



# *VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK*

Lincoln County School District would like to take this opportunity to say “Thank You.” What you do as a volunteer is very important and a precious gift.

However, the school board policy requires volunteers/chaperones to complete a criminal history verification and required on-line trainings. Once the background check and required trainings are completed and verified you may begin to volunteer. Thank you for your patience with this process. The volunteer packet (criminal history and required trainings) must be completed every two years.

### **THREE MOST IMPORTANT VOLUNTEER QUALITIES**

#### **1. PUNCTUALITY**

Always arrive on time for any volunteer activity. The school day and class periods are set for specific times and if you are late the activity may be over when you arrive.

#### **2. DEPENDABILITY**

Teachers and staff members rely on the valuable services performed by volunteers. If you are unable to volunteer on your scheduled day it is essential that you contact the school office as soon as possible so other arrangements can be made.

#### **3. CONFIDENTIALITY**

It is extremely important that confidentiality be upheld at all times. As a matter of professional ethics, volunteers do not discuss teacher, student, or school affairs with other people. If a situation or problem arises that you feel uncomfortable about, please discuss it with a teacher or the principal.

### **OPEN COMMUNICATION**

If at any time you would like to comment on a school program, a method of teaching, or anything that is going on in our schools, please feel free to do so. The first, and most obvious, person to share a comment or suggestion with is the staff member who would most benefit from the suggestion – most likely the person with whom you are volunteering. The most appropriate time to conference with a staff member would be before or after school, so as not to disturb classroom time. If you have a comment or concern about a student, please discuss it with the student’s teacher in private. If you feel your concern needs to be discussed further please contact the building principal.

### **FACILITIES**

- Registered volunteers are welcome in any part of the school. Feel free to use staff restrooms and break areas. Please wear your name tag for identification.
- Always be sure to sign in at the school office when volunteering.

## **GUIDELINES FOR A TEAMWORK APPROACH TO A SCHOOL VOLUNTEER PROGRAM**

### School volunteers should:

- Express a genuine interest in helping students.
- Assist only those teachers who request their help and work only with pupils referred to them by the teachers.
- Commit themselves to a regular schedule or service; be prompt and dependable; and notify the school when unable to be present.
- Sign in at front office and wear name tag whenever volunteering.
- Serve under the supervision and direction of the teacher; NEVER substitute for the teacher.
- Not be responsible for diagnosis, prescription or evaluation of students.
- Maintain a professional attitude; respect the confidentiality of all information and activities related to students and others in the school.
- Be willing and able to comply with school rules.
- Understand and use the appropriate channels of communication for comments and suggestions.
- Become an integral part of the school organization and work within the school program.

### Teachers should:

- Be willing to consider utilizing the services of trained school volunteers to reinforce and enrich classroom instruction as needed.
- Follow designated procedures for requesting school volunteer services.
- Plan appropriate duties for school volunteers and give them clear instructions and support.
- Provide information about students and appropriate materials to enable school volunteers to help students effectively.
- Keep school volunteers informed about any changes in classroom schedule which may affect the volunteers' schedules.
- Be responsible for the daily educational program – instructing, diagnosing, prescribing and evaluating students and their work.
- Set aside time on a regular basis to observe school volunteers at work and to have feedback conferences with them.
- Recognize the school volunteers as part of the school team and express appreciation for their contributions.

## **STUDENT BEHAVIOR**

Volunteers are not expected to handle discipline problems. Call on staff members for assistance.

### **Abuse, Assault, or Bullying, Etc.**

School volunteers who work directly with students can follow some easy steps to prevent false accusations of abuse or assault. See “Maintaining Appropriate Boundaries” brochure available on the district website.

- Follow a “hands-off” policy.
- Avoid being alone with students in unsupervised locations.
- Do not write personal notes to students.
- Avoid conversations (or jokes) that involve private or sexual matters.
- If you witness or suspect abuse or bullying contact a teacher or the building principal.

### **VOLUNTEER PROTECTION AGAINST BLOODBORNE PATHOGENS\***

Staff members are trained and have the necessary equipment at their disposal for handling emergency situations. As a volunteer, we ask that you do not assist or provide first aid, or handle any body fluid spills. If you were to be accidentally exposed to another individual’s body fluid, wash the affected skin thoroughly with soap and water, or flush mucous membranes with water for 15 minutes. Promptly report the incident to the school secretary. You may want to contact your own physician for further instruction.

\*Pathogens are disease causing micro-organisms.

## **VOLUNTEERS HAVE RIGHTS ALSO**

Every volunteer has:

### **The right to be treated as a co-worker**

...not just free help

### **The right to a suitable assignment**

...with consideration for personal preference, temperament, life experience, education, and employment background.

### **The right to know as much about the school as possible**

...its policies  
...its people  
...its programs

### **The right to sound guidance and direction**

...as a follow-up to initial training  
...with information about new developments  
...with training for greater responsibility

### **The right to a place of work**

...an orderly, designated place  
...a place conducive to work

### **The right to be heard**

...to feel free to make suggestions  
...to have respect shown for an honest opinion

### **The right to a variety of experience**

...through on-the-job and skill specific training  
...through transfer from one activity to another

### **The right to recognition**

...and awards  
...through day-by-day expressions of appreciation

## **DO'S FOR VOLUNTEERS**

1. Stay within your own time commitment. Saying “yes” every time staff makes a request will cause you to “burnout”. Be honest and open with the school secretary and other staff regarding your goals, skills and intent so that a good placement is possible and you enjoy your assignment.
2. Understand the requirements of time and duties of your assignments before accepting them and once accepting them, fulfill the commitment to the best of your ability. Be reliable and always on time. Please call ahead if unable to be present when scheduled. The students learn to expect you and the staff depends on you.
3. Request on-going information pertinent to your volunteer task, and constantly evaluate your performance. If you think you can improve, ask the teacher and/or school secretary to provide you with more information or training. If you are willing to take on more responsibility, let the school administrative assistant know.
4. Share your ideas with teachers/staff, but realize that even teachers’ ideas are not always implemented – don’t take it personally if your idea is not used.
5. Accept direction willingly. If you have concerns about what you are being asked to do, talk to the teacher, but schedule a time convenient for both of you.
6. When working in a classroom, try not to take too much time with the teacher – remember this is time taken away from the students. It is important you check in with the teacher, but schedule a time convenient for both of you.
7. Be conscientious and respect the student’s and school’s confidences. Feel free to discuss problems or concerns with the teacher or principal. Never publicly discuss parents, children or staff.
8. Attend workshop/training sessions if offered. Information from these sessions will be helpful to you and will give you an opportunity to share ideas with others attending the workshop.

\*\*The priceless gift of service and enthusiasm that you bring to the school lightens the load for everyone.

## **TAX DEDUCTIONS FOR VOLUNTEERS**

A number of tax deductions are available to volunteers that may be itemized on a tax return as a charitable contribution. Volunteers may deduct unreimbursed out-of-pocket expenses directly related to their volunteer service.

Examples of the types of expenditures that volunteers may deduct on their tax returns include:

- Bus and cab transportation expenses
- Parking costs and toll fees
- Telephone bills
- Materials and supplies purchased to perform volunteer duties
- Dues or fees made to a qualified organization
- Non-cash contributions of property (clothing, books, etc.)
- Automobile mileage

Volunteers may deduct mileage at the standard mileage rate determined by the IRS. Volunteers may not deduct general automobile repair and maintenance expenses. Good record-keeping for transportation-related costs is must a for volunteers who intend to claim automobile-related deductions.

Not deductible are costs for dependent care, the value of your volunteer time, and travel expenses (meals and lodging).

\*\*Contact your tax consultant to ensure the latest tax laws and how it applies to you.

**VOLUNTEER REGISTRATION FORM**  
**LINCOLN COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT**

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone (Day): \_\_\_\_\_ (Eve): \_\_\_\_\_

Emergency Contact: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Volunteer Location Preference: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Student(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Specific Day or Time Available for Volunteering: \_\_\_\_\_

Past Volunteer Experience: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Resources/Enrichment: Do you have a special skill, hobby, profession, or foreign language proficiency that you would be willing to share with our students?  
\_\_\_\_\_

Areas of Interest:

\_\_\_\_\_ Library

\_\_\_\_\_ Athletics

\_\_\_\_\_ Classroom Assistant

\_\_\_\_\_ Chaperone on Official Field Trip

\_\_\_\_\_ Clerical

\_\_\_\_\_ Booster Club

\_\_\_\_\_ Advisory Committee

\_\_\_\_\_ Correcting Papers

\_\_\_\_\_ Book Fairs

\_\_\_\_\_ Preparing Art Projects. (May be done at home)

\_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

Please return this form to the school. Thank you.