

PARENT ORGANIZATION MANUAL: DISTRICT POLICIES 101

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Collaboration between Scottsdale Parent Council
& Scottsdale Unified School District

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INTRODUCTION

While all the information in this booklet is available in multiple places, it is not readily accessible in one single location or department within the District. The goal of this manual is to create a “one stop” information resource for parent organizations throughout our District.

Topics were chosen for inclusion based on the experience of the authors- Scottsdale Parent Council and the Scottsdale Unified School District- regarding the most frequently asked questions by parents about District policies. They are also the issues that seem to come up with the most regularity from one year to the next.

It is also important to note that the information in this manual is accurate as of the time of distribution; but things change. We will do our best to update the manual regularly, but please make a point to use the contact information provided to ascertain accuracy of all policies.

Finally, we encourage you to load this booklet onto your parent organization website, if you have one. It will also be available on line at the Scottsdale Parent Council website www.scottsdaleparentcouncil.org and on the SUSD website, www.susd.org .

Thank you for volunteering to support our schools with your leadership and time. Together, we can make a difference for all the children in SUSD schools.

Francesca Thomas for the Scottsdale Parent Council

Jeff Thomas for the Scottsdale Unified School District

VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers in SUSD schools donated the equivalent of \$3.5 million dollars in time and services during the 2009-10 school year. and are a critical component of our school successes.

Individual schools and their parent organizations are the best resource for identifying the variety of available volunteer opportunities. While volunteers can help in a number of areas, they are precluded from doing work (helping with attendance, student records, using electronic cash registers at lunch) that gives them access to students' private information. It is important to recognize these small limitations for the safety of our students.

To further maximize the safety of all children at all times, it is essential for volunteers to comply with District guidelines regarding training and registration.

If you are a parent volunteer working under the supervision of and in the line of sight of a teacher, you must fill out a District volunteer form (see Appendix A), but will not need to submit to a background check. Always be sure to sign in and out at the front office, and wear a visitor's badge while on campus.

If you are a parent volunteer working in the cafeteria or at lunch and handling any kind of food, you must fill out a District volunteer form (see Appendix A), and obtain a Food Handler's License. The Food Handler's card is free for those who only need it to volunteer. For more information about obtaining a Food handler's card, log onto <http://www.maricopa.gov/envsvc/envhealth/specprog/foodworker/testschedule.aspx>

If you are a parent volunteer who will be chaperoning a field trip, and might at any time be outside the direct line of vision of a certified teacher, have access to student information, or if you are chaperoning an overnight field trip, you must complete a District volunteer form (Appendix A), expect the District to run a background check with the information you provide, and view the chaperone video for chaperones on overnight trips available for viewing at the District website:
<http://susd.schoolfusion.us/modules/cms/pages.phtml?pageid=102039&sessionid=27800f977ffede3c4a972abd6c91fb71&sessionid=27800f977ffede3c4a972abd6c91fb71> .

All volunteers, in every capacity, are subject to site administration approval.

Background checks are valid for 3 years. Volunteer information must be verified annually for accuracy.

Questions about volunteer forms and background checks should be directed to the SUSD Human Resources Department 480-484-6176 or to Elizabeth Husak at ehusak@susd.org .

RENTING SCHOOL FACILITIES

Parent organizations are welcomed and encouraged to hold meetings and events on school grounds. All SUSD school-affiliated parent groups may rent for only the cost of utilities during the day, and must pay for utilities and any extra staff (custodial and security) needed after school hours. Proper procedure for renting school space is as follows:

1) Complete a rental contract, available from each school site administrative assistant, one month in advance of your event.

Each site may have a slightly different contract form, so be sure to obtain a site-specific contract.

The contract must be signed by

- a) a representative of the renting parent organization,
- b) the school administrator,
- c) any additional staff requested on the contract, and
- d) the SUSD Chief of Facilities Management.

The administrative assistant will secure all the needed signatures besides the parent's.

2) Ask the site administrative assistant if additional insurance is needed for your event.

The PTO is required to supply a Certificate of Insurance that names the Scottsdale Unified School District as an additional insured. The Certificate must state no less than \$1,000,000 General Liability and no less than \$100,000 Damage to Rented Premises. Other events will require additional insurance that can be purchased for single days through the District's insurance carrier (see Appendix B). Events that typically require additional insurance include: carnivals, fundraisers, etc. that have rides, inflatables and food vendors, for example. For more information, see SUSD Facility Rental Policy Manual and Fee Schedule, available at:

<http://susd.schoolfusion.us/modules/cms/pages.phtml?sessionid=27800f977ffede3c4a972abd6c91fb71&pageid=109135&sessionid=e48860ac5bba705fe3953b53ce11403d>

or contact Kathy Franz at 480-484-6139 or kfranz@susd.org .

In addition, any vendors requested to participate during a rental contract must also provide the required insurance certificate as stated above.

3) Request a response from Risk Management.

The District Risk Management department reviews all contracts to determine safety for children and District liability. If you are holding an event, such as a carnival, that will involve activities not normally part of the school day, please be sure to submit your rental contract well ahead of the event and specifically ask to be contacted regarding the decision of Risk Management.

Questions about facilities rentals should be directed to the District's Facilities Department at 480-484-6139

PARENT ORGANIZATION COMMUNICATIONS & ADVOCACY

Parent organizations are independent of the SUSD, but must still abide by some of the laws that regulate school communications.

1) All school related information that parent organizations want to send home **in the hands of children** must receive prior approval of the site administrator.

The following disclaimer must be prominently displayed or affixed to the material:

The Scottsdale Unified School District neither endorses nor sponsors the organization or activity represented in this material. The distribution or display of this material is provided as a community service.

2) All parent communications sent via the **parent organization e-mail system are not subject to administrative approval**, and should not receive prior sanction from principals (see #3 below). Parent organizations are encouraged, though, to share all communications with school principals.

3) Parent organizations are allowed, under both state advocacy rules and federal laws regarding non-profits, to advocate for or against ballot measures, but NOT in partisan races. However, schools resources NEVER are allowed to be used for any advocacy, even for ballot measures. **To be both legally politically active and compliant with Arizona state laws regarding school resources, please follow these guidelines:**

- ◆ When advocating for or against any ballot measure, **do not use any school resources**, including school copiers, paper, phones, and especially teachers or other employees.
- ◆ When advocating for or against any ballot measure, **do not send literature home with students**
- ◆ When advocating for or against any ballot measure, **you may send information via your organization's e-mail systems**. SUSD employees can receive this information as well; but they cannot use their school computers to link to any advocacy sites or forward the information to others. Be sure to include the following disclaimer:
If you are an SUSD employee please DO NOT forward this email or click on any included links as it will be in violation of Arizona state law.
- ◆ When advocating for or against any ballot measure, **your personal property can be used, even while on school campuses, to state your position**, including advocacy buttons on clothes and signs on your car.
- ◆ When advocating for or against any ballot measure at a meeting on campus, **please be sure to complete a separate rental contract for the time of the advocacy**. Remember to adjourn your regularly scheduled meeting for the time of the advocacy, when the separate contract is in use, and reconvene when the advocacy is finished. No District employees should be present during the advocacy portion of your meetings.

For more information about advocacy, please contact the Scottsdale Parent Council Vice President Legislative Liaison at vplegislation@susd.org .

TAX CREDIT CONTRIBUTIONS & FUND GIFTING

SUSD parents can help financially supplement students' education through tax credit contributions, by gifting funds, and by direct donations.

1) The rules for tax credit contributions for public schools are as follows:

- ◆ Individuals may contribute up to a maximum of \$200, and jointly filing couples up to \$400.
- ◆ The contributed funds should be given directly to the individual public school of your choice, and may be given in conjunction with legally allowed contributions to private schools and charitable organizations.
- ◆ The school may use tax credit funds to support narrowly defined extra-curricular and character programs.
- ◆ Mandatory school sports and field trip fees are considered a tax credit contribution.

2) Parent organizations can also support education at individual schools and in the District by donating supplies and funding the employment of non-certified staff through the gifting process. Here are the steps to gifting process:

- ◆ The site administrative assistant receives funds from the parent organization, and submits the gift request to the District Finance department.
- ◆ The gift is put on to the next Governing Board meeting consent agenda.
- ◆ Once approved, the gifted funds are available for the designated school to use. Only after approval of funds can a job be posted.

3) Parent organizations can make in kind donations to SUSD schools.

- ◆ **If the donation is equipment that the District will need to maintain** (computers, copiers, etc.), the donation must go through the gifting process.
- ◆ **If the donation is soft capital** (paper, pencils, teaching tools), the donation can be given directly to the school or vendor with administrative approval.
- ◆ **If the donation is teacher training**, after gaining administrative approval, funds can be given directly to the provider.

For more information about tax credit and the gifting process, please contact the District's Finance department at 480-484-6133 or email Shannon Crosier at scrosier@susd.org or visit the link below:

<http://susd.schoolfusion.us/modules/cms/pages.phtml?sessionid=e48860ac5bba705fe3953b53ce11403d&pageid=102035&sessionid=e48860ac5bba705fe3953b53ce11403d>

PARENT CONCERNS/ COMPLIMENTS

In an effort to maintain good communication among all stakeholders, SUSD has an established protocol for parents both to compliment District employees and to express concerns. The system works best when all parties follow the established steps in the process. Information about the compliment/concern processes can be accessed through a link on the District's home page (www.susd.org), in the District's home page "Parent" drop down, and through every individual school website's "Parent" drop down.

To send a letter of commendation to any District employee:

- ◆ **If you are giving a hard copy to the employee**, be sure to also give a copy to the employee's supervisor. This will insure that the letter becomes part of the employee's permanent file.
- ◆ **If you are e-mailing your compliment to the employee**, be sure to copy the employee's supervisor and the District at susdcommunications@susd.org.

To send a general compliment to the District simply e-mail your comments to susdcommunications@susd.org.

When a parent has a concern about an employee, the following steps must be followed:

1. The parent must **set up a meeting with the employee** to discuss the concern.
2. If there is no resolution, the parent should **request a meeting with the employee and the employee's immediate supervisor**.
3. If there is still no satisfactory resolution, the parent may **complete a complaint form known as the KEB-E form** (see Appendix C). This form must be delivered to the employee's supervisor, and a copy must be sent to Employees' Relations Administrator in the District's Human Resources department.
4. **Within 2 days, the parent will hear back from either the supervisor or the District Human Resources representative** to acknowledge receipt of the KEB document.
5. **Within another 2 days, it will be determined whether the complaint is legitimate**. If so, a formal investigation will begin.
6. Investigations can take several months. **Upon completion of the investigation, the complaining parent will receive notification of the conclusion of the investigation** and that appropriate action was undertaken to address the concern. Due to legal issues of privacy, the complaining parent may not be privy to the exact actions taken with regard to the employee.

For more information about submitting a compliment for a District employee, please contact the District's Communications department at 480-484-6277. For more information about the parent complaint process, please contact the District's Human Resources department at 480-484-6172

Both processes and information may be accessed at the following link:

<http://susd.schoolfusion.us/modules/cms/pages.phtml?pageid=108486&sessionid=11f5c2e893fcf8fca4501b41eefd009f&sessionid=11f5c2e893fcf8fca4501b41eefd009f>

APPENDIX A: Volunteer Application Information

Link to volunteer information

<http://susd.schoolfusion.us/modules/cms/pages.phtml?pageid=102039&sessionid=11f5c2e893fcf8fca4501b41eefd009f&sessionid=11f5c2e893fcf8fca4501b41eefd009f>

Link to information on how parents can help SUSD during challenging economic times

<http://susd.schoolfusion.us/modules/groups/homepagefiles/cms/394763/File/Communications/HowParentandCommunityGroupsCanSupportSUSD.pdf?sessionid=11f5c2e893fcf8fca4501b41eefd009f>

Link to volunteer application

<http://susd.schoolfusion.us/modules/groups/homepagefiles/cms/394763/File/Communications/Volunteer%20PDF.pdf?sessionid=11f5c2e893fcf8fca4501b41eefd009f>

Definition of volunteer types and categories

<http://susd.schoolfusion.us/modules/groups/homepagefiles/cms/394763/File/Community/Volunteer%20Memo%20Revised%2009-09.pdf?sessionid=11f5c2e893fcf8fca4501b41eefd009f>

Volunteer information in Spanish

<http://susd.schoolfusion.us/modules/groups/homepagefiles/cms/394763/File/Communications/FINAL%20Volunteer-Spa%20in%20PDF.pdf?sessionid=11f5c2e893fcf8fca4501b41eefd009f>

APPENDIX B: How to Get Insurance for a Day

1. Log onto <https://www.ebi-ins.com/tulip/>
2. In “Step #1” select “If you don’t know the facility ID then click here.”
3. Find “Arizona School Risk Retention Trust” and select. Another drop down will appear
4. Find “Scottsdale USD #48”, and select
5. Complete “Step 2”, and click “Next”
6. Complete “Step 3”. At this point, you can ask for an estimate.
7. Continue to provide information based on prompts.
8. The entire process can be completed on line, including credit card payment. Questions should be directed to the SUSD Finance department

APPENDIX C: Concerns and Compliments

Compliments Flow Chart Link

[http://susd.schoolfusion.us/modules/groups/homepagefiles/cms/394763/File/Human%20Capital/HR%20Parental%20Compliments%20Procedure 1.pdf?sessionid=11f5c2e893fcf8fca4501b41eefd009f](http://susd.schoolfusion.us/modules/groups/homepagefiles/cms/394763/File/Human%20Capital/HR%20Parental%20Compliments%20Procedure%201.pdf?sessionid=11f5c2e893fcf8fca4501b41eefd009f)

Compliments

Compliment email link will go directly to Clay McAllester, Employee Relations Administrator in Human Resources.

Concerns and Complaints Flow Chart Link

<http://susd.schoolfusion.us/modules/groups/homepagefiles/cms/394763/File/Human%20Capital/HR%20Parental%20Concern%20Procedure.pdf?sessionid=11f5c2e893fcf8fca4501b41eefd009f>

Concern Form KEB - E with Flow Chart Link

<http://susd.schoolfusion.us/modules/groups/homepagefiles/cms/394763/File/Human%20Capital/KEB-E%20PUBLIC%20CONCERNS%20FORMv2.pdf?sessionid=11f5c2e893fcf8fca4501b41eefd009f>

Policy KEB – Public Concerns/Complaints About Personnel

<http://lp.ctspublish.com/asba/public/lpext.dll/Scottsdl/253e/262e?fn=document-frame.htm&f=templates&2.0>

Regulation KEB – R – Public Concerns/Complaints About Personnel

<http://lp.ctspublish.com/asba/public/lpext.dll/Scottsdl/253e/2637?fn=document-frame.htm&f=templates&2.0>