

Cassopolis Public Schools

VOLUNTEER



HANDBOOK

WELCOME

Welcome and thank you for being a part of the Cassopolis Public Schools' Volunteer Team. Your participation is a valuable asset to the success of our students' educational experience. As a volunteer you provide additional educational opportunities for students, and support to teachers and administrators.

Cassopolis Public Schools has created this handbook to guide community members in becoming a school volunteer. It is hoped this handbook will give volunteers valuable tips and guidelines.

Schools today cannot work alone to meet the increasing needs of students, grades K-12. The community must assume a shared approach to education in which parents/guardians, citizens, government, business and community groups work together to help our schools educate, nurture and inspire our students.

The presence of another caring and interested person in the classroom can make a real difference.

You are part of our Education Team. Volunteers who are committed to helping students be successful are important members of our school team. You are essential to bringing the outside world to the school. Students need contact with individuals who can share experiences and bring other perspectives into the classroom. Students need adults who can guide them through the learning process.

As a volunteer working with students, just think how exciting it will be to know that you are making a difference in a child's life by volunteering in a school. We know the experience will be an enjoyable one.

Please contact the school office where you are interested in volunteering for further information.



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I. VOLUNTEERS

- **Volunteers can be:**
 - Parents/Guardians
 - Grandparents
 - College Students
 - High School Students
 - Community Members
 - Retirees

- **Areas to Volunteer:**
 - Classroom
 - Field Trip
 - Office
 - Kitchen / Cafeteria
 - Bus Aides
 - Sporting / Extracurricular Events
 - Tutoring
 - Donations

The Do's and Don'ts of a Volunteer

What a Volunteer Does	What a Volunteer Does Not Do
Praises and encourages	Berates or belittles
Tells the child good things about him or herself	Acts in a cold or indifferent manner
Tries to understand how the child feels	Criticizes the teacher
Commits to regular attendance	Fails to call and let school know he or she is going to be absent
Builds caring and supportive rapport	Gets physical with a child
Speaks directly to teacher about any concerns regarding student performance	Violates confidentiality by passing on information to the community
Is considerate of teachers' time	Loses control and says something that is inappropriate or might be regretted
Makes a difference in a child's life	

II. REGISTRATION

Please submit the forms on pages 11 and 12 of this handbook to the school principal's office and then wait patiently while the district completes a criminal history check as part of our due diligence in ensuring the safety of all students and staff. Once completed, the school will contact you.

III. SIGN-IN

Please be sure to sign in and pick up a site badge to wear during your volunteer service at the school site. When you sign out, please return the badge. For your safety and the safety of our students, it is important that we know who is on campus at all times.

IV. CLASSROOM VOLUNTEER FIRST-DAY CHECKLIST

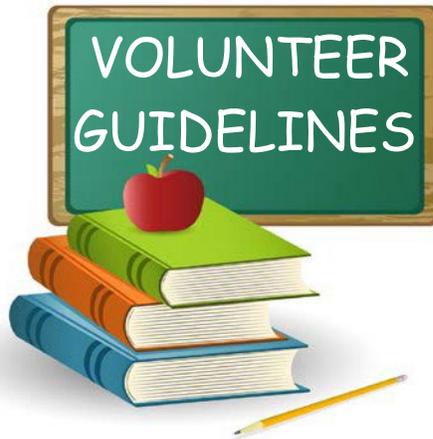
- ✓ Ask where you should store your personal items and where your workstation is located.
- ✓ Learn how the teacher will communicate with you during the volunteer assignment.
- ✓ Ask about classroom standards and your role in enforcing them.
- ✓ Ask for ways on developing rapport with the students.
- ✓ Try to learn names of students.
- ✓ Assist pupils when possible.
- ✓ Be punctual.
- ✓ Call the office if you need to be absent.
- ✓ Be patient when dealing with students.
- ✓ Student efforts should be praised.

V. GUIDELINES

a) Safe Interaction with Students:

All interaction with Cassopolis Public Schools students, staff and volunteers should be professional and focused on teaching and learning. These guidelines are provided for the protection of everyone involved and must be followed by volunteers:

- Avoid being alone with students. If alone with a student, be visible and in an open location.
- Treat all students in the same manner.
- Maintain appropriate boundaries between volunteer and student.
- If you sense that a student may be developing a personal interest in you, see the teacher immediately.
- Giving gifts to student(s) is prohibited.
- No physical contact with students unless for Health or Safety reasons.



Do not:

- Take students on private outings
- Initiate social activities with students
- Transport students alone
- Make any comments that are based on gender or could be construed as sexist
- Make any comments and/or innuendo that are sexual in nature or could be construed as sexual
- Make jokes that belittle or diminish another person
- Share personal religious or political beliefs
- Give students compliments that focus on physical attributes
- Initiate conversations or correspondence of a private and personal nature with students
- Provide your contact information to any student or ask for the phone number of any student

b) Field Trips and Off-Campus Activities

Volunteers must be at least 18 years old and out of high school to serve as a chaperone for off-campus field trips and activities. Volunteers who wish to drive students must be 21 years of age, have a valid driver's license, and a currently registered vehicle and insurance.

c) Extracurricular and Enrichment Activities

Schools often provide before and after-school programs. All extracurricular and enrichment activities must be organized under the authority of Cassopolis Public Schools or a principal approved club or organization and comply with all applicable rules and regulations.

VI. SUPERVISION

School volunteers always work under the direct supervision of school or district professional staff. Volunteers are never to be alone with a student.

VII. DISCIPLINE

Students rarely misbehave while working with volunteers. However, our schools have detailed plans to address behavior concerns. The responsibility for discipline rests with the professional staff. Volunteers may not discipline students. Please make the teacher/staff aware of any discipline issues that arise while you are working with a student or on campus.

VIII. REPORTING OF ABUSE

If a child confides in you information of a personal nature that may be construed as possible abuse, you are obligated to report this information to the staff member that you are volunteering with and the school principal. They are prepared to follow up with the appropriate referral or reporting agency.

IX. DEPENDABILITY

Volunteers should always be prompt and reliable. If you cannot make your scheduled shift, please notify the staff as soon as possible. If you are going on vacation, advance notice is always helpful to staff. The work you do is important. Staff and students look forward to and depend on your volunteer assistance.

X. PERSONAL DOCTRINES

The school respects and values each family's beliefs and religious doctrines. Volunteers may not advocate or endorse any personal or religious beliefs to a student. It is the responsibility of every volunteer, staff member and administrator to report to the District within 24 hours any misconduct on their part that would jeopardize their volunteer status.

XI. CULTURAL DIVERSITY

It is important that we respect the cultural differences and ethnic diversity among students, staff, and families as a valuable component of every student's educational experiences.

XII. DRESS AND BEHAVIOR

Please dress appropriately for the volunteer assignment you are performing. Casual clothing is fine, but we ask that your attire be conservative. Your attire should not reflect clothing suited for the weekend or the beach. Keep in mind that you are in a position to set an example for students. Your speech and behavior should serve as a good role model for students to follow.

XIII. RESTROOMS

Staff restrooms are available for volunteers. Do not use student restrooms or accompany students into the student restrooms.

XIV. DISPLAYS OF ENCOURAGEMENT

It is best to reserve any show of support and encouragement to verbal phrases, handshakes and pats on the back. See “School Volunteer Tips” on page 10 for ideas on encouraging students.

XV. EMERGENCIES

Check with your supervising teacher or office staff for emergency plan procedures at the school site that you are currently volunteering. Please report any accidents or unusual incidents to the teacher immediately.

XVI. CONTACTING STUDENTS

In your role as a school volunteer, you will meet many wonderful students. Your work with students will be fun and rewarding. However, volunteers may not telephone students or visit them off campus or at their homes. In addition, students may not be invited to a volunteer’s home. Your volunteer assignment whether at school or off campus is under District supervision and should be kept on a professional level.

XVII. GIFT GIVING

Please limit gift giving to small rewards approved by the teacher for a job well done or special day. A new pencil, a sticker, or other small token works well. It is always best to check with the teacher first.

XVIII. DISMISSALS

Volunteers may never dismiss a student from school. Children who must leave school early for any reason must receive permission from the school office and sign out before leaving.

XIX. MEDICATIONS

Medical treatment for any student is the responsibility of the school nurse or other designated personnel. Volunteers may not administer medication to a child. If a student becomes ill, follow the school’s procedures in regards to notifying the teacher and taking the child to the nurse.

XX. INFECTION CONTROL

Please remember that hand washing is the most important way to prevent the spread of infection. During the course of your volunteer assignment, do not expose yourself to blood or other human body fluids. If a student has a medical emergency, call the teacher. In the case of a bloody nose, direct the student to hold and cover his own nose with a tissue. Staff have been trained to deal safely with these situations.

XXI. PHOTOGRAPHS

Before taking a student(s) photograph, ask the teacher for permission. The School District is accountable to assure the proper parental permission is on file.

XXII. LIABILITY

For insurance reasons, children who are not enrolled in school may not accompany volunteers to school sponsored events, either on or off campus.

XXIII. CODE OF ETHICS FOR VOLUNTEERS

1. Classroom and student work is always confidential. Please don't discuss student problems with anyone except the teacher.
2. Try not to compare children within the classroom.
3. Since there are as many different methods as there are teachers, please do not compare different methods of teaching. There is no one best way to do anything.
4. Volunteers should refrain from using any tobacco (including vaping), alcohol, or other drugs during their time volunteering both on and off school grounds.
5. Remember that you are a representative of the school. Work positively for the good of the school. Constructive criticism should be directed only to the supervising teacher or school administrator.

XXIV. SCHOOL VOLUNTEER TIPS

REMEMBER TO BE:

- ❖ HONEST in your approach and attitude which will aid in developing trust
- ❖ PATIENT when working with students because when they are having difficulty with a subject, they do not need additional pressure
- ❖ FLEXIBLE in responding to the needs of students
- ❖ FRIENDLY because with a smile and a thank you, you can accomplish miracles
- ❖ RESPECTFUL by treating individuals in the same manner you wish to be treated
- ❖ CONFIDENTIAL because it is very important that what is observed in the classroom remains confidential, and student performance or behavior is not to be discussed with other parents



Criminal History Check Release Form

Thank you for chaperoning/volunteering your time to our district. Your efforts are certainly appreciated by the staff and students of Cassopolis Public Schools. With the passage of the School Safety Legislation Act, effective 1/1/2006 which requires any person who volunteers to work with the District to be screened through the Internet Criminal History Access Tool criminal history records check prior to being allowed to participate in any activity or program, it is imperative that you read and sign the following. **Please sign and return this form to the appropriate building administrator and await approval prior to your volunteer work.**

For the protection of the children in the school, the District is required by law to inquire of its staff members whether or not they have ever been convicted of a crime related to children. We would appreciate your cooperation by indicating that you have never been convicted of any of the following offenses including, but not limited to: *aggravated murder, murder, voluntary manslaughter, involuntary manslaughter, felonious assault, aggravated assault, aggravated menacing, abuse or neglect of a child, sexual imposition, importuning, voyeurism, public indecency, felonious sexual penetration, compelling prostitution, promoting prostitution, procuring prostitution, disseminating matter harmful to juveniles, pandering obscenity, pandering obscenity involving a minor, pandering sexually-oriented matter involving a minor, illegal use of a minor in nudity-oriented material or performance, endangering children, contributing to the delinquency of children, carrying concealed weapons, improperly discharging a firearm at or into a school or house, corrupting another with drugs, placing harmful objects in or adulterating food or confection.*

All fields must be completed

I have been convicted of a crime related to children: **NO** _____ **YES** _____

If yes, list any convictions: _____

I agree to allow Cassopolis Public Schools to perform a criminal history records check.

Name (Print) First _____ **Middle** _____ **Last** _____ **Date of Birth:** ____/____/____

Signature _____ **Date** _____

I have offered my services as a chaperone/volunteer to help the district in the following areas (be specific): _____

Approved by Principal _____ **Date** _____

**It shall be the discretion of the building Principal or other designated Administrator to limit the type of volunteering based on information listed on a background check in conjunction with Local and State Laws.*

Student Name: _____ Grade: _____

Teacher Name: _____ School Year: _____

Student Name: _____ Grade: _____

Teacher Name: _____ School Year: _____

VOLUNTEER AGREEMENT

I,

(Name of the Volunteer)

acknowledge that I have read the Cassopolis Public Schools Volunteer Handbook and that I agree to abide by all aspects of the handbook. This includes agreeing that I will always act to preserve the confidentiality of all personal information of which I become aware during the course of fulfilling my duties as a volunteer with the Cassopolis Public Schools. I further agree that, in particular, I will preserve the confidentiality of any personal information which I receive with respect to students, parents, staff and administration. I will hold all such information in the strictest of confidence and I shall not use, copy or disclose such information to any other individual within or outside of the district, in whole or in part, in any manner or form, unless I have obtained the permission of the Principal.

Executed and witnessed this _____ day of _____ 20 _____

(Print Name of Volunteer)

(Signature of Volunteer)

(Signature of Principal)