



Technology Committee

Database Policies & Practices

The mission of the Technology Committee is to provide and maintain a database resource to facilitate communication with members and enable self registration in classes. Members shall include the Volgistics System Operators (aka the Database Team) and the chair of each New Frontiers committee, or a designee assigned by the committee chair.

New Frontiers Database – General

- A. The New Frontiers database is hosted by Volgistics (www.volgistics.com). It can contain information for up to 1,000 Active Members.
- B. Information in the database includes members' name, address, phone, email, and Student ID.
- C. The database stores information on all active members and, to the extent allowed by space, on past members. Members are classified by Status and Type.
 - a. Status "Active" refers to NFLL's communications relationship with its members, rather than an established calendar. Members are placed in an Inactive status after the mailing of the fall catalog if they have not renewed their membership by that time. Inactive members are identified by the year in which they were last active; e.g., "Member 2012-13". As the database fills to capacity, members who have been inactive the longest are deleted. Members are retained in the database for a minimum of three years after they become inactive. Up to six different Status classifications are allowed.
 - b. Type:
 - 1. "Continuing" identifies members who have continued their membership from the previous semester.
 - 2. "New" identifies new members each semester for the Membership Committee, in order to create nametags and otherwise welcome new members to the organization.
 - 3. "Former" identifies members who previously belonged to NFLL and are still in the database. "New" and "Former" types are reclassified as "Continuing" before the start of the next semester. Additional Types can be added by the Database Administrator.
- D. Members can be filtered by Tags, Sets, and Flags.
 - a. Tags are used to temporarily create subsets of members. They automatically disappear at the end of a session if not removed before then.
 - b. Sets: typically identify members by the functions they perform for New Frontiers such as "Facilitator," "Council Member," or similar category. A common use of Sets is to use as Contact lists for sending emails to members. Sets can be created by anyone with System Operator privileges.
 - c. Flags: Can be created only by the Database Administrator; however, they may be added to or deleted from a member's record by anyone with System Operator privileges. Flags are often used to create sets; for example, Council members are identified by means of a Flag entitled "Council"; a Set entitled "Council members" can then be created consisting of members with the "Council" Flag checked. Flags are also used to identify spouses (to avoid duplicate mailings to households), Newsletter delivery preference (postal or email), and similar requirements.
- E. Printed materials that are generated include:
 - a. Mailing labels
 - b. Telephone Directory
 - c. Attendance reports for events such as the Annual Meeting

- F. Emails can be sent to all members or to a subset of members. Emails can be distributed by the Database System Operators (Database Team) or by Council members who have access to the database.
 - G. Database Team responsibilities:
 - a. Enter new members' information in the database.
 - b. Ensure that information in the database is current.
 - c. Print labels for mailing.
 - d. Monitor Returned Email to determine reason for non-delivery and resolve problem.
 - e. Compile telephone directory for printing.
 - f. Print sign-in sheets for Annual and All-Members Meetings.
- A "How-To" manual is being designed which describes procedures for each function. The committee will review the manual each fall and update as necessary.
- H. Council Use of the New Frontiers Membership Database
 - a. Before any member is given access to the database, he/she must go through training.
 - b. All Council Members will be able to access the system using a shared password, provided they have had training. This access will allow the person to view the database and output a variety of useful reports. Example: They will be able to tell whether someone is an active member, or they can get either a "count" or a "list" of all members or a set of members. They will be able to view the information and retrieve data for New Frontiers to use in the following formats:
 - 1. A document in .pdf format that they can print out or attach to an email
 - 2. An Excel spreadsheet
 - c. Council Members will be able to send out emails:
 - 1. To a subset of people, such as all Facilitators
 - 2. To the entire membership
 - d. Council chairs may share access to the database with a member who has a legitimate business reason to access the database, provided such member goes through training

While most of the data New Frontiers collects about its members does not fall under the Family Educational Rights and Privileges Act (FERPA), New Frontiers members with access to the database will treat the data as if it does and will comply with FERPA privacy regulations.

- I. How the New Frontiers Membership Database can be accessed:
 - a. The System Operator password can be shared. Only one person with a shared password can use the system at a time.
 - b. Because the System Operator account carries privileges that can affect the database with unintended consequences, access will be limited to Council members who have received training.
 - c. The Database Administrator (DBA) is a System Operator with extended privileges. The DBA uses the Database "Setup" option to:
 - 1. Assign and change the System Operator password.
 - 2. Customize the system.
 - d. Requests for changes to the system may be requested in writing by other members of the Committee.
 - e. A member of the committee shall be responsible for seeing that Volgistics service fees are paid. Payment is made with an MCC purchase order through the MCC liaison.
 - f. Although the DBA is responsible for changes to the system, the password for the DBA account is to be shared by a minimum of three members of the Database Team and one person from the MCC Community Partnership Office. Reasons are:
 - 1. In order to understand the system thoroughly, it is necessary to have access to the "Setup" option. For backup purposes, members of the Database Team should understand the system.
 - 2. In emergencies, when the System Operator account is "busy", it is essential that the System Operators have access to a backup account.

3. To ensure continued availability, it is essential that the password not be restricted to one or two members.

The DBA is to change the password when a member of the committee leaves.

J. Training:

- a. Any Council Member can ask a System Operator for training to learn how to do a specific task.
- b. Although there is no telephone support, Volgistics maintains an excellent online Help system that includes an on-line Manual and individual help via email.
- c. The System Operators can help other committee members use the system; however, they will not be able to help members utilize the information on their own computers - for example, how to use Excel on their personal computers.

K. **New Frontiers Database –Email Distribution Guidelines**

- a. Goal: To send information that furthers the mission of New Frontiers to NFLL members who have e-mail.
- b. Access:
 1. Members of the Technology Committee who have received training can send emails to all members or to subsets of members. A System Operator will provide detailed directions to Council members on how to create a distribution list and post a message.
 2. Committee Chairs are responsible for sending out messages relating to New Frontiers. The "Outreach Coordinator" is responsible for sending out messages about lifelong learning or other non-New Frontiers activities. The Outreach Coordinator is to monitor rules compliance on emails.
- c. Content: In accordance with NFLL policies:
 1. Messages shall NOT provide endorsements of political candidates or political activities
 2. Posted messages shall be secular subjects only – nothing religious.
 3. Posted messages shall be for non-profit, non commercial subjects only.
 4. Message content is to be restricted to activities and announcements relevant to lifelong learning and likely to be of interest to NF members. Examples of such items might include:
 - a) MCC College Events
 - b) Community Events
 - c) Lifelong Learning Opportunities in the community
 5. Information is to be limited to activities open to all members of New Frontiers.
 6. Phone numbers and email addresses of members can be included, with permission.
- d. Other Guidelines:
 1. Any member who posts a message must include his/her name.
 2. Recipients can ask to be removed from the distribution list.

L. **New Frontiers Database – Registration Process**

- a. VicNet is the arm of Volgistics which allows individual members to self-register for classes or to update their personal information (address, phone, or email address).
- b. A tab on the web site home page will link members to a VicNet login screen to access their account. Only Active members will have access to a VicNet account.
- c. Active members can update their Profile (address, phone, email) at any time.
- d. Self registration for classes is available only during a pre-determined registration period in the fall and spring. Self registration is de-activated while a System Operator prepares information on upcoming classes; self-registration will then be activated on a day and time agreed to by Council.
- e. Individual assistance will be given to members who do not have computer access, or who need additional help.
- f. Class Facilitators: VicNet gives Facilitators the ability to see their class roster. Facilitators have the option of logging on to their account as a Facilitator or Member.