SBISD VOLUNTEER ETHICS, PROCEDURES AND GUIDELINES

Revised June 2026

SBISD Vision: T-2-4 for Every Child
Every SBISD graduate will attain a technical certificate, military training, or a two-year or four-year degree.

Core Characteristics of a T-2-4 Ready Graduate
T-2-4 defines what we want our students to achieve. The six Core Characteristics of a T-2-4 Ready Graduate define who we want them to become as they matriculate through our school system. They are:

- **Academically Prepared**—Every child finds joy in learning, has a learner's mindset, and is motivated and equipped with the knowledge, skills, and competencies to succeed in life.
- **Ethical & Service Minded**—Every child acts with integrity, is personally responsible for their actions, and is a civically-engaged community member.
- **Empathetic & Self Aware**—Every child appreciates differences, forms secure relationships, and cares for their own and other's emotional, mental, and physical health.
- **Persistent & Adaptable**—Every child is fueled by their own passions, interests, and goals, and perseveres with confidence and courage.
- **Resourceful Problem-Solver**—Every child thinks critically and creatively and applies knowledge to find and solve problems.
- **Communicator & Collaborator**—Every child skillfully conveys thoughts, ideas, knowledge, and information and is a receptive and responsive listener.

Our Values: The Spring Branch Way

The five Core Values serve as guiding principles that undergird and inform the actions, behaviors, and decisions of our Board of Trustees, staff, students, community, and partners. These essential, non-negotiable ideals and expectations define who we are as Spring Branch ISD, individually and collectively, when we are at our best.

SBISD Core Values shall be referred to as "The Spring Branch Way," and are the foundation of our school district's organizational culture. The five core values are as follows:

- **Every Child – We put students at the heart of everything we do.**
    - Every child. Every Day. Every minute. Every way.
    - What's Best for the Child Drives the Decision
    - Infinite Possibilities Through Education
- **Collective Greatness – We, as a community, leverage our individual strengths to reach challenging goals.**
    - Surpass Expectations
    - Everyone's Work Matters
    - Diversity Makes Us Stronger
- **Collaborative Spirit – We believe in each other and find joy in our work.**
    - Each of Us is Committed to All of Us
    - Together We're Better
    - Assume the Best
- **Limitless Curiosity – We never stop learning and growing.**

    - Empowered to Innovate
    - Tenaciously Embrace Challenges
    - Unleashed Potential
- **Moral Compass – We are guided by strong character, ethics and integrity.**
    - Personal Responsibility
    - Kindness and Mutual Respect
    - Trustworthiness

Introduction

The following procedures, developed by the SBISD Volunteer Advisory Board, are designed to protect both students and volunteers. Acceptance of and adherence to these ethics, procedures, and guidelines is mandatory to participate as a volunteer in Spring Branch ISD. Failure to accept and/or to adhere to the ethics, procedures, guidelines is a violation of the SBISD Code of Civility and may result in the revocation of volunteer opportunities and additional district/campus restrictions.
These volunteer guidelines are designed to protect students from harm and to prevent any and all aspects of improper behavior by individual mentors, volunteers, students, and schools participating in Spring Branch ISD volunteer programs. Please know that we appreciate your participation and that we appreciate your adhering to these guidelines. If you have additional questions, ask your school principal, campus volunteer coordinator, or the Community Engagement Department.

Volunteer Procedures.

- **Criminal Background Check.** All current and potential SBISD volunteers must annually complete the SBISD volunteer registration process and undergo a criminal background check. The SBISD online volunteer registration is accessible through the district website. Individuals' criminal histories are subject to review by SBISD to determine eligibility to serve as an SBISD volunteer. SBISD reserves the right, in its sole discretion, to refuse and/or restrict an individual's access as an SBISD volunteer based on an individual's criminal history, in accordance with applicable law and SBISD policy, including SBISD Policy GKG (Legal). At no point shall a volunteer be permitted to volunteer prior to SBISD receiving criminal background check results.
- **Training**. Depending upon the volunteer role, you may be required to attend a campus or district training.
- **Campus Entry.** All volunteers must adhere to individual campus entry procedures and be signed in and out each time you volunteer on campus through the Raptor System.
- **Name Badge.** Visibly wear the Raptor-generated identification badge at all times while on campus.
- **Standard Response Protocols.** Safety and security is our top priority. All volunteers should know and follow the Standard Response Protocols while on campus. Review these here.
- **Volunteer Hours.** Volunteer hours are captured through the Raptor System. The volunteer is responsible for tracking and/or recording any volunteer hours served off-campus for recognition purposes.
- **Dress Code.** Use common sense in your attire; please dress appropriately for any specific events you attend. Neat, conservative attire is preferred and casual dress is acceptable. Remember, you are a role model for students. SBISD reserves the right to ask any volunteers to change clothes that SBISD deems unsuitable. Note that SBISD has a neutrality policy for all its employees—clothing must be free of any political or religious speech. We ask volunteers to adhere to this so long as it is practicable.
- **Non-School Age Children**. Only bring your non-school age children with you if a school permits and if childcare is available.

- **Dependability.** Maintain consistent and regular attendance. Contact the school if you are unable to attend as scheduled.
- **No Smoking or Alcohol.** All SBISD facilities are vape and tobacco free zones, and alcohol consumption is strictly prohibited on SBISD property. This includes parking lots, stadiums and outside fields. Vaping, tobacco possession/use, and alcohol possession/consumption is also prohibited while on SBISD sanctioned field trips.
- **Respect**. Volunteers will be respectful of student's and staff's cultural, social, and religious differences. Openness, honesty and respect are expected.
- **Role**. The teacher is in charge of all phases of classroom activity and volunteers will take directions from the teacher or other administrators. Your activities should support the efforts of staff members but not replace them or exceed their authority.
- **Discipline or Other Concerns.** Report discipline, academic or social/emotional concerns to the appropriate administrator or teacher. Student discipline is the sole responsibility of administrators and school staff. Volunteers should not be put in a position of having to enforce discipline.
- **Calendars.** Stay informed of school holidays, field trips, testing, etc. as posted on the district website.
- **Materials and Supplies**. Return any school supplies utilized in your volunteer role and advise the appropriate school personnel of needed supplies as appropriate. District materials and supplies are not to be used for personal use.
- **Pictures and Recordings**. Volunteers should not photograph or record any students who are not their own, without prior permission from the teacher and/or the campus principal. Additionally, volunteers should not photograph or record any students' work without prior permission from the teacher and/or campus principal. Volunteers should never post, distribute, or publish any photograph or recording of any student not their own, even if the teacher or campus principal consents, on any social media site.
- **Removal**. A volunteer may be removed from service from a campus or SBISD any time it is deemed necessary and appropriate to do so. If it is determined that it is in the best interest of the district that the volunteer shall be excluded from service, SBISD will notify the volunteer.

Confidentiality.

All student information shall be treated confidentially. Both state and federal law protect the privacy of student information, including the Family Educational Rights & Privacy Act ("FERPA"). Sharing student information with others may be a violation of the law. Confidential information includes any personally identifiable information regarding a student, including, but not limited to, a student's:

- Scholastic and health records
- Test scores and grades
- Family information
- Discipline or behavioral incident information
- Status or accommodations given an academic or developmental special need

In the course and scope of volunteering, you may obtain information that is otherwise confidential by state or federal law (e.g. FERPA) and/or SBISD policy. As a volunteer, you must not disclose such confidential information except as may be allowed and/or required by law or SBISD policy. You further must exercise due diligence to safeguard against the negligent disclosure of confidential information by ensuring confidential information is not left unattended or unsecured in paper or digital format. If you have any questions about whether certain information is confidential or the disclosure of student information, ask campus administration for clarification.

Do not make a promise to a student that you will not reveal confidential information to a parent or school officials. *It may be necessary to do so* for the welfare of the student and to protect you from violating the law. Although the student is free to share confidential information with you, there are certain things that you are required by law to tell the campus administrator. Any personal information learned from a student or student's files, should be held in strictest confidence **except:**

1. If a student confides that he or she is the victim of sexual, emotional, chemical or physical abuse;
2. If a student confides that he or she is involved in any illegal activity; or
3. If a student confides that he or she is considering homicide or suicide.

Should one of these exceptions arise, you are required to immediately notify the student's principal or appropriate school personnel and/or appropriate agencies in the case of suspected child abuse or neglect in accordance with applicable law and SBISD Board Policy FFG, within 24 hours of learning of information giving rise to the suspicion. Note on your calendar when this information was reported and to whom it was given. Remember, this information is extremely personal and capable of damaging lives, so do not share it with anyone except the appropriate authorities. If you have questions, please ask a campus administrator. Any student needs communicated to the volunteer should be referred to an appropriate staff person.

Guidelines for Working with Students

Meeting with Elementary School Students in your role as a volunteer/mentor/tutor:

1. All meetings and/or activities with students must take place on the school campus, or as part of a school-sponsored or school-related activity such as a field trip, concert or athletic game.
2. All activities with a student or students must take place in a room with open visibility to the public or on the school grounds in sight of school staff representatives.
3. Off campus meetings between the volunteer and a student are strictly prohibited unless under the direct supervision of a school official.
4. Communication with the student through the use of any form of electronic media is prohibited. The term "electronic media" includes all forms of social media, text messaging, instant messaging, electronic mail (email), web logs (blogs), electronic forums (chat rooms), video sharing web sites (for example, YouTube), editorial comments posted on the Internet, and social network sites (for example, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn, SnapChat, etc.). Electronic media also includes all forms of telecommunication such as land lines, cell phones, and web-based applications. A volunteer may communicate with the parent of a student about volunteer activities by phone, email, or in-person. The volunteer will provide a copy of any email communication to a parent regarding volunteer activities to district staff upon request. If requested by the parent or district administrator, the volunteer will cease calls and/or emails to the parent.
5. The volunteer is prohibited from knowingly communicating with students through a personal social network page.

Meeting with High School and Middle School Students in your role as a volunteer/mentor/tutor:

1. All meetings and/or activities with students must take place on the school campus, or as part of a school-sponsored or school related activity such as a field trip, concert or athletic game.
2. All activities with a student or students must take place in a room with open visibility to the public or on the school grounds in sight of school staff representatives.
3. Off campus meetings between the volunteer/ mentor/tutor and the student are strictly prohibited unless under the direct supervision of a school official.
4. Communication with middle and high school students through the use of electronic media is prohibited except in the limited circumstances described below. The term "electronic media" includes all forms of social media, text messaging, instant messaging, electronic mail (email), web logs (blogs), electronic forums (chat rooms), video sharing web sites (for example, YouTube), editorial comments posted on the Internet, and social network sites (for example, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn, SnapChat, etc.). Electronic media also includes all forms of telecommunication such as land lines, cell phones, and web-based applications. Under the following limited circumstances, electronic media may be used to contact a student solely regarding mentoring/tutoring issues:
    a. The parent must consent in writing to the type of contact in the Parent Permission Form.
    b. If the parent consents in writing, the mentor/tutor may communicate with the student by telephone or cellular phone, including text messaging. There may be no communication between the hours of 9:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. The parent must be copied on all text messages. Upon request by the parent, student, or campus administrator, the mentor/tutor will cease communication with the student by telephone or cellular phone and/or provide all copies of all communications.
    c. If the parent consents in writing, the mentor/tutor may use email to communicate with the student solely about mentoring/tutoring issues. The mentor/tutor must copy the campus mentor program email on all emails to the student. The mentor/tutor may not communicate with the student by email during school hours or between the hours of 9:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. Upon parent, student, or campus administrator request, the mentor/tutor will cease email communication and/or provide all copies of all communications.
    d. The mentor/tutor is prohibited from knowingly communicating with a student through a personal social network page. The mentor/tutor may communicate with a student only through a social network page created by a campus or the district for mentoring and/or tutoring activities.

Pictures and Recordings. Both state and federal law protect the privacy of student information, including pictures and recordings of students. Volunteers shall not photograph or record any students who are not their own, without prior permission from the teacher and/or the campus principal. Additionally, volunteers shall not photograph or record any students' work without prior permission from the teacher and/or campus principal. Volunteers may never post, distribute, or publish any photograph or recording of any student not their own, even if the teacher or campus principal consents, on any social media site or elsewhere.

Transportation. Transporting a student in your personal car as part of your volunteer activities is prohibited.

- Students must be transported in a school district vehicle for field trips or in the vehicle of a parent or legal guardian.

- Do not put yourself in the position of being alone with any student in any vehicle.

- If a parent provides written consent for you to transport the parent's child, the consent is not valid for purposes of your volunteer duties.

Physical Contact.

- Restrict physical contact.

- Use common sense.

- Physical contact should be limited to holding a hand, giving a soft pat on the back or sharing a (side) hug in full view of other school officials. Take the age, sex, and personal circumstances of a student into consideration before using even these acceptable forms of physical contact.

- Remember that what you see as simple, friendly affection between you and the student may be viewed as something entirely different by someone else.

Positive, Respectful Role Model.

- Do not criticize parents, teachers, school personnel or guidelines publicly or with your student. If a problem arises, consult with your volunteer coordinator or the campus principal.

- Do not discuss your students and their problems publicly or with others. If you need help with a student, discuss the matter professionally and confidentially with the teacher, counselor, assistant principal, or principal.

- Address the student directly and with sensitivity, be honest and model an appropriate manner.

- Use discretion in giving gifts to students in alignment with your campus volunteer program policy.

What you should know about Potential Liability.

- A volunteer directly serving a school district is immune from civil liability – in other words, is not personally liable – for conduct that is (1) incident to or (2) within the scope of your duties as a volunteer and involves the exercise of judgment or discretion on your part.

- You are NOT protected from personal liability if you use excessive force or negligence in disciplining a student resulting in bodily injury to a student.

- For purposes of liability, a "volunteer" is a person providing services (1) for or on behalf of the school district (2) on the premises of the district or at a school-sponsored or school-related activity on or off school property and who (3) does not receive compensation in excess of reimbursement for expenses. *See* TEX. EDU. CODE § 22.053(b).

- The law concerning volunteers does not limit the volunteer's liability for intentional misconduct or gross negligence. That is, a volunteer can be liable for intentional misconduct or gross negligence. *See* TEX. EDU. CODE § 22.053(c).

- A person who does not provide services for or on behalf of the school district on the premises of the district or at a school-sponsored or school-related activity on or off school property is not considered a "volunteer". If you are not considered a "volunteer", you may be subject to liability. A volunteer may be subject to criminal liability on charges for abuse of children.

- A person who volunteers to assist with an extracurricular activity is not liable for civil damages arising out of an act or omission relating to the requirements under Texas Education Code 33.205 regarding safety precautions [see SBISD Policy FM (Legal)] unless the act or omission is willfully or wantonly negligent. *See* TEX. EDUC. CODE § 33.211.

- Volunteers/mentors may sometimes be in a position to learn or observe important information about a student that a teacher or other school employee may not know. If you believe a student to be in need of resources and/or if something seems "not quite right" with a student, it is important that you share this information with the building principal or other administrator confidentially as soon as possible and in any case no later than 24 hours after learning or observing the information.

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