



CONNECT
CHARTER SCHOOL

Updated August 2015

Volunteer Handbook

**Volunteering at Connect:
“It’s never just an ordinary day!”**

So you want to volunteer ...

The teaching staff and administration of the Connect Charter School recognize the immense value of the many volunteers who support our school. There are many ways in which volunteers contribute to students learning and the culture of our School.

Connect Volunteers are needed to help directly with the school in the following ways: school council, classroom help, field trips, outdoor education, Scholastic coordinators, science fair judges, camp sweet work bees and so much more. There are also many ways for parents to support our school and programs indirectly with their support from home.

What you need to know before you can volunteer...

Please contact Nola in the office (403 282-2890 or nola.s@connectcharter.ca) if you wish to volunteer and she will send you the information you require in order to complete the process. There are 2 on-line forms that need to be completed in order to volunteer for the school. There is an additional form (paper form) for volunteers wishing to drive students other than their own children to school sponsored events.

1. Calgary Police Service Volunteer Security Clearance Application (ePIC)

- Contact Nola in the office and let her know you wish to volunteer. She will send you a letter from the school that you will need in order to complete the on-line ePIC. She will also send you the link you require to complete the ePIC. Once the check is completed you will receive notification directly from the police service, then you can indicate which organizations you wish your screening to apply. Once approved, clearance is good for a maximum of 3 years unless your criminal record changes. All security clearance information is confidential and kept in the school office. You will be notified by the school office when it is time to re-do the security clearance process.

2. Connect Volunteer Registration Form - one per volunteer

- You will have likely already completed this form during the registration process. By completing the on-line "Connect Volunteer Registration Form", you agree to abide by the conditions that protect the safety, confidentiality and working environments of the school.
- You also make a signed declaration with regards to criminal convictions.
- This form is good for the current year and will again be included in the registration process for next year.

3. Driver Authorization Form/Drivers Abstract

- At Connect, the ideal is that children are transported by externally run transportation such as charter bus companies. On occasion, when this is not

- possible, parents may be asked to drive.
- If you anticipate the possibility of driving students, other than your own, to school sponsored events, the following is required:
 - Drivers Authorization Form – can be obtained from the office
 - Current Drivers Abstract (keep the receipt, as the school will reimburse the cost of the abstract – contact the office for details)
 - Proof of insurance
- The school's insurance policy strongly advises volunteers to have 2 million dollars of coverage, and it is also advised that the details of your coverage be reviewed carefully with your independent insurance carrier.
- For more information, please inquire with your insurance provider and at the school office.
- Information regarding driver's authorization is kept in the school office for one year.

At the beginning of each year, the Connect Parent Volunteer Committee hosts a volunteer orientation that we strongly encourage all volunteers to attend. This orientation will help our parents (new and experienced) to become familiar with the current school volunteer policies; to get to know each other a bit better; and to be able to ask questions that may arise for various volunteering opportunities. Dates change each year. Parents will be notified of the date and time for the orientation.

Once the Calgary Police Service clearance has been received by the school, and the volunteer has been approved by the principal, you will be contacted by the office and the Parent Volunteer Committee will be notified.

Volunteer Responsibilities...

At Connect, we try our best to match volunteer qualifications to the volunteer position. Sometimes volunteers are selected because they have knowledge in areas where expertise is an important consideration for an activity or event, in the instance of outdoor education and other specialty areas.

As a Connect Volunteer, you will be responsible for assisting the teacher in charge, as they have a formal contract and act in "loco parentis" (in lieu of parents) of the children in the classroom. If you have any questions or matters of concern during your time as a volunteer, you should bring them up to the teacher or to the school administration in a timely manner, as your input is valuable to our school.

As a Connect volunteer, you are required to:

- Maintain confidentiality in all matters relating to your role working with students, teachers and other parents.
- Receive direction from and be accountable to the teacher in charge.
- Be a positive role model for students.
- Work with the teacher to manage any inappropriate student behavior.
- Have appropriate qualifications for the activity.

- Dress appropriately for your duties and present a positive image to the community at large.
- Refrain from smoking (this includes e-cigarettes) or drinking alcohol while on school property or on a school field trip.
- Be aware of and comply with all applicable Connect policies, emergency procedures and regulations. For more information please contact the office or check the volunteer webpage (see “Emergency Procedures” below).
- Be aware of policies and procedures as they pertain to outdoor education field trips.

It is our practice to have responsible volunteers who match the above criteria.

Volunteer Sign in Procedures...

All volunteers at the Connect Charter School are required to sign in at the office before starting their volunteer shift. This helps us keep our school secure, and properly recognize the enormous contributions of our parent population. As well, it also helps us to record the hours of our volunteers and apply for grants with these hours being considered as one of the criteria for grant applications.

- Please log your name, start time and where you will be volunteering with/for the school in the volunteer binder.
- Find your name badge in the box and wear it while you are volunteering. If you do not find your name, please use a “volunteer” badge. Name badges are not required for field trips, but please sign in so we can track the volunteer hours.
- Outdoor Education trips: please log your hours in the binder so we can track them along with the other volunteer hours.
- Sign out when your shift is finished, record your hours, and then return your name badge to the box.

General Information...

Parking: It is best to park on 34th street on the west side of the field. Please do not park on the residential side of the street. Please observe all signage. Handicap parking is available in the staff parking lot. If parking is unavailable or you have further questions, please inquire at the office.

Valuables: Avoid bringing valuables into the school and keep wallets and purses with you. Connect is not responsible for lost or stolen personal property.

Washrooms: You can either use the student washrooms or the staff washrooms located on each floor. A handicap accessible washroom is available on the main floor and the school also has a lift.

Emergency procedures: Every school has a plan to deal with emergency situations. You are encouraged to ask about specific protocols in the event of a fire, lock-down, evacuation, or other emergency. We will be reviewing some of these with the parents during our orientation session. In the event of an emergency, the teacher in charge and/or school administration will provide further direction to you. You are expected to participate fully in fire drills or other safety related training conducted during the school day.

School Evacuation

If you are present in the school during an evacuation (e.g. a fire drill), you are expected to evacuate as well. If you are working with a class, follow the instructions of the teacher in charge and evacuate along with the class.

- Remain with the class at their designated muster point on the school field so that you can be accounted for as well.
- If you are volunteering in the school but not with a class and must evacuate, leave by the closest available exit (there are maps on the wall in each occupied space, showing the closest exit), closing the door behind you. Proceed to the school field to the south of the school and wait with the office staff at their muster point until further instructions are given or the all-clear is sounded (3 bells is our all-clear signal).

Lockdown

If you are volunteering in the school and there is an **internal lockdown** it is imperative that you follow the procedures below. Treat every lockdown as though it is the real thing, even if you know it is a drill.

- There will be an announcement stating that there is a lockdown. The school bell will sound continuously once the announcement is made.
- If you are in a classroom follow the instructions of the teacher in charge. You will be told to sit quietly with the students away from the door and windows until the room is cleared by a member of the Calgary Police Service. **Under no circumstances should the classroom door be opened by yourself, a student or the teacher.**
- If you are not in a classroom you may be directed into a classroom by a teacher. As with the above point, follow all instructions of the teacher in charge.
- If you are in the washroom, staff room, or other non-instructional space, close and lock the door upon the announcement of the lockdown. Sit quietly away from doors and windows until the space is cleared by a member of the Calgary Police Service. Call 911, indicating that you are in a lockdown and give them the name of the school – if it is a drill the 911 call centre would have been advised of the drill; if it is the real thing, more people calling 911 is a good thing.

Health-related Emergency

- If there is a life threatening health emergency and a teacher is present, they will take charge of the situation. The role of the parent volunteers in such a situation could be to help manage the rest of the students so that the teacher can manage the emergency itself.
- If it is an emergency situation and a teacher is not present, please call 911. As soon as possible (send a runner or make a phone call), notify the office of the emergency and that you have called 911.
- There is an Automatic External Defibrillator (AED) mounted on the wall just outside of

the school office, if required. Once the emergency has been dealt with you will need to fill out an accident/emergency report form, which is available in the office.

Staff Room: When not volunteering, parents are welcome to make use of the staff room and help themselves to coffee. There is also a Parents Corner in the library that we encourage all parents and volunteers to use. Resources/books are available for parents to sign-out at their leisure.

**The key to our success
rests in people like you,
who embody the spirit of greatness
by saying, "Yes I can, and so can you!"
Thanks for your inspiring dedication
and tremendous example to the world.**

If you have any questions please feel free to email the Parent Volunteer Committee at

volunteer@connectcharter.ca