



All that's missing is !

Volunteer Handbook

Richmond County Board of Education

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VOLUNTEER INFORMATION

1. Each school should have a person on staff that is designated as the “Volunteer Coordinator”
 - A. The **Volunteer Coordinator** or the “VC” will be responsible for:
 - a) Communicating with potential volunteers a training date, time and place
 - b) Conducting the volunteer training/workshop & distributing volunteer handbooks
 - c) Sending the completed GCIC forms and Mandated Reporter Certificate.
 - d) **State and National background checks** will be done on each applicant and failure to disclose previous charges, etc. will automatically exclude this person from volunteering within the Richmond County School System (RCSS).
 - e) Fingerprints will be done on Level 3 Volunteers, the fee is \$37 payable to RCSS by cashier’s check or Money order. (Please see “VC” for Level 3 information)
2. Those volunteer applicants that have charges on their GCIC will be sent to Lt. Henry Jackson, for clearance determination.

Any and all persons interested in becoming a community coach must apply through Mr. George Bailey, Athletic Director.

1. Those interested in coaching in high school in addition to the paperwork from Mr. Bailey will have to also go through the GHSA Community Coach Program.
2. State and National background checks will be done on each applicant and failure to disclose previous charges, etc. will automatically exclude this person from volunteering within the RCSS.
3. Applicants with past criminal offenses will be evaluated by Mr. Priester, Mr. Bailey, and Lt. Henry Jackson. A rubric will be used to determine if the applicant is eligible to be a community coach.
4. The Volunteer Coordinator must contact the applicant after the background checks have been completed to inform the applicant of his/her cleared or not cleared status.

All volunteers are required to show their volunteer card to Principal or staff

√**What is a Volunteer?** - One who comes into the school setting and assists the teachers, staff and faculty. They may or may not be asked to interact with students one-on-one.

√**What is a tutor?** - One who helps a student become proficient in one or more school subjects, one-on-one or in a group setting.

√**Volunteers can serve in many different ways**

- Classroom
- Music
- P.E.
- Computer Lab
- Lunchroom
- Fundraisers and many others.

So Many Ways To Volunteer



QUICK GUIDE TO QUESTIONS FOR NEW VOLUNTEERS

"Dare to Learn First"

HOW TO FIND OUT ABOUT RULES AND REGULATIONS

1. Check with the principal to see whether there is a list of rules and regulations.
2. Ask a teacher or volunteer coordinator.

HOW TO HANDLE ACCIDENTS AND EMERGENCIES

1. Locate the nurse's room and note her hours
2. Ask what is expected of you in such circumstances
3. Learn the emergency procedures and learn what to do and where go. (Emergency procedures are usually posted in the classroom.)

HOW TO GET ANY MATERIALS YOU MIGHT NEED

1. Inquire as to which materials can be used and which must be checked out or ordered.
2. Clear your needs with your teacher
3. Find out where equipment is kept and how it is checked out.
4. Learn to check out books from the school library

HOW TO ESTABLISH THE BEST RELATIONSHIP WITH THE TEACHER

1. Observe the teacher's way of doing things - follow her methods closely during the early part of your volunteer experience.
2. Respect the teacher - ask for advice, accept suggestions
3. Clear new ideas ahead of time - think ideas through, then present them to the teacher for consideration.

HOW TO ACHIEVE A GOOD WORKING RELATIONSHIP WITH STUDENTS

1. Learn student's names - use seating chart and use the student's name.
2. Be friendly, but firm
3. Plan activities that produce feelings of success
4. Treat each child as an individual

HOW TO OBTAIN SATISFACTION FROM WHAT YOU ARE DOING

1. Be dependable and be consistent
2. Be prepared for each day
3. Believe in what you are doing for children

HOW TO FIND OUT WHAT IS EXPECTED AND WHAT PRIVILEGES ARE EXTENDED TO VOLUNTEERS

1. Ask for a volunteer handbook
2. Ask the principal (or volunteer coordinator) when in doubt about anything that affects you
3. Inquire as to policy for use of teacher's room, as well as faculty restroom
4. If you drink coffee, contribute to the coffee fund

The Role of a Volunteer



Volunteers in the classroom can assist teachers in a variety of ways, thereby freeing the teacher to focus more time on the teaching/learning process. An organized program of volunteer assistance can provide a unique contribution to the educational program by helping assume some of the many roles of the teacher.

Before You Begin

- ✓ Volunteers should arrange to meet with the teacher before beginning as a classroom volunteer. The first visit or two should be spent observing the classroom, getting to know the students and the style and routines of the teacher. This will help the children to become familiar with you before you begin.
- ✓ The teacher is in charge of all phases of classroom activity and the volunteers will take directions from the teacher. Your activities should support the efforts of staff members but not replace them or exceed their authority.
- ✓ It is not in the best interest of the child to have a parent, grandparent, guardian, etc. volunteer in their child's classroom; therefore, volunteers will be utilized in classrooms other than those in which their children are enrolled.
- ✓ Try to match your interest, abilities and time availability with the school needs. Contact the building principal for specific details regarding school need, requirements and scheduling options.
- ✓ Maintain good communication especially in the event of an absence or schedule change. If you cannot fulfill your commitment for any period of time, please contact the school or classroom teacher as soon as possible so other arrangements can be made.
- ✓ Follow school and system procedures regarding volunteers signing in and out, wearing badges, using school materials and maintaining health/security standards. Know emergency procedures for fire, illness, etc.
- ✓ Seek advice from those directly in charge, including teachers, secretaries, teaching assistants or other school personnel who are trained and responsible for the tasks. Maintain a spirit of partnership and cooperation with school staff.

All volunteers are to show their volunteer card to the Principal or School Staff

General Tips for the School Volunteer

Volunteering in a school is an experience and a privilege for both the student and the volunteer. It is designed to promote and maintain a supportive relationship for students, teachers and school staff.

REMEMBER:

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| BE HONEST | in our approach and attitude. It aids in developing trust. |
| BE PATIENT | when working with students. If they are having difficulty with a subject, they do not need additional pressure. |
| BE FLEXIBLE | in responding to the needs of students. Everyone has on/off days and this needs to be considered when working with students. |
| BE CONSISTENT | in dealings with students. |
| BE FRIENDLY | with a smile and a thank you, you can accomplish miracles. |
| BE RESPECTFUL | treat individuals in the same manner you wish to be treated. |
| BE DEPENDABLE | the student and teacher will look forward to your visit and will be disappointed if you are not there as scheduled. |

Hints for Working with Students

- ✓ Be yourself. Warmth and friendliness foster positive volunteer-student relationships. Maintaining a sense of humor and comfort will help ensure your success with young people.
- ✓ Always be consistent with specific rules and practices maintained by your staff partner. Also, be familiar with school and classroom rules. Read parent or teacher handbook, if necessary.
- ✓ Maintain your position of responsibility and authority at all times. Do not let friendships or neighborly relations interfere with your role as school volunteer.
- ✓ Learn student and teacher names quickly.
- ✓ Be aware of and sensitive to the unique gifts and needs of individual students. This is critical at all age levels.
- ✓ Encourage and praise students when appropriate. Praise should be genuine.



Important Information

Confidentiality

All school volunteers are expected to maintain confidentiality of information while working in the school. All things that are seen and heard at school about children and their families should be considered privileged information. Trust must be established and maintained in order for the volunteer program to be successful. Volunteers can strengthen the bond between themselves and the school by following these guidelines:

- ✓ Treat all student information as personal and confidential regardless of source.
- ✓ Communicate relevant information about students to the respective classroom teacher or building principal.
- ✓ Seek clarification of unusual situations that occur in the school from the person(s) involved and avoid discussing such matters with non-school personnel.
- ✓ Retain a sense of perspective regarding comments heard and actions observed.
- ✓ Understand that not all information can and will be shared with volunteers, due to legal considerations.
- ✓ Deal impartially with students regardless of background, intellect, physical or emotional maturity.
- ✓ Do not discuss student progress or behavior with the parent. All relevant information should be referred to the teacher or principal. Direct inquiries about students to the professional staff.
- ✓ Speak constructively of all school staff; however, report difficulties involving the welfare of students or school to the principal.
- ✓ Do not discuss confidential information with anyone. This information includes, but is not limited to:
 - Scholastic and health records
 - Test scores and grades
 - Discipline and classroom behavior
 - Character traits of children
- ✓ **All volunteers are to be at least 18 years of age and required to sign a statement of confidentiality.**



Discipline

Discipline of students is solely the responsibility of the teacher in charge.

Volunteers should in no way discipline students. Should students misbehave in your presence, you should report this immediately to the teacher in charge. The teacher will then determine the necessary course of action.

Also note that we expect students to treat volunteers with the same level of respect given to other school personnel. If you feel that students are not being respectful towards you, do not hesitate to discuss the matter with the teacher or principal.

Discipline Suggestions

1. A teacher/aide/volunteer must be mature, self-controlled - an adult example of the conduct you are trying to teach.
2. Be yourself. There is no ideal personality for all adults who work with children to emulate; you have to be your own best self.
3. Act your age. Children need adults - not a playmate. Be friendly always; but, there is a basic difference between friendliness and familiarity. You can think as a pupil and understand pupils without becoming one of them.
4. Insist at all times on respect for grown-ups, for authority in general.
5. Be positive - give praise, encouragement – don't forget to say please and thank-you.
6. Be firm but kind. Children need kindness, but they also need a firm guiding hand.
7. Be consistent. Do not play favorites, but you should reward good behavior.
8. Be fair. Since the children in a class will be different, your treatment of each will be different.
9. Don't be thin-skinned. Don't take undisciplined, aggressive student behavior personally. Reject the behavior of the child, never the child himself.
10. Don't argue. You may discuss and explain, but you should never argue.
11. **HAVE A GOOD SENSE OF HUMOR!!!!!!!!!!**

Ways to Assist the Teacher

- ✓ Assist with teacher-planned activities
- ✓ Read teacher-prepared instructions to pupils
- ✓ Read stories
- ✓ Check to see if seatwork is completed
- ✓ Prepare students for daily program changes
- ✓ Assist in the lunchroom
- ✓ Review previously taught material
- ✓ Help children to understand and follow directions
- ✓ Listen to children read
- ✓ Share a hobby, talent or experience
- ✓ Help with field trips (**Must be Level 3**)
- ✓ Assist with school parties and special days
- ✓ Help with assemblies
- ✓ Keep classroom materials in order
- ✓ Collect papers for evaluation by the teacher
- ✓ Assist with displays throughout the school

The Do's and Don'ts of Volunteering

To assist the school with additional services, all are requested to keep in mind the following:

- DO** take a personal interest in helping and working with teachers, staff and students.
- DO** be willing to learn more about fostering the process of growth and development in children.
- DO** participate in training programs offered to volunteers.
- DO** be willing and able to follow directions from teachers and staff.
- DO** be adaptable and flexible when working with children.
- DO** have a cooperative attitude in working with school personnel.
- DO** be imaginative, creative and optimistic.
- DO** be consistent and dependable.
- DO** keep all student information strictly confidential.
- DO** have a sense of humor as well as patience and understanding.
- DO** accept each child for who they are.
- DO** let the teacher be responsible for discipline.
- DO** assist in the case of an emergency. Seek help immediately.

- DON'T** forget to sign in and out of the office every time you're in the building.
- DON'T** scold when pointing out errors. Use a positive approach.
- DON'T** become annoyed when students don't understand something the first time.
- DON'T** be afraid to laugh at yourself.
- DON'T** lose your temper.
- DON'T** leave students alone.
- DON'T** do student's work for them.
- DON'T** discuss student's work with anyone but the teacher.
- DON'T** ask teachers or others for personal information about students.
- DON'T** threaten or punish students.
- DON'T** intervene or contradict a teacher once a problem has been handled.
- DON'T** forget to contact the teacher or school if you can't fulfill your commitment.

“SAMPLE”

VOLUNTEER EVALUATION FORM

Volunteer's Name: _____

Student's Name: _____

I saw my student on _____ (date) in the school during that time, the student and I:

- worked on established goals
- discussed areas of need or concern
- worked together on non-academic activities
- other (please list)
 1. _____
 2. _____
 3. _____

I felt my meeting with my student was productive because:

Special observations or concerns:

Next time we need to work on:

Comments:



RCBOE Community Service Tracking Form

Date	Activity	Place of Service	Hours	Signature

“Volunteers are not paid not because they are worthless, but because they are priceless.” unknown

What's the Point?

“A hundred years from now it will not matter what my bank account was, the sort of house I lived in, or the kind of car I drove-but the world may be different because I was important in the life of a child.”

-Forest Witcraft