

Volunteers Make a Difference!

VOLUNTEERS CARE ABOUT THE EDUCATION AND WELL-BEING OF THE YOUTH IN OUR COMMUNITY



MOUNT VERNON SCHOOL DISTRICT VOLUNTEER GUIDELINES

What is the volunteer's role in district activities?

- Volunteers provide support to our students and staff in many ways. Volunteers may tutor students, assist with projects and activities, help in the classroom, office, library, playground, lunchroom, share their personal skills and talents, mentor students and accompany students on approved field trips and activities.
- Volunteers who serve as chaperones must supervise students at all times. Students should not explore independently or take side trips without adult supervision. *"If you can't see them, you are not supervising them."*

Are there any limitations?

- Volunteers may not be assigned to roles which require specific professional training (i.e., an assignment filled by a certificated staff member); instructional services shall be rendered under the supervision of certificated staff. Volunteers will defer to a regular staff member for final solution of any student problem (instructional, medical or operational).

I submitted my volunteer application – what happens next?

- The volunteer coordinator will hold the application until receipt of completed personal reference forms and acceptable WSP background check. The volunteer will either receive a telephone call or letter stating the application has been approved or volunteer may call the school to check on the status of his/her application.

Why do you conduct a background check?

- Per Washington state law, the Washington State Patrol background check is conducted for all volunteers in the Mount Vernon School District. Background checks for volunteers will be repeated every three (3) years.

How do I enforce the rules and deal with discipline?

- Volunteers must report disruptive student behavior to the district's supervising staff member for action.

What are the expected behaviors for volunteers?

- Volunteers are expected to follow the directions given by the district's supervising staff member, comply with district policies, work cooperatively with other staff and volunteers and model appropriate behaviors for students.
- Volunteers will refrain from smoking, drinking or use of narcotics within sight of students and not possess any weapons during a district event or other prohibited acts.
- Volunteers should not place themselves in situations in which they are alone with a student for the protection of both the student and the volunteer.
- Volunteers may not administer prescription or non-prescription medications to students.
- Volunteers will treat student information with confidentiality—parents and volunteers do not have a legitimate educational interest in any student unless the student is their own child. Do not share information about students. On occasion a parent/volunteer may draw conclusions about a student given information they glean from their interactions with students in the classroom or school—information may be shared with the

supervising teacher or administrator when the information reveals that the student's welfare may be endangered or there is a reasonable likelihood that a crime has or will be committed (e.g., child abuse, sale of drugs, suicidal ideation).

How do I learn about general safety, including emergency procedures, when volunteering in an activity?

- Prior to accepting a volunteer assignment, the volunteer should check with the district's supervising teacher for specific instructions and information regarding the field trip or activity.

Is there liability insurance for volunteers?

- School liability insurance in general covers a volunteer when they are working under the direction of the district. This liability insurance only applies to district-sponsored activities—coverage does not provide medical benefits in the event of accidental injury to volunteers. Trips sponsored by the PTA or booster clubs are not covered. Volunteers should maintain their own health or accident insurance.
- Staff should never ask a volunteer to work one-on-one with a student behind closed doors or place them in any situations that could be considered risky or unprofessional.
- To limit the amount of its exposure to claims for injury, volunteers may be asked to complete an informed consent form.

What type of clothing should I wear?

- It is the district's expectation that volunteers '*set the example*' in dress and appearance. There is no written dress code, however, volunteers should think 'safety' and use 'common sense' when preparing for their service in the schools.
- Dress for students is only regulated when certain health or safety hazards are presented by the student's dress or appearance, damage to school property shall result, a hostile environment is created or disruption of the educational process results from the student's dress or appearance (School Board Policy 3224/3224P).

Are there any recordkeeping requirements?

- There may be recordkeeping requirements in keeping with the volunteer assignment; this will be under the direction of the supervising teacher or administrator.

May I transport students in my private vehicle to an activity?

- Transporting students in school buses is the safest mode of transportation. If parent volunteers will transport students, the supervisor and volunteer will complete appropriate Field Trip Request forms including the Volunteer Driver Checklist to make sure guidelines are being followed.

Are there any other rules I should be aware of?

- Volunteers may not bring family members or friends to activities without prior district approval. Any field trip or event participant age 18 or older who is not a student in the district must complete all district forms required of adult volunteers.

Who may I call if I have additional questions?

- Contact your building's Volunteer Coordinator or the District Office.

References:

- MVSD School Board Policies
- Washington Schools Risk Management Pool

I acknowledge receipt of the Volunteer Guidelines for the Mount Vernon School District.

Print Name: _____ Signature: _____ Date: _____

