

Volunteer Handbook

Volunteers Make a Difference

Volunteers play an important and valuable role in education. The volunteer program provides you with an opportunity to increase your knowledge of the educational process. Regardless of the type of volunteer work you do, you will play a key role in helping out our students. You will receive satisfaction for doing an important job and have an opportunity to meet other members of the community. Volunteering may help you acquire new skills and work experience for future jobs. Volunteers enable teachers to maximize their time. Our children benefit from more individualized attention and an enriched curriculum. Teachers, students, administrators, parents, and the community benefit from the work of people like you, who freely share their talents and resources. There is a place for every kind of volunteer talent.

Reasons Why Volunteers Have a Positive Effect on Our Schools:

- Children receive more individualized attention
- The curriculum is enriched
- Community appreciation of school and the educational process is increased
- Instructors have more time to teach and plan
- Discipline problems are reduced
- Children can relate to more adults
- Motivation of children is increased
- Children's respect for adults is increased

How to Become a Volunteer

******All potential volunteers need to complete a volunteer registration form******

Dependent on your duties, volunteers are divided into two categories:

- 1) If you will work with student in a district sponsored activity program then you must obtain an Activity Supervisor Clearance Certificate or clear a Department of Justice and Federal Bureau of Investigation criminal background check prior to beginning the volunteer duties. (Ed code 49024)
- 2) If you may supervise student during lunch, breakfast, or other nutritional periods or may serve as nonteaching aides under the immediate supervision and direction of certificated personnel to perform noninstructional work which assists certificated personnel in the performance of teaching and administrative responsibilities. The district must first clear the potential volunteer through the Department of Justice Megan's Law web site.

Now You Are a Volunteer!

Daily Procedures: When entering the school building, all visitors (including volunteers) must register at the main office of the school. This will help us identify your presence in the building so that we may contact you if the need arises.

Absences: If you are unable to make your assignment for any reason, please phone the school office at:

Worker's Compensation: If you are injured while volunteering, immediately notify your supervisor. Volunteers are under the district's worker compensation program.

Limitation of Duties: A volunteer is never considered a substitute for a member of the professional school staff. Your services are supportive. Your value is in reviewing with individuals and small groups the lesson material once it has been presented by the professional. The volunteer is an extension of the teacher's eyes and ears in the classroom. Your observations are valuable to the teacher who is responsible for content and techniques.

Volunteer Ethics:

- The volunteers are at all times guided by school policy which they neither make nor violate.
- Volunteers work under the supervision, direction, and guidance of school personnel.
- The volunteers augment the work of the professional school staff but are not considered as substitutes for them.
- **A volunteer should never divulge confidential information to which they may have access in the classroom or in the school.**
- Classroom and student work is always confidential. Please do not discuss student problems with anyone except the teacher or school administrator.
- Since there are as many different methods of teaching as there are teachers, please do not compare them. There is no one best way to do anything.
- Work positively for the good of the school. Constructive criticism should be directed only to the supervising teacher or school administrator.

The School Volunteer's Role:

As a school volunteer, your role is to support the work of a teacher in assisting students with their classroom work and other activities.

Expectations:

What does the teacher expect of the volunteer?

- Promptness
- Flexibility
- Dependability
- Patience
- Professional manner and dress
- Tact
- Initiative
- Confidentiality
- Discretion and trustworthiness
- A warm, positive and supportive attitude
- Sensitivity to children's needs
- Respect for the teacher's authority
- Sensitivity to teacher's time needs
- Notification of absence

What should the volunteer expect of the teacher?

- Clear and professional communication
- Appreciation
- Respect
- Cooperative attitude
- Demonstration of how to use materials
- Organization
- Explanation of specific expectations
- Willingness to help volunteer as needed
- Appropriate assignment of tasks
- Classroom management
- Notification of schedule changes
- Materials needed for assigned tasks
- Constructive criticism

Health Issues

We want to remind you of safe procedures to observe in working with students.

Maintain Good Hygiene:

- First and foremost...HAND WASHING

Handwashing is the single most important procedure for preventing the spread of infection.

- Lather hands with soap and water
- Vigorously rub together all surfaces of lathered hands for 10 to 15 seconds
- Rinse hands thoroughly under a stream of water
- Dry hands completely with a clean, dry paper towel

Illness: Volunteers are very valuable resources, but we ask the same of staff and students - *if you are contagious, please stay home*. This will allow time to give your body a chance to recover. Remember – do not return to school until you have at least 24 hours after being free of fever or signs of a fever without the use of fever-reducing medicines.

No Smoking: Recognizing that exposure to environmental tobacco smoke can cause lung cancer and other illnesses, current law and the board wishes to protect the health and safety of students and employees by providing a smoke free environment.

Drug and Alcohol Free Campus: It is the law and policy of our district to maintain a drug and alcohol free campus. The use of controlled substances is inconsistent with the behavior expected of employees and volunteers, and subjects everyone to unacceptable safety risks and undermines our ability to operate efficiently.

Bloodborne Pathogens: It is the policy of the district to meet federal and state standards for minimizing exposure to bloodborne pathogens and other potentially infectious materials in the workplace. Bloodborne pathogens are microorganisms carried by human blood and other body fluids. Most approaches to infection control are based on a concept called Universal Precautions. The term “universal precautions” refers to a system of infection control which assumes that every direct contact with body fluids is potentially infectious. If you need to provide first aid, first put on latex gloves. Contact the custodian to clean up any body fluids. If, as a volunteer, you have questions regarding universal precautions, please ask your teacher or principal.

Injuries: If you are injured while volunteering, no matter how slightly, report the incident immediately to you supervisor, who will make a report of the incident and see that you receive first aid.

Characteristics of Children Aged 5 – 8 Years:

- **Physical Characteristics**
 - Full of energy, find it difficult to sit still
 - Tire easily
 - Aware of physical limitations
 - Increasing fine motor skills (example: using scissors, writing)
 - Proud of what they can do physically

- **Self-image**
 - Self image based primarily on what they think others think of them
 - Proud of their own accomplishments; want to be treated as individuals
 - Eager to please adults they admire
 - Becoming more independent of home and parents
 - Flourish from positive reinforcement
 - Sometimes adamant about their likes and dislikes

- **Relationship with Others**
 - Trying out new ways of getting along with others
 - Imitate adults in attitudes and actions
 - Sensitive about feelings – both their own and others
 - Aware of individual difference in physical appearance
 - Still seek acceptance and encouragement primarily from parents and teachers
 - Beginning to develop a sense of right and wrong in attitudes and actions towards others

- **Interest in Learning**
 - Beginning to draw conclusions from practical experience
 - Still have private worlds of fantasy and wonder
 - Eager to learn
 - May surprise adults at times with their insight
 - Eager to try new activities but frustrated by attempting things beyond their capabilities
 - Investigate, experiment, explore, collect anything and everything

Characteristics of Children Aged 8 – 12 Years:

- **Physical Characteristics:**
 - Growing steadily; physically active
 - Differ widely in physical maturity (girls likely to mature earlier than boys)
 - May be maturing sexually and having questions about their bodies
 - Becoming increasingly interested in improving personal appearance

- **Self-image:**
 - Becoming more independent of adults
 - Often frustrated with themselves when they do not measure up to their own expectations
 - Want to make their own decisions
 - Often mention what they would like to be when they grow up
 - Want tasks to perform; want to be useful

- **Relationships with Others:**
 - May be aware of the opposite gender but unsure of relationship; teasing often denotes attraction to the opposite sex
 - Have increased concern about right/wrong (example: lying, cheating)
 - Developing more responsibility for forming and keeping friendships
 - Interested and informed about people around the world
 - Values of peer group generally accepted over those of adults

- **Interest in Learning:**
 - Developing longer attention span
 - Interested in current events
 - Learning to think abstractly
 - Beginning to challenge adult thinking
 - Often try to be perfectionists which can result in frustration

Characteristics of Children Aged 13 -1 5 Years:

- **Physical Characteristics:**
 - Have spurts of boundless energy and periods of dreamy lethargy
 - Vary greatly in strength, dexterity and size
 - Rapidly changing bodies and minds
 - Enjoy exploring and experiencing new things

- **Self-image:**
 - Extraordinarily self-conscious about themselves and the attitudes of others towards them
 - Overwhelming desire to do something well and to receive admiration for the achievement
 - Need to hear that what they do is valued by others whom they respect

- **Relationships with Others:**
 - Parents and families remain primarily important in setting values and giving affection
 - Peers offer needed support, companionship and criticism
 - Eager to understand the possibilities of adulthood (need relationships with adults who are willing to share their experiences, views and feelings)
 - Want to know and understand rules (explicit boundaries help define the areas in which they may legitimately seek freedom to explore)
 - Increasingly able to participate with adults in framing their own rules and limits

- **Interest in Learning:**
 - Enjoy participation in activities that shape their lives and allow them to use their new talents
 - Want to be included in the planning of events
 - Have short attention span; prefer choice of varied tasks that enlist diverse interests and abilities

Effective Ways to Work with Students:

1. Be a good listener. Let the students know s/he matters. If a student thinks you are not interested in being with him/her, you will have lost a lot of ground.
2. Encourage students to do their own thinking. Be patient, i.e., give them plenty of time to answer. Silence can mean they are thinking about what they want to say or write. Be sensitive; do not leave your students hanging if s/he does not know the answer.
3. If you do not know an answer or are unsure of what to do, admit it to the student(s) and work it out together. Feel free to ask the teacher for help when you need it.
4. Comment or apologize when you make a mistake. It is important that children hear apologies the way adults do, and to know that no one is perfect.
5. Use tact and positive comments. Encourage students. Seek something worthy of a compliment, especially when students are having difficulties.
6. Accept each student as s/he is. Correct a student's behavior, not the student him/herself.
7. Respect a student's privacy. If a student or a teacher reveals personal information, regard it as confidential unless it is something dangerous to the student or someone else. If so, tell a teacher or the Principal before you leave that day.
8. Keep your commitment. The students will expect you and look forward to your coming to their school. Teachers come to depend on your support. If you need to be absent, please call your teacher or the school office.
9. Be gracious and positive about students' efforts.
10. Maintain a sense of humor. Enjoy yourself!

50 Ways to Volunteer

These suggestions are only a beginning.....

1. Tell stories to children
2. Conduct flash card drills
3. Listen to children read
4. Assist with field trips
5. Provide individual help
6. Make props for plays
7. Assist in learning centers
8. Set up or run bookstore
9. Discuss careers or hobbies
10. Gather resource material
11. Make copies on copy machine
12. Help children learn to type
13. Work in library
14. Set up simple science experiments
15. Reinforce learning the alphabet
16. Help children with arts and crafts
17. Practice vocabulary with non-English speaking students
18. Help children with motor skill problems
19. Tell stories with puppets and flannel board
20. Help children learn a foreign language
21. Reinforce recognition of numerals
22. Take attendance
23. Play games at recess
24. Collect lunch money
25. Assist with visual tests
26. Prepare teaching materials
27. Prepare visual materials
28. Record grades
29. Drill recognition of color words
30. Help students who play instruments
31. Grade papers
32. Make puppets
33. Prepare bulletin boards
34. Help with handwriting practice
35. Help with book fairs
36. Drill spelling words
37. Work with underachievers
38. Assist with sing-alongs
39. Make instructional games
40. Discuss care and training of pets
41. Share information about local history
42. Share ethnic backgrounds and experiences
43. Demonstrate pioneer crafts
44. Discuss farm life and farm animals
45. Read stories to a small group
46. Demonstrate gardening skills
47. Catalog articles to supplement class units
48. Assist in classroom chores; tidy the room, water plants
49. Review seat work with students
50. Help prepare assembly programs

Some Final Thoughts

Thank you for your interest in becoming a volunteer. Your experiences will add a positive dimension to your life. In addition to enriching our school programs, as a volunteer, you will automatically receive the following benefits:

- You will have a hand in shaping a bright tomorrow for children.
- You will have a greater understanding of what children are doing in school.
- You will discover and use the talents you have.
- You will develop understanding and skills that will help you in working with your own children, if you have any.
- You own children will grow in confidence, knowing that you are involved.
- You will be rewarded by the love and appreciation of the children and staff.

THANKS!!!!