

Palmyra-Eagle Area School District
Promoting a Safe Environment Using Background Checks
Please read this information carefully.



The Palmyra-Eagle Area School District desires to promote a safe environment for its students, employees and visitors. To keep everyone safe it is important that the district perform background checks on its employees and others who interact with children (volunteers). The School Board further recognizes that certain programs and activities can be enhanced through the use of volunteers who have particular knowledge or skills that will be helpful to members of the staff responsible for the conduct of those programs and activities.

Classroom volunteers and trip chaperones are important to our children. It is also important that the district assures that the adults who assist the district with our children in those capacities have successfully completed a criminal background check and have been approved to serve in a voluntary capacity. Background checks provide necessary information to the district that allows us to make decisions on which adults can provide the positive support for our children. To accomplish this objective the school board has determined to implement the following procedural safeguards prior to the granting of permission to work or volunteer in the district:

1. Any individual who volunteers to work in the schools or on any school sponsored activity shall submit to a criminal history records check, prior to being allowed to participate in any activity or program.
2. Any volunteer who works with or has access to students shall submit to a criminal history records check, prior to being allowed to participate in any activity or program.
3. Any person who volunteers to work with the District shall be screened through the Internet site for the Sex Offenders Registry (SOR) list prior to being allowed to participate in any activity or program.
4. Any volunteer who works with or has access to students shall be screened through the Internet site for the Sex Offenders Registry (SOR) list prior to being allowed to participate in any activity or program.

Attached you will find a Palmyra - Eagle Area School District Background check form. Please note that a conviction record or pending criminal charge is not an automatic bar to employment or volunteering in our schools. A person may serve as a classroom volunteer under direct supervision of district employees, but will be unable to serve as a field trip or overnight chaperone.

However, falsifying your answer to the background check question, "*Do you have a pending criminal charge or have you ever pled guilty, or no contest/nolo contendere, to or been convicted of an ordinance violation (such as inappropriate use of drugs or alcohol and/or harm to another person), misdemeanor, or felony*" may be cause for automatic denial for employment or volunteering in the district. Please read the question carefully and answer truthfully.

The information collected on this Background Check Form is used solely to conduct a background check. The information being asked for is needed in order to run the background check. This information is kept confidential. The District Administrator shall have sole discretion to determine whether information obtained through the background check process disqualifies an individual from serving as a volunteer within the District, or may place restrictions on the type of volunteer service the individual may provide.

FAIR CREDIT REPORTING ACT

While the Fair Credit Reporting Act does regulate both the collection and use of credit information about you, it also regulates both the collection and use of "consumer reports" or "investigative consumer reports" prepared by a consumer reporting agency. Background checks fall under the category of "consumer reports" and "investigative consumer reports."

Since the Palmyra – Eagle Area School District uses a third party agency to run some of its background checks, the District is obligated under the Fair Credit Reporting Act to inform you of your rights under the act.

The only time the District will run an actual credit report on an employee/volunteer or contracted service worker is if they have fiduciary responsibility (i.e.: budgeting, payroll, fundraisers or other money related activities).

VOLUNTEERS

I agree to abide by all relevant Board policies and administrative guidelines while on duty for the District. I understand that, although I am covered under the District's liability insurance policy, I am not covered by its health insurance policy nor am I eligible for workers' compensation. Should I become ill or suffer an accident while doing volunteer work for the District, I agree that I shall be responsible for any and all hospital and medical charges that may accrue.

I understand further that, as a volunteer, I am not in any manner considered an employee of the District or entitled to any benefits provided to employees. I further release the Board of Education from any and all liability for any damages, whatever their nature, which may result as a consequence of my volunteer services.

As a volunteer in the District, I acknowledged that if I hold a license or permit to carry a concealed weapon in Wisconsin or any other state that I will not carry such a weapon during the course of performing my volunteer activities with the District.

For the protection of the children in the school, the District is required by law to inquire of its staff members and volunteers whether or not they have ever been convicted of a crime related to children. We would appreciate your cooperation by indicating that you have never been convicted of any of the following offenses: aggravated murder, murder, voluntary manslaughter, involuntary manslaughter, felonious assault, aggravated assault, assault, aggravated menacing, abuse or neglect of a child, kidnapping, abduction, child stealing, criminal child enticement, rape, sexual battery, corruption of a minor, gross sexual imposition, importuning, voyeurism, public indecency, felonious sexual penetration, compelling prostitution, promoting prostitution, procuring prostitution, disseminating matter harmful to juveniles, pandering obscenity, pandering obscenity involving a minor, pandering sexually-oriented matter involving a minor, illegal use of a minor in nudity-oriented material or performance, endangering children, contributing to the delinquency of children, carrying concealed weapons, improperly discharging a firearm at or into a school or house, corrupting another with drugs, placing harmful objects in or adulterating food or confection

VOLUNTEER EXPECTATIONS

1. Maintains Confidentiality – In your role as a school volunteer, you may read and hear information about students and staff that is confidential. The confidential information may be test data, attendance, financial or personal information or social or behavioral information. There are times that a staff member may need to share confidential information with you or a student may tell you something in confidence. You may hear conversations between students and teachers, students to students or between district personnel. All of these situations are confidential and should not be discussed with anyone that does not have a legitimate need to know. If you suspect a child is being abused or neglected, this should be reported to the building principal immediately.

Parents, friends or community members may in good faith ask you questions about the progress or problems of a student knowing that you volunteer. Discussion about individual students, teachers or staff or their actions and/or abilities is considered a breach of conduct and the student's or staff member's privacy.

2. Be Reliable – Remember that students and staff members depend on and appreciate your presence. If you find that you are unable to meet your obligation please contact the school office as soon as possible.
3. Be a Good Role Model – All faculty, staff, administrators, board members and school volunteers serve complimentary roles in promoting positive character development. In schools, as in families, children care about our values because they know we care about them.
- Volunteers serve as caregivers – respecting students, helping them to succeed, treating each student as having dignity and worth and enabling students to gain a firsthand appreciation of the meaning of ethics by being treated in an ethical way.
 - Volunteers serve as role models – ethical persons who demonstrate a high level of respect and responsibility both inside and outside the school setting.
 - Volunteers serve as mentors – providing guidance through explanation, storytelling and encouragement of positive behavior.
4. Practice Open and Positive Communication – Address any concerns or issues promptly and productively. Volunteers may contact the staff member they are working with or the building principal to express their concerns. Communication is the key to establishing good relationships that benefit everyone.

SCHOOL VOLUNTEER APPROVAL PROCEDURE



Palmyra-Eagle Area School District board policy requires that all volunteers complete a required National and/or State criminal history background check. For the purposes of policy and procedure a volunteer is defined as an adult who volunteers to serve in the school in one or more approved capacities.

The following procedure outlines the steps required for the volunteer approval process:

- 1. The prospective volunteer should contact the principal or building secretary to obtain the district approved volunteer application form and related materials.**
- 2. Once completed, the documents may be submitted to the building principal or secretary who will then forward them on to the district office for processing.**
- 3. Upon receipt of the forms the district will conduct a confidential criminal background check.**
- 4. Upon completion of the background check the District Administrator will contact the individual to inform them of the results of the background check if something appears as a result of the background check that was not disclosed or causes concern which might jeopardize the approval of the application.**
- 5. The District Administrator will issue a formal notice in the form of a letter to individuals who have not successfully completed the background check and have not been approved for volunteer service to the district.**
- 6. A list of approved volunteers will be available to each principal and building secretary. Volunteer badges or some form of identification shall be made available and will be worn by all individuals, as necessary, during the time of their volunteerism.**
- 7. Such badges or forms of identification shall be issued daily upon the onset of the volunteerism in the school and shall be returned at the conclusion of said activity(ies).**
- 8. It is the responsibility of school staff members facilitating the volunteer activity(ies) to make sure that the volunteer have been properly screened prior to performance of volunteer duties. This shall be done via confirmation/verification with the principal or building secretary to ensure the individual's name is included on the approved list.**
- 9. Volunteers who have not successfully completed a background check shall not be provided unsupervised access to students or confidential student information and will not be permitted to serve as a chaperone on a school-sponsored trip or planned activity.**
- 10. The District Administrator retains the sole authority to approve or deny all school volunteer applicants.**

*****Applicant - Please keep the following for your file - A Summary of Your Rights Under the Fair Credit Reporting Act*****

The federal Fair Credit Reporting Act (FCRA) is designed to promote accuracy, fairness and privacy of information in the files of every "consumer reporting agency" (CRA). Most CRA's are credit bureaus that gather and sell information about you - such as if you pay your bills on time or have filed bankruptcy - to creditors, employers, landlords and other businesses. You can find the complete text of the FCRA, 15 U.S.C. 1681 - 1681u, at the Federal Trade Commission's web site (<http://www.ftc.gov>). The FCRA gives you specific rights, as outlined below. You may have additional rights under state law. You may contact a state or local consumer protection agency or a state attorney general to learn those rights.

You must be told if information in your file has been used against you. Anyone who uses information from a CRA to take action against you - such as denying an application for credit, insurance, or employment - must tell you and give you the name, address and phone number of the CRA that provided the consumer report.

You can find out what is in your file. At your request, a CRA must give you the information in your file and a list of everyone who has requested it recently. There is no charge for the report if a person has taken action against you because of information supplied by the CRA, if you request the report within 60 days of receiving notice of the action. You also are entitled to one free report every twelve months upon request if you certify that (1) you are unemployed and plan to seek employment within 60 days, (2) you are on welfare, or (3) your report is inaccurate due to fraud. Otherwise, a CRA may charge you up to eight dollars.

You can dispute inaccurate information with the CRA. If you tell a CRA that your file contains inaccurate information, the CRA must investigate the items (usually within 30 days) by presenting to its information source all relevant evidence you submit, unless your dispute is frivolous. The source must review your evidence and report its findings to the CRA. (The source also must advise national CRA's - to which it has provided the data - of any error.) The CRA must give you a written report of the investigation and a copy of your report if the investigation results in any change. If the CRA's investigation does not resolve the dispute, you may add a brief statement to your file. The CRA must normally include a summary of your statement in future reports. If an item is deleted or a dispute statement is filed, you may ask that anyone who has recently received your report be notified of the changes.

Inaccurate information must be corrected or deleted. A CRA must remove or correct inaccurate or unverified information from its files, usually within 30 days after you dispute it. However, the CRA is not required to remove accurate data from your file unless it is outdated (as described below) or cannot be verified.

If your dispute results in any change to your report, the CRA can-not reinsert into your file a disputed item unless the information source verifies its accuracy and completeness. In addition, the CRA must give you written notice telling you it has reinstated the item. The notice must include the name, address and phone number of the information source.

You can dispute inaccurate items with the source of the information. If you tell anyone - such as a creditor who reports to a CRA - that you dispute an item, they may not then report the information to a CRA without including a notice of your dispute. In addition, once you've notified the source of the error in writing, it may not continue to report the information if it is, in fact, an error.

Outdated information may not be reported. In most cases, a CRA may not report negative information that is more than seven years old; ten years for bankruptcies.

Access to your file is limited. A CRA may provide information about you only to people with a need recognized by the FCRA - usually to consider an application with a creditor, insurer, employer, landlord, or other business.

Your consent is required for reports that are provided to employers, or reports that contain medical information. A CRA may not give out information about you to your employer, or prospective employer, without your written consent. A CRA may not report medical information about you to creditors, insurers, or employers without your permission.

You may choose to exclude your name from CRA lists for unsolicited credit and insurance offers. Creditors and insurers may use file information as the basis for sending you unsolicited offers of credit or insurance. Such offers must include a toll-free telephone number for you to call if you want your name and address removed from future lists. If you call, you must be kept off the lists for two years. If you request, complete and return the CRA form provided for this purpose, you must be taken off the lists indefinitely.

You may seek damages from violators. If a CRA, a user, or (in some cases) a provider of CRA data, violates the FCRA, you may sue them in state or federal court.

The FCRA gives several different federal agencies authority to enforce the FCRA:

FOR QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS REGARDING: CRA'S, creditors and others not listed below

National Banks, federal branches/agencies or foreign banks (word "National" or initials "N.A." appear in or alter bank's name) Federal Reserve System member banks (except national banks and federal branches/agencies of foreign banks) PLEASE CONTACT Federal Trade Commission Consumer Response Center - FCRA Washington, DC 20580 202-326-3761 Office of the Comptroller of the Currency Compliance Management, Mail Stop 6-6 Washington, DC 20219 800-613-6743 Federal Reserve Board Division of Consumer & Community Affairs Washington, DC 20551 202-452-3693

Savings associations and federally chartered savings banks (word "Federal" or initials "F.S.B." appear in federal institutions name) Federal credit unions (words "Federal Credit Union" appear in institutions name)

State-chartered banks that are not members of the Federal Reserve System.

Air, surface or rail common carriers regulated by former Civil Aeronautics Board or Interstate Commerce Commission Activities subject to the Packers and Stockyards Act, 1921

Office of Thrift Supervisor Consumer Programs Washington, DC 20552 800-842-6929

National Credit Union Administration 1775 Duke Street Alexandria, VA 22314 705-518-6360

Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation Division of Compliance & Consumer Affairs Washington, DC 20429 800-934-FDIC Department of Transportation Office of Financial Management Washington, DC 20590 202-366-1306

Department of Agriculture Office of Deputy Administrator - GIPSA Washington, DC 20250 202-720-7051

Background Check Form

This information is being collected solely to conduct a background check. None of the information being solicited is intended to be used in violation of the law. Information revealed will not be used in hiring decisions or approving volunteers unless it relates to the applicant's employment/volunteering request.

*****Please note this form must be completely filled out prior to processing.*****

Position Applying/Volunteering For: _____

Location: (Check all that apply) District Eagle Elementary School Palmyra Elementary School

Palmyra-Eagle Middle School Palmyra-Eagle High School

First Name

Middle Name

Last Name

Street Address

City

State

Zip Code

Email/Gmail: _____

Other Name(s) As Applicable

Date of Birth

Social Security Number

Male

Female

Driver's License Number

State

Do you have a pending criminal charge or have you ever pled guilty, or no contest/nolo contendere, to or been convicted of an ordinance violation (such as inappropriate use of drugs or alcohol and/or harm to another person), misdemeanor, or felony? No Yes

Please explain: _____

A conviction record or pending criminal charge will not be used as criterion in making an employment decision unless the circumstances of the offense substantially relate to the circumstances of the position being sought.

Please list **ALL** previous counties and states in which you resided since 18 years of age starting with the most recent. If you need more space, please attach a separate sheet of paper.

County

State

From (yyyy)

To (yyyy)

AUTHORIZATION AND RELEASE

I certify that the information provided by me on this form and the employment/volunteer application I previously filled out is true and complete to the best of my knowledge. I understand that if any false information, omissions or misrepresentations are discovered, my application may be rejected and, if I am employed, my employment/volunteering may be terminated at any time. I agree that the District shall not be held liable in any respect if my application is rejected or my employment /volunteering is terminated for this reason.

The Palmyra - Eagle Area School District, its employees, and its agents are hereby authorized, at the time of my application for employment/volunteering or during the course of my employment/volunteering, to obtain from any source, information regarding my education, experience, criminal background, competence, character or medical history as relates to the position for which I applied for or in which I am employed/volunteering.

I authorize any former or current employer, school or government agency as well as its officers, agents and employees to release any and all information to the Palmyra - Eagle Area School District, its employees, and agents should the District, its employees, or its agents make a written or oral request for such information. I understand that the employment information may include, but is not necessarily limited to, performance evaluations and reports, job descriptions, disciplinary reports, letters of reprimand and concerns regarding my suitability for employment.

I further, voluntarily and knowingly, fully release and disclaim, absolve, indemnify, and hold harmless such former employers, schools or government agencies as well as its officers, agents and employees from any and all claims, liabilities, demands, causes of action, damages or costs, including reasonable attorneys' fees, present or future, whether known or unknown, anticipated or unanticipated, arising from or incident to the disclosure or release except for the malicious and willful disclosure of derogatory facts concerning my employment/volunteering made for the express purpose of preventing me from obtaining employment/volunteering which the person or entity disclosing such facts knows are untrue.

FAIR CREDIT REPORTING ACT AUTHORIZATION AND RELEASE

I acknowledge the District's notification to me as required by the Fair Credit Reporting Act of 1970 that a consumer report or an investigative consumer report may be made on me prior to or during the course of my employment/ volunteering with the Palmyra - Eagle Area School District, including information related to my character, general reputation and personal characteristics, and I hereby consent to such.

I understand that upon my written request a complete and accurate disclosure of the nature and scope of the investigation requested will be provided for me.

Signature _____ Date _____

The Palmyra - Eagle Area School District does not discriminate in hiring or employment on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, age, disability, arrest and conviction record, or any other protected characteristic. No questions on this application are intended to secure information to be used in violation of the law.

PLEASE NOTE:

Convictions or pending charges related to sexual predation, crimes against children, violent acts, drugs, weapons, theft, or a significant disregard for the safety and well-being of others are examples of some of the types of convictions that will result in a denial of the volunteer application. Any false statements found on the application will be cause for automatic denial for volunteers. Applicants who are denied will be unable to chaperone day or overnight field trips, but are able to serve in a voluntary capacity in the schools or at school sponsored or sanctioned events held on school premises at which district personnel are present and acting in a supervisory role.

An approved background check shall be valid for the school year in which the application is made. Individuals who make application should provide at least two weeks for the purpose of processing the request prior to their voluntary service. The approval to serve as a volunteer shall expire one week following the last day of student attendance in that school year. A new Volunteer Declaration and Background Check form must be completed annually. Those individuals wishing to continue volunteering after that time shall submit the necessary forms once again and, pending approval, shall be valid for the subsequent school year. Costs associated with the expenses incurred by the completion of the criminal background check shall be borne by the Palmyra-Eagle Area School District.