AISD School Volunteer Coordinator Guide

2023-2024

Contents

Austin Partners in Education
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Austin Partners in Education

Austin Partners in Education (APIE) is an independent 501(c)(3) organization, created in 2004 through a partnership between the Austin Independent School District (AISD) and the Austin Chamber of Commerce.

APIE is the liaison between AISD and a third-party background check company, True Hire. We provide a registration database so AISD school-based volunteers can complete their background checks, and Volunteer Coordinators at all campuses have a list of approved volunteers for the current school year.

APIE's mission is to provide college and career readiness support through individualized academic and mentoring programs to prepare students for success. APIE has four school-coordinated programs including Secondary School Mentoring, Middle School Math Classroom Coaching, GEAR-UP and College Readiness.

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Roles & Responsibilities

Austin Partners in Education (APIE) processes AISD's school volunteer background checks according to AISD and Texas Education Agency policy. APIE partners with **principal-designated** Volunteer Coordinators at each school to support the volunteer registration and background check process.

Austin Partners in Education (APIE):
APIE will:

- Provide a criminal history background check service for volunteers, in accordance with AISD policy and state regulation.
- Provide each AISD campus with a portal that lists background check approved volunteers for the current school year.
- Refer people who ask about volunteer needs to schools that request volunteer support.
- Provide volunteer background check registration and coordinator instructions and support.

Volunteer Coordinator:
The Volunteer Coordinator at each campus is the primary point of contact for all school volunteers.

Volunteer Coordinators will:

- Notify people interested in volunteering at their school about the background check requirement. Volunteers need to complete the registration form on APIE's website: www.austinpartners.org.

- Log into their Volunteer Coordinator Portal (at least once a week) to review the list of approved volunteers who selected your campus.
- Contact volunteers with information about volunteer needs at their school and coordinate with volunteers.
- Verify that the Name and Date of Birth match the volunteer's information on their government-issued ID.
- Provide volunteers with instructions on school procedures and district policies including FERPA.
- Run a volunteer's ID through RAPTOR to sign-in.
- Volunteers sign the AISD Confidentiality Agreement electronically when they register for a background check. We recommend reviewing the AISD Confidentiality Agreement form with volunteers the first day they support your campus each school year.

Registration and Background Check FAQs

Why do volunteers need a background check?

School districts are required to obtain criminal history record information on school volunteers (TX Education Code Section 22.083). The Raptor (Safety Check) screening performed for campus visitors *does not satisfy* the legal requirements to obtain criminal history information. Raptor only checks sex offender records, not all criminal history.

Who **needs** to complete this type of volunteer background check:

- People who will be volunteering for more than a one-time event at your school.
- Anyone driving students (who are not their own children) during field trips.
- Volunteers who interact with students without direct supervision at all times.
- Volunteers working with students virtually (via electronic device).

Who **may not need to** complete a criminal history background check:

- One-time visitors and volunteers. They must go through RAPTOR like all visitors.
- AISD Vendors and Contractors must complete AISD's fingerprinting requirement. They need to contact backgroundcheckreviews@austinisd.org
- Student teachers, observers, and those seeking credit for an academic program need to contact the AISD Human Resources Student Teacher Program for background checks.

How long do background checks take?

It can take up to two weeks (10 business days). Usually, it takes 2-3 business days. Volunteers will receive an email from APIE and True Hire once they are approved (or not approved).

What happens if someone does not pass their background check?

If someone does not pass the background check due to a criminal history record, they will receive an email from True Hire, the background check company. They can dispute their record and try to resolve any issues

regarding the results. If volunteers have questions about the process, they can also contact APIE. They cannot volunteer at an AISD campus.

What if a volunteer does not have an email address?

To receive a background check from APIE, each volunteer is required to have a unique email address. APIE's volunteer database program relies on unique email addresses for communication and background check processing. This means volunteers are not able to share an email with a spouse, family member, or friend. If a volunteer does not have an email address:

- The Volunteer Coordinator can assist them in creating an email address.
- The Volunteer can contact APIE for support.

What are the background check clearance levels?

Level 3 – Drivers: Volunteers are approved to drive their own child and other students to off-campus events. This level is only for the volunteer opportunity "Field Trip Driver". Some AISD campuses do not allow volunteers to drive students. Please notify APIE if you want this opportunity removed as an option.

Level 2 – "School Volunteer" is set at this level. Volunteers are approved to support students without direct, consistent AISD supervision.

Level 1 – AISD staff are always present with volunteers while the volunteers are on campus. Examples: Lunchtime Monitor, Front Office Support.

Verifying a Volunteer's ID

A volunteer's background check is NOT complete until their legal name (first, middle, and last) and birthdate have been verified on campus. Because APIE uses an online background check system, this step is very important to ensure the accuracy of the check.

Before allowing a volunteer to meet with students, your school MUST confirm that the legal name – first, middle, and last – along with the birthdate on the volunteer's driver's license, passport, or other government-issued picture ID, matches the information provided for the background check.

It is essential that this step is taken to ensure the accuracy of the information used for the check. It is the responsibility of the school to verify this information before allowing volunteers to begin. **APIE accepts no responsibility for misrepresentation or inaccurate information submitted during registration.**

What if the name and/or date of birth on the ID is different from their information on the Volunteer Coordinator portal?

If the information is inconsistent, please notify APIE so that we can update the volunteer's information and request a new and accurate background check.

Do approved volunteers still need to check in through RAPTOR?

Yes, all volunteers must be processed like visitors and comply with office check-in procedures through the Raptor system.

Volunteer Opportunity Guidelines

APIE will post the two volunteer opportunities listed below for all campuses. Each school may choose **one** additional volunteer opportunity to be included on their campus's volunteer registration form:

- **School Volunteer** (Level 2 Background check) – general volunteer duties based on campus needs (examples include field trip chaperone, tutoring, classroom support, etc)
- **Field Trip Driver** (Level 3 Background check)
- **Optional:** One customized volunteer opportunity, determined by each campus

APIE only processes background checks for volunteers who are participating as school-based volunteers on AISD campuses. These volunteer opportunities must meet ALL the following AISD and APIE criteria:

1. Opportunities must be validated by a campus administrator as an appropriate public school program with adequate volunteer supervision.
2. Opportunities must be free for AISD student participants.
3. Opportunities must be secular in nature.
4. Opportunities must be confined to campus property.
5. Opportunities must have an expectation of regular volunteer visits throughout the school year.

Also:

- APIE disclaims liability for volunteers.
- Volunteers serve at the discretion of the campus's principal.
- A school is not required to invite "approved" volunteers to support their campus.
- A school reserves the right to terminate any volunteer's participation in any program. APIE can support the school in this effort, if requested.

What if the volunteer opportunity does not meet the above criteria?

If your campus is hosting opportunities that do not meet the above guidelines, but you still wish to obtain background checks for your volunteers, you must do so independently.

Does a volunteer have to sign up for more than one opportunity on campus?

It depends. Volunteers serving as a general "School Volunteer" who want to volunteer as a "Field Trip Driver" must be approved under this opportunity because it requires a higher-level background check approval, level 3.

The "School Volunteer" opportunity is considered a Level 2 background check clearance. School Volunteers may work with students without direct AISD staff supervision.

What if the volunteer is Not Approved for the opportunity?

If you do not see a person's name on the Volunteer Coordinator Portal, then this person is not approved to support as a volunteer in this role. Contact APIE with questions regarding a specific volunteer if you are unsure of their background check status.

Volunteer Sign-In

School volunteers need to sign in as a visitor at the front office using the RAPTOR system. Please remember that RAPTOR only checks for sexual offenses. AISD's Raptor does not include a full criminal history background check. Your school may also choose to have a sign-in book for volunteers. Please follow the instructions under "Verifying Volunteer ID" the first time a volunteer signs in.

Volunteer Appreciation

APIE will send Volunteer Coordinators a nomination form before Volunteer Appreciation Month in April. Campuses can nominate two volunteers of the year, mentors of the year, parent ambassadors, and up to five partners of the year. These nominations will be posted to AISD's annual Appreciation webpage.

Volunteer Coordinator Portal: Step by Step Instructions

This portal provides a list of current, background-check-approved volunteers at your school. Recommended: Bookmark the link below so you can check daily for new volunteers. APIE will send weekly email reminders.

Volunteer Coordinator Portal step-by-step instructions:

1. Coordinators can access the Volunteer Coordinator Portal and log in with their AISD email:
   https://austinpartners.formtitan.com/volunteercoordinator#/
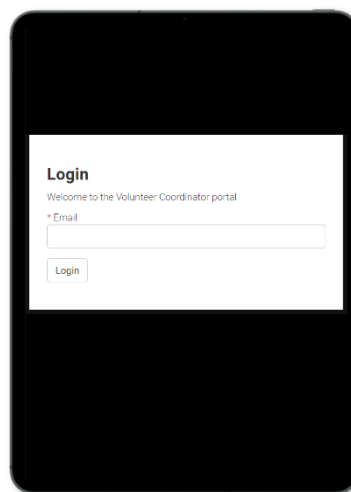
2. Once logged in, the coordinator should see their campus and name in the upper left corner.

Your name and campus name should appear here.
If the school name is blank, contact APIE.

3. To view the list of approved volunteers, click the drop-down menu and select the opportunity.

Click the arrow to view approved volunteers
under each opportunity.

4. Coordinators can use the comment box to document information that is helpful for them and their campus. If coordinators have any concerns that require immediate attention, please contact APIE's School Connection Manager.

Use the comment box to add helpful information for you and your campus. (ex: available Tuesdays, tutoring)
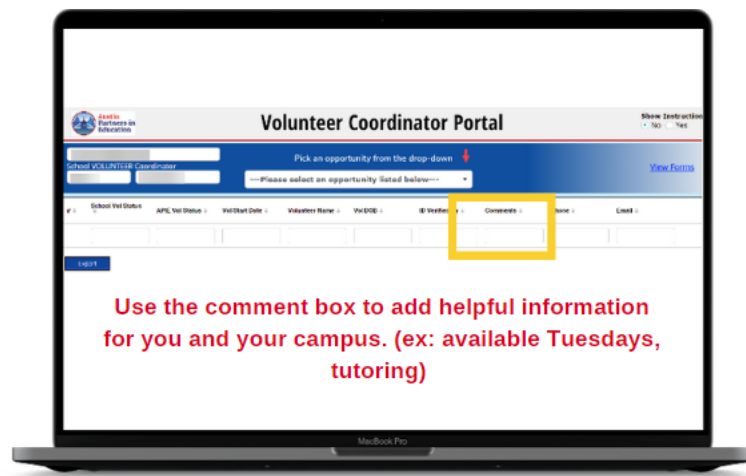
5. When a new volunteer shows up on your portal, you can contact them to invite them to support your school in specific ways. Volunteers may also contact you to ask about volunteering. You have the option to update their volunteer status in the left-hand "School Reported Status" box. These updates are for your campus, not APIE. There are 6 status options:

- **In Process**: If you are working to place a volunteer.
- **Placed** : Once you have officially assigned a volunteer to a role at your campus.
- **Never Started** : When a volunteer doesn't respond or has decided not to volunteer.
- **Switched**: A volunteer signed up for the wrong opportunity and needs to be placed in another volunteer opportunity instead.
- **Dropped**: A volunteer starts an opportunity but then quits before the end of the school year.
- **Completed Commitment**: At the end of the year, switch all remaining "Placed" to this status.

To change the status, scroll to the far right of the volunteer's name and click on the edit icon (see below).

The status you enter will show in the School Volunteer Status column:
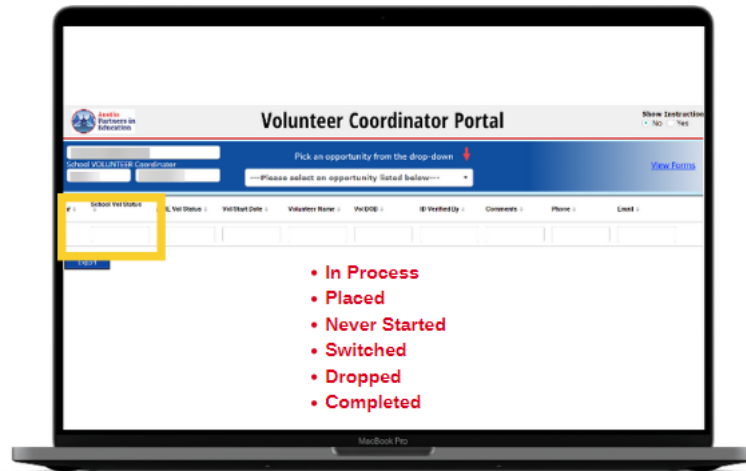
6. The list of Volunteer Statuses, along with other helpful instructions, is at the top right of the screen, click "Yes" under "Show Instructions".
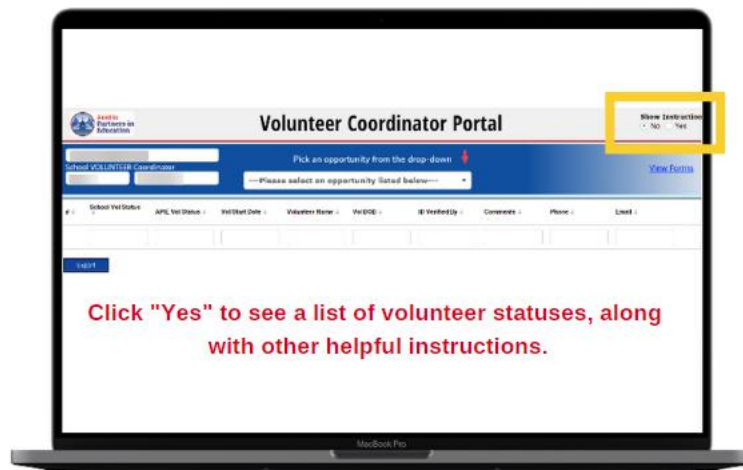
7. **Important Step!** The first day a volunteer visits your campus, you must verify that the name and date of birth on their photo ID matches the information listed in this portal. When using the drop-down menu to update a volunteer's status, please add your initials in the "ID verified by" box. Without initials, the information on your link will not be saved properly.

Volunteer Coordinator Portal

Important! Confirm each volunteer's ID matches name & date of birth listed in this portal. You can track who's been verified by adding your initials next to each name.
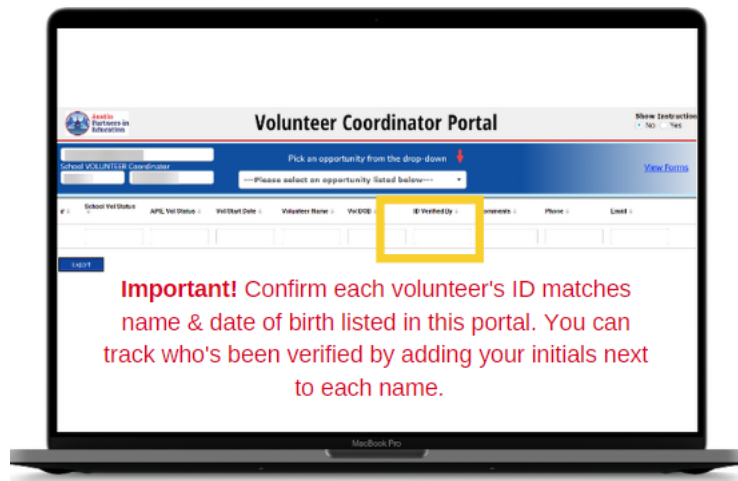
8. Languages: This column identifies languages volunteers speak so that you can invite them to support your campus with things like tutoring students, assisting teachers, and communicating with parents. **Volunteers cannot be used to translate or interpret confidential documents and/or conversations.**

Volunteer Coordinator Portal

Languages: Volunteers cannot be used to translate or interpret confidential documents or conversations, but they can help in ways like tutor students and communicate with parents.
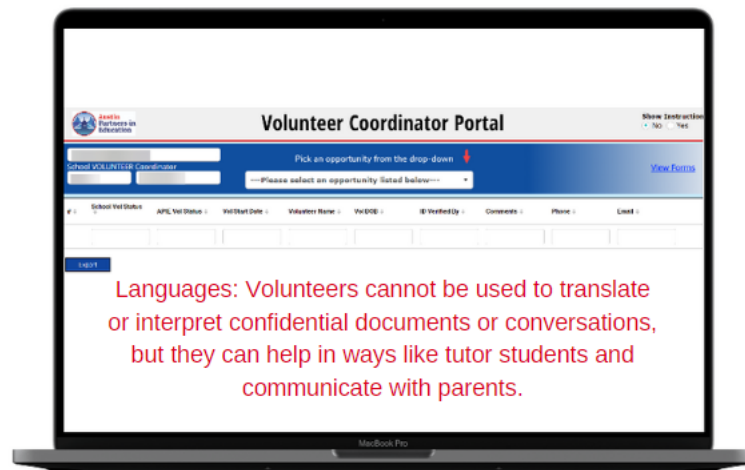
9. To view helpful forms like the AISD Confidentiality Agreement, Volunteer Registration Instructions, and additional resources, click View Forms.

Volunteer Coordinator Portal

Click to view forms like the Volunteer Coordinator Guide, AISD Confidentiality Agreement, etc.
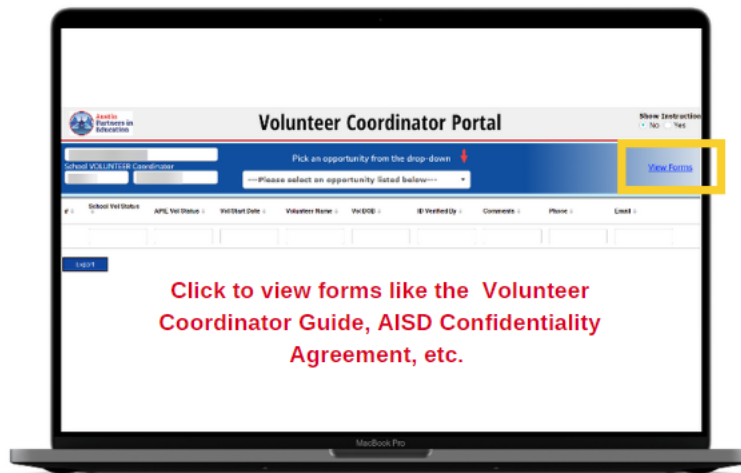
10. To export the list of approved volunteers, scroll to the very bottom left of your screen and click the blue Export button. The list will be downloaded as an excel spreadsheet and can be found in the "Downloads" folder on your computer.

Volunteer Coordinator Portal

Click this button to download the entire list of volunteers as an excel spreadsheet so you can share with others on campus, add more details, etc.
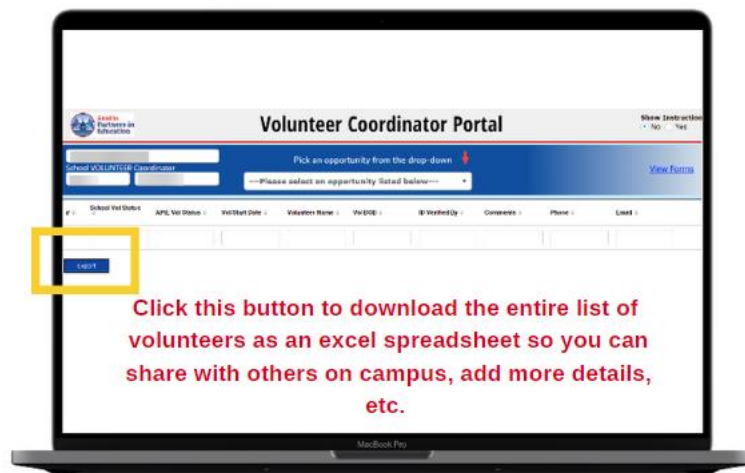
Volunteer Registration: Step-by-Step Instructions

The procedure for volunteer registration is as follows:
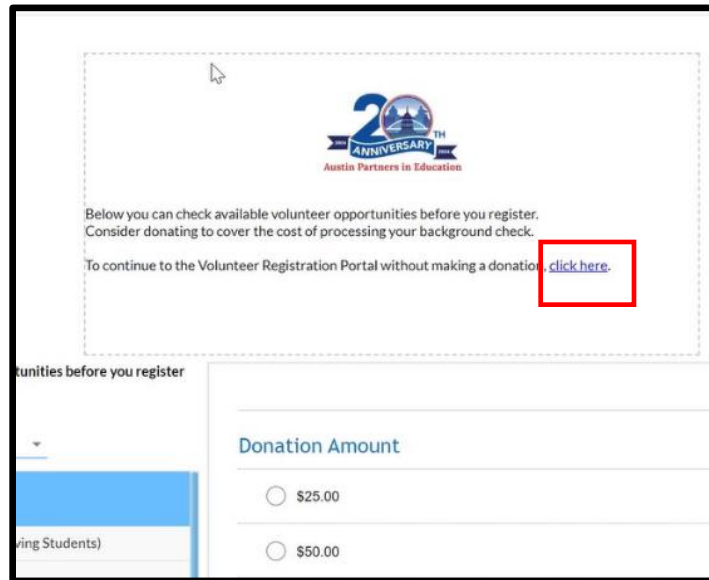
1. Visit www.austinpartners.org
2. Click the **Volunteer** button at the top right.
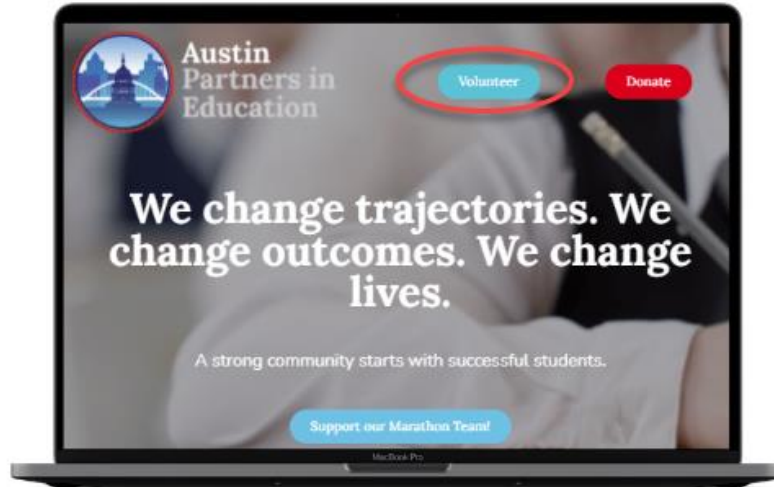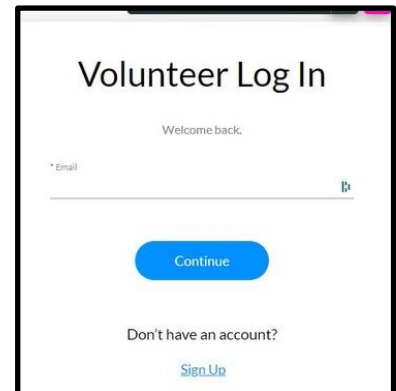
1. If you are only volunteering for a one-time event (NOT including field trips), you do not need to complete the background check. You can be processed as a "Visitor" on campus. If you do need the background check, please Click the blue "Next" button at the bottom right.
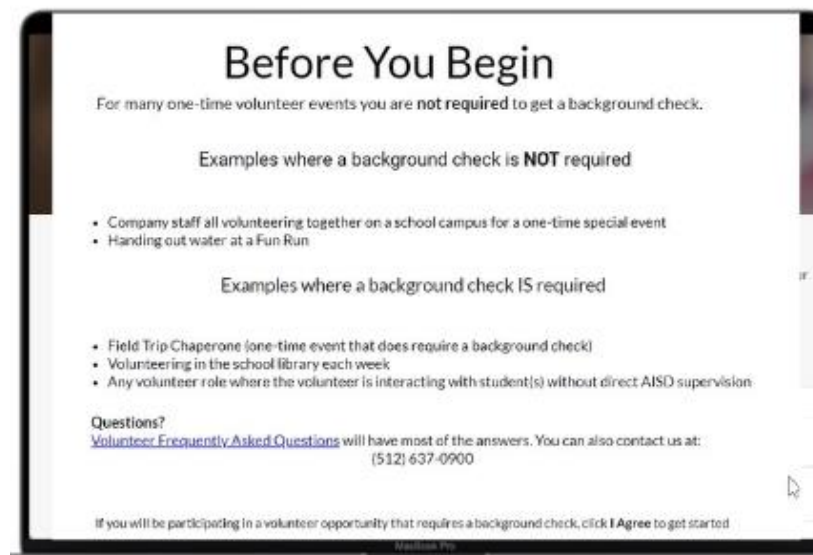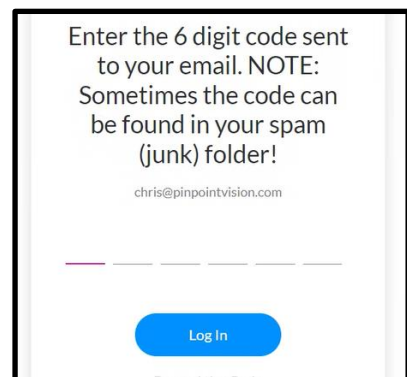
2. *Pre-Registration* page: It is **optional** to donate (to cover the cost of the background check). Move onto the next page by clicking on **Click Here**

3. *Volunteer Log In*: If you are an existing volunteer, you will type the email address you've used in the past. **If this is your first time registering,** please click the "**Create New Account**" button.

4. You will receive a 6-digit code in your inbox or Spam/Junk mailbox. Type this code and click Log In.

5. Please enter your contact information and answer a few questions. Then, click the blue "Next" button at the bottom right.

6. Please authorize your background check by clicking **"Yes".**

7. Please select the campus you want to volunteer from the list. First, click the check box to the left of the school. You can select up to 5 schools. They are listed in alphabetical order. Then, click the blue Next button.

8. Choose from the volunteer opportunities. First, click the check box to the left of the opportunity. Then, click the blue Next button.
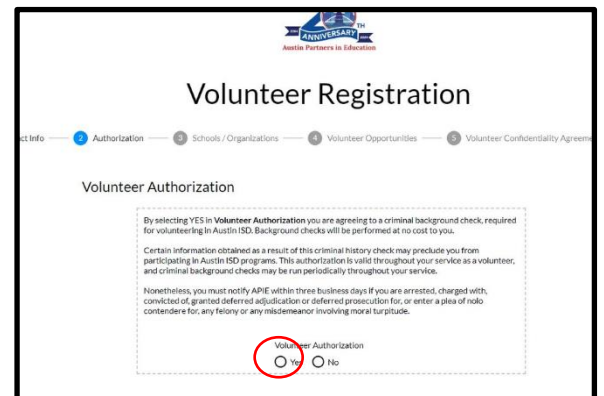
9. Please read and electronically sign the AISD Volunteer Confidentiality Agreement form. First, by clicking on the box. Then, click "Next".

10. **Success!** You completed the volunteer registration form. You will immediately receive an email confirmation from APIE. **It can take up to 2 weeks for your background check to be processed**. Within **2 weeks** you'll receive another email from APIE with your status and the name of the Volunteer Coordinator at the school you selected.

11. Once you have an approved background check, your name will be on the school's volunteer list. Please contact the campus to learn about the school's volunteer needs and when you can begin.

Do you have questions or need support?
Contact: Wen Nguyen, APIE School Connections Manager
Phone: 512-637-0900
Email: wnguyen@austinpartners.org