

Buffalo ISD

Volunteer Handbook

2015-2016



“To the world you may be one person,
but to one person you may be the world.”

-Anonymous

Dear Buffalo ISD Volunteer:

Welcome to the Buffalo Independent School District! We applaud your decision to serve our students and staff as a school volunteer. Our volunteers are very important people to us. As a volunteer, you are helping our district to build strong partnerships with our parents, community members, businesses, and patrons.

One of the great gifts you can give is your time. Your time and your caring are a powerful combination that impacts our school district in significant ways. Please know that we will do our very best to make your experiences in our schools both enjoyable and rewarding.

It is our hope that through your examples of service and commitment, our students will be inspired to follow your lead as they progress through the formidable years of their young lives. Volunteers play an integral role in the development of the whole child in our community.

On behalf of our Board of Trustees, thank you once again for choosing to volunteer your time and talents in our schools. We wish you all the best throughout the coming school year.

Sincerely,
Lacy Freeman
Superintendent of Schools

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WHY VOLUNTEER?

Your willingness to become involved benefits many!



For Students...

- Enriches learning
- Increased achievement
- Additional individualized and personalized attention
- Increased motivation and improved self-concept
- Positive adult role models



For Schools...

- Improved student achievement, attitude and behavior
- Community support
- Parental understanding and cooperation
- Positive community attitudes



For the Community...

- Better quality education
- A more responsive school system
- Added pride and confidence in the educational system
- Well-educated students



For Volunteers...

- Sharing knowledge and talents
- Providing active support for quality education
- Becoming more involved in the school and community

WHO ARE VOLUNTEERS?

Everyone who cares about children and education is a potential volunteer. School volunteers are all ages with unique personal and professional experiences.

Our volunteers include:

- Parents
- Grandparents
- Business Partners
- Retirees
- Students

Other caring, concerned adults who want to make a difference in their community

Each volunteer has a different set of talents and skills to share. Some volunteers work directly with students, while others perform necessary support services. Many volunteers make a regular commitment to share an hour or more per week. Some volunteers are on call, while others perform one-time tasks during a semester or school year.

Volunteer opportunities are varied and endless!

BISD VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

Program Description: *Each school's volunteer program is individualized to meet the needs of the students and teachers at the school. In cooperation with the principal, the school's Volunteer Coordinator directs their volunteer program.*

For the safety of our students: All volunteer applicants will be subject to a background check.

- Volunteers can perform any job that does not require working alone with students. Please note: If volunteers plan to work alone with one or more students, they must agree to a complete criminal background check to be conducted by the Texas Department of Public Safety. Inquire with the campus Volunteer Coordinator for more details.
- Volunteers will be required to check-in with a driver's license each time they visit.
- Volunteers will be required to sign a Confidentiality Pledge each school year.
- Volunteer opportunities are available as soon as the campus is ready to receive assistance.



CODE FOR VOLUNTEERS

As a volunteer in our schools, you will be a role model for our students. State law and BISD Board Policy* set certain standards for all staff and volunteers to follow so that the safety and well-being of our students is ensured while they are attending school. Therefore, everyone is asked to observe these guidelines: *Texas Education Code 22.053, (d) and Board Policy GKG (Local)

- ⇒ Observe the no smoking policy and dress codes.
- ⇒ Keep confidential any information about students.
- ⇒ Volunteers must not give medications or medical treatment unless designated Red Cross trained clinic volunteer.
- ⇒ Volunteers must avoid proposing any personal or religious doctrines or beliefs to a student.
- ⇒ Volunteers must seek the aid of school personnel in case of serious discipline problems.
- ⇒ Volunteers must avoid lending money to students.
- ⇒ Volunteers must avoid promoting any specific business, commercial products, or brand names.
- ⇒ The volunteer/student relationship should be restricted to the school setting.
- ⇒ Unless supervised by school district personnel, a volunteer must be 18 years of age before the first day of school.



SUGGESTED VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

- Assisting in the classroom/Instructional Aide
- Reading to/from Students
- Guest Speakers (Career Day, Texas Scholars, Black History Day, etc.)
- Public Translator/Interpreter
- Library/Technology Assistance
- Mentors/Tutors
- Judges/Coaches (Science Fair, Reflection Artwork, Academic Decathlon, UIL, etc.)
- Workroom Assistant (copies, mail, die cuts, etc.)
- Field Trip Chaperone
- Library Assistant
- Book Reading/Review for Accelerating Reading Program
- Crossing Guard
- Landscape Services/Plant Materials
- Musical Instrument/Talents
- Snacks for Teachers/Students (Teacher Appreciation, Testing Days)
- Childcare provider for meetings and workshops at school
- Sewing (uniforms, costumes, curtains)
- School Supply Donations
- Art Supplies
- PTA Committee Member
- Campus Committee Member

EXPECTATIONS FROM THE VOLUNTEER PARTNERSHIP

Some expectations are similar for both teacher and volunteer. Both groups have the same goal in common: providing the best educational experiences for every child.

❖ Shared Expectations

- A genuine love of children
- Honest and open communication
- Patience
- Cooperative attitude
- Enthusiasm
- Shows respect and courtesy
- Sincere approach

❖ What volunteers expect from teacher and staff:

- Sensitivity to volunteer's time and needs
- Students who are prepared for volunteer
- Acceptance of leadership role
- Relevant information regarding students
- An open mind to volunteer's ideas
- To be kept informed of schedule changes
- Explanation of policies and procedures of the school
- Feedback on progress of students
- Clear directions and essential materials
- Appreciation of volunteer's efforts
- To be regarded in a professional manner

❖ What teachers and staff expect from a volunteer:

- A friendly, pleasant, positive attitude
- Professional attitude and behavior
- Promptness
- Recognition that the teacher is the authority
- Willingness to work with all children
- Creativity and flexibility
- Dependability
- Discretion and trustworthiness with confidential matters in classroom
- Sensitivity to needs of children
- To serve as role model
- To provide motivation for students
- To follow instructions and ask questions when necessary
- Dedication to helping students and teachers

Confidentiality and Commitment Guidelines

Please return this form to your campus Volunteer Coordinator each school year.

Thank you for working with our students and staff. You are providing a very valuable service to our school district. It is important to understand the following guidelines when working with students and school information:

Confidentiality: A feeling of mutual understanding and trust between school staff and volunteers is essential. Volunteers sometimes have access to information about students and their abilities, successes and struggles as well as information from teachers. As a volunteer, your responsibility is to maintain confidentiality at all times.

Commitment: Please make a professional commitment. Be consistent and dependable. Please notify the school office if you are unable to come at your committed time.

Sign-In and Out: Remember to bring your driver's license and sign in at the front office through the Raptor System. You must wear your identification badge at all times, and return it to the office upon departure. Your hours of service will be recorded for monthly reporting requirements.

If you have questions involving your volunteer work, please ask the teacher, the principal, or campus coordinators.

Confidentiality Pledge

I have read the guidelines above and understand their importance. All information regarding students and district staff is considered confidential, and I will maintain confidentiality.

Volunteer's Name: _____

Signature

Date

HOW TO BECOME A VOLUNTEER

STEP 1: Complete Application to Volunteer (Applications available at the campus office)

All potential volunteers must complete an *Application to Volunteer* and wait for clearance PRIOR to volunteering or chaperoning. The application needs to be completed accurately and in its entirety. The form is sent to the campus principal and the Human Resource Department so that a criminal background check can be performed to maximize the safety of our students and to meet Texas Education Code legal requirements.

STEP 2: Sign & Return Confidentiality Pledge

Volunteers must maintain strict confidentiality concerning information they learn about students or faculty. Keep information about students between yourself and the teacher. A misplaced comment can be devastating to a student, the family, and the volunteer program. If you have questions or concerns, talk with the teacher, guidance counselor, or the principal.