

Volunteer Training Handbook



Owen County Public Schools

1600 Hwy 22E

Owenton, KY 40359

502-484-4018

WELCOME!!!!

We would like to take this opportunity to say THANK YOU for your consideration in joining our team of volunteers in the Owen County School System. As a parent and/or member of our community, you are a valuable resource in the education process. Studies show that the presence of a strong volunteer program helps to promote safety and enrichment in schools. We hope that your experience, as a volunteer, will prove to be rewarding for you and our students. It is our desire that through this experience, you will find fulfillment in a fun and educational environment.

This training handbook contains information to assist you in your volunteer efforts with Owen County Schools. Anyone interested in serving as a school volunteer, attending class parties with their children, or supervising children on field trips must review the handbook and complete the required paperwork. After reviewing the entire handbook, please complete the Application, Administrative Office of the Courts (Criminal Record Check), and Confidentiality Form and return to Becky Gibson at the Lower Elementary School or mail to Owen County Lower Elementary School, 1925 Hwy. 22 E, Owenton, KY 40359 ATTN: Becky Gibson

Please remember to include the \$10.00 required for the criminal background check payable to Owen County Board of Education.

If you need additional information, please contact:

Becky Gibson

District Parent Involvement Coordinator

Owen County Lower Elementary School

1925 Hwy. 22 E

Owenton, KY 40359

Phone: 502-484-4018

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THANK YOU for investing in the lives of our students! Your commitment to our students, our schools and our community is greatly appreciated!

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INTRODUCTION

WHY DO SCHOOLS NEED VOLUNTEERS?

A school volunteer program builds positive community involvement in the school and creates better parent/school/community relationships.

School volunteer programs can:

- Strengthen school-community relations through positive participation from all segments of the community
- Tap into the human resources of the community for the enrichment of school programs and broaden children's learning experiences
- Increase children's motivation for learning.
- Provide more individualized attention for students.
- Extend the teacher's teaching time
- Bring the community and business world into the schools.
- Expand a child's world of adult friendships and provide a variety of positive role models for students.

WHAT IS A SCHOOL VOLUNTEER PROGRAM?

A school volunteer program organizes unpaid citizens to assist schools in their mission of educating children and helps schools to form partnerships with their communities. It provides outreach to the community, relevant training, appropriate placement, and ongoing recognition of the efforts of its volunteers. A school volunteer program can supplement the efforts of professional staff and provide human resources to enrich the educational experience.

WHO CAN VOLUNTEER?

School volunteers come from all walks of life, all ages, and all segments of society. Volunteers may be male or female, young, middle-aged, or older adults, single or married, parents; actively employed, unemployed or retired. They represent every economic, social, racial, religious, ethnic, and educational background in the community. Concerned, dedicated volunteers give the gift of quality time to the children of Owen County Schools.

No specific educational background is needed. Volunteers do need to be willing to work under the direction of school staff; be reliable to their commitment; maintain confidentiality about matters relating to students; and hold a professional attitude toward their volunteering experience. All volunteers should review the entire volunteer training handbook and complete the required paperwork.

Volunteers give anywhere from an hour or two a year to service to multiple hours daily, several days a week. Most volunteers try for a commitment of an hour or two a week.

"IF NOT BY ME, BY WHOM? AND IS NOT NOW, THEN WHEN?" -EMERSON

VOLUNTEER JOB DESCRIPTION

Job Title	Location	Supervisor
Classroom Assistant	Classroom	Teacher

Job Description: Assist teacher with daily tasks so that he or she can spend more one-on-one time with those students who need it – two to six hours per day and one to five days per week as agreed upon by the teacher, volunteer, building principal, and volunteer director.

Responsibilities and Tasks: Assist teacher and classroom aid in daily tasks with students during regular classes, at class functions, and at meal times.

Qualifications: Possess a positive attitude and strong, clear communication skills.

Job Requirements: Must be able to effectively communicate and work well with students, teachers, aides, and staff members. There is a two-week trial period incorporated into this position.

Training Requirements: Volunteer orientation, confidentiality agreement, and records check will be required.

OWEN COUNTY VOLUNTEER PROGRAM POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

- 1. Attendance:** It is very important that you the volunteer make every effort to plan on working the day(s) you sign up for. If for some reason, you would be unable to come, it is important that you call the school office in which you are to report so they can contact the teacher and make other plans. **Please don't forget to sign in on the volunteer log when you arrive and leave each day.**
- 2. Record-keeping Logs:** Please make sure you sign in and out on the volunteer log each day that you volunteer. Please include if you attend a field trip, or even do some work at home for teachers or a staff member.
- 3. Confidentiality:** It is extremely important that as a volunteer in our school district that you maintain confidentiality at all times when working with a student or just having a casual conversation with a staff member. **Everything** that you hear at school must stay at school. You will be responsible for signing a confidentiality form that will be kept on file. If, for any reason, you fail to follow the confidentiality rule, we will be forced to ask you to leave your volunteer role.
- 4. Emergency Situations:** There are certain policies and procedures that our schools follow in an emergency situation. These situations may include natural disasters, fires, playground accidents, or school building accidents. Each classroom has evacuation information posted. Don't worry if you forget, the classroom teacher always knows what to do and can guide and direct you for what she/he needs.
- 5. Other:** Understand although you are a valuable asset to our school districts, the building principal has the **(final)** decision on who volunteers in their building, and how often the services are required. The principal in collaboration with other administrators and teachers develop a workable plan to ensure the confidentiality is ensured for all students.
- 6. Promise:** As a volunteer it is extremely important that your identification badge is worn at all times while volunteering in the building that you are assigned. Please do not use your badge to gain access in the building when you are not scheduled to volunteer. Visitor rules apply when not volunteering.
- 7. I have read the above and understand the policies and procedures as they are written.**

Volunteer Printed Name

Volunteer Signature

Date

Volunteer 16.0

Owen County Elementary School
School Based Decision Making (SBDM) Council

Policy Number: 16.0

Policy Area: Parents/Volunteers

Policy Title: **Volunteer Policy**

Policy Statement:

Owen County Elementary School encourages parents, guardians, and/or other members of the community to share their time, knowledge, and abilities with our students.

An Owen County Elementary School volunteer shall:

- **Submit to a background check.**
- **Schedule the day and time for volunteering with the principal and teacher(s) in advance.**
- **Sign in and out on the Volunteer Log each day.**
- **Adhere to the Owen County Lower and Upper Elementary School dress code listed in the Staff Handbook.** (Excerpt from the OCES Staff handbook: The Following are not acceptable: cut-off jeans, jeans with holes, sloppy t-shirts, informal sweat suits, spaghetti straps, and/or halter tops or dresses, revealing tops showing excessive cleavage, and short skirts (piercings, other than ear piercings, are not permitted.)
- **Understand that discipline is solely the responsibility of the classroom teacher.**
- **Understand that data entry, handling of money, attendance, and grading papers is solely the responsibility of the classroom teacher.**
- **Maintain confidentiality at all times.**
- **Wear your volunteer identification badge at all times.**
- **Understand that cell phone usage for calls or texting is not permitted when volunteering.**

Policy Evaluation

The effectiveness of this policy will be evaluated through our school Improvement Planning Process.

Date of First Reading _10/13_____ Date of Second Reading _____

Date Adopted _____

Signature SBDM Council Chairperson _____

Signature, Council Vice-Chair _____

Date Reviewed or Revised: _____

GUIDELINES FOR VOLUNTEERS

School volunteers are caring, committed people who assist in the education of our children. Volunteers come in all ages, from all walks of life. No specific educational background or training is needed. Volunteers should, however, be committed to volunteer activities, regular in attendance, and willing and able to cooperate with school personnel.

A School Volunteer or Partner is:

Dependable

- The volunteer keeps volunteer appointments and is prompt
- If a volunteer appointment cannot be kept, the proper person should be notified as far in advance as possible.
- The volunteer signs the volunteer sign in sheet upon arrival/departure at school to record volunteer service and wears a volunteer ID badge while volunteering.
- Volunteers participate in orientation and in any training needed.

Discreet

- A volunteer's work is confidential. Students should not be discussed with anyone except the appropriate school personnel. If a volunteer has questions about school policies or procedures, they should be discussed with the appropriate school personnel, not outside of the school.
- Volunteers should feel free to discuss concerns with the school volunteer coordinator.
- For the safety of the children, prospective volunteers may be asked to provide references and releases for background checks.

Reliable

- The volunteer follows the direction of the teacher and does not hesitate to ask for more specific instructions when necessary.
- The volunteer communicates regularly with the supervising teacher about goals, methods, and assignments.
- It is helpful for the volunteer to provide the teacher with feedback at the close of each volunteering session.
- Volunteers should know and follow school regulations, as explained through the volunteer training handbook.
- Volunteers do not release a child to any other person.

Helpful

- Patient and understanding with children.
- Motivates students by praising their accomplishments, even if the accomplishments are small.
- Builds the child's self-confidence; helps the child think of him/herself as a person capable of success.

Professional

- A school volunteer conducts him/herself as a professional, a member of the school team. A professional attitude toward responsibilities will help make volunteering a satisfying, enjoyable experience for all.
- Although volunteer experience is not paid employment, many businesses and educational institutions give credit for volunteer experience. It is important for the volunteer and Coordinator to keep an accessible record of service and of any training, workshops and conferences attended.
- If teacher to which you are assigned, has no duties for that day, volunteer will willingly accept other duties with another teacher or choose to go home.

SOME WAYS VOLUNTEERS CAN HELP

The ways in which volunteers can help are almost limitless. The particular needs of a school's staff as well as their imagination and flexibility in devising volunteer assignments will define how volunteers help. Schools are urged to seek volunteers for traditional positions and to be creative in finding new ways to enlist community support.

A school volunteer may work an hour or two, or even more every week during an entire school year. Others can donate concentrated amounts of time for short-term projects, and still others are only able to volunteer an hour or two each year. Every volunteer is a valuable asset to your school and there are areas of need for all types of volunteers.

The following is only a partial list of ways volunteers can help in the classroom, assist staff or to help in some way. Remember, a volunteer should never take the place of a teacher. A volunteer's role is to assist the teacher with their curriculum.

CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

- TUTOR ONE STUDENT OR WORK WITH SMALL GROUPS OF CHILDREN
 - o Reinforce skills in subject areas-Reading, math, spelling, science, etc.
 - o Help students who have been out absent to "catch up" on missed work
 - o Assist with classroom parties
- OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM
 - o Run copy machines
 - o Filing
 - o Assist in the lunchroom
 - o Prepare materials for classroom projects
 - o Help School Volunteer Program with record-keeping (keeping track of volunteer hours)
 - o Keep inventories of supplies and equipment
 - o Orient new student to the school
 - o Assist in writing or reading centers
- AT HOME
 - o Prepare materials for the teacher
 - o Cutting patterns
 - o Preparing materials for a craft or special project
- MAKE
 - o Educational games
 - o Instructional materials displays

WHAT A SCHOOL VOLUNTEER DOESN'T DO

- **Discipline or counsel students**
- **Provide curriculum or teaching plans**
- **Have access to materials in students' permanent record (psychological records, grades, etc.)**
- **Take over for a teacher**
- **Evaluate achievement or discuss student progress**
- **Reading groups**
- **Be put in a compromising situation**

Volunteers are never to be left alone with a child or group of children.

VOLUNTEER EXPECTATIONS

What the teacher expects of the volunteer:

- Promptness
- Love of children
- Enthusiasm
- Flexibility
- Dependability
- Patience
- Loyalty
- Businesslike attitude
- Imagination and creativity
- Non-disruptive influence
- Tact
- Sense of humor
- Initiative
- Helping for benefit of community
- Discreet/trustworthy/confidential
- Willing to help, ask for directions
- Follow instructions
- Participates in necessary training
- Pleasant, friendly, positive attitude
- Dress appropriately for activity
- Sensitive to children's needs
- Sensitive to teacher's time needs
- Knows the teacher is the authority
- Avoids trying amateur psychologist

What the volunteer expects of the teacher:

- * Consideration
- * Patience
- * Appreciation
- * Respect
- * Courtesy
- * Pleasant voice
- * Sincerity
- * Loves children
- * Has tasks ready
- * Cooperative attitude
- * Controls class
- * Clear instructions
- * Explains specific expectations
- * Explains policies and procedures
- * Gives feedback on student progress
- * Willing to help volunteer as needed
- * Assigns tasks volunteers are capable of doing
- * Treats volunteers as professional assistants
- * Friendly and welcoming attitude
- * Tells volunteer about schedule changes
- * Matches personality of volunteer with student
- * Provides materials needed for assigned tasks
- * Remains in charge of the classroom
- * Offers constructive criticism (NOT in front of students)
- * Accepts creative ideas and suggestions from volunteer
- * Gives volunteer relevant information about students

CHECKLIST FOR VOLUNTEERS

Before beginning your volunteer service, please complete the following checklist to insure that you are properly prepared for your new assignment.

- _____ I have completed an application.
- _____ I have completed the Administrative Office of the Courts Criminal Record check form.
- _____ I have paid the \$10.00 for the Criminal Record Check.
- _____ I have read and signed the Confidentiality Form.
- _____ I have been notified that I am able to begin volunteering.
- _____ I have signed Policy and Procedure forms.
- _____ I have met the school principal.
- _____ I have had a conference with the teacher/school coordinator of volunteers.
- _____ I know the hours of when the school is open.
- _____ I have scheduled when I am able to volunteer.
- _____ I know where I am to report for work.
- _____ I am familiar with the school facility.
- _____ I know where to park.
- _____ I know where the sign-in sheet for volunteers is located.
- _____ I know the school fire drill procedures.
- _____ I know the school safety rules.
- _____ I know what to do in case of an emergency.
- _____ I know the school discipline policy in the school.
- _____ I have been provided a specific place to volunteer.
- _____ I have any needed background information on the students with whom I will work.
- _____ I have been shown where the needed materials are located.
- _____ I have received additional in-service training if necessary.