

Use of Volunteers

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ISSUE: Volunteers must not perform the duties of employees. Increasingly, faced with tight budgets, school boards and schools are turning more to the use of volunteers to perform various support activities for students.

Since the number of educational employees in schools is declining, some school communities feel they have little choice if they are to continue to try to assist students in meaningful ways during the school day.

Unfortunately, the use of volunteers can have an adverse impact on the jobs of incumbent employees. If an unpaid volunteer is performing duties in schools normally performed by employees there is less obvious need for the same or additional number of employees.

Discouraging the use of volunteers during strikes or lockouts is also necessary to prevent school boards from using them as replacement workers.

It is possible that an unforeseen adverse effect of the introduction of school councils could be an increased interest in the use of volunteers in schools. OSSTF does not and would not wish to discourage the use of volunteers. They can and do provide valuable support for educational workers. School boards should establish and maintain system-wide policies/guidelines concerning the use of volunteers in schools. These policy/guidelines must address any safety and liability issues that may arise as a result of the use of volunteers. These policies should be communicated to all school councils, school administrators and bargaining units.

The development of these policies/guidelines should be done by a committee comprised of trustee, administrative, bargaining unit and school council representatives.

It may be that one policy/guideline needs to be developed for elementary schools, another for secondary schools.

The school board, as employer, should agree in the collective agreement to adhere to the policy/guidelines. Changes to the policy/guidelines should be made only with the agreement of affected bargaining units.

All volunteers should be provided with copies of the current policy/guidelines. A member of the school community (administrator, teacher, school councillor) should be familiar with the policy/guidelines and should meet with all volunteers to explain their role and responsibilities. This is important since questions of liability apply to volunteers as well as employees.

RECOMMENDED CLAUSES:

- XX.01 Volunteers shall not perform duties of employees
- XX.02 Volunteers shall not be used during a legal strike or lockout to perform the duties of striking or locked out employees.
- XX.03 The use of volunteers shall be in accordance with the "Volunteer Policy/Guidelines" as amended from time to time.
- XX.04 The President or designate shall serve as a member of the employer's Volunteer Guidelines Committee.
- XX.05 The employer's policy/guidelines concerning the use of volunteers in workplaces shall be made only with the agreement of affected OSSTF bargaining units.
- XX.06 Employees shall not have their duties modified nor their hours of work changed or reduced owing to the use of Volunteers in the workplace.
- XX.07 The Employer shall not refuse to fill vacancies within the Bargaining Unit due to the use of Volunteers in the workplace.