

# Coventry schools adjust volunteer policy

## Policy will soon be district-wide

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COVENTRY—School volunteers district-wide in Coventry will soon be all under the same policy.

The school committee planned to perform the second reading on the school volunteer policy but chose to table the action until a later date to clarify some word choices.

The policy was constructed due to a range of different policies at the schools, according to Michael L. Convery, superintendent of schools.

“A parent would call the principle and say, ‘At my former school, I used to be able to...’” Convery stated. “We made formal rules for consistency.”

He explained that the differences between schools were

minor and most volunteers would not notice a difference.

According to Convery, the second reading was postponed due to wording the policy that may have given the impression that volunteers could replace jobs.

“That is not the intent of the policy at all,” said Convery. “Our intent is not to replace current school personnel with volunteers and the wording needed clarification.”

Convery explained that the policy and handbook were developed by all the elementary school principles, the central office staff and the school related personnel (SRP), which include any function in the school that is not a certified teacher.

“We worked out a set of expectations that can be found online,” said Convery. The link can be found at [www.coventryschools.net](http://www.coventryschools.net).

“Once we got it down with language from both sides, we

sent it over to the insurance company so that there would be no liability issues,” he explained.

The goal was to create a clear set of expectations so that parents know what they can do and the schools have consistent expectations, according to Convery.

Most of the volunteers at the school are parents, he stated. The schools are always looking for volunteers and welcome anyone who would like to participate.

To ensure the safety of students, the policy requires those that do participate to receive a background check and also adhere to rules and district protocol for confidentiality.

The handbook states that volunteering in the schools is a privilege, not a right and there “it is imperative that volunteers take their placement seriously, maintain dependable attendance, and communicate with teachers.”