



## **POLICY 2.53**

**5-M** I recommend that the Board approve development of the proposed **revised** Policy 2.53, entitled "Volunteers in Public Schools."

[Contact: Nat Harrington, PX 48227.]

### **Development**

### **CONSENT ITEM**

- This revision outlines enrollment procedures for school volunteers, including a requirement for such volunteers to undergo a Level I criminal background screening. The costs of the background screening of prospective volunteers will be borne by the School District. See paragraphs 4 and 6.
- Any prospective volunteer who has been convicted of criminal offenses as provided for in the recently enacted *Ethics in Education Act*, Chapter 2008-108, Laws of Florida, is prohibited from volunteering in positions with direct contact with students. See paragraph 6.
- The revised policy does not apply to an individual who visits a school for a one-time special event, such as guest speakers, celebrity readers, attending student performances, parents or family members who have lunch with their own child, career day special guests, and attendance at parent conferences. In such instances, the individual is viewed as a school visitor. See paragraph 2.
- It also sets forth the responsibilities for coordination, supervision and tasking of volunteers. See paragraph 7.
- Volunteers are prohibited from engaging in political or religious activities on district property.
- This revision also updates statutory references.

## POLICY 2.53

### VOLUNTEERS IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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3 1. **Purpose.** -- The purpose of this policy is to promote and encourage school  
4 volunteers in order to expand and enhance parental, community and civic  
5 involvement within schools while maintaining an adequate level of safety and  
6 security in the schools of the School District. This policy establishes the framework  
7 of volunteers serving in schools through the Palm Beach County Schools Volunteer  
8 Program known as VOLUNTEERS IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS, hereafter referred to as  
9 VIPS. The name of the Palm Beach County School Volunteer program shall be  
10 VOLUNTEERS IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS, hereafter referred to as VIPS.
- 11 2. **Applicability and Scope.**
  - 12 a. This policy applies to all volunteers and prospective volunteers in Palm Beach  
13 County District Schools.
  - 14 b. This policy shall not apply to: (1) adults who visit a school but have no ongoing  
15 individualized interaction with a student or students, including, but not limited  
16 to, adults who have been invited to speak at a class or assembly, to judge  
17 student or academic competitions, to give a performance, or to participate in  
18 other school programs; (2) a parent or legal guardian who is accompanying his  
19 or her child on a field trip or another type of occasional extra-curricular activity;  
20 and (3) members of the school advisory council and other school support  
21 organizations. A person who visits a school for a one-time special event,  
22 such as guest speakers, celebrity readers, attending student performances,  
23 parents or family members who have lunch with their own child, career day  
24 special guests, and attendance at parent conferences. These people are  
25 considered school visitors . They must sign in as visitors in the main office  
26 and school staff should provide them with appropriate direction. Under no  
27 circumstances may visitors or volunteers be left alone with students.
- 28 3. **Policy.** The School Board believes that the use of volunteers in schools of the  
29 District enhances the educational process for students and promotes community  
30 involvement in education. The School Board of Palm Beach County encourages  
31 volunteer participation by individuals and groups in School Board sponsored  
32 programs in local schools, in district central and area offices, and for School Board  
33 sponsored and supervised off-school campus activities before, during, and after  
34 regular school hours.
  - 35 a. A volunteer is a non-paid person functioning under the sponsorship of the  
36 Palm Beach County School District.

- 37 b. The School Board of Palm Beach County authorizes the Superintendent or  
38 his/her designee to approve volunteers to assist in organized school programs  
39 following the submission of an application, completion of a background check  
40 as provided herein, and upon successful completion of a volunteer orientation  
41 and training program as outlined in Florida State School Board Rule 6A-1.070  
42 6A-1.70. in accordance with State Board of Education Rules and Laws of the  
43 State of Florida.
- 44 4. **Enrollment Procedures for Volunteers.** Prospective volunteers must complete  
45 all VIPS registration forms and volunteer release as provided by the Department of  
46 Public Affairs/Office of Community Involvement.
- 47 5. **Status of Volunteers.** Volunteers may be used to assist district personnel in local  
48 schools and district programs. However, the instructional personnel retains  
49 responsibility for supervising, diagnosing, prescribing, instructing and evaluating  
50 students.
- 51 a. The acceptance and utilization of the services of any person on a voluntary  
52 basis shall be at the discretion of the School District, and the utilization of such  
53 services may be discontinued by the School District at any time.
- 54 b. Volunteers shall not engage in political or religious activities while on district  
55 premises and while performing district duties.
- 56 6. **Criminal Background Investigation.** In order to protect the safety and security  
57 of students and staff, volunteers must submit to a Level 1 criminal background  
58 investigation. The background check will be paid for and performed by the School  
59 District.
- 60 a. An individual who has been convicted of any of the criminal offenses  
61 enumerated in Section 1012.315, Florida Statutes, is prohibited from any  
62 volunteer activities which have direct contact with students.
- 63 7. **Responsibility.**
- 64 a. Principals and administrators are responsible for coordination and supervision  
65 of volunteers
- 66 b. Principals and administrators are responsible for identifying appropriate tasks  
67 for volunteers.
- 68 c. The Department of Public Affairs/Office of Community Involvement is  
69 responsible for coordinating the background checks on volunteers.
- 70 d. The Superintendent shall issue directives concerning school volunteers  
71 included but not limited to more stringent guidelines for screening as deemed

72                   necessary.

73   STATUTORY AUTHORITY: Fla. Stat. §§ 1001.41, 1001.42, 228.041(24), FS; ~~230.2311-~~  
74   ~~2312, FS; 236.0873, FS; 6A-170, FAC~~

75   LAWS IMPLEMENTED: Fla. Stat. §§ 110.504, 768.28, 1001.43, 1012.01, 4440.02,  
76   ~~943.04351-SBER 6A-170~~

77   State Board of Education Rule: Rule 6A-1.070 and 6A-1.0502

78   HISTORY:4/23/86;00/00/09

Legal Signoff:

The Legal Department has reviewed revised Policy 2.53 and finds it legally sufficient for development by the Board.

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Attorney

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Date

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