

Methacton SCHOOL DISTRICT

Volunteer Manual



Helping build the future...one student at a time!

This packet contains all the information you need to be in compliance with school board and state requirements for volunteering with students.

PROCEDURES FOR BECOMING AN APPROVED METHACTON VOLUNTEER

1. **Complete the on-line “Volunteer Registration Form” and print a copy to submit with your completed volunteer packet.** Please go to Methacton’s website at www.methacton.org/volunteer. Links to obtain clearances and all necessary documents can be found at that site.
2. **Submit requests for the following clearances to the appropriate agencies:**
- **Act 34 - Pennsylvania Criminal History Background Check**
 - **Act 151 - Pennsylvania Child Abuse History Clearance**
 - **FBI Fingerprint Check** - INDIVIDUALS WHO HAVE **NOT** RESIDED IN THE STATE OF PENNSYLVANIA CONTINUOUSLY FOR A PERIOD OF **10 YEARS** BEFORE REGISTERING WILL ALSO NEED TO OBTAIN AN FBI CRIMINAL HISTORY RECORD (select Pennsylvania Dept. of Education).
 - **Volunteer Affirmation Form** - Those who have resided in the State of Pennsylvania for a period of 10 years or more at the time of registration do NOT need to obtain an FBI Fingerprint Check, but must instead complete and submit the Volunteer Affirmation Form contained in this packet.
 - **PLEASE NOTE: Clearances cannot be more than 1 year old from the date we receive them.**
3. **Complete TB Testing**
Contact Methacton School Nursing Coordinator Cheryl Peiffer at 610-489-5000, ext. 25040 or send an email to cpeiffer@methacton.org to make an appointment to obtain a TB screening. Testing appointments are available for Monday, Wednesday with re-checks (48 hours later) on Wednesday, Thursday or Friday. You may have the TB test done by a school nurse for free, or by your family physician at your own cost. You will need to provide the TB test results with both clearances.
4. **When you have clearances and TB results in hand, bring the documents to any school. DO NOT MAIL. You must have:**
- a. Completed and printed the online Volunteer Registration Form
 - b. Obtained both the PA Criminal History Background Check and PA Child Abuse History Clearance.
 - c. Completed the FBI Fingerprint Check (<10 years residing in PA) **OR** completed and signed the Methacton Volunteer Affirmation Form (>10 years residing in PA).
 - d. Obtained proof of a negative TB test from a doctor or Methacton school nurse.
- DO NOT MAIL ORIGINAL CLEARANCES TO THE DISTRICT OFFICE – THEY WILL NOT BE RETURNED.** A district employee will scan the documentation for district files and return the originals to you. **Please retain your originals and keep them in a safe place. If all documentation is in order, you may begin volunteering as you await Board approval and your Volunteer Lanyard.**
5. **Approval by Board of School Directors**
Once your paperwork has been received by the District, the Board of School Directors will need to approve your request to be a volunteer in the Methacton. This will be done at the next scheduled regular board meeting typically held on the fourth Tuesday of each month.
6. Once approved, please bring your valid PA driver’s license to the building you will be volunteering in to get your Volunteer Lanyard. As the beginning of each new school year, please bring your PA driver’s license to be re-scanned in order that a current school year badge can be produced.
7. **Act 34 and 151 clearances will need to be renewed every 60 months. If you suspend your volunteer service for a year, you will also need to get new Act 34 and 151 clearances before volunteering again.**

ONLY COMPLETED PACKETS WILL BE ACCEPTED

Welcome!

Making the decision to volunteer your time and talents to the students of the Methacton School District is a very honorable one... and a decision with which we hope you will be pleased.

School volunteers enhance the educational experience in so many ways:

- By helping to ensure that vital programs like music, sports and the arts are available in the school
- By working as the extra hands, ears, and hearts of teachers whose responsibilities extend to many students
- By working to ensure the smooth operation of many school activities, we sometimes take for granted – for example, concessions at sporting events, or equipment management at band competitions
- By listening, caring, and supporting the most important person in any school – the student.

This booklet was designed to help ensure that your volunteer experience at Methacton School District is a good one. It contains lots of information about district procedures and policies that affect you in your volunteer role, as well as tips and ideas that might make your experience more valuable.

Please let us know if there is anything we can do to help you as you give of yourself to our number one priority – our students!

Angela M. Linch
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610-489-5000, Ext. 15007

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General District Policies Concerning Volunteers

Exemptions:

Volunteers exempted from this requirement would include members of Booster and parent organizations who are *exclusively involved in fund-raising efforts off the school property.*

1. The Methacton School District School Board shall approve all volunteers.
2. **Volunteers must complete the Volunteer approval process prior to the commencement of volunteer service, including obtaining Act 34 and Act 151 clearances, as well as a tuberculosis screening in accordance with the regulations of the Advisory Health board BEFORE being placed on the volunteer list, per Section 1418 of the School Code. (*see note, page 2)**
3. **Once every three (3) years, and in the event that service in the district's volunteer program should cease for a period of one (1) school year, they will be required to repeat the Volunteer approval process.**
4. If, under the pertinent laws or regulations, his/her criminal history/child abuse report would preclude him/her from being hired as an employee, that person may not be a volunteer.
5. Volunteers shall not be asked to assume the professional responsibilities of the school staff. Volunteers may provide assistance that is supportive, when under the direction of a staff member.
6. Volunteers will not be permitted to directly administer student discipline nor will they be permitted to administer first aid, except in the case of an emergency.
7. The building administrator or designee shall assume general authority and responsibility over all volunteers serving at that site.
8. Under no circumstances shall a volunteer be considered an employee of the district. A volunteer shall receive no wages from the district.

The volunteer position is not a right, but rather a privilege that is conferred by the board and the administration. As such, any volunteer position may be eliminated at any time for any reason. In addition, any volunteer may be removed from a volunteer position for any reason.

Adherence to Laws and Methacton Policies and Regulations

Volunteers shall meet any standards that may be established by federal, state or local government, or by the board or administration, from time to time. The volunteer must agree to be bound by all applicable privacy laws and regulations.

In addition, the volunteer shall adhere to all rules and regulations and administrative guidelines governing the conduct of the district's professional employees.

Please familiarize yourself with following school board policies. These policies will also apply to district approved volunteers when participating in volunteer activities.

MSD Board Policy [916](#) – Volunteers
MSD Board Policy [323](#) – Tobacco
MSD Board Policy [348](#) – Unlawful Harassment
MSD Board Policy [350](#) – Criminal Charges/Convictions
MSD Board Policy [351](#) – Drug and Substance Abuse

Act 191 of the Pennsylvania Legislature of 1988 24 P.S. 5-527 requires that any employee of the Methacton School District who is convicted of the delivery of a controlled substance or convicted of the possession of a controlled substance with the intent to deliver shall be terminated from his or her employment with the district (no matter where the violation occurred). The same policy will be applied to volunteers.

Accident Reports

Any accident involving a student, employee or volunteer that occurs on school property must be reported to the school office using the appropriate district accident report forms. Such forms are needed for prevention of future accidents, regardless of insurance coverage or liability issues. Accident report forms can be secured from the building secretaries.

Confidentiality

It is expected that matters of confidential information or materials about students, staff, other volunteers or school district business will be maintained as confidential by anyone who may become aware of such information.

Transportation

All volunteers who transport students in personal vehicles are not covered by insurance provided by the school district. Insurance coverage in this situation is through the volunteer's own insurance carrier. Therefore, it is not recommended to transport students in your personal vehicles.

Use of Facilities

Because of increased use of school facilities, both during and after the school day, planning is important. All tentative dates for activities and special programs must be cleared with the principal and placed on the school calendar prior to organizing the activity. If an after-school activity is planned, the advisor/sponsor must submit a "Request for the Use of School Facilities" at least one month before the event. Appropriate chaperones and personnel must be available to attend the event before approval will be given. For more information about school facilities rental, consult the district's website.

Most buildings are open on a daily basis from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Staff members or volunteers who need access to the building beyond those hours should make arrangements through the office. A staff member must be present during any after-hours function.

Fundraising

The principal must approve the sale of all items to students (i.e. T-shirts, Tab books, etc.) as well as all other fundraising activities undertaken by volunteers associated with his/her building.

The school district is liable for the payment of state sales tax for sales of any items that are taxable under state law. The school district has two options: (1) pay sales tax to the vendor upon purchase of items that are to be resold and are subject to sales tax (*this is the preferred and easiest method*) or (2) collect the sales tax upon resale of the item and notify the business office of the amount of sales tax collected. A check made payable to the school district in the amount of the sales tax collected must be forwarded to the business office. The business office will then remit the required amount to the state. This applies to fund raising activity executed by the school district or by one of the activity funds or clubs operating within the school district's activity fund accounts. **Home & School and Booster organizations may not use the school district sales tax exemption form for any purpose, including fundraising purchases.**

Use of the Methacton Name/Logo

Any use of the district's name or logo shall be done in accordance with MSD Board Policy [141](#) – School Related Organizations.

Fire and Emergency Procedures

In case of fire

In the event a fire starts in the building, use the following guidelines for reporting the fires:

1. Ring the emergency fire bell by pulling the lever in the fire alarm box located nearest you (Please take note of the location of the nearest fire alarm box – and ask office staff to direct you when you first visit the building for a volunteer assignment if it's not immediately apparent.).
2. Follow the direction of the staff liaison concerning fire drill evacuation rules and procedures.
3. Individuals with limited mobility (crutches, wheel chairs, etc.) may require individual attention. If necessary, they may need to be carried from the building, and you may be in a position to assist. ASK for extra help if needed!
4. Building re-entry – everyone must remain outside the building until notified by the authorities to re-enter.

In case of threat or other emergency:

In the event of other emergencies, the district has established certain procedures to be followed by the administrative and office staff. When a building evacuation is warranted, fire drill procedures should be followed.

General Information

All school personnel must know the location of fire extinguishers, alarm boxes, and AED (automatic external defibrillators) within the school building.

The Board declares it to be the policy of this district to provide to all persons equal access to all categories of employment in this district, regardless of race, color, age, creed, religion, sex, sexual orientation, ancestry, national origin or handicap/disability. The district shall make reasonable accommodations for identified physical and mental impairments that constitute disabilities, consistent with the requirements of federal and state laws and regulations required by Title VI, Title IX, Section 504, and the American Disabilities Act. For information regarding civil rights or grievance procedures, contact the Superintendent, 1001 Kriebel Mill Road, Eagleville, PA 19403 (610) 489-5000.

HELPFUL HOW-TOS

A few pointers to enhance your volunteer experience.

Basic Volunteer Procedures

- Visit the main office to be logged in/out of Raptor each time you visit the building, both when you arrive and before you leave.
- ALWAYS wear your Volunteer Lanyard while in the school.
- Be reliable. Call if you cannot be at school.
- **Confidentiality is highly important!** Remember that anything overheard concerning students or staff should never leave the building.
- Keep in mind that you are here to support teachers, not replace them. Please refer to the classroom teacher for his/her preferred method of dealing with day-to-day situations.
- Remember – if you don't know – ASK! We'll be glad to help!

YOUR Help makes a
BIG Difference
in the lives of our students!

Volunteering with Students

- A student's name is VERY important. Make every effort to remember the names of the students you work with.
- Be sure the students know your name – establish in the beginning how they are to address you. (You may want to check with the classroom teacher as to what is normally done in the school.)
- Demonstrate your interest in the students by asking them about their activities and LISTENING!
- Help build students' self-confidence by pointing out the improvement you see in their work, manner, etc. Even when helping to correct a student's work or manner, try to start the conversation by praising their hard work!
- Discuss student behavior and/or progress ONLY with the teacher.
- Make sure you always leave the students on a positive and friendly note.
- Keep in mind that students will model the behaviors they see adults displaying – whether that adult is a staff person or a volunteer.
- Common sense and cool heads are always the best in any situation.

Volunteer Affirmation Form

A Methacton School District volunteer who has been a resident of Pennsylvania during the entirety of the previous ten-year period does not need to submit a Report of Federal Criminal History Record (fingerprinting) if this Volunteer Affirmation is completed.

I, (print name) _____, would like to serve in the position of an unpaid volunteer for the Methacton School District. Under penalty of law, I affirm that I have been a Pennsylvania resident during the entirety of the ten-year period prior to my signing this Volunteer Affirmation. I am aware that the Methacton School District will be relying upon this Volunteer Affirmation for the purpose of complying with Pennsylvania’s Child Protective Services Law (“CPSL”). I further affirm that I am not disqualified from service as a school volunteer by reason of having been convicted of any of the following offenses under Title 18 of the Pennsylvania Crimes Code or of an offense similar in nature under the laws or former laws of the United States or one of its territories or possessions, another state, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico or a foreign nation, or under a former law of Pennsylvania:

- Chapter 25 (relating to criminal homicide)
- Section 2702 (relating to aggravated assault)
- Section 2709.1 (relating to stalking)
- Section 2901 (relating to kidnapping)
- Section 2902 (relating to unlawful restraint)
- Section 3121 (relating to rape)
- Section 3122.1 (relating to statutory sexual assault)
- Section 3123 (relating to involuntary deviate sexual intercourse)
- Section 3124.1 (relating to sexual assault)
- Section 3125 (relating to aggravated indecent assault)
- Section 3126 (relating to indecent assault)
- Section 3127 (relating to indecent exposure)
- Section 4302 (relating to incest)
- Section 4303 (relating to concealing death of child)
- Section 4303 (relating to endangering welfare of children)
- Section 4305 (relating to dealing in infant children)
- A felony offense under section 5902(b) (relating to prostitution and related offenses)
- Section 5903© or (d) (relating to obscene and other sexual materials and performances)
- Section 6301 (relating to corruption of minors)
- Section 6312 (relating to sexual abuse of children)
- A felony offense under the act of April 14, 1972 (P.L. 233, No. 64), known as The Controlled Substance, Drug, Device and Cosmetic Act, committed within the five-year period immediately preceding today’s date
- The attempt, solicitation or conspiracy to commit any of the above offenses

I hereby affirm that the information contained in this Volunteer Affirmation is correct. I further affirm that in the event that I am arrested for, or convicted of, an offense that would constitute grounds for denying my further participation as a school volunteer, or if I am named as a perpetrator of child abuse, I will provide the Methacton School District with written notice not later than 72 hours after the arrest, conviction or notification that I have been listed as a perpetrator of child abuse in the statewide database.

Signature of Parent Volunteer

Date (mm/dd/yyyy)

Student Name (if applicable)

School Name