

**Series 6000 – Community Relations**

**Section 6300 – Community Involvement**

**Policy 6304 – School Chaperones, Volunteers, and Vendors**

**6304.1 Purpose:** Harrison County Schools recognizes the involvement of parents and volunteers as a vital contribution to the success and growth of the school system. While Harrison County Schools shall encourage and promote the participation of school volunteers throughout the district, it is equally paramount that the school system simultaneously maintain an adequate level of safety and security in Harrison County Schools. Harrison County Schools employees, who have a criminal background check on file with the Human Resources Department, are excluded from this policy.

**6304.2 Definitions:**

- I. Vendor – a paid person, excluding current Harrison County Schools students, functioning within the policies of the Harrison County Board of education who shall serve under the immediate supervision and direction of the professional staff of the district to whom he/she is assigned to provide contracted services for the purpose of working with students in a specialist capacity (i.e. choreographer, vocal coach, designer, photographer)
- II. Volunteer -- a non-paid person, who has a vested interest in the school and is functioning within the policies of the Board during an event or activity that may include overnight travel; volunteer shall serve under the direction of the professional staff of the district to whom he/she is assigned for multiple occurrences or events not related to coaching responsibilities; volunteer shall serve without compensation of any type or other benefits accorded to employees of the district; a driver is a volunteer
- III. Chaperone – a parent or legal guardian, as designated on the official school enrollment form, who is accompanying his/her child’s class on a single field trip, class party, or other type of occasional activity that is not overnight; chaperone will be supervised by a professional educator and will never be left unsupervised while on school premises

**6304.3 Procedures:**

- I. Vendors, Chaperones, and Volunteers shall be approved by the principal and submit the following documents to the principal for review once for each programmatic level (K-5, 6-8, and 9-12) of the child's academic career
  - a. Harrison County Schools Vendor, Chaperone, and Volunteer Request Form
- II. Vendors, Chaperones, and Volunteers shall submit the following documents to the principal for review annually:
  - a. Acknowledgement of Mandatory Reporting Form
- III. Volunteers, including Volunteer Drivers, shall submit to the principal for review and consideration for submission to the Board of Education for approval:
  - a. Criminal Background Investigation Authorization Release
  - b. Criminal Background Check, at the expense of the Volunteer, by a company chosen by the Harrison County Board of Education
  - c. An interview by the principal/school designee, at the principals' discretion, prior to serving at the school
  - d. In the case of Volunteer Drivers, a proof of insurance and liability shall be provided as well as a criminal background check
- IV. Vendors shall submit to the principal for review and consideration for submission to the Board of Education for approval:
  - a. Criminal Background Investigation Authorization Release
  - b. Criminal Background Check, at the expense of the vendor or sponsoring group, by a company chosen by the Harrison County Board of Education
  - c. An interview by the principal/school designee
- V. The principal's decision on whether to approve the Vendor, Volunteer, or Chaperone shall be based upon the best interests of the school.
- VI. A rejected Vendor, Volunteer, or Chaperone may appeal the principal's decision to the Superintendent or designee whose decision shall be final.
- VII. The principal/designee shall submit a list of approved Volunteers and Vendors to the Supervisor of Personnel for review by the Board of Education at one of its regular meetings.
- VIII. A list of approved Chaperones will be maintained at the building by the principal only.

#### **6304.4 Criminal Background Investigation.**

- I. In order to protect the safety and security of children and school staff, Volunteers, who are serving as Drivers, and Vendors must submit to a criminal background investigation using the person's name, date of birth, gender, race, Social Security number.
- II. At the Volunteer Driver's or Vendor's expense, or at the expense of the sponsoring group, an initial criminal background investigation will be completed. After the initial application and criminal background check at each programmatic level of Harrison County Schools (K-5, 6-8, 9-12), a principal may request an additional criminal background check, at the expense of the Vendor or Volunteer Driver, if there is a reported concern.
- III. After the initial criminal background check, Volunteers and Vendors must report any subsequent criminal convictions to the principal immediately.
- IV. If an individual refuses to submit to the initial or subsequent criminal background investigation, that person shall be ineligible to be a Volunteer Driver or Vendor in Harrison County Schools. This includes a refusal to submit to all or part of the background investigation. To provide consistency in the district in determining the appropriateness of individuals working with children, the Harrison County Schools Department of Human Resources will use the same guidelines currently in place for reviewing criminal conviction(s) or pending charge(s) for employees in determining if a Volunteer Driver or Vendor is accepted or rejected.
- V. Any person wishing to be a Volunteer Driver or Vendor in the schools and who has been convicted of any criminal offense which constitutes a felony must be approved by the Board of Education prior to performing any volunteer activities or as a Vendor.

**6304.5. Training for Vendors.** Before entering into any of the duties as a Vendor at a school, a prospective Vendor must receive appropriate training in sexual harassment prevention, cultural diversity, English as a second language, safety in the workplace, student confidentiality, and mandatory reporting as provided by Human Resources of Harrison County Schools. All Vendors are required to submit a mandatory reporting acknowledgement annually.

**6304.6 Training for Volunteers.** Before entering into any of the duties as a Volunteer at a school, a prospective Volunteer must receive appropriate training in confidentiality and mandatory reporting as provided by Human Resources of Harrison County Schools. All Volunteers are required to submit a mandatory reporting acknowledgement annually.

All Vendors, Volunteers and Chaperones must also adhere to the requirements of the Drug Free Workplace Act of 1988 (41 U.S.C. §701 et seq.)

**6304.6 Volunteer and Chaperone Activities.** When a person is engaging in volunteer or chaperone activities within the school, the person must first sign in at the school office. The Chaperone or Volunteer will be issued a badge, which the individual must wear in a prominent manner at all times when in the school.

**6304.8 Incidental Adult Visitors.** This policy shall not apply to adults who visit a school but have no ongoing individualized interaction with a student or students, including, but not limited to, adults who have been invited to speak at a class or assembly, to judge academic competitions, to give a musical performance, or participate in a program, such as “Career Day” or other activities within the school at the discretion of the principal.

**6304.9 Adherence to Harrison County Policy and Administrative Regulations.** Any individual, group, or organization affiliated with Harrison County Board of Education, in any capacity, including without limitation the mentoring, “co-op,” shadowing, internships, or volunteer programs, or as chaperones, sponsors, or vendors, shall abide by the Policy and Administrative Regulations set forth by the HCBOE.

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**Public Comment Period May 9 to June 7, 2018**