**New York Conference Elementary Teachers’ Handbook**

This handbook is supplemental to the Atlantic Union Teachers’ Handbook. It addresses matters which are specific or unique to the New York Conference. Each teacher is responsible for becoming familiar with the information contained herein. For concerns not addressed by this handbook, consult the Atlantic Union Teachers’ Handbook or the Atlantic Union Code Book. If, as a teacher, you encounter a situation or are considering doing something that is in any way out of the ordinary, it is your responsibility to locate related policies and/or contact the education

superintendent for clarification.

**Spirit Compatible Instruction**

Spirit Compatible Instruction is a modification of an approach based on recent brain research, and has been adopted by the New York Conference as a model for creating classrooms which are safe and strong spiritually, emotionally, physically, and academically. Spirit Compatible Instruction takes brain compatible instruction to another level by incorporating and emphasizing the spiritual, while continuing to address the role of the whole person, including body and mind.

In the classroom, this approach begins by ensuring that the environment is physically and emotionally safe and supportive of the needs of the brain. We begin by addressing the following environmental issues:

- pure air (for example, eliminate odors caused by mildew or chemicals)

- pure water

- adequate lighting

- calming colors and decorations

- clutter free and organized

- provision for movement

Next we work to provide students with an emotional environment characterized by the following:

* an assurance of unconditional love
* personal significance
* absence of threat and strategies for conflict resolution
* clear, consistent and fair boundaries
* adequate time to complete requirements

- meaningful content

* interesting and relevant resources
* peaceful collaboration with peers
* instruction targeted to challenge without overwhelming
* reflective thinking
* choice

Throughout instruction we emphasize and integrate spiritual values. This is done by:

- helping students to sense the presence of God

- assuring students of His unconditional love

- beginning the day with worship

* teaching students the relevance of prayer throughout the day
* making spiritual connections to academic studies
* systematically teaching positive character traits which are essentially the fruit of the Spirit
* assisting students to learn the joy of Christian service through practical experience
* providing discipline in a spiritual context
* the teacher acknowledging her/his dependence on God

Teachers in the New York Conference will be provided in-service training in this approach and are expected to practice these principles. Additional assistance will be provided through mentoring and modeling as needed.

**Communicating with the Education Office**

Conference Office to Teacher

The education office of the New York Conference has established numerous methods for communicating with teachers. At or near the beginning of each month during the school year a newsletter, *Master Teacher*, is mailed to the homes of teachers. It is the teacher’s responsibility to read and attend to the information contained in the newsletter. Additionally, information which needs to be in the hands of teachers between newsletter mailings may be sent by email. Teachers need to establish a habit of checking their email at least most week days. Materials which cannot be sent by email will be sent by regular mail to the school. If a teacher prefers to have mail sent to his/her home address, the office should be informed accordingly. Head teachers should establish a habit of opening school and home mail routinely so that important information is not overlooked. It may be appropriate to enlist the help of the school board chair or other board member to keep up with school mail.

Teacher to Conference Office

The superintendent and secretary for the education office consider it their privilege to serve teachers and schools. Teachers are encouraged to contact either whenever help is needed. This may be done by means of email ([fburghardt@nyconf.org](mailto:fburghardt@nyconf.org), [barbara@nyconf.org](mailto:barbara@nyconf.org)), standard mail (4930 W. Seneca Turnpike, P.O. Box 15505 Syracuse, NY 13215), or office phone (315.469.6921). The superintendent may also be contacted at home or by cell phone and these numbers will be provided to teachers.

Whenever an unusual or potentially problematic situation arises, it is strongly recommended that the superintendent be contacted. This will minimize unpleasant surprises and allow those involved to be proactive, rather than reactive. If in doubt, PLEASE CALL!

**Attendance at School**

Work Hours

The teacher is expected to be in attendance when school is in session unless s/he has made necessary arrangements to use leave time. This should include no less than 30 minutes before school and 30 minutes after school to prepare lessons and the classroom, to evaluate students’ written work and projects and to be available to communicate with parents.

Pre- and Post-School Weeks

Teachers’ contracts include two weeks prior to the start of school and one week following the end of the school year. During these weeks teachers are expected to work eight hours per day (a typical work day) preparing the classroom and/or lessons, and/or recruiting students. If basic duties are completed in less time, the additional time should be used to learn new techniques or plan innovative lessons.

Snow Day

Upstate New York has a reputation for snow-blessed winters. The conference school calendar allows for 2 or 3 snow days (this varies from year to year). Schools may take the initiative to obtain one or more extra snow days by adding a Sunday school day (using a Sunday near the beginning of the school year to orient parents to expectations and routines, to build community among families and offer educational activities or presentations are good uses of a school day) or by eliminating a scheduled holiday. If more days are used than have been planned for, time will need to be made up by either forfeiting days from winter or spring vacation or by adding Sunday school days.

Teachers, in conjunction with the school board, should develop a plan for determining when to cancel school for snow days or other unexpected reasons. Arrangements can be made with local TV and radio stations to announce cancellations or it may be determined that school will not be in session when the local public school is cancelled. Whichever method is chosen, parents should be informed and reminded of the policy.

**Absences from the Classroom**

**Sick Time**

Full-time teachers who are employed by the New York Conference are permitted ten sick days per year for short-term or long-term illnesses. Elective medical, dental or surgical appointments should be scheduled so as not to interfere with the regular work schedule whenever possible. When this is not possible, sick days may be used. Unused sick days may be carried over from one year to the next up to a maximum of 26 weeks. **Teachers are obligated to report the use of sick days even if a paid substitute is not needed** (for example, a classroom assistant or volunteer is left in charge). This should be done by submitting the “Request for Substitute Pay” form and indicating on it that the teacher was absent but substitute pay is not required. Extended long-term illnesses will be addressed through the Conference Office of Education on an individual basis.

**Personal Days**

Two of the ten sick days may be used as personal days; that is, the teacher may take two days off when school is in regular session without a medical reason. These may be used as “mental health” days or to attend family events such as reunions, weddings or the birth of grandchildren. Personal days may not be taken the day before or after school vacations unless prior arrangements are made and approved by the Conference Office of Education in writing, assuming that the teacher has unused personal days. Elementary school teachers have a number of relatively lengthy scheduled vacations (Christmas, winter and spring breaks) providing opportunities to attend family events and they are encouraged to take advantage of these times off so that additional time is not needed. **Teachers are obligated to report the use of personal days even if a paid substitute is not needed (for example, a classroom assistant or volunteer is left in charge).** Personal days may not be accumulated from one year to the next, but may be carried over as sick days.

**Bereavement Leave**

A leave of up to three days with no loss of salary is granted to an employee in the case of a death in the immediate family. Immediate family consists of the parents, siblings of the employee or spouse, the employee’s spouse, grandparents, children and grandchildren. Transportation and other expenses related to attending funerals are the employee’s responsibility.

**Jury Duty**

Employees selected for jury duty should accept this responsibility as required of a contributing citizen and should notify the principal and/or superintendent as soon as possible. Employees will be granted time off upon presentation of written evidence of a call for jury duty. The employee’s pay will be issued as though the teacher were on duty. Any reimbursement provided by the courts must be turned in to the conference. The substitute will be paid by the conference.

**Sabbath School and Church Attendance**

It is assumed and expected that teachers will be committed to their personal spiritual growth and will understand the role of Sabbath School and church attendance in this. Furthermore, it is vital that students see their teachers modeling attendance and participation in positive ways. Teachers are also encouraged to view themselves as partners in ministry with pastors and as such each should be available as much as possible to support the other. It is not the desire of the administration of the Office of Education to keep track of or enforce church attendance of teachers in a legalistic fashion. It is hoped that teachers will embrace the spirit of worship and work to make balanced contributions to Sabbath School and church services.

**Pastor/Teacher Partnerships**

There are many ways in which pastors and teachers may work collaboratively to empower each other’s ministries. A manual addressing many of these is produced by the Atlantic Union and available through the Conference Office of Education. At a minimum pastors and teachers should intentionally pray with and for each other, and work cooperatively in activities which assist students to commit their lives to Christ and which enable them to share the gospel with their loved ones and community. Pastors should be welcomed in the classroom on a regular basis and it is appropriate for either party to initiate such involvement. A monthly meeting between the two to review goals and plans may help to make collaboration and mutual support a reality.

**In-services**

**Pastor/Teacher Retreat and In-Service**

During one of the two pre-school weeks a pastor and teacher retreat and in-service is typically held from Sunday through Wednesday at the conference camp, Camp Cherokee. Teachers are required to be in attendance for the duration of the meetings. Immediate family members are welcome to accompany teachers and camp activities are made available to them while teachers are occupied.

**January In-Service**

A teacher in-service day is typically scheduled on the Tuesday following the Monday holiday honoring Martin Luther King, Jr. Students are not expected to be in class on this day. If a school needs to gain a school day and is able to offer meaningful instruction with a substitute on this day, they may do so. However, the local school board will be responsible for providing the substitute pay.

**Other In-Services**

Other in-services may be scheduled as needed. When teachers are required to attend these meetings, unless otherwise informed, classes should be in session and the conference office will provide the substitute pay.

**Outdoor School and Other Conference Sponsored Events**

The New York Conference sponsors several annual events which require students to travel away from their local schools. A four or five day outdoor school program is provided for students in grades 5-8 and held at Camp Cherokee in the Adirondack Mountains. A three day music festival for this same group of students is held on the campus of Union Springs Academy, as is a one day Education Fair for all students. Teachers of students eligible for participation in these events are expected to accompany their young people in the designated activities. Those who feel that they are unable to do so, should discuss their concerns with the education superintendent. Travel expenses incurred by teachers for these activities will be reimbursed by the conference.

**Monthly Reports**

As with nearly all professions, church school teachers are obligated to complete and submit some paperwork. The education office recognizes the many responsibilities of teachers in small schools and has actively sought to make the completion of such paper work as painless as possible. Teachers are only required to complete those forms which serve a specific, necessary purpose and in order to make it easier for the teacher to remember to do so, forms will be emailed just prior to the time they are needed. Teachers are expected to have an email account and to check it frequently. While filling out this paperwork may not be a priority for the teacher, s/he is asked to do so in a timely manner out of courtesy for those who need the information.

**Certification**

Teachers are responsible for maintaining their teaching certification. They should provide documentation for completed courses and other applicable activities to the registrar for the Atlantic Union Conference who may be contacted at (978)368-8333, x3022.

**The Teacher’s Relationship to the School Board**

It is expected that each teacher will work in a spirit of cooperation with the school board chair and other members. Tasks which should be completed jointly include, but are not limited to, creating or updating a student handbook and local school calendar, preparing a budget for the subsequent school year, planning for the growth and long-term “health” of the school, finding solutions to physical plant challenges, resolving significant issues of student discipline, setting the agenda for school board meetings and responding to concerns expressed by parents.

Principals/head teachers deserve prior knowledge of all problems to be discussed at school board meetings, and school board chairs will be asked to remind their members of this policy. To facilitate this process, it is expected that the principal/head teacher and board chair will meet in advance of the scheduled meeting and determine items to be included on the agenda for the upcoming meeting. This should be distributed to board members in advance of the meeting so that they may suggest other matters *prior* to the meeting.

The local conference board of education serves as employer of all teachers. As such the local conference board of education is responsible for the employment, assignment, transfer, retirement, non-renewal of contract, and termination of all certified personnel. The local conference superintendent or associate, in consultation with the local school boards, makes recommendations to the local conference board of education on the employment of certified personnel. Teachers should be aware that it is neither the duty nor the right of the school board or its members to investigate or censure them without the knowledge and representation of a conference administrator. It is in the best interest of teachers to inform the Office of Education at the first indication that problems may be developing.

**Creating a School Handbook and Calendar**

Each school should develop a professional looking, carefully edited handbook which describes the mission of the school and identifies school policies and guidelines for parents and students. It should be distributed to families considering enrolling children in the school and should be updated periodically and redistributed to families of students already enrolled.

The education office provides a conference school calendar. This should be used as the basis for each school to create its own calendar, ensuring that the required number of school days is met. Local calendars will vary from the conference calendar by identifying which days will be half days and adding local events such as Christmas and spring concerts, fund raising events and extra school days to provide for additional snow days. The calendar should be distributed to each family to minimize confusion about school events and days in session.

Both of the tasks described above should be accomplished by the school board in consultation with the principal/head teacher. Any questions about policies may be directed to the education office.

**Field Trips**

Carefully planned and focused field trips are an important component of Spirit Compatible Instruction. Each major theme unit should begin (rather than end) with a field trip which will provide students with an experiential “hook” on which to “hang” the information they will be learning. Following are guidelines which will help to ensure that field trips are safe and meaningful.

* Contact the field trip site early to allow time to work out details and to visit it, if possible.
* Inform tour guides that students are coming at the beginning of the unit and will have limited knowledge about the topic.
* Identify some goals which you hope will be accomplished by the trip and share these with the site coordinator.
* For each volunteer who will be driving students, obtain and file copies of the volunteer’s driver’s license and proof of insurance.
* Obtain parental permission for the student to participate in the field trip. This should be done using the form provided. This form contains consent to treat information. Two copies should be taken on the trip- one carried by the driver with whom the student is riding and one by the teacher.
* Approximately a week before the trip, confirm by phone or letter (see sample letter) that the site is expecting and prepared for the students’ visit.
* Provide each driver with a list of students for whom s/he will be responsible. This list should identify special needs of students and ways in which the volunteer can help to make the trip more meaningful. See sample form.
* A first aid kit in a small backpack or “fanny” pack should be taken in case of emergency.
* Students should be reminded that they are leaving the school as ambassadors for Jesus. Guidelines for doing so should be reviewed with them prior to heading out.
* At the conclusion of the trip students should verbally express gratitude to the hosts at the site and to the volunteer drivers/chaperones. This should be followed up with a written thank you from students to at least the field trip site.

**Record Keeping**

Schools in the New York Conference are maintaining academic records electronically through an internet-based company, RENWEB. This service is used to record students’ grades, create and print report cards, and keep attendance records. Other optional services include billing parents for tuition and other charges, making daily progress reports available to parents (they can view current grades and missing assignments on-line) and e-mail communication. Teachers are expected to become familiar with this service and use it consistently as previously used paper systems are no longer in use. In-service training is available and RENWEB offers several methods for having questions answered and problems resolved.

**Supervision of Students**

Careful supervision of students is not only an indication of concern for the welfare of the child but a legal matter and must be provided in the classroom, on the playground, during recess and transitions, before and after school and during any activity sponsored by the school. It is not enough for the teacher to be physically present in the same space as students. S/he must be alert to environmental dangers and interactions between students and therefore should avoid prolonged discussions with students or other adults which might serve as a distraction. Students should not be permitted to engage in rough or dangerous play such as boxing, wrestling or karate. They should not be allowed to hang up-side down from monkey bars or go head first down slides (these present a risk of head injury). Roller skates/blades, skate boards or bicycles should be allowed only if approved by the local board, and students must wear full protective gear (helmet, shoulder and knee pads). Ramps and jumps are not appropriate on school property. Students should not be allowed to climb trees.

Accidents should be reported to the school nurse if one is available or directly to the parents in the absence of a school nurse. A narrative description of accidents should be written up including first aid which was administered and contacts which were made. This should be kept in an incident file. When students must leave the classroom or other area under the supervision of the teacher, as a general rule, only one student should be permitted to leave at a time.

**Physical Appearance and Professionalism**

Teaching is not only a profession but a calling from the Lord. Many professionals are identified by their uniform or manner of dress and none should be more dignified than that of the teacher. It is assumed that teachers will dress and adorn themselves in accordance with the dictates of Scripture- modestly, simply and neatly. While these guidelines leave room for individuality, items which are clearly inappropriate in New York Conference schools include decorative jewelry, excessive makeup and unnatural nail polish, flip flops, and clothes that are tight, short, leave the midriff exposed or are otherwise revealing. Jeans and other modest casual wear should be worn only for occasions which require them such as school picnics or outdoor field trips.

**Physical Contact with Students**

Children, particularly those in the early elementary grades, often want and need physical contact as a sign of acceptance and affirmation. Teachers are encouraged to provide this contact with prudence, being highly conscious of what constitutes appropriate touch and avoiding interactions which might be suspect. Following are some important guidelines.

1. Always ask a child’s permission before physically touching them anywhere, even when responding to an injury or problem. This is especially true for any areas that would normally be covered by a T-shirt and/or shorts. If an injury is within this area, make sure another adult works with you as care is provided.
2. Refrain from physical and verbal attacks and corporal punishment which is inappropriate behavior and should never be used as discipline.
3. Affirm children with appropriate touch by keeping hugs brief and “shoulder-to-shoulder” or “side-to-side”, always keeping hands at (not below) the shoulder level. For young children, a kiss, if given, should be to the forehead or cheek only- not elsewhere. For small children who like to sit on laps, encourage them to sit next to you.
4. Provide extra care when taking small children to the restroom. Take another adult along, or leave the door open.
5. In rooms that do not have an interior viewing area leave the door open to allow easy observation by others.
6. Avoid situations which leave you alone with a solitary child.
7. Be aware of the signs and symptoms of child abuse and of the legal requirements for reporting suspected cases of abuse.

**Volunteer Screening**

A volunteer screening procedure has been established by the conference and is included in this handbook. It is the principal or head teacher’s responsibility to ensure that volunteers complete the screening process and are oriented to the task for which their help is enlisted. The board chair or a member may assist with the process if the teacher wishes.

**Volunteer Management and Screening Guidelines**

**For Seventh-day Adventist Schools**

**in the New York Conference**

**Objectives:**

a. The Seventh-day Adventist Church and the schools operated by it are committed to providing a safe environment to help children learn to love and follow Jesus Christ. At this time, the disturbing and traumatic increase and recognition of physical and sexual abuse of children has claimed the attention of our nation, our society and the church. Adventist institutions which conduct programs for children and youth are not insulated from abusive individuals. Because the Seventh-day Adventist Church desires to make its educational environments free from abuse of all kinds, the following guidelines have been developed for implementation throughout the New York Conference.

b. In keeping with the Seventh-day Adventist Church Manual and in concert with the local conference, it is the responsibility of the local school to select, screen and manage trustworthy individuals to fill volunteer positions in ministry for children and youth.

***“The local church should take reasonable steps to safeguard children engaged in church-sponsored activities by choosing individuals with high spiritual and moral backgrounds as leaders and participants in programs for children.”*  SDA Church Manual- Revision 2000 page 120**

**c.** The work of volunteers is essential to the successful accomplishment of the school’s mission and ministry. In selecting individuals for volunteer positions, only persons who support the mission of the organization should be recruited. The management policies and procedures employed to supervise the work of volunteers must be consistent with the school’s mission and must support its successful achievement. Individuals who are unwilling to support the volunteer management policies and practices should not be allowed to serve.

**Organizational Responsibilities:**

a. The school has both a moral and civil duty to protect the children entrusted to its care from harm caused by abuse. The local community has an expectation that the school will provide a safe haven for children who participate in the ministry of the school.

b. It is expected that appropriate levels of adult supervision shall be provided at all times.

c. The school will exercise reasonable care in the selection and supervision of volunteers that will include:

* Careful selection of individuals needed to supervise a specific ministry or activity.
* Appropriate training and orientation of individuals in order to provide proper supervision of the ministry or activity.
* Each volunteer will receive a written copy of the policies and/or expected code of conduct.
* The school will be expected to provide proper oversight and management of volunteers.
* The school shall take appropriate corrective action to either discipline, counsel, or remove volunteer(s) when necessary.
* The school has a duty to report all incidents of suspected child abuse in accordance with the law.

**Volunteer Selection and Management**

a. It is the responsibility of the school to select individuals who will serve in volunteer positions.

b. All volunteers should be appropriately screened before they are allowed to supervise children.

c. The school should adopt a practice that no adult will be considered for a volunteer leadership role in a school sponsored activity until they have held membership in the congregation or been known by the organization for a minimum of one year.

d. All volunteers should be asked to submit to a screening procedure that will include the completion of a signed School Volunteer Information Form. Individuals who submit incomplete forms will not be considered for a volunteer position.

e. The school should establish a Volunteer Screening Committee of 3-5 members. This committee will review School Volunteer Information Forms submitted and approve individuals to serve in a volunteer capacity.

f. All volunteer positions should be evaluated to determine the appropriate level of screening based on the potential level of interaction with children; e.g., one-on-one activity, off-site activities and over-night activities, in which the volunteer may be involved.

g. The appropriate level of screening should be completed before the volunteer is allowed to serve. In some cases, the local conference may provide assistance in the volunteer screening process.

h. The Volunteer Screening Committee will notify the volunteer when the screening process is complete.

i. All volunteer leaders regardless of their previous experience shall participate in the screening program.

j. The Volunteer Screening Committee shall periodically review the performance of all volunteers. Volunteer information on file at the school should be updated every three (3) years.

**Protecting Confidentiality of Information and Records**

a. It is the duty and responsibility of all individuals involved in the screening, interviewing and selection process of volunteers to conduct themselves with utmost integrity and confidentiality. The information received concerning individuals who volunteer their services to the school will be maintained at all times on a confidential basis by the organization. Information contained on the School Volunteer Information Form will only be released to other organizations upon the request and written authorization of the applicant.

b. All information received during the volunteer screening process, including the School Volunteer Information Form, will be maintained on a confidential basis and kept in a locked file.

c. All allegations of inappropriate conduct involving a child with a volunteer will be promptly investigated by the screening committee*.* The screening committee will respect the rights of all parties involved in the alleged incident and treat all matters concerning the situation discreetly, confidentially and in accordance with local child abuse reporting laws.

**Levels of Screening for Volunteer Service:**

a. Basic Level- All Volunteers

* Personal interview of the volunteer applicant by the principal/head teacher
* Complete and sign the School Volunteer Information Form
* Applicants shall provide three (3) personal references which are not family members.
* The applicant will complete the Sterling Volunteers training/background check. This is now required by New York State and NAD policy. Go to [w<https://www.ncsrisk.org/adventist/registration/reg_2.cfm?theme=0&ac=77437464330>](http://www.shieldthevulnerable.org). On the Home page, select “First Time Signup”. The organization is Seventh-day Adventist; the Union is Atlantic Union; the conference is New York Conference. Click on the continue button and follow the on-screen guides. Be sure to complete the “Criminal Background Check” section also.
* The Volunteer Screening Committee shall review the School Volunteer Information Form and contact and document the personal references provided by the applicant.

Example: home room mothers and other volunteer positions conducted on site with numerous individuals present, or field trip drivers/supervisors.

b. Comprehensive Level- Regular One-On-One Interaction with Children/Overnight Trips

* Complete all elements of the Basic Level screening.
* State and/or FBI Criminal History & Sex Offender Registry Check. Criminal background checks may be required of the applicant. This action requires fingerprinting and additional written permission from the applicant to obtain access to this information from law enforcement or other agencies.

Example: regular one-on-one interaction with children including off-site and overnight trips.

**Cost of Screening Procedures:**

All volunteers must complete the Basic Level of screening. The school is responsible for the cost of implementing these screening procedures. The local conference may provide assistance with or conduct the formal screening of applicants at the Comprehensive Level.

**Minimizing Resistance to Screening and Achieving Cooperation:**

a. The focus should always be on the mission.

b. Invite adults to apply for the privilege of volunteering in ministry activities.

c. Conduct an orientation program for volunteers.

d. Jesus placed a high value on the protection of children (Matthew 18:1-6), therefore child protection is an essential element in all school sponsored activities. Volunteers will be expected to conduct themselves at all times in accordance with Biblical principles.

e. Resist prolonged discussion of volunteer screening procedures. Handle these questions in a private meeting with the individual raising the objection.

f. Personally invite a volunteer applicant to complete any missing information on the application form and resubmit for reconsideration. Individuals will not be allowed to serve as a volunteer until the screening process is complete.

**Screening for Volunteer Service:**

*“Effective screening of volunteers requires considering the mission of the organization and the activities of volunteers necessary to accomplish that mission. Designers of effective screening must also consider the willingness of volunteers to give up some of their privacy for a greater good. Screening must be thorough enough to impact child abuse, but should not intrude on the privacy of volunteers more than required for the safety of the children with whom they work. Every youth-serving organization should understand that even well screened volunteers may still pose a threat to the children with whom they work.”* - The National Collaboration for Youth- Screening Volunteers to Prevent Child Abuse: A Three Step Action Guide- Page 3.

**Orientation for Volunteers:**

Jesus loved to minister to children. Today, we have the privilege of volunteering our time, talents and service in numerous ways to help fulfill the Gospel Commission. As a volunteer you have the privilege of working with children, one of God’s most precious gifts. Beyond protecting our children from abuse we also desire to empower volunteers to help youth grow in their experience and understanding of Jesus and His saving grace. So we encourage you to walk with God daily, letting His love fill you up and spill over to the young people you serve.

* Volunteers must be provided with an understanding of the school’s mission and the expectation that it be accomplished in a safe and abuse-free manner.
* Volunteers must be provided, in writing, with the expectations, code of conduct and rules that will be followed by volunteers in relation to supervision and interaction with children.
* Reaffirm that alleged incidents of child abuse will be investigated and reported to authorities in accordance with local law.
* Conduct training on appropriate physical contact to affirm children.
* Always provide appropriate supervision for children. Never leave children alone without supervision. Wherever possible a minimum of two adults should be present to supervise activities involving minor-aged children.
* If an activity is in a room without an interior viewing area, the door should remain open to allow observation of the activity.
* Make it clear that failure to comply with the established volunteer guidelines and code of conduct may result in the individual being asked to terminate participation in the ministry.
* Consider planning volunteer orientations to include knowledgeable individuals and in-service materials to help with the training of volunteers in order to bring credibility and support for your child protection efforts.

**Code of Conduct and Guidelines for Volunteers**

**Acknowledgement:**

Because our society is filled with pain, problems and litigation caused by improper conduct of individuals working with children and youth, it is imperative that those working with children have meaningful guidelines for conduct- to protect both themselves and those under their care. As a school volunteer, you want parents, staff and others to feel comfortable and confident with you.

**My Commitment as a School Volunteer:**

*I will,*

1. Never leave a child or group of children for whom I am responsible unattended. I will provide appropriate supervision at all times.
2. Always have at least one other adult, 18 years or older, to help with the supervision of children. If I find myself in a situation where I am the only adult present, UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES will I allow myself to be alone with one child.
3. Always ask a child’s permission before physically touching them anywhere, even when responding to an injury or problem. This is especially true for any areas that would normally be covered by a T-shirt and/or shorts. If an injury is within this area, I will make sure another adult works with me as care is provided.
4. Refrain from physical and verbal attacks and corporal punishment which is inappropriate behavior and should never be used as discipline. “Time outs” or “sit in that chair” may be helpful discipline methods to use with children.
5. Affirm children with appropriate touch by keeping hugs brief and “shoulder-to-shoulder” or “side-to-side”, always keeping hands at (not below) the shoulder level. A caregiver’s kiss should be to the forehead or cheek only- not elsewhere. For small children who like to sit on laps, encourage them to sit next to you.
6. Provide extra care when taking small children to the restroom. I will take another adult along, or leave the door open.
7. Be aware of conducting activities in rooms that do not have an interior viewing area or leave the door open during the activity to allow easy observation by others.
8. Cooperate with the volunteer screening process and complete the School Volunteer Information Form and the Shield the Vulnerable training/background check as required by the school.
9. Be aware of the signs and symptoms of child abuse and aware of the legal requirements for reporting suspected cases of abuse.
10. Cooperate with staff in conducting children and youth activities by being loving, kind, firm and always be thoroughly responsible as a volunteer. Working with children is not only a privilege, but is also a deep responsibility that must be approached with utmost care. As a volunteer I will participate in orientation and training programs conducted by the school.

The North American Division of Seventh-day Adventists and Risk Management recommend these Guidelines for Volunteers which serve as a protection to you and the school from allegations of abuse.

**I, the undersigned, have read this document and agree to abide by the Code of Conduct and Volunteer Guidelines outlined above. I will retain a copy of this document and keep it for reference.**

**Signed: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

School Volunteer Information Form

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Section I Personal Information | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Name: | | | | | | | Email: | | | | | | |
| Address: | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Home Phone: | | | Work Phone: | | | | Volunteer positions(s) interested in: | | | | | | |
| Church membership: | | | | | | |
| Churches attended in the last 5 years: | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Previous residence(s) for last 10 years (list dates at each address): | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Dates: | | Address: | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Dates: | | Address: | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Dates: | | Address: | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Name of Emergency Contact & Relationship: | | | | | | | | | Phone: | | | | |
| Section II Health Information | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| List any injury/disability/health factor that might limit your involvement in school activities, or impact the health of children (i.e., communicable diseases, physical limitations). | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Section III Education/Training Information | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Highest level of formal education and area(s) of study: | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Certification(s)/license(s) held that may reflect on your skills and abilities in working with children or as a volunteer: | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Church offices held or special ministry training: | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Section IV Personal References | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| List below three individuals (other than family members) who could recommend you for this volunteer ministry. | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Name | | Street Address | | | | City/State | | | | Zip | | | Phone |
| 1. | Pastor |  | | | |  | | | |  | | |  |
| 2. | Other |  | | | |  | | | |  | | |  |
| 3. | Other |  | | | |  | | | |  | | |  |
| \*\*\* Office Use Only \*\*\* | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| ❏ Volunteer Management and Screening Guidelines signed (attached, and copy given to applicant) | | | | | | | | | | | Date: | | |
| Date SVIF Received: | | | | | ❏ Recommended ❏ Not Recommended | | | | | | | | |
| Date of committee decision: | | | | |  | | | | | | | | |
| Signature of chairperson: | | | | | Church Name: | | | | | | | | |
| Section V Background | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Date of Birth: | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Driver’s License #: | | | | State: | | | | Exp. Date: | | | | | |
| Car Insurance: ❏ Yes ❏No | | | | Willing to Provide Transportation: ❏ Yes ❏No | | | | | | | | | |
| As a result of our concern for the safety and protection of children and youth, we require al potential volunteer to 1) complete and return this School Volunteer Information (SVI) form, 2) consent to a voluntary criminal record check, and 3) read and agree to follow the **Volunteer Management and Screening Guidelines.** | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Have you ever been convicted of a felony? | | | | | | | | | | | | ❏ Yes ❏No | |
| Have you been denied legal custody of your children in any legal proceedings, including divorce decrees or settlements? | | | | | | | | | | | | ❏ Yes ❏No | |
| Have you ever been accused of, charged with, disciplined for, or convicted of any unlawful sexual conduct, abuse, child abuse, child neglect, and/or child sexual abuse? | | | | | | | | | | | | ❏ Yes ❏No | |
| Have you been required to register as a sex offender in any jurisdiction? | | | | | | | | | | | | ❏ Yes ❏No | |
| If you answered yes, please supply the date, place, type of conduct, disposition, and sentence, as applicable. | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Section VI Statement of Accuracy | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| The information contained in this form is current to the best of my knowledge. I understand that this is strictly a volunteer position, and I expect no remuneration for service and time volunteered.  I authorize any persons giving a reference or churches listed in this form to disclose information that they may have regarding my character and fitness for serving as a volunteer in activities that may involve children or youth. I hereby release any individual, church or organization from any and all liability for damages which may result to me, my heirs, or family for compliance with this authorization, and agree that the school may maintain this information. My signature on this form confirms my understanding and agreement that: In the event that allegations of criminal or sexual misconduct arise regarding my conduct while I serve in a volunteer capacity, the church will fully cooperate with any investigation. I further state that I have carefully read the foregoing release and understand the contents thereof, and that I sign this release as my own free act. This is a legally binding agreement, which I have read and understand.  Further, I have read and agree to follow the **Volunteer Management and Screening Guidelines** and I give my consent for a voluntary criminal record check.  Applicant’s Signature\*: Date: | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| \* Please be sure you have answered every question and signed your name above. Application cannot be accepted without a signature.  Return this completed form to the principal or school board chairman. | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Purpose  The School Volunteer Information Form assists schools in appointing the best possible individuals to serve our students. This form is part of a screening process which protects the volunteers, while also serving to protect children and youth from predators and the church/school from liability. This record, once turned in, becomes the property of the local school. Applicants may request that a copy of the School Volunteer Information Form be forwarded to another school should they move the membership.  Procedure  Copies of the School Volunteer Information Form are available from the principal or school board chairman. The completed forms are to be returned to the principal or school board chairman, who passes them on to the Volunteer Screening Committee. This group, appointed by the school board, determines volunteer eligibility. The committee interviews applicants, checks references, and **may** request a criminal record check. The committee’s recommendation, marked on page 1, is signed and dated. The committee gives a copy of the first page of this form to the school board chairman. The applicant agrees to participate in any orientation or training programs conducted by the school. The School Volunteer Information Form will be shared with another church entity only upon the applicant’s written request. Any such requests will be attached to the original document and kept on file.  Policy  All information on this School Volunteer Information Form is required by the New York Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. The information on this form shall be kept confidential and become a permanent record of the New York Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. Volunteer records should be updated every three years. In the event of accusations against the applicant, opportunity shall be given for response by the accused. Such a response will also become a part of the record and must be attached to this form. | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| New York Conference of Seventh-day Adventists  4930 West Seneca Turnpike \* Syracuse, NY 13215 \* Telephone 315-469-6921 \* Fax: 315-469-6924 \* www.nyconf.org | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

Field Trip

school bus.tif

Forms

**Extended Field Trip Request Form**

Complete this form and send it to the Office of Education **ONE MONTH**

before the date of the trip.

Teacher Making the Request: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Name of School: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Field Trip Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Field Trip Location: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Objectives of the Trip:**

1. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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Related to (subject area): \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

How: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Points of Interest:**

1. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Financing:**

List Approximate Expenses: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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List Sources of Funding: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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**Lodging:**

Where Staying: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

If private home, have the residents all been screened? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Method of Transportation:** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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**Persons Participating in the Trip:**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Name | Student or  Chaperone | Gender | Cleared by Verify Volunteers |
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**Received School Board Approval?** [ ] Yes, *please provide a copy of the minutes with this request.*

**Conference Approval:** *\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_*

*(Signature)*

**New York Conference**

**Field Trip Information and Permission Form**

The students in \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ class will be going on a field trip.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Time leaving school: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Time returning: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Location: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Purpose of trip:

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Transportation: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Chaperones: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Cost: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Lunches: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Need to bring \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Will be provided

Other details: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*

My child, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, has permission to go on the class field trip to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ on \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. If in the course of the trip it becomes necessary for my child to receive medical attention, the staff has my permission to seek the same. The doctor and/or hospital has my permission to start the needed treatment. Please call me at \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Field Trip Volunteer Information Form**

We are going to: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Directions to this site: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

The purpose of the trip is: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

You can help students get the most out of this trip by: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

You will be responsible for Students know that they should:

supervising the following - stay with you

children: - respect each other

- respect adults and property

- use light-skills

- thank hosts of the field trip

Please be aware of the following special needs of individual students:

Please be sure that students are in compliance with New York State law regarding the use of child safety restraints and positioning in the car. Thank you so much for your help with this outing!

Dear *Mr. Jones,*,

I would like to thank you for your willingness to provide an educational experience for my students in *grades 2-6* at your facility on *Tuesday, March 23, 2009.* There will be *three* chaperones including myself. As we previously discussed, my students will be arriving at *10:00* and will be leaving at *2:00*. They will be bringing sack lunches which you indicated could be eaten *in your lobby.*

As I explained in our phone conversation, I have intentionally scheduled this field trip at the beginning of our unit of study about *insects*. The reason for this is so that students will have a hands-on experience which will serve as a mental “hook” on which they may “hang” the knowledge they will obtain throughout the unit. Because we are coming at the beginning of the unit, please advise the *naturalists* who will work with my students that they will have limited background information. We are grateful for your willingness to provide an opportunity to enrich students’ knowledge of their world through this field trip.

In an attempt to broaden students’ knowledge of career options, I would appreciate it if your staff would take a moment or two to describe the training and education they needed to prepare to perform their duties, as well as what they enjoy most about the job. Additionally, at *Parkview Junior Academy* we are committed to helping students learn to be responsible citizens and with that goal in mind, we systematically teach character traits such as integrity, curiosity, initiative, perseverance and problem solving. It would be “frosting on the cake” if your staff would share with students examples of how these life skills enable them to succeed.

Should you have any additional questions or concerns, please contact me at *123-4567*. My students and I are looking forward to this field trip.

Sincerely,

*Martha Smith*