legal mandate above, it is important that volunteers and school staff realize their general responsibilities in the areas of ethics and confidentiality. Volunteers receive the trust of the students, parents, teachers and administrators of the schools in which they work. An important part of that trust is related to ethics and confidentiality.

### **ORIENTATION: VOLUNTEER GUIDELINES AND EXPECTATIONS**

The principal of the school has the responsibility, in consultation with staff, to determine who will volunteer in the school and what form each school's volunteer program will take. The principal is guided in all decisions, including those related to volunteers, by Section 197 of the Education Act, as well as Sturgeon Public School Division policies and procedures.

All volunteers will read and sign the Volunteer Guidelines and Expectations Form annually. Volunteers must be made aware of the guidelines, expectations and limitations.

1. A volunteer must not share information about students, staff or other volunteers with other people. If a volunteer has a concern, they should bring the matter forward to the appropriate school staff or school administration.
2. If a volunteer has a challenge or issue with a student, they should redirect the matter to the student's teacher and/or speak with school administration.





3. If a volunteer has an issue or conflict with a teacher, they should first discuss the matter with that teacher and, if necessary, speak with school administration.
4. A volunteer cannot use their presence in the school as an opportunity to dialogue with teachers concerning their own child(ren)'s situation. Volunteers who wish to speak to a teacher about their own child(ren) should make an appointment for another time.
5. All volunteer work is done under the direction and immediate supervision of a teacher and may need to follow an appropriate work style to meet the expectations of each individual teacher.
6. The role of volunteers is viewed as a supportive one. Volunteers are not there to replace paid staff but to support and supplement work that is already being done within Sturgeon Public Schools.
7. Individual teachers shall decide whether they wish to utilize the services of volunteers. Every teacher has the option of deciding not to have volunteers in their classroom.
8. School administration must take responsibility to inform volunteers of school and Division rules regarding entrances, exits, emergency procedures, parking, access to staff areas, etc. All volunteers are expected to abide by the rules of the school and Division policies and procedures.
9. It is the school personnel's responsibility to ensure that volunteers are properly informed about their tasks and welcomed in the school.
10. It is the responsibility of the volunteer to do their assigned tasks to the best of their ability. A volunteer is expected to work cooperatively with all staff members and seek clarification whenever necessary.
11. A volunteer has the right to refuse a task if they feel that they are not properly prepared to do what is required. It is the responsibility of school personnel to give volunteers adequate on-the-job training.
12. The achievements of students are to be valued and their rights preserved. In the course of their service in schools, a volunteer may learn personal information about students and their families. A volunteer must keep all personal information they may come across in their role as volunteer confidential and must not discuss it with anyone, either inside or outside of the school, other than the school administration.
13. A volunteer is not, under any circumstances, to be placed in a situation where they are responsible for the direct supervision of students (one on one). Division volunteers will always be supervised by a teacher or school staff member when carrying out their duties.





14. All volunteers are welcome and valued, and we invite volunteers to use staff facilities while volunteering, including the staff room to store/access beverages and food. We ask that volunteers refrain from being in the staff room during recesses and lunch hours, as teachers often dialogue about confidential information as they collaborate and interact.
15. If you feel ill, please stay home and call the school office to inform the teacher that is expecting you.
16. As outlined in [AP 315: Volunteers](#); volunteers taking part in field trips and in coaching and other responsibilities requiring sole-supervisory responsibility of students will provide the school with a current criminal record check and vulnerable sector verification (to be renewed every three years) before the volunteer can be assigned to such activities. A Volunteer Criminal Record Check and Vulnerable Sector Verification is required for all volunteer coaches and those volunteers who accompany students on overnight field trips. Volunteer opportunities shall generally be established to avoid the necessity of vulnerable sector verifications.
17. Role model responsible use of technology resources - as outlined in [AP870: Responsible Use of Technology Resources Exhibit 2: Responsible Use of Technology Resources Protocol Students](#).
18. Volunteering in schools shall be considered a privilege and not a right, and therefore the Principal or designate may deny or revoke permission for a volunteer to work in school(s):
  - a. If, in the opinion of the Principal, an individual is not needed in a voluntary capacity;
  - b. If, in the opinion of the Principal, the volunteer is deemed unsuitable for a volunteer position;
  - c. If the volunteer is deemed to be in breach of Board policies or Administrative Procedures; or
  - d. If the volunteer behaves in a way that is contradictory to the Division's vision, mission or values.
19. The Principal has the final authority with respect to individuals serving in a volunteer capacity.

### **CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT**

Volunteers will not disclose confidential student information, images, or confidential school, department, or personnel records. Adhere to the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FOIP) and ensure that publishing personal information on the Internet or in publicly viewed files meets the Division's FOIP guidelines.



It is very important that each of our volunteers understands and accepts their own obligations of confidentiality required as a volunteer of Sturgeon Public School Division.

I understand and agree that:

- I will act at all times to preserve the confidentiality of all personal information of which I become aware during the course of my volunteer work with Sturgeon Public School Division.
- All information obtained by me in the course of my volunteer work will be held by me in strictest of confidence and not disclosed without the expressed consent of The Sturgeon Public School Division. This information includes, but is not limited to:
  - o Student information (includes student personal information)
  - o Business strategies
  - o Financial information
  - o Information and technology specific to The Sturgeon Public School Division
  - o Staff Information

This Confidentiality Agreement applies during the course of your volunteer work and following your volunteer work with The Sturgeon Public School Division. I acknowledge having received, read and understand, Administrative Procedure 315: Volunteers and 315: Exhibit 1: SPS Volunteer Guidelines and Confidentiality Agreement.

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

