



“Unlocking each child’s potential through the foundation of reading”

Volunteer Handbook

*PROVIDING GUIDELINES FOR VOLUNTEER
LITERACY MENTORS*

2024-2025



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“Working with ESLC, other mentors and the children we serve connects me with my love of reading and helps me support our scholars. As each child learns to explore the world through reading, our community grows stronger.”- Kate, Literacy Mentor

WELCOME

Volunteers, please review this handbook and look forward to “unlocking each child’s potential through the foundation of reading.”



Mission and Vision

ESLC envisions a community where “all children read with pride and joy to become life-long learners.” The mission, “unlocking each child’s potential through the foundation of reading,” aims to provide children with the skills needed to be successful in school, graduate, and fulfill their potential as members of society.

ESLC History

In 1998, as part of a long-range effort to revitalize the East Side of St. Paul, the East Side Neighborhood Development Company approached the School Sister of Notre Dame (SSND) to supplement the educational needs of East St. Paul resident children. In 2001, the SSND’s partnered with St. Paul civic and educational leaders to develop our one-on-one literacy tutoring for 1st through 4th grade children who were reading below grade level. This service would be offered at no cost to families. The SSNDs chose literacy as the core service for the new East Side Learning Center, because it was, and continues, to be one of the best predictors of school success, graduation, and post-secondary life success. In 2019, ESLC became host for the Twin Cities AARP Foundation Experience Corps.

ESLC Affiliates

School Sisters of Notre Dame (SSND) ESLC is a partnership with and affiliated ministry of the Central Pacific Province of the School Sisters of Notre Dame (School Sisters). Established in 1833 in Bavaria by Blessed Theresa Gerhardinger, with the goal to educate women and children living in poverty. The SSND’s arrived in Mankato, MN in 1865. Today, the School Sisters advocate for change, teach, and provide social services throughout the world, including founding East Side Learning Center in 2001. For more information visit <https://ssnd.org/>

AARP Foundation Experience Corps ESLC hosts the Twin Cities program of AARP Foundation Experience Corps. AARP Foundation Experience Corps is an intergenerational volunteer-based Literacy Mentoring program proven to help children who are not reading at grade level become great readers by the end of third grade. The program aims to inspire and empower adults age 50 and older to serve in their community and disrupt the cycle of poverty by making a lasting difference in the lives of America’s most vulnerable children.

Who Does ESLC Serve?

ESLC partners with families, literacy mentor volunteers, schools, and community centers in low-income neighborhoods to close the learning gap by providing high-dosage, personalized, strengths-based services for children who are behind in Reading.

ESLC Volunteer Standard Practices

Volunteers Agree To:

- **Value Diversity.** Accept and respect different cultural backgrounds and customs, ways of communicating, and traditions and values.
- **Comply with ESLC's policies**
- **Foster trusting relationships.** Express interest in each child's background and family. Affirm each child's unique approach to ethnicity, culture, and language as strengths.

Volunteer Expectations:

- **Be Punctual:** Consistent and prompt attendance is essential. Arriving 15 minutes prior to your shift is optimal. Notify the Site Coordinator of a late arrival or absence using text, email, or voice mail.
- **Be Prepared:** Sign in on arrival. Wear ESLC name tag. Review the session guide and materials for each assigned student and ask Site Coordinator for needed clarifications. Complete session logs, complete volunteer timesheet, and sign out.
- **Follow school and/or site policies and procedures**
- **Two week notification if leaving volunteer position**

Volunteers Must Complete the Following:

- Interview
- Background check
- Orientation
- Application paperwork
- Site Specific Orientation
- Review of Safety Protocols
- Required training in relationship-building, literacy tutoring, social emotional coaching skills (25 hours annually).

ESLC Provides:

Site Coordinators provide support during all tutoring sessions
Ongoing training
Resolution guidance for concerns that arise

Safe and Healthy Environment

Discrimination

Discrimination is unjust or prejudicial treatment because of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, mental or physical disability, or political affiliation, or any other legally protected status. We are proud to be an Equal Opportunity Employer. We do not discriminate in any aspect of employment or service because of race, color, sex, national origin, religion, age, mental or physical disability (including HIV/AIDS), sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, political affiliation, marital or familial status, military service or any other legally protected status.

ESLC's promotes an environment free of harassment and hostility, verbal or physical. A volunteer who believes they have been a victim of/or witness to discriminatory /harassment follows procedures outlined in Discriminatory Harassment Policy and Whistle Blower Policies in appendix.

Confidentiality

Volunteers and Students Personal Identifying Information (PII) is confidential and protected.

Volunteers do not

- Contact children outside of ESLC volunteer time.
- Exchange personal contact information with students, which is: mailing address, email address, telephone numbers, Twitter handles, or social media profiles.
- Share or publish photos of children or families.
- Give students gifts/prizes/food. Address questions to the Site Coordinator.
- Please refer to the confidentiality requirements outlined in ESLC's Confidential Information Policy located in the appendix.

Suspected Maltreatment of a Child

ESLC employees are mandatory reporters in the State of Minnesota. If a volunteer suspects or has reason to believe that a child is abused or neglected, or has knowledge of, or observes a child being subjected to, conditions that would result in harm to the child, the volunteer **MUST**

report the suspected abuse or neglect to the Site Coordinator. The Site Coordinator has the responsibility to communicate volunteer observed concerns about a child to the Program Manager who will communicate the information to the ESLC Executive Director, appropriate agency, and school personnel. States provide some form of immunity from liability for persons reporting suspected abuse in good faith and without malice. ESLC's Reporting Maltreatment of Minors Policy in appendix.

Open Communications and Grievance Policy

Should a problem arise with your Site Coordinator, fellow volunteers or ESLC employees, we will all work together toward an acceptable solution. Contact the Program Manager with questions, concerns, or for advice. If unresolved, speak with the Executive Director. Retaliation against any employee for the appropriate use of communication channels is prohibited. Refer to the Whistle Blower Policy in the appendix.

Health

ESLC follows the CDC, Department of Health, the State of Minnesota's, and St. Paul Public Schools' COVID guidelines posted on our website.

Smoke and Drug Free Workplace

The unlawful possession, dispensing, distribution, manufacture, sale or use of controlled substances and alcohol, as well as use of tobacco, tobacco products, E-cigarettes (electronic), and e-cigarette is prohibited in the workplace, on school premises, or as part of any ESLC activity.

Reasonable Accommodation

For volunteers and students with disabilities, ESLC makes every effort to make reasonable accommodations. Accommodations that impose an undue financial or administrative burden on the operation of the program or fundamentally alter its nature are not reasonable accommodations.

Emergencies

In case of an emergency, fire, tornado, lockdown drills, refer to school/site Safety Plan, posted in each room and defer to the Site Coordinator for further instruction. If an accidentally injury occurs to a volunteer, student, or staff, do not move the injured individual. The Site Coordinator calls for needed assistance. ESLC provides insurance coverage above the school/community site limits.

School Closings

Check ESLC Site Calendars for early release or non-program days. If schools are closed due to inclement weather or building issues, notification is made on local radio and TV stations, school websites and social media pages. When specific sites are closed, there is no tutoring at that site. In this circumstance, Virtual Tutoring Cohorts are also cancelled.

ESLC Student Management Guidelines

East Side Learning Center (ESLC) is committed to: a) providing a safe environment for students, employees, and volunteers; b) promoting peaceful interactions; and c) implementing policies that protect employees, volunteers and youth. ESLC has a zero-tolerance policy towards physical, verbal, or sexual abuse or molestation at all program sites or at any activity sponsored by or related to ESLC services. ESLC does not tolerate any actions that discriminate against others.

- Restraining a child in any type of physical hold is prohibited for all employees and volunteers. If a child poses a danger to others or self, an ESLC employee will clear the room and/or space around the child and immediately contact the Director of Curriculum & Instruction, School Administrator, parent or guardian.
- ESLC volunteers and staff are prohibited from disciplining a child who is not currently participating in an ESLC program. Volunteers and staff are permitted to discipline only those students participating in an ESLC program.
- Volunteers must never be alone with a child. Always remain in the line of sight of employees or other adults while with a child. This includes virtual environments as well as side-by-side tutoring.
- Follow the rule of three when accompanying children to the rest room. Always take groups of at least three to the restroom. Volunteers and staff members should wait outside the rest room and not enter the rest room. To enter a rest room with children, another adult must also be present.

- Never touch a child on any part of the body that a swimsuit covers. Limit physical touch to holding a child's hand, an encouraging pat on the back, or returning a gesture such as returning a brief hug when initiated by the child.

Promote a positive atmosphere for the students by modeling positive behavior. Encourage and acknowledge positive student behaviors, and act proactively to prevent problem behaviors by preparing before the session to keep things moving, keeping sessions focused on the relationship, the tasks, and the child. *If a student is not focused or appears to be misbehaving, seek assistance or guidance from the classroom teacher and/or ESLC's Site Coordinator.* Under no circumstances shall volunteers engage in any type of corporal punishment, physical restraint or hold, bullying, intimidation, or threats.

Performance Expectations

If a volunteer violates any of the program expectations and policies outlined in this handbook disciplinary steps will be taken.

Disciplinary steps could include:

1. Verbal Warning or Informal/Formal Coach– Site Coordinator, Program Manager
2. Written Reprimand, Verbal Warning, Performance Improvement Plan (PIP)- Site Coordinator, Program Manager
3. Suspension, Termination-If a volunteer's behavior does not improve by the determined date, he/she will be suspended. If the behavior that led to suspension continues, the volunteer will be terminated from the program.

Depending on the seriousness of the violation, ESLC employees reserve the right to terminate a volunteer for gross and/or intentional violation of policies without completing the above disciplinary procedures.

Legal charges, convictions and sentence to serve requests will be considered on an individual basis.

Prohibited Activities

ESLC is a federally funded program. Volunteers and ESLC staff are prohibited from participating in the following activities while at an ESLC site or function.

- Fundraising.
- Participating in efforts to influence legislation.
- Engaging in partisan political activities.
- Political party advocacy.
- Organizing or participating in protests, petitions, boycotts, or strikes.
- Assisting, promoting, or deterring union organizing.
- Impairing existing contracts for services or collective bargaining agreements.
- Conducting worship services. The best practice is to avoid all talk about religious affiliations and beliefs.
- Providing instruction as part of a program that includes mandatory religious instruction or worship.
- Constructing or operating facilities devoted to religious instruction or worship.

- Providing a direct benefit to a for-profit entity, a labor union, a partisan political organization, or an organization engaged in religious activities.
- Participating in activities that pose a significant safety risk to participants.

APPENDIX

KEY POLICIES GOVERNING VOLUNTEERS

Confidential Information Policy

Board approved updates: February 9, 2021, August 22, 2023

East Side Learning Center (ESLC) is committed to protecting confidential information which is provided to ESLC by employees and stakeholders or is collected by ESLC. ESLC deeply values all contributions, partnerships and volunteers that contribute to achieving our mission and strives to maintain strict confidentiality concerning information they provide to ESLC.

Purpose

This Policy is designed to protect the confidential information ESLC receives concerning participating students and our families, volunteers, partners, donors and employees. This Policy also discusses the confidentiality of proprietary information concerning ESLC, AARP Experience Corps or any related programs. *This Policy applies to employees, volunteers and Board of Directors.* The requirements and restrictions described in this Policy apply to all information provided to ESLC in any form by donors, employees, volunteers and other stakeholders whose information is acquired in personal interactions, official communications, or via completed forms submitted on our website, by paper or from partner and vendor websites.

Personally Identifiable Information

Personally identifiable information (PII) includes details that, when combined, could lead someone to discover or determine the identity of the person spoken or written about. Many types of information received by ESLC are PII. Examples of PII:

Student Information:

- Names, addresses, email addresses and telephone numbers of students and/or parents
- Demographic details such as race, ethnicity or languages spoken at home
- Protected health information such as illness or past illness, diagnoses, treatment plans, disability status, care details or any other health information
- Photographs or likenesses
- Grades
- Student behavior
- Personal information

Volunteer and Employee Information:

- Names, addresses, email addresses and telephone numbers
- Demographic details, such as race, ethnicity or languages spoken at home
- Protected health information such as illness or past illness, diagnoses, treatment plans, disability status, care details or any other health information
- Photographs or likenesses
- Performance or behavior
- Personal or work information

Donor Information:

- Names, addresses, email addresses and telephone numbers
- Demographic details, such as race, ethnicity or languages spoken at home
- Amount of an individual's donation or value of an in-kind gift
- Photographs or likenesses

Proprietary Information:

- ESLC's financial, business, technical and trade secret information
- Information about ESLC's strategic and program plans and materials
- Information about AARP Foundation Experience Corps and other ESLC partners

Information ESLC Collects and How It is Collected

Employees and volunteers receive PII in their day-to-day work. Additionally, contact information, such as telephone numbers, physical addresses, work locations, volunteer activity, program participation and/or demographic information, is collected by ESLC through its website and via paper or digital registration and information forms. Even when employees and volunteers receive PII through informal conversations, that information is considered to be confidential and employees and volunteers should take appropriate action to protect the confidentiality of this information.

Prohibitions

Employees and volunteers are prohibited from disclosing PII to any third parties outside of ESLC unless there is a legitimate business purpose for such disclosure. This prohibition includes discussing or sharing PII with spouses, significant others, siblings and other family members.

Staff and volunteers are prohibited from engaging in any of the following activities:

- Accessing unauthorized files or PII without a legitimate business purpose. PII should be accessed only when necessary for the employee's or volunteer's job duties and responsibilities.
- Sharing PII with other employees when it is not related to any of the employees' or volunteers' responsibilities or duties. Notwithstanding, if there is a possibility of self-harm or harm to others, relevant PII may be discussed or shared with the appropriate ESLC staff member to determine the proper course of action.
- Sharing or publishing photographs or names of students or families online, in private groups on Facebook, photo libraries, Twitter, email or other forums accessible to others.
- Forwarding PII or proprietary information to others, whether within ESLC or outside of ESLC, when it is not for a legitimate business purpose.
- Selling, trading or sharing any stakeholder lists with anyone outside the organization.
- Importing or exporting PII from one database to another for reporting and/or communicating with stakeholders without using a secure, socket-layered transfer system.

Examples of permissible sharing of PII includes:

1. For the benefit of a student's programming plan. Volunteers may need to share information with ESLC staff for the benefit of the student. Additionally, ESLC employees may need to share information about a student's progress or behavior concerns with an ESLC staff member, a volunteer, a family member and/or the student's teacher.
2. Using a person's image, quotes and/or story in published communications. If ESLC employees secure written consent from the parent or guardian to take and publish photographs and stories about a student's success in a program, employees may ask volunteers to share that information. If feasible, ESLC may change the name of the affected students and family members.
3. Research. If PII is shared for the purposes of research with any entity or person other than the AARP Foundation, a **Non-disclosure Agreement** must be signed by the party to whom the PII will be disclosed.

Employee Responsibilities

- Secure written approval from a student's parent or guardian to use a student's photo or name in print or digital communications using the **Media Release Form**. This form gives ESLC explicit permission to use the student's and/or parent's names and/or image(s) in a story.
- Secure written approval from partners and their staff members, volunteers, or employees to use their image in print or digital communications or to use a quote by them using the **Media Release Form**.
- Retain all PII in the organization's approved, secure database, including personal contact information and donation information.
- Destroy digital and paper copies with PII in a timely manner per the **Records Retention Policy**.
- Store paper copies of partner, employee, volunteer, donor, and student information in locked cabinets.
- When PII is exported from a database, employees must save file(s) in a secure environment which allows access only to those who have a legitimate business purpose to receive the PII. Upon completion of the project, employees must destroy all copies of the files so that PII only exists in the appropriate secured database.
- Suppress donor names from the annual report listing if requested.
- Destroy paper copies of student records within one year after they leave the program and save only that information which is required by ESLC's **Record Retention Policy**.
- Comply with a person's request to be removed from the database, email, or direct mail lists.
- PII maintained on a computer or laptop must be maintained on a computer or laptop which is password protected. The computer or laptop must also be maintained in a safe and secure environment. Laptop computers should not be left in an uninhabited vehicle.

Aggregate Reporting

ESLC uses PII for aggregate reporting, internal purposes and to communicate with stakeholders.

Student assessment information for the fall, winter and spring may be used only for aggregate reporting and is destroyed at the end of the school year. Individual PII concerning students may be shared with AARP Experience Corps for the sole purpose of aggregate reporting. When sharing information about students, their names are suppressed and a random ID is assigned for the record.

Fundraising Information

The Internal Revenue Service requires non-profit organizations such as ESLC to maintain accurate contribution records for donors. ESLC records and retains this information in a secure location and/or locked cabinet. ESLC does not retain or record credit or debit card information physically onsite, in its computers or in any database. When individuals make contributions to ESLC using a link from ESLC's website to the secure giving portal or through any other online giving portal, employees enter donor contact information into ESLC's secure database, but have no access to the credit card information. When individuals contribute through an employee giving program, or send checks through United States postal mail, ESLC records and saves the donor contact information in its secure database. *ESLC publishes donor names in its print and digital reports. At any time, donors may request that their gift be anonymous in which case, ESLC will suppress their name on annual report publications.*

Newsletter subscriber contact information is used to send organizational news. Subscribers may opt out of receiving emails at any time. Volunteer contact information is recorded and used to communicate with volunteers about training and updates regarding their volunteer service and to send newsletters.

Reporting an Information Breach

To report privacy or confidentiality concerns contact the Executive Director:

Executive Director
PO Box 6703
Saint Paul, MN 55106

Phone: (651) 758-0660
ESLC admin email: admin@eslcmn.org

If reporting a privacy, confidentiality, or security violation to the Executive Director is not effective or possible, report the complaint to the Board Chair.

Experience Corps Volunteers may also contact the AARP Foundation:

Director – Experience Corps
AARP Foundation 601 E
Street, NW Washington, DC
20049

Email: experiencecorps@aarp.org

Investigation

ESLC takes all reports of conduct which violate this Policy seriously. Suspected privacy breeches and confidentiality violation reports, inquiries, complaints, and investigations are confidential to the extent possible. Sometimes it is necessary to share information on a need-to-know basis. Upon receiving a complaint, ESLC will investigate.

Retaliation

ESLC prohibits retaliation against those who come forward and in good faith submit a confidentiality report or complaint. Complaints of retaliation should be submitted to the Executive Director. If the complaint involves the Executive Director, complaints should be reported to the Board Chair.

Review

This Policy must be reviewed annually by the Executive Director or assigned Compliance Officer to ensure it complies with funder and partner requirements. When updated, the same changes must be made in the *Employee* and *Volunteer Handbooks*.

Discriminatory Harassment Policy

Board Approved updates: February 9, 2021, August 22, 2023

PURPOSE

It is the policy of the East Side Learning Center (ESLC) that our employees, students, volunteers, and Board members enjoy an environment free of discrimination and discriminatory harassment. Accordingly, all forms of discriminatory harassment are strictly prohibited. Anyone found to have violated this policy will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including discharge.

DEFINITIONS

This policy refers to discriminatory harassment. Discriminatory harassment is harassment based on race, color, creed, religion, age, sex, national origin, sexual orientation, disability, marital status, familial status or status regarding public assistance.

Any discriminatory harassment action based on the above criteria by any employee or volunteer toward another that has the effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance and creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment will not be tolerated. It could include, for example:

- The display of written materials or pictures which are offensive to either gender or to racial, ethnic or religious groups.
- Verbal abuse, jokes or insults directed at members of racial, ethnic or minority groups.

Sexual Harassment

One particular category of harassment is sexual harassment. Sexual harassment includes unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct or communication that is sexual in nature when:

- Submission to such conduct or communication is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of employment or volunteer service.
- Submission to, or rejection of, that conduct or communication by an individual is used as a factor in decisions affecting such individual's employment or volunteer service.
- The conduct or communication has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an individual's employment or volunteer service, or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment.

Examples of sexual harassment include, but are not limited to:

- Sex-oriented verbal "kidding," abuse or joking.
- Subtle or overt pressure for sexual activity.

- Brushing against another's body.
- Demands for sexual favors accompanied by implied or overt promises of preferential treatment or threats concerning an individual's employment or volunteer status.

Sexual harassment can be perpetrated by both men and women and may be directed at the same or opposite sex.

Filing a Complaint of Discriminatory Harassment

Any employee or volunteer who believes that he/she has been subject to discriminatory harassment should make his/her concerns known by:

1. Telling the person engaging in the harassing conduct or communication that the conduct or communication is offensive, against this policy, and must stop; and/or
2. Submitting a written report of the incident(s) to the Executive Director. This option should be used if an individual does not wish to communicate directly with the person whose conduct or communication is offensive, or if direct communication has been unsuccessful. If the Executive Director is the subject of the complaint, the complaint should be brought to the Board Chair.

The written report should include the date (and time if known) of the incident, location of the incident, a description of the incident, the full names of the persons who engaged in the discriminatory harassment and the names of any witnesses.

Reporting Contact Information

Contact information for the Executive Director:

Executive Director
PO Box 6703
Saint Paul, MN 55106

Direct cell: 651-758-0660
ESLC admin email: admin@eslcmn.org

If reporting a privacy, confidentiality, or security violation to the Executive Director is not effective or possible, report the complaint to the Board Chair. If the complaint is about the Executive the complaint should be reported to the Board Chair.

In addition to filing a complaint with the Executive Director or Board chair Experience Corps Volunteers may also report discriminatory harassment to:

Director – Experience Corps
AARP Foundation
601 E Street, NW
Washington, DC 20049

Email: experiencecorps@aarp.org

Supervisors who are informed of discriminatory harassment must notify the Executive Director. All complaints of prohibited harassment are investigated promptly and impartially. If it is determined that a violation of this policy has occurred, appropriate action, up to and including

discharge or other disciplinary action will be taken. The type of action taken will be determined by the severity, frequency, and nature of the offense, as well as other relevant considerations.

Investigation

ESLC takes all reports of conduct which violate this Policy seriously. Suspected privacy breeches and confidentiality violation reports, inquiries, complaints, and investigations are confidential to the extent possible. Sometimes it is necessary to share information on a need-to-know basis. Upon receiving a complaint, ESLC will investigate.

RETALIATION

ESLC prohibits retaliation against those who come forward and in good faith submit a discriminatory harassment complaint. Complaints of retaliation should be submitted to the Executive Director. If the complaint involves the Executive Director, the complaint should be reported to the Board Chair.

Review

This Policy must be reviewed annually by the Executive Director or assigned Compliance Officer to ensure it complies with funder and partner requirements. When updated, the same changes must be made in the *Employee* and *Volunteer Handbooks*.

Reporting Maltreatment of Minors Policy

Board Approved updates: February 9, 2021, August 22, 2023

Purpose

Minnesota law requires that all East Side Learning Center (ESLC) employees report to the appropriate authorities suspected physical or sexual abuse or neglect of a child. This Policy discusses the statutory requirements applicable to all staff. In addition, volunteers are expected to report suspected sexual or physical abuse or neglect of a child to a staff member. The staff member in turn, once informed by a volunteer of such suspected abuse or neglect must report the incident if the staff member believes such conduct meets the definition of maltreatment of minors within Minnesota statutes on the maltreatment of minors.

Definitions

Mandatory Reporters

A staff member who knows or has reason to believe a child is being maltreated as defined by Minnesota law, or has been maltreated within the preceding three years, is a mandatory reporter. They must immediately report the information to the local welfare agency, the agency responsible for assessing or investigating the report, or police department or county sheriff.

The following definitions are based on the statutes of Minnesota related to maltreatment of minors:

Neglect

Neglect means the commission or omission of any of the following acts, except by accidental means:

1. Failure by a person responsible for a child's care to supply a child with necessary food, clothing, shelter, health medical or other care required for the child's physical or mental health
2. Failure to protect a child from conditions or actions that seriously endanger the child's physical or mental health, including a growth delay (failure to thrive) that has been diagnosed by a physician and is due to parental neglect
3. Failure to provide for necessary supervision or childcare arrangements appropriate for a child after considering factors as the child's age, mental ability, physical condition, length of absence or environment when the child is unable to care for the child's own basic needs or safety
4. Failure to ensure that the child is educated
5. Prenatal exposure to a controlled substance used by the mother for non-medical purposes
6. Medical neglect
7. Chronic and severe use of alcohol or a controlled substance by a person responsible for the child's care that adversely affects the child's basic needs and safety

8. Emotional harm from a pattern of behavior that contributes to impaired emotional functioning of the child which may be demonstrated by a substantial and observable effect in the child's behavior, emotional response or cognition that is not within the normal range for the child's age and stage of development, with due regard to the child's culture.

Spiritual Means or Prayers: None of the above should be construed to mean that a child is neglected solely because the child's parent, guardian or other person responsible for the child's care in good faith selects and depends upon spiritual means or prayer for treatment or care of disease or remedial care of the child in lieu of medical care.

Physical Abuse

Physical abuse means any:

- Physical injury
- Mental injury
- Threatened injury inflicted by a person responsible for the child's care on a child other than by accidental means
- Physical or mental injury that cannot reasonably be explained by the child's history of injuries
- Aversive or deprivation procedures or regulated interventions, that have not been authorized under the law

Exceptions: Abuse does not include *reasonable and moderate* physical discipline of a child administered by a parent or legal guardian that does not result in an injury. Abuse does not include the use of reasonable force by a teacher, principal or school employee as allowed by law.

Actions that are not *reasonable and moderate* include but are not limited to any of the following but are not limited to the following:

- Throwing, kicking, burning or cutting a child
- Striking a child with a closed fist
- Shaking a child under age 3
- Striking or other actions that result in any non-accidental injury to a child under 18 months of age
- Unreasonable interference with a child's breathing
- Threatening a child with a weapon
- Striking a child under age 1 on the face or head
- Striking a child who is at least age 1 but under age 4 on the face or head which results in an injury
- Purposely giving a child:
 - Poison
 - Alcohol
 - Dangerous, harmful or controlled substances that were not prescribed, in order to control or punish the child

- Other substances that substantially affect the child's behavior, motor coordination or judgment; that result in sickness or internal injury; or that subject the child to medical procedures that would be unnecessary if the child were not exposed to the substances
- Unreasonable physical confinement or restraint not permitted under the law, including but not limiting to tying, caging or chaining

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse means the subjection of a child by a person responsible for the child's care, by a person who has a significant relationship to the child, or by a person in a current or recent position of authority, to any criminal sexual conduct. Sexual abuse includes any act involving a child that constitutes prostitution, known or suspected child sex trafficking or threatened sexual abuse.

Reporting Maltreatment of a Minor

Staff

When a staff member knows or has reason to believe a child is being neglected or physically or sexually abused, or has been neglected or physically or sexually abused within the preceding three years, an oral report **must be made immediately by telephone or otherwise** and **followed up within 72 hours**, exclusive of weekends or holidays, by a written report to the appropriate police department, county sheriff, the agency responsible for assessing or investigating the report, or the local welfare agency. **"Immediately"** is defined to mean as soon as possible but in **no event longer than 24 hours**.

Volunteers

If a volunteer suspects or has reason to believe a child has been abused or neglected, the volunteer **MUST** report the suspected abuse or neglect to an ESLC staff member. ESLC employees are mandatory reporters in the State of Minnesota and must, in addition to making the report to the appropriate agency as described above, inform the child's teacher or appropriate school personnel and the ESLC Executive Director if the incident meets the state's definition of abuse defined above.

Reporting Contact Information

The contact information for Hennepin County Child Protection and Ramsey County Child Protection is:

Hennepin County Family Services
612-348-3552

Ramsey County Human Services
651-266-4500

If the complaint involves the Executive Director, the employee who is informed about the incident or concern, or who has observed the abuse or suspected abuse by the Executive Director, is responsible for notifying the Chair of the ESLC Board of Directors.

AARP Foundation Experience Corps volunteers must also contact the AARP Foundation: Director of Field Services—Experience Corps AARP Foundation, 601 E Street NW, Washington, D.C. 20049, email: ExperienceCorps@aarp.org.

Failure to Report

A mandated reporter who knows or has reason to believe that a child is neglected or physically or sexually abused or has been neglected or physically or sexually abused within the preceding three years, who fails to report as described above, is guilty of a misdemeanor. A mandated reporter who knows or has reason to believe that two or more children not related to the perpetrator have been physically or sexually abused by the same perpetrator within the preceding 10 years and fails to report, is guilty of a gross misdemeanor.

Immunity

Persons who make a voluntary or mandated report under the statute are immune from any civil or criminal liability that might otherwise result from their actions.

Retaliation

It is unlawful for an employer to retaliate against any person who makes a report in good faith of abuse or neglect. Retaliation complaints should be reported to the Executive Director. If the complaint involves the Executive Director, the complaint should be reported to the Board Chair.

Additional ESLC Student Management Guidelines

1. Restraining a child in any type of physical hold is prohibited for all employees and volunteers. If a child poses a danger to others or self, an ESLC employee will clear the room and/or space around the child and immediately contact the school administration or parent.
2. ESLC volunteers and staff are prohibited from disciplining a child who is not currently participating in an ESLC program. Volunteers and staff are permitted to discipline only those students participating in an ESLC program.
3. Volunteers must never be alone with a child. Always remain in the line of sight of employees or other adults while with a child. This includes virtual environments as well as side-by-side tutoring.
4. Follow the rule of three when accompanying children to the rest room. Always take groups of at least three to the rest room. Volunteers and staff members should wait outside the rest room and not enter the rest room. To enter a rest room with children, another adult must also be present.
5. Never touch a child on any part of the body that a swimsuit covers. Limit physical touch to holding a child's hand, an encouraging pat on the back, or returning a gesture such as returning a brief hug when initiated by the child.

6. Volunteers may not contact the school staff, children, or their families outside of programs via any means, including but not limited to telephone, e-mail, text, social media, chat rooms or any other direct contact. If a volunteer suspects or has reason to believe a child has been abused or neglected, they should discuss it with an ESLC employee. If needed, ESLC will contact the family or school personnel.
7. Volunteers and employees may not exchange personal contact information with students, such as mailing addresses, email addresses, telephone numbers, Twitter handles, or social media profiles.

Background Checks

ESLC requires comprehensive background checks for all employees and volunteers who interact with children or who enter school or site premises where children are present. Please see ESLC's Background Check Policy for required background checks for employees and volunteers who work with vulnerable adults and/or children as part of ESLC's programs.

Whistleblower Policy

First approved: 3/8/2012 | Approved: 6/8/21

PURPOSE

East Side Learning Center (ESLC) requires employees, volunteers, board members, and committee members to observe high standards of business and personal ethics in the conduct of their duties and responsibilities. As employees and representatives of the organization, it is important to comply with all applicable laws and regulatory requirements.

REPORTING RESPONSIBILITY

ESLC seeks to have an “Open Door” policy and encourages board members and employees to share their questions, concerns, suggestions or complaints regarding ESLC and its operations with someone who can address them properly. In most cases, a board member or committee member should present his or her concerns to the Chair of the Board. An employee or volunteer should present his or her concerns to the Executive Director.

If the reporting person (whistleblower) is not comfortable speaking with the Board Chair or Executive Director or is not satisfied with the response, the whistleblower may contact the State of Minnesota Attorney General Office

(<https://www.ag.state.mn.us/Charity/FileAComplaint.asp>) to file a formal complaint.

REQUIREMENT OF GOODFAITH

Anyone filing a complaint concerning a violation or suspected violation of the law or regulation requirements must be acting in good faith and have reasonable grounds for believing the information disclosed indicates a violation. Any allegations that prove not to be substantiated and which prove to have been made maliciously or knowingly to be false will be viewed as a serious disciplinary offense.

NO RETALIATION

A board member, committee member, employee or volunteer who in good faith reports a violation of a law or regulation requirement shall not suffer harassment, retaliation or any adverse employment consequence. An employee who retaliates against someone who has reported a violation in good faith is subject to discipline up to and including termination of employment or volunteer status. This policy is intended to encourage and enable persons to raise serious concerns within ESLC prior to seeking resolution outside ESLC.

COMPLIANCE OFFICER

ESLC’s Executive Director, working with the Chair of the Board, will act as ESLC’s Compliance Officer for this policy. The Compliance Officer is responsible for investigating and resolving complaints and allegations concerning violations of all applicable laws and regulations, including the Bylaws and Code of Conduct. The Board Chair or his or her designee will take on the Compliance Officer role if the complaint involves the Executive Director. If the complaint involves both the Executive Director and Board Chair, outside legal counsel or a subcommittee

of the board selected by the board without input from the Executive Director and Chair, will carry out the functions of the Compliance Officer.

ACCOUNTING AND AUDITING MATTERS

The Finance Committee of the Board of Directors shall address all reported concerns or complaints regarding corporate accounting practices, internal controls or auditing. The Compliance Officer shall immediately notify the Finance Committee of any such complaint and work with the Committee until the matter is resolved.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Violations or suspected violations may be submitted on a confidential basis by the complainant or may be submitted anonymously. Reports of violations or suspected violations will be kept confidential to the extent possible, consistent with the need to conduct an adequate investigation.

HANDLING OF REPORTED VIOLATIONS

The Compliance Officer, or the person responsible for carrying out the Compliance Officer's role with respect to a reported or suspected violation, will acknowledge receipt of the reported violation or suspected violation by writing a letter (or e-mail) to the complainant within five business days. All reports will be promptly investigated, and appropriate corrective action will be taken if warranted by the investigation.

DETAILED PROCEDURE

This detailed procedure begins when a suspected violation is reported to the Executive Director, Board Chair, or member of the board and the violation is documented and handed over to the acting Compliance Officer. The Compliance Officer:

1. Writes to the party or parties making the allegation acknowledging receipt of the suspected violation and informs them that an investigation into the violation will be opened.
2. Ensures the original document or documents of the report, as well as the letter acknowledging receipt of the reported or suspected violations, are included in the memorialization record.
3. Ensures that the investigation and corrective action(s) are completed in a timely manner and maintains and submits the timeline for resolving the report.
4. Submits findings to the Board, if warranted.
5. Maintains written records of the complaints and allegations along with all correspondence and actions taken in resolving them. These written records are maintained in a confidential Board folder. If the Executive Director is involved in the said violations, these records will be kept off site as determined by the ESLC Board Chair.

RELATED POLICIES

- Financial Policies and Procedures

Background Check Policy East Side Learning Center

Board Approved 8/11/2020

PURPOSE

East Side Learning Center (ESLC), believes that working with qualified, committed individuals contributes to the success and safety of the children and families who participate. Individual background checks are performed for all staff and volunteers to protect current and future students, volunteers, and employees. Thus, they are an important part of the recruitment process. Conducting background checks also ensures ESLC meets state, local, and Federal requirements to provide services to children and the adults who deliver services.

REQUIREMENTS

Class I: ESLC requires all employees and volunteers to be cleared through the following background checks to participate in or maintain employment and volunteer opportunities:

- Two personal or professional references
- U.S. Department of Justice National Sex Offender Public Registry
- State Criminal History Check
- Applicable school or community background check requirements

Class II: ESLC requires that all employees, Experience Corps volunteers, and any volunteer who is supported by a Federal grant to follow the background check procedure as outlined in the National Service Criminal History Check (NSCHC) guide.

DETERMINATION OF CLEARANCE TO PARTICIPATE

The following conditions automatically bar persons from participating as a tutor or employee, or, if started, result in termination as a tutor or employee of ESLC.

- Failure to clear the National Sex Offender Public Registry; or
- Conviction of murder, child abuse, or sexual assault

Failure to clear other background checks do not automatically result in immediate dismissal. Instead, the following factors may be taken into consideration before making a final determination regarding participation or employment:

- The significance of risk reported in a personal or professional reference
- The status of a criminal or civil charge (pending or convicted)
- The length of time since a criminal or civil conviction
 - The nature of the crime
 - The relationship between the person's role and the crime committed
 - The number of convictions
 - Rehabilitation efforts and recommendations

- Subsequent employment history
- Convictions of murder, assault/battery, child abuse, and sexual assault will preclude volunteering for or result in termination of volunteer services to the Experience Corps Program.

INITIATION OF BACKGROUND CHECK

While the background check process will be initiated prior to the applicant's anticipated start date the complete results may not be available by the time placement occurs. The applicant will be permitted to begin work with the program after signing the "*Criminal History Consent Form*," being cleared through the National Sex Offender Public Registry website, and by signing the annual "*Volunteer Agreement*."

If complete results are not returned by the start date, at no time will the applicant be left unsupervised with a child. The supervisor must be someone who has completed and been cleared as a Class II employee.

Once results are returned to ESLC, the applicant will be immediately removed from the program if the person's background check is not cleared. No volunteer will be allowed to sign a Volunteer Agreement prior to the initiation of all background checks.

DISQUALIFYING EVENTS AFTER INITIATION OR START DATE

Furthermore, if a current employee or volunteer is charged with a felony or misdemeanor crime, the employee or volunteer will be removed immediately from having contact with students and/or children until the charge has been resolved. A conviction may result in immediate dismissal from the program in accordance with the guidelines above.

CONTINUING EXPERIENCE CORPS & FEDERAL GRANT-SUPPORTED VOLUNTEERS

To ensure that employees and volunteers continue to be eligible for contact with students and children, the following background checks must be performed as indicated:

- National Sex Offender Public Registry – Every year
- State Criminal History Check – Every two (2) years
- FBI Criminal Background Check – Every four (4) years

This is subject to change based on funder and school requirements. If an employee or volunteer is found to have been charged with a crime at the time of review, the individual will be removed immediately from having contact with students and/or children. If the employee or volunteer is found to be convicted of a crime, the individual may be immediately dismissed from the program in accordance with the guidelines above.