

# CALGARY SCIENCE SCHOOL SOCIETY

Policy Title: **Volunteers**

Policy No. **4.07**

Legal Reference: Alberta Freedom of information and Protection of Privacy Act

**RATIONALE:** Volunteers provide an important contribution in supporting classroom teachers with activities inside and outside the school. The school community is strengthened through active and intentional parental involvement. Outdoor education programs are made possible through the commitment of parent volunteers who accompany the excursions to help ensure the safety of students through adequate supervision.

**POLICY:** The Board recognizes the value of volunteers and supports their role in maintaining the school's capacity to deliver dynamic educational experiences for children, while ensuring that the safety of students is a foremost consideration. The Principal will ensure adequate procedures are designed and implemented to determine the suitability of a volunteer to support school activities.

## **PRINCIPLES:**

1. Any person wishing to participate in a volunteer capacity during any school activity must consent to a security clearance from the Calgary Police Service.
2. The Principal must approve all volunteer applications and will exercise discretion in determining the eligibility of a volunteer.
3. Court issued documents relating to access and custody of children attending CSS take precedence over a security clearance report in determining volunteer eligibility.
4. The collection of all information under this policy complies with the Alberta Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FOIP).

First Reading November 4, 2008

Adopted November 4, 2008

Amended \_\_\_\_\_

## PROCEDURES

### Screening Process

- a) The volunteer screening process includes the completion of a *CSS Volunteer Registration Form*, a *Calgary Police Service Consent to Search and Disclosure of Personal Information Form*, and, when applicable, a driver authorization form, all available at the school office. All forms should be completed, signed, and submitted to the office by June 15<sup>th</sup> of the year prior to that in which the parent is required to undergo screening for. (This deadline allows sufficient time for processing volunteer applications prior to the outdoor education excursions that take place very early in the school year). **Note: Page 2 of the CPS Consent form must be signed by the applicant in the presence of the designated school contact person.**
- b) Volunteer applications will be processed and forwarded to the Calgary Police Services Security Clearance Unit before the end of each school year. Parents may be reimbursed the cost of this service by the school if they choose to submit a cheque requisition form with a receipt.
- c) Volunteer applicants who do not submit a registration form by the deadline noted in 1 (a) may obtain the documents from the school office at any time. The request will be submitted to the Calgary Police Service with the subsequent group application.

### Driver's Abstract

- a) Volunteers who may be required to drive students in the course of field trips or student participation in extracurricular activities (such as sporting events or fine arts programs) will, in addition to the security clearance procedures outlined in #1, also be required to fill out a *Driver Authorization Form* (available from the school office) and submit a driver's abstract prior to the volunteer activity. Abstracts may be obtained from an Alberta Registry office.

### Notification

- a) Upon receipt of a satisfactory security clearance check document and driver's abstract (if required), the Principal will consider the application and notify the potential parent volunteer of their eligibility to participate on school sponsored educational trips. **It is important for parent volunteers to understand that eligibility to participate does not guarantee involvement on any given excursion as the number of volunteers often exceeds the number of positions available.**
- b) In the event that a potential volunteer discloses a prior criminal conviction for which they haven't received a pardon, or the Security Clearance form comes back indicating the possibility of a criminal conviction, the Principal will invite the individual to meet and discuss the nature of the offence and whether there is a risk to engaging that person as a volunteer at CSS.

The Principal will make a determination as to the suitability of engaging that parent as a volunteer and will notify them accordingly.

#### Frequency

- a) Parents wishing to volunteer in the school where they might have any possibility of contact with students must complete the screening process upon registering a child in grade 4, then again in grade 7.
- b) All parents registering a child in grades other than 4 and 7 and who wish to volunteer must complete the screening process upon initial registration, then again according when their child registers in grade 7 (if applicable).
- c) Parents with multiple children in CSS will undergo the volunteer screening process upon admission of the first child and will repeat the process at least every three years thereafter until the last child is no longer attending the school.
- d) Parents who wish to volunteer in the years between those in which they must undergo the volunteer screening process will be required to annually disclose whether they have been convicted of any criminal offence since their last police information check (this disclosure will be on the volunteer application form).

#### **Volunteer Orientation**

- a) Parents wishing to volunteer in school activities are strongly encouraged to attend the annual general volunteer session.
- b) At the beginning of each school year those parents or guardians who are interested in volunteering for an overnight camp or off site excursion will attend a mandatory volunteer orientation session, where the following information will be shared:
  - Volunteer policy and selection criteria,
  - Guidelines and expectations of volunteers,
  - Roles and responsibilities of volunteers,
  - Specifics of the main annual volunteer opportunities (Camp Sweet, Fort Steele, Winter Camp, Bamfield Marine Sciences Center, Circle Tour),
  - The security clearance process for volunteers at CSS,
  - Implications of the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FOIP)* regarding student information that volunteers may become privy to in the course of their duties,
  - The requirement to submit a driver's abstract if they will, or may be, transporting students in their private vehicle.