

# VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK

## Insurance Coverage

Volunteers are considered agents of the Board of Education of Baltimore County for the limited purpose of comprehensive liability insurance and Workman's Compensation coverage while on school property. To activate this coverage, volunteers are required to sign a time schedule sheet upon entering and leaving the school.

## Tax Deductions

A number of tax benefits are available for volunteers according to the Internal Revenue Service. Volunteers may deduct expenditures made as a part of giving services to a school. Volunteers should maintain accurate records of expenditures and receipts for purchases.

The following expenditures may be deducted:

- Mileage at the IRS cents per mile standard rate. Currently 44.5 cents.
- Bus and cab fare.
- Parking fees and tolls.

\*For more information concerning deductible expenses, please contact the local IRS office.\*

## Procedures

Sign-in / Sign-out

For the safety of our students and in the interests of our instructional programs, all visitors - whether regular volunteers or one-time guests - are required to register with the office whenever they visit the school.

- \* Check into the office
- \* Sign the volunteer log sheet.
- \* Receive your visitor identification badge.
- \* Wear your visitor identification badge at all time when you are in the building.
- \* Return your badge to the office when you leave the building.
- \* Sign-out on the volunteer log sheet.

## Work Location

Most of the time you will be working in a classroom under the direct supervision of school staff. Occasionally, a teacher may ask that you work outside the classroom. It is important that you always work in an area where you are easily seen and accessible to school staff.

Meeting with the staff member prior to beginning your volunteer work can make your experience more rewarding. Use this time to ask questions about what you will do and how the staff members wants the work done. Establish how the teacher wants you to handle any student misbehaviors you may observe. Talk about a system for regular communication. This is a wonderful opportunity to get to know the teacher and to learn about any students with whom you may be working.

## **Commitment**

The time you give to our school is deeply appreciated. We know that teachers and students come to depend on this assistance and expect the volunteer to be at school the agreed upon time. However, there may be times when you are unable to keep your commitment. When that happens, we ask that you notify the teacher or leave a message with the office so that everyone with whom you work can be informed that you are unable to be there.

## **Problem-Solving**

We want your volunteer experience to be satisfying. Sometimes, despite our mutual best efforts, things don't work out as planned. Working in a situation where you are unhappy is not beneficial for you or the students. If there are problems that arise during your volunteer experience here at school, please bring them to the staff member's attention as soon as possible. We will handle those issues promptly and courteously, with respect for the dignity of all.

## **Use of Telephones**

Our telephone lines are extremely busy and we ask that you make all personal phone calls prior to arriving and after leaving school. Should you receive an emergency phone call while you are volunteering in school, we will contact you according to the information given in the volunteer/visitor log book. Please remember that all cell phones are to be turned off before entering the school.

## **Bell schedule**

- 9:00 a.m. 1<sup>st</sup> bell rings and students may enter the building through the main lobby doors
- 9:15 a.m. 2<sup>nd</sup> bell rings and all students should be in their classrooms & announcements begin
- 3:45 p.m. Final bell rings and students are dismissed

## **Drop Off and Dismissal**

Due to increased acts of non-parental/non-custodial adults entering

schools across the country, our doors will not open until 9 a.m. for students and/or parents. If weather is inclement, students and parents will be allowed in the lobby area, but they will not have access to the rest of the building until the 9 a.m. bell. We are requesting that both students and parents enter the school via the main door and not use the doors by the custodial or speech offices. All doors will be secured at 8:30 a.m.. Students required to be here prior to the start of school (Madrigals, tutoring, etc.) should wait in the lobby to be picked up by the sponsoring teacher.

At dismissal in the afternoon, except for early dismissals, parents will not be admitted into the building until the bell rings at 3:45 p.m.. In the event of inclement weather only, parents will be admitted into the main lobby at 3:30 p.m., but they will not be able to go to their child's class until the 3:45 p.m. bell has rung.

### **Crosswalks/Parking Lots**

Please obey all signals from the crossing guards. **All children and adults must cross at the crosswalk.** Do not drop children off in the street or cross between parked cars. Do not step off the curb until the crossing guard gives a signal. The parking lot is closed to all parents and visitors from 9 - 9:30 a.m. and 3:35 - 4:10 p.m.. Please do not drive through the cones in the driveway. The cones are removed when the buses have departed. Only drivers with handicapped license plates or a special pass from the office will be allowed on our parking lot during the listed times. If you use the parking lot, use the crosswalks too. Do not walk in front or between the buses. Insure that your children cross safely near the buses. Please instruct your children to remain on school property if you are picking them up, but do not arrive on time. Ask your children to meet you along Summit Avenue at dismissal. Tell your children to return to the school office if you are late picking them up after school.

Praise and encouragement are important ingredients in helping students learn. We ask that you please refrain from hugging/touching a student to show praise. In general, less is better. The student's cultural background may also play a factor in whether it is appropriate to touch them at all. **NEVER TOUCH A STUDENT WHEN YOU ARE ANGRY.** There are many ways to show a student you care without touching. Praise and encouragement are important ingredients in helping students learn. A simple smile, a "thumbs up" or some of the phrases below can be used for complimenting specific behaviors. Keep these in mind as you work with your students.

- \* Wow!
- \* I like the way you explained that
- \* That's great!
- \* This is nicely done
- \* Show this to your parents
- \* I'm so proud of you!
- \* Good thinking
- \* Now you've got the hang of it
- \* It looks as if you put a lot of work into this
- \* Congratulations!
- \* Super!
- \* That's a good point