



HARTFORD
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Where the future is present.

Leslie Torres-Rodríguez, Ed.D.
Superintendent

Dear HPS Partner,

Thank you for your interest in volunteering with Hartford Public Schools. One of my overarching goals as superintendent is to co-create trusting partnerships that recognize and promote families' and community's contributions to student learning. At Hartford Public Schools we celebrate the richness of diversity of our Hartford community and appreciate your willingness to share your unique gifts and talents with our schools and our students.

The role of caring adults in children's lives is well documented in research. We know that one caring adult can make all the difference in a young person's life – in helping to navigate challenges, to overcome obstacles and to persist in achieving one's goals. Being a caring adult can be as simple as showing an interest in a student; caring about how they are doing, the goals they are pursuing, and supporting them as they explore emerging interests and practice new skills. We thank you for taking the time to be that caring adult in our students' lives.

While we are committed to sharing the responsibility for our children's growth and development with families and a wide range of community partners, we also hold the safety of our students as the most important of our obligations. To this end, we have established a volunteer application and screening process to ensure that our students are protected and that you have the best possible experience as a volunteer. We are grateful for your partnership in helping our students to thrive and grow into successful and achieving members of our Hartford community.

Sincerely,

Leslie Torres-Rodríguez, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

"Every Child Thrives. Every School is High Performing. No Exceptions."

960 Main Street Hartford CT 06103 • www.hartfordschools.org



Hartford Public Schools - Volunteer Program Guidelines

A. Hartford Public Schools Volunteer Program

The Board of Education recognizes that volunteers can make many valuable contributions to Hartford Public schools. Volunteers can enhance collaboration between the school and community, broaden the school's educational environment and ultimately enrich students' school experience. The Board endorses a volunteer program in schools subject to suitable regulations and safeguards. Appropriate recognition of volunteer services shall be made by the Board and school district administration.

Volunteers must work under the supervision of Hartford Public Schools staff. Volunteers are held to the same standards of conduct as school staff and must observe all Board of Education policies, including applicable policies on the confidentiality of student information.

Volunteers may come to the district with or without a desired volunteer role in mind. When the individual is interested in volunteering, but is not currently connected to an opportunity, she/he may be matched to opportunities previously identified by the principal. Annually, principals shall submit a list of all regular volunteers in the district (chaperones on field trips, aides, library and classroom volunteer assistance, grandparents, assistance at athletic events, field days, etc.) to the Superintendent of Schools.

B. Definitions of Volunteers

A volunteer for Hartford Public Schools is defined as a person who provides unpaid services within a school or the district on a regular basis and does not fall into one of the following designations:

An individual who is otherwise covered under an organizational agreement:

1. A partner operating under a Memorandum of Understanding with the district
2. A vendor operating under contract with the district
3. An afterschool program provider operating under a Memorandum of Understanding or a Use of Facility Request

An individual who never has the opportunity to move about the building and interact with students:

4. A parent or caregiver volunteering in their child's classroom who is always in the presence of an HPS staff person



5. A parent of caregiver accompanying a class or group of students on a one day field trip who is always in the presence of an HPS staff person
6. A person who volunteers at a one-time, special event such as a guest speaker at a career day or a volunteer at a community service event, who is always in the presence of an HPS staff person

C. Types of Volunteers

There are many types of volunteer positions within Hartford Public Schools. Volunteers may be parents, corporate partners or community members. A partial list can be found below:

- a. Assisting an individual student, small group, or special project in a classroom
- b. Accompanying a class on a field trip during the school day
- c. Helping in the school office during regular school hours
- d. Assisting in the cafeteria or library
- e. Assisting during extracurricular events, i.e., dances, fairs, open house, sporting events, field day, etc.
- f. Accompanying a class or group of students overnight field trip
- g. Working as a student intern
- h. Coaching
- i. Mentoring or tutoring

D. Volunteer Safety Screening Procedures

All individuals interested in volunteering for Hartford Public Schools must submit to a non-fingerprint background check process. Materials should be submitted at least three weeks in advance of the volunteer start date to ensure that there is enough time to complete the screening, approval, training and orientation process prior the beginning of the volunteer assignment. This review will include the Clear Basic Check, which includes various public records on criminal convictions. The Superintendent will make a case-by case determination as to whether the individual will be allowed to volunteer in the Hartford Public Schools. This determination will be based upon the nature of the conviction or offense and the time period in which it occurred. No person who is required to register as a sex offender under state or federal law, will be approved to volunteer in Hartford Public Schools. Also, any volunteer convicted of a crime of moral turpitude may be excluded from the volunteer program at the discretion of the Superintendent or designee. Volunteer applications from prospective volunteers who refuse to submit to a background screening will not be accepted.



No person may be approved for volunteer service while still under investigation. Notwithstanding the foregoing, the falsification or omission of any information on a volunteer consent form, including, but not limited to, information concerning criminal convictions or pending criminal charges, may be grounds for the Superintendent or designee to prohibit the individual from becoming a volunteer.

The district also screens all staff and volunteers who act as chaperones for overnight field trips as part of the field trip approval process.

E. Process for Becoming a Volunteer

All individuals who want to volunteer in a Hartford Public School are required to follow the steps below:

Step 1: Submit volunteer application and release of information form to Lindsay Diaz, Community Partnerships Specialist, Hartford Public Schools, at Lindsay.Diaz@hartfordschools.org. For questions about the application or process, please contact Ms. Diaz at 860-695-8834.

Step 2: Application is reviewed and background checks conducted by Hartford Public Schools. The check is at no cost to the volunteer and includes the Clear Basic Check.

Step 3: Within a period of two weeks, the applicant and principal or central office supervisor will be notified whether he or she has been approved as a volunteer in the Hartford Public School System.

Step 4: The volunteer completes training requirements and submits a Volunteer Commitment Form to the Principal of the school at which they are volunteering (or to their supervisor at Central Office).

F. Volunteer Expectations and Responsibilities

All volunteers for Hartford Public Schools must agree to and complete the steps outlined below prior to beginning a volunteer assignment.

1. A school or district-level orientation that includes training on policies and protocols, the tasks involved in the volunteer assignment, and procedures for maintaining student confidentiality. This orientation may be conducted by the principal or her/his designee at the school level, or by the district supervisor if stationed at Central Office.



2. All volunteers must report to the school office upon arrival to sign in and must report to the office prior to departure to sign out. A sign-in/sign-out log will be maintained in each school office. Volunteers must indicate the purpose of their visit and include any other information (i.e. destination; provide proof of identification etc.) as may be required by the log. Volunteers will be provided with identification badges, which must be displayed during each visit.
3. The school district, acting through the appropriate building administrator or his/her designee, reserves the right to discontinue or disallow the services of any volunteer at any time at the discretion of the administration.



Hartford Public Schools Volunteer Application

We appreciate your interest in volunteering with the Hartford Public Schools. In order to protect our students, all individuals wishing to volunteer with Hartford Public Schools must complete the application below and submit to a background check, including a review through the sex offender registry. Upon completion of this review, you will be contacted regarding your acceptance as a volunteer for Hartford Public Schools.

Ms. _____ Mrs. _____ Mr. _____ Other _____

Name: _____

Current Address: _____

How long have you lived at this address/dates? _____

Phone Number: _____ E-mail: _____

Date of Birth: _____ Emergency Contact Information: _____

Have you ever been convicted of a crime? Yes _____ No _____

If yes, please provide the name of the charges and date of convictions: _____

Are you currently under investigation for a criminal offense? Yes _____ No _____

Have you volunteered with Hartford Public Schools in the past? Yes _____ No _____

If yes, at what school(s)? _____

Who was your supervisor in this role? _____

What school are you interested in volunteering at? _____

What grade(s) are you interested in volunteering with? _____



What kind of volunteer work are you interested in doing? _____

Skills/hobbies/interests: _____

Languages spoken other than English: _____

I certify that the information provided on this application is true and complete. I hereby authorize Hartford Public Schools to conduct a non-fingerprint background check to include the Clear Basic Check, which includes public records of state and federal criminal convictions and the Sex Offender Registry. I understand that information obtained through this background check may be shared with district and school-based staff solely for the purpose of ensuring student safety.

Signature

Date

Please submit completed form*

By e-mail to:

Lindsay.Diaz@hartfordschools.org

By mail or hand delivery to:

Lindsay Diaz
Community Partnerships Specialist
Hartford Public Schools
960 Main Street, 9th floor
Hartford, CT 06103

*Please note that in the case that you cannot be found in the Clear Basic Check system using name and DOB, we will need to contact you to supply your Social Security Number, which may be provided by phone or fax and will be stored in a locked location.



Volunteer Commitment Form

Congratulations on being accepted as a volunteer for Hartford Public Schools! Thank you for sharing your time, talents and experience with our students. Please complete the form below and submit it to your school principal (school-based volunteers) or district supervisor (district volunteers) by or before your first day of volunteer service.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone Number: _____ E-mail: _____

Emergency Contact Name: _____

Relationship: _____ Phone Number: _____

Volunteer Policies Agreement *(Please initial each item below.)*

_____ I have received a school handbook and agree to abide by the policies of _____ School.

_____ I have read and agree to abide by the Volunteer Program Guidelines for Hartford Public Schools.

_____ I will maintain the confidentiality of students and families at all times.

_____ I commit to notifying my school's principal (school-based volunteers) or district supervisor (district volunteers) if an incident occurs that results in my being investigated for a criminal offense, or if I am convicted of a criminal offense.

_____ I understand that unless I notify the district in writing to opt out, there will be an annual automatic renewal of my background check and volunteer certification for a period of three years.

Signature: _____ Date: _____