

Volunteer Guidelines and Procedures

Buffalo - Hanover - Montrose Schools



Buffalo-Hanover-Montrose Schools
Making a Difference!

Parkside Elementary
207 3rd St NE, Buffalo, MN 55313
763-682-8500

Volunteers Help Parkside Elementary Grow!

Welcome to Parkside Elementary! If you are new to Parkside, we invite you to become a **Parkside Elementary Volunteer**. If you are a returning volunteer, we would like to thank you for your past commitment, and we look forward to working with you again this year. Volunteering is also an excellent way to meet other parents as well as a good way to be a part of your child's education.

Please take a look at this brochure and see how you can become an effective volunteer in your school. If you would like more information on the volunteer opportunities available or to speak with the volunteer coordinator in your school, you may contact the Parkside Elementary office at 763-682-8500. *THANKS FOR YOUR GIFT OF TIME!*

The Volunteer Program

It is the intent of Buffalo-Hanover-Montrose Schools to utilize volunteers to enhance our educational programs.

As a volunteer, you are assisting the staff in their day-to-day endeavor to provide the best possible educational experiences for each child in the school. So that you can be more effective, you may want to better understand your role and how your volunteer tasks work under the direction and guidance of school personnel. They will not replace salaried staff, nor will their presence mean that fewer staff members will be needed.

A volunteer is many things: an extra pair of hands, an extra measure of personal warmth, a valuable special resource for classroom enrichment, a bridge between the instructional program and the community. We cannot buy what volunteers give our schools!

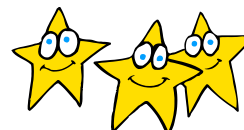
Why Volunteer?

There are as many different reasons for volunteering as there are volunteers. Understanding your goals for volunteering will help you use your talents most effectively. Some of these reasons are:

- To *experience* the satisfaction of helping someone
- To *have* an opportunity for personal growth
- To *develop* new skills
- To *document* experience for future jobs or academic references
- To *meet* new people and make new friends
- To *learn* about your community
- To *explore* career options

- To *use* time in a meaningful way
- To *remain* active and productive in the community after retirement
- To *pursue* a personal interest or hobby
- To *create* a closer tie with your child's classroom

Working With Students



Effective Ways to Work with Children

1. Be warm and friendly -- learn the children's names and show interest in what they are doing and telling -- you are very important as a listener.
2. When working with children, encourage them to do their own thinking -- give them plenty of time to answer; silence often means they are thinking and organizing what they want to say or write.
3. If you don't know an answer or are unsure of what to do, admit it to the children and work it out together -- feel free to ask the teacher of the children for help when you need it.
4. Use tact and positive comments -- encourage children -- look for something worthy of a compliment, especially when children are having difficulties.
5. Accept each child as he/she is -- you do not need to feel responsible for judging a child's abilities, progress or behavior.
6. Respect a child's privacy -- if a child or teacher reveals personal information, regard it as a confidence.
7. Maintain a sense of humor.
8. Be consistent with the teacher's rules for classroom behavior, schedule and atmosphere.
9. Wear comfortable clothes and don't hesitate to get down to a child's level.
10. Keep your commitment; the children will expect you and look forward to you coming. If you know you will be gone, tell them in advance. Keep all promises and make none that you cannot keep -- children never forget.

Staff Responsibilities

Volunteers are an important part of the educational team. The suggestions and opinions of volunteers are always welcome. It is the professional staff, however, that is held responsible by the law for the decisions that are made regarding the instruction of students and school management. For this reason, volunteers always work under the supervision of the professional staff.

Is there anything volunteers shouldn't do?

YES! The professional staff at your school is responsible for everything that goes on in your building, including student instruction, safety and discipline. Volunteers supplement and support the program, but may not:

- Discipline students
- Have access to materials in students' permanent record files
- Diagnose student needs
- Evaluate achievement
- Counsel students
- Discuss student progress with parents
- A volunteer is never considered a substitute for a member of the school staff

Sign-In Procedure

Volunteers are asked to sign in and out in the front office each time they work at the school.

For security reasons, and in case of an emergency, it is important for staff to know who is in the school and why.

In addition, a record of each volunteer's hours enables the school to evaluate its volunteer program and recognize volunteers for their contribution of time. The hours spent volunteering is an example of the commitment to quality education in our school district.

DON'T FORGET!! Sign-in and out each time you volunteer. We know it takes a few extra minutes to follow this procedure, but it is very important!

If you must cancel:

If illness or any emergency arises, please call the office of the school where you volunteer or your school coordinator as soon as possible. Ask the secretary to inform the teacher you will not be there or leave it on the teacher's voice mail. The plans of at least one teacher and learning of several children may be interrupted if you are not where you're expected at the scheduled time.

Volunteer Name Badges

By wearing a name badge designated for volunteers, you will be immediately recognized as a person whose specific purpose is helping staff and students. Your name badge will enable staff to recognize you as a registered volunteer and an important part of the school's educational team.

Tips For Volunteers

Assignment:

If the assignment does not prove to be what you expected or you feel you cannot handle it, please contact your volunteer coordinator or teacher who assigned you.

Confidentiality:

Respect the confidential nature of anything you see or hear. Share any concerns you may have only with those in authority at the school. If parents and friends ask about your work, tell them you enjoy working with the children and discuss the activities you do rather than specific information about the child, the teacher or the school.

Your comments:

There is always room for improvement. If you have a creative solution or constructive criticism...tell us! We welcome your comments and encourage your ideas.

Enjoy yourself:

Your enthusiasm will be conveyed to the students who are eager to learn about new topics and ideas.

Don't Forget...

1. Sign-in at the school office each time you volunteer.
2. Wear your name tag.
3. Document your hours, document your mileage for possible tax deductions.
4. Ask for and take advantage of training sessions.
5. If you have constructive criticism...tell us! We welcome your comments.
6. If you are unhappy with the assignments or are having problems concerning them...tell us!



Tax Deductions

Some of your out-of-pocket expenses are deductible from your income tax. Generally, you can deduct your mileage and auto expenses, parking fees, and direct gifts of money. Unfortunately, you cannot deduct the value of your time or your child care costs.

For deduction purposes, it is important to keep accurate records. For more information, ask for publication #526 from the Internal Revenue Service.