

FWCS Volunteer Application Information

Thank you for your interest in volunteering for Fort Wayne Community Schools. We know that young people benefit from the time, knowledge and experiences that adults are willing to share with them.

It is essential to take steps to ensure the safety of children; therefore, FWCS has established a procedure adopted by the School Board of Trustees in which volunteers go through a screening process which involves a criminal history and reference check. Please refer to the section entitled General Guidelines – Use of Limited Criminal Histories to determine the District’s stance on reported criminal incidents in regards to volunteer opportunities.

Who Should Be Screened

The school district wants to encourage both community and parental involvement and has developed the following course of action for determining which individuals should be screened. Please note, it is up to the discretion of the building principal as to whether or not all volunteers must go through the screening process, and it is recommended that anyone who works in your building on a consistent basis, including relatives of students, complete the screening process. However, individuals volunteering under the following categories must be screened pursuant to District guidelines.

- Chaperones for overnight field trips.
- Volunteers who are connected with activities that involve students who disrobe (i.e., Natatorium, Clothing Bank).
- Individuals working with students who DO NOT have ties to the school by way of a daughter/son, grandchild, niece or nephew.
- Individuals working with students outside the guidance of a teacher or staff member.
- Coaches*

**Coaches must be screened through Human Resources located at the Grile Building. There is a separate application process that these individuals must follow.*

Screening Process

Please complete the attached volunteer application form and return it to a teacher or administrator in the building in which you would like to volunteer, or you may return it to Community Programs directly as indicated on the top of the volunteer application.

It may take anywhere from two to four weeks to complete the application process. In order to expedite your application, please make sure that you provide complete and correct information. Additionally, your application must be notarized in order to be processed by the Fort Wayne Police Department. Incomplete applications will cause a delay in application authorization and may result in your ineligibility to volunteer.

To check on the status of your application, please feel free to contact Community Programs at 467-8810.

General Guidelines – Use of Limited Criminal Histories

Each Limited Criminal History with reported incidents will be reviewed by District personnel. Decisions shall be made for each individual based upon available information and within the policies established by Fort Wayne Community Schools.

1. No individual with a charge or conviction involving offenses against children will be accepted.
2. No individual with a conviction for a crime of violence or sex related crime will be accepted.
3. No individual convicted of a felony of any type will be accepted if the conviction occurred within the last ten years. If the conviction is older than ten years, and there are no objective mitigating facts, the District personnel has the authority to accept that individual if it determines that it is in the best interest of the school district.
4. If an individual has had a misdemeanor conviction, other than a minor traffic violation, within the five years preceding screening, District personnel must consider the relationship of the conviction upon the applicant's fitness for a particular volunteer position. The following factors will be considered in this analysis: the nature and seriousness of the crime in relation to the position sought, the time elapsed since the conviction, the degree of the applicant's rehabilitation, the circumstances under which the crime occurred, the exposure to children involved in the position. If as a result of this analysis District personnel determine that the best interests of children outweigh the applicant's interests in volunteering, the applicant will not be accepted.
5. No individual with any pending criminal charges will be accepted.
6. Any individual with a criminal history not within the foregoing paragraphs will be reviewed to determine whether there are objective facts to offset the criminal history. If so, District personnel may recommend accepting the applicant if determined that it would be in the best interest of the school district.

Volunteer Assignment

Once you have successfully completed the volunteer screening process, Community Programs will notify the school with which you will be volunteering. The school will contact you to make arrangements for your volunteer assignment.

If, for any reason, your application to volunteer is denied, you will be notified via mail and the school with which you requested a volunteer assignment will be notified of your ineligibility to work with students. Specific information is kept confidential and will not be shared with school personnel.