

Mount Vernon School District No. 320

Mount Vernon, Washington

Volunteer Orientation



July 2019

Welcome!

This course is designed to provide volunteers an overview of important safety and compliance information. There are important state and federal laws that you need to be familiar with.

This training emphasizes the importance of student safety ensuring a safe and positive learning environment for students as well as a positive work environment for school employees and volunteers.

Don't hesitate to ask your school supervisor, a school administrator or a district administrator with questions you may have about safety, district regulations or your responsibilities. Always put safety first!

Volunteers Must Observe All The Same Professional Behaviors As Staff

- ▶ Volunteers must be drug and alcohol free, and be professional in their words and actions with students and adults.
- ▶ Volunteers must keep their focus on education and their actions must have an educational purpose.
- ▶ When you commit to volunteering, the students are counting on your presence. Please keep your commitments to students and staff!
- ▶ In case of emergency, please notify your building supervisor if you are unable to attend.

Federal Educational Right to Privacy Act of 1974

- ▶ Student information is confidential per federal law. FERPA gives parents access to their child's education records, an opportunity to seek to have the records amended, and some control over the disclosure of information from the records.
- ▶ In a school setting, you may have access to student names, addresses, phone numbers, pictures, academic information, behavior, discipline records, or medical information.
- ▶ **You must never disclose any of this information to anyone outside the school. You should never even share information inside the school, unless a school employee asks for the information for educational purposes.**

Internet Usage and Electronic Communications Policies

- ▶ Internet-based communication has created **the need for school staff and volunteers to be cautious** in their communications with and about students. All communication with students should be as a group, not individually, and should be related to school activity only.
- ▶ School employees and volunteers should be judicious in the use of social networking sites. Students, families, and the public are always to be treated with respect.
- ▶ Volunteers should never post photos of staff or students online. There should be no sharing of any information concerning staff or students by volunteers.
- ▶ It is inappropriate for a volunteer to be social networking “friend” or “follow” a student on the internet.

Harassment, Intimidation And Bullying Prohibited

The Mount Vernon School District is committed to a safe and civil educational environment for all students that is free from harassment, intimidation or bullying.

“Harassment, intimidation or bullying” means any intentional electronic, written, verbal or physical act that:

- ▶ physically harms a student or damages the student's property
- ▶ has the effect of substantially interfering with a student's education
- ▶ is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it creates an intimidating or threatening educational environment
- ▶ has the effect of substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school

Bullying

The following are the **elements of bullying** which have three main characteristics:

- ▶ **Harm** - someone gets hurt physically, socially or emotionally
- ▶ **Unfair Match** - one person or a group does not have the physical, verbal or social skills to effectively contest the other person or group
- ▶ **Repeated** - the harm and unfair match are repeated over a period of time

What To Do if You Suspect Bullying

If you suspect a child is being bullied, please act in accordance with the following steps:

- ▶ When in doubt, report.
- ▶ Notify administration or supervisor in charge, do not attempt to investigate the bullying yourself.
- ▶ Student confidentiality must be protected. Do not discuss situations with other employees, students, or individuals.

SEXUAL CONDUCT

What is Sexual Harassment?

Sexual harassment means unwelcome conduct or communication of a sexual nature.

Under federal and state law, the term “sexual harassment” includes:

- acts of sexual violence
- unwelcome sexual or gender-directed conduct or communication that interferes with an individual’s educational performance or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment
- unwelcome sexual advances
- unwelcome requests for sexual favors
- sexual demands when submission is a stated or implied condition of obtaining an educational benefit
- sexual demands where submission or rejection is a factor in an academic, or other school-related decision affecting an individual.

SEXUAL CONDUCT

Authorities have learned through experience that students rarely fabricate claims of sexual exploitation. **Under Washington law, staff-to-student sexual conduct is not tolerated. All school staff members are mandatory reporters of sexual abuse of students. Volunteers should report any such suspected activity to school administration.**

SEXUAL CONDUCT

Warning Signs: Grooming

- ▶ Sexual misconduct with students most often doesn't "just happen". Over the course of time, **the victim is "groomed"**.
- ▶ Offenders spend a great deal of time and energy gradually crossing boundaries and setting the individual up for victimization. This grooming behavior may start very innocently. Over time, "personal space" boundaries are violated. Offenders often justify this behavior by rationalizing that the victim was lonely and needed support, affection, or time with someone who cared. These grooming activities are "red flags".
- ▶ Pay attention to these red flags. Recognize that perception of others is crucial. If you notice these grooming behaviors in others, do something about it and inform the building administrator or supervisor in charge.

SOCIAL NETWORKING

Although technology can change frequently, the following examples represent a few of the many social networking technologies or platforms that can be exploited for sexual grooming:

- ▶ Text messaging and instant messaging
- ▶ Smartphones and cell phones
- ▶ Facebook
- ▶ Twitter
- ▶ YouTube
- ▶ Google+

Volunteers are expected to maintain proper boundaries between themselves and students. They should not become personally involved with students.

PROFESSIONAL BOUNDARIES

Inappropriate Boundary Invasion

An inappropriate boundary invasion means an act, omission, or pattern of such behavior by a staff member that does not have an educational purpose and results in abuse of the staff/student professional relationship.

- ▶ Granting special privileges, favoring and showing undue interest
- ▶ Meeting privately in unsupervised or off-campus settings
- ▶ Providing rides home
- ▶ Offering additional, unneeded assistance
- ▶ Discussing personal problems
- ▶ Making personal, flattering comments
- ▶ Socializing where students are consuming alcohol, drugs or tobacco

PROFESSIONAL BOUNDARIES

Inappropriate Boundary Invasion

- ▶ Writing letters or emails
- ▶ Giving gifts of money
- ▶ Moving close and closer physically (i.e., sitting next to student, touching a student, putting a hand on shoulder or putting an affectionate arm around the back)
- ▶ Allowing inappropriate behavior
- ▶ Engaging in peer-like behavior
- ▶ Personal secrets
- ▶ Outings away from other adults
- ▶ Home visits

REMINDERS ABOUT MAINTAINING APPROPRIATE BOUNDARIES

Don't!

- ▶ put yourself at risk...even with parent permission.
- ▶ transport students unless it is in the job description.
- ▶ invite students to your home or give personal gifts.
- ▶ take students on private excursions as rewards.
- ▶ use cell phones and personal communication devices to create an inappropriate relationship that could be viewed as grooming and boundary violation.

CHILD ABUSE, NEGLECT AND EXPLOITATION

Identification & Intervention

Nationally, over 3 million children are reported as abused or neglected each year and more than 1 million are confirmed as victims of child maltreatment.

Child maltreatment includes physical abuse; neglect; sexual abuse, sexual exploitation; mental injury, threat of harm; and abuse of children with disabilities.

Issues of abuse at home can affect children at school. Learning is very difficult for students who fear abuse.

CHILD ABUSE REPORTING

If you suspect child abuse, act in accordance with the following steps:

- ▶ When in doubt, report.
- ▶ Notify administration or supervisor in charge, do not attempt to investigate the abuse yourself.
- ▶ Student confidentiality must be protected. Do not discuss situations with other employees, students, or individuals.

Confidentiality - CPS or local law enforcement will keep the identity of a reporter confidential. However, this confidentiality may not prevent the reporter from testifying at a hearing if legal action is initiated.

Like most states, the state of Washington imposes penalties on school employees who knowingly and willfully fail to report. In Washington, a mandatory reporter who fails to report may commit a crime and can expect to face criminal penalties, a monetary fine, and/or civil suits for damages.

If you suspect that a child is being abused, report your concerns to school administrators.

SUPERVISION OF STUDENTS

As a volunteer, always remember these points relating to student supervision:

- ▶ **Direct supervision** - when inappropriate or unsafe behavior occurs, it must be addressed consistent with school discipline policies and classroom management practices.
- ▶ **Accountability** - is the process of accounting for each student during each transition. It requires accurate attendance and accurate accounting when transitioning between classes and recess and lunch.
- ▶ **Observant** - behavior goes beyond direct supervision and accountability. It requires employees/volunteers to remain vigilant about what they see, hear and to act on those things that suggest inappropriate or risky behavior. That “action” may include direct intervention or engaging another professional or administrator. What is does not include is ignoring the problem and leaving it to someone else.
 - ★ Always keep this guideline in mind: **The greater the likelihood and gravity of injury, the greater the amount of supervision necessary.**

BLOODBORNE PATHOGENS (BBPs)

All school employees and volunteers are at some risk from exposure to **bloodborne pathogens (BBPs)**. Adults in a school environment are exposed to germs, viruses and potentially infectious agents on a daily basis. After all, that's part of working in any place with a high concentration of people. In particular, bodily fluids - including blood and vomit - carry the risk of disease.

Blood borne pathogens are infectious microorganisms present in blood that can cause disease in humans. A BBP is carried - and potentially transmitted - through blood or another body fluid that contains traces of blood.

BBPs may be present in blood from a wound. They may also be present in other bodily fluids which contain traces of blood such as vomit, saliva, mucus, semen, vaginal fluids and more.

Two of the most common types of BBPs are:

- ▶ Hepatitis B - known as HBV
- ▶ Hepatitis C - known as HCV
- ▶ BBPs can be: **Bacterial** (such as staph and strep) or **Viral** (including hepatitis B, hepatitis C and HIV)

BBP Facts

Here are some facts about BBPs with which you should be familiar:

- ▶ The viruses with which you are most likely to come into contact at school are hepatitis B (HBV) and cytomegalovirus (CMV).
- ▶ Hepatitis B (HBV) is the main focus of OSHA BBP regulations. HBV can be transferred from person to person via blood, saliva, semen or vaginal fluids - even if the fluids have dried.
- ▶ Hepatitis C (HCV) is the most recently identified type of hepatitis. It's a viral disease that leads to inflammation of the liver. HCV's risk to school staff and volunteers is very small.
- ▶ Hepatitis A (HAV) is not a BBP. It's the most common form of hepatitis, and is the type most often identified with contaminated food in a restaurant or cafeteria.
- ▶ HIV is not easily transmitted in a school setting and cannot be transmitted through casual contact, such as shaking hands or working with an infected individual.

FOLLOW UNIVERSAL PRECAUTIONS

- ▶ To protect yourself, **ALWAYS** treat bodily fluids as if they are infected.
- ▶ Use **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)** when possible if you come into contact with another person's bodily fluids. An example of PPE is disposable gloves from a first aid kit.
- ▶ If you come into contact with bodily fluids, **wash your hands** and/or affected body areas with soap under running water for at least 15 seconds. **Carefully follow the school district's Exposure Control Plan** - including notifying the school nurse or your primary care physician.
- ▶ **Only specifically-trained custodial staff members with proper equipment should attempt to clean up bodily fluids.** Keep students away from fluids until trained and equipped staff arrives.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS!

Mount Vernon School District, staff and students are grateful for your time and talents you share as a volunteer. To ensure the safest possible learning environment, as well as complying with Washington law and School District Board Policies, this course offered an overview of safety issues with which volunteers must be familiar.

Most importantly: If you are not sure about the answer to a question regarding any safety topics, please ask a supervisor or school administrator.

Thank you for all that you do for our students and our community! You are helping us achieve the MVSD goal of 100% of our students will graduate with the knowledge and skills necessary to be successful in post-secondary education, careers and life.

Following completion of this slideshow, please click the back arrow on your internet browser to return to the Volunteer Orientation page (under My Checklist) and click “Yes” to affirm completion.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Mount Vernon School District No. 320
124 E Lawrence Street, Mount Vernon, WA 98273
Telephone: (360) 428-6110 Fax: (360) 428-6172
www.mountvernonschools.org

Human Resources/Personnel Office: 360-428-6113
Superintendent's Office: 360-428-6181

The Mount Vernon School District does not discriminate in employment, programs, or activities on the basis of age, race, color, national origin, creed, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender expression, gender identity, honorably discharged veteran or military status, or the presence of any sensory, mental or physical disability or use of a trained guide dog or service animal by a person with a disability and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. Inquiries regarding compliance and/or grievance procedures may be directed to the District's Title IX/Civil Rights Compliance Coordinator, Jon Ronngren, Director/Human Resources, 124 E. Lawrence Street, Mount Vernon, WA 98273 (360)428-6110; Section 504/ADA Coordinator, Clint Carlton, Executive Director/Special and Support Services, 920 S. Second Street, Mount Vernon, WA 98273, (360)428-6141.