**Lawrence Public Schools Early Childhood**

**Volunteer Guidelines**

Thank you for your willingness to share your time, enthusiasm, and skills with our students.  Your efforts, and the efforts of our many other volunteers, help to make our school the exceptional place that it is.

 Even as a volunteer, your commitment needs to be professional.  While you are on campus you are a role model for students.  Please see the list below of things you should and should not do while volunteering.  If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.  Thank you for participating directly in our early childhood program. You make the difference!

                                                                                                            Esther Kottwitz

Early Childhood Coordinator

**Ways a volunteer can help**

* + Room parent
  + Read to students
  + Help with small groups
  + Help with special classroom events
  + Go on field trips
  + And many more…….

**Volunteers should NEVER...**

* + Administer discipline.  Behavior problems should be addressed by teachers and administrators only.
  + Initiate physical contact with students.  Never put your hands on a student, especially when you are angry.
  + Contact students outside of the school setting.
  + Correct staff members.  See the principal with any concerns relating to staff members.

**Volunteer Expectations for Lawrence Public Schools Early Childhood Program**

**Attendance/Absence**

If you are unable to volunteer at your assigned time, please contact the staff member you are scheduled to work with, or the office at (785) 832-5760.

**Bathrooms**

Volunteers should not use student bathrooms.  Please use the “adults only” bathrooms in the staff room or adult bathrooms in the hallway.

**Cell Phone Etiquette**

Please put your cell phone on vibrate mode when working on campus.  Cell phone ring tones and conversations are disruptive to the learning environment.  Do NOT take pictures of students.

**Confidentiality**

All volunteers, no matter what job they perform, have an obligation to keep in confidence all information that pertains to the students and staff they assist.  Information regarding students, staff, and other volunteers is not to be discussed with anyone who is not entitled to such information. Do NOT take pictures of students and no sharing on social media.

**Positive Environment**

We believe that all people, adults and children, deserve love and respect.  We create a positive atmosphere in our programs by encouraging and supporting our students and one another.  We do not accept verbal abuse of any kind.

**Serious Behavior Concerns**

Serious concerns about student behavior during volunteer time should be referred to the teacher or another staff member immediately.  Do not reprimand or try to discipline students.  There is always a staff member nearby.

**Length of Volunteer Time**

Please limit your volunteer time to 1 hour per week. Classroom staff work hard to maintain structure and consistency for our students and it is important that a significant amount of classroom time is spent with the teachers and students creating their classroom community.

**Sign In Sheets**

Anyone entering the building must sign in and out and also wear a visitor badge at all times.  It is very important to us to know who is on campus at all times.  Visitor badges help alert us to any strangers who might be on campus.  All visitors on campus should have a designated purpose for their visit, and a designated role or responsibility.

**Suspected Child Abuse**

Child abuse shall be defined as any mistreatment or neglect of a child by an adult resulting in serious injury or harm to the child.  Any volunteer who suspects child abuse should notify the child’s teacher.  If the teacher is not available, contact the early childhood coordinator at 785-330-1706.  It shall be their responsibility to determine whether child abuse is suspected as per the State Code and whether a report will be made.

**Behavioral Techniques**

Recall that all discipline is to be conducted by teachers and administration, not volunteers or visitors.  If you feel that a student may need discipline, make a referral to the teacher in charge.  Here are some ideas to assist you in encouraging the best behavior from our students.

*Specific* *Positive Praise*

            Find someone using good behavior and be really interested in what they are doing.

            Praise the child for doing the appropriate thing.

            For example, “I like the way you are sharing the blocks with your friend.”

*Active Listening*

Sometimes it is enough for a child to hear that you understand and accept their feelings.

*Consistency*

            Be specific and follow through.

*Choices*

            Choice does not mean allowing a child to not follow a directive.

            Give the child some control over the situation.

            Offer only choices you intend to honor.

            For example, “Would you like to read with me in the library area or the block area?”

*Unconditional Positive Regard*

Treat all children with respect.  Children do not have to earn this by behaving in a certain way.  This is our right as human beings.

*Humor*

A great way to defuse a tense situation, so that it can be dealt with more effectively, is to use humor. Never underestimate the power of a little bit of levity.  Sarcasm is, however, not an appropriate form of humor with students. Sarcasm is usually misunderstood by children and frequently leads to bigger problems for everyone.

**Hugs**

We ask that if a child wants to give you a hug, that they practice asking if it is okay for them to give you a hug before they do.

**Laps**

Preschoolers love to sit in laps. Before they snuggle in, please practice having them ask permission to sit in your lap before they do.

Important Information:

* Early Childhood Coordinator: Esther Kottwitz
  + [esther.kottwitz@usd497.org](mailto:esther.kottwitz@usd497.org)
  + 785-330-1793
  + Administrative Assistant: Suzette Crone
  + [suzette.crone@usd497.org](mailto:suzette.crone@usd497.org)
  + 785-832-5760

School Procedures You Need To Know:

* + Fire Drill:  Exit the nearest outside door that is not blocked.
  + Tornado Drill: Follow directives of classroom teacher.
  + Emergency Drill:  Follow directives of classroom teacher.
  + Dress Code:  Dress as a positive role model for children
  + Parking: Please park in the front parking lot off of Harper Street

*Who to contact when you are late or absent: Contact the teacher you are scheduled to work with or call office at 785-832-5760.*