



Welcome To Volunteers In Partnership

By giving generously of your time and talent, you become a valued partner in providing a quality education for our students. Rewarding volunteer opportunities await you to make a difference in your life and in the lives of our students.

Lifting the Human Spirit

"Never underestimate the power of dreams and the influence of the human spirit. We are all the same in this notion. The potential for success lies in all of us."

-Wilma Rudolph, Olympic Champion

Volunteers' Guide to Success

VIP is committed to providing an enjoyable experience for our volunteers. To guide you, it's important to have a clear understanding of expectations, procedures, and policies. Please read this handbook carefully.

Individual Focus. Infinite Potential

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Welcome to Robbinsdale Area Schools!

Dear VIP Volunteer,

Welcome to Robbinsdale Area Schools! We are honored you have chosen to generously devote your time and efforts to enrich the learning experiences for our students. Our Unified District Vision guides our work and emphasizes our belief in the value of community engagement supporting student success.

Your gift of volunteering in our school district makes a difference! The relationships you develop with students and staff reflect the importance of education in our communities. You are a role model to our students, displaying effective citizenship for the benefit of all.

Thank you for engaging as a valued partner with Robbinsdale Area Schools. We sincerely appreciate your generous contribution and hope your volunteer experience proves to be rewarding and enjoyable.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Carlton D. Jenkins, Ph.D." in a cursive script.

Carlton D. Jenkins, Ph.D.
Superintendent
Robbinsdale Area Schools

Information about the District

Robbinsdale Area Schools (RAS) is a diverse school district serving all or part of the seven cities of Brooklyn Center, Brooklyn Park, Crystal, Golden Valley, New Hope, Plymouth and Robbinsdale. By enrollment, we are among the ten largest school districts in Minnesota.

We take pride in our strong tradition of achievement from preschool through adult students. In addition, our robust Community Education program offers innovative programming, enriching the lives of individuals and families in our community and beyond.

Our Mission, Core Values, Unified District Vision

- The Mission of RAS is to inspire and educate all learners to develop their unique potential and positively contribute to their community: "See All, Serve All, Support All!"
- The Unified District Vision (UDV) was adopted in 2014 through the collaboration of district staff, students, and the community at-large. It guides the work staff does every day to support our students along their educational journey.

Our UDV has four goals:

1. Implement policies and practices that open pathways to academic excellence for all students
2. Utilize culturally responsive teaching and personalized learning for all students
3. Engage family and community members as partners
4. Engage and empower students by amplifying student voice

We believe each student has limitless possibilities and we strive to ignite their potential, expecting high intellectual performance from all our students.

- The **UDV** and **Board Core Values** are embodied by the RAS Equity Definition. RAS defines equity as setting the conditions, to the extent possible, to assure access and opportunity for ALL students, while eliminating gaps in performance based on race, socio-economic status, and language. Discriminatory policies and practices are not tolerated. RAS is committed to the provision of a barrier-free learning environment. Graduating students ready for careers, skilled trades, and college is our priority. We will actively eliminate district policies, structures, and practices which perpetuate inequities and contribute to disproportionality in access and outcomes. Recognition of the strengths within our staff and students is an essential core value. These strengths are related to factors such as: race, culture, ethnicity, language, national origin, socioeconomic status, gender, sexual orientation, age, ability, religion, and physical appearance.

Diversity, Inclusion, Multiculturalism, Respect

Students in Robbinsdale Area Schools represent many different families, cultures, ethnicities, and backgrounds. Our district embraces the diversity within our school community and we seek volunteers who are accepting, welcoming, and share the value of learning in a diverse school environment. Our district is committed to creating a safe and respectful learning environment for all within our buildings.

As a VIP volunteer, you may work with students who look, talk, worship, or move about differently and have different customs and life experiences than you. Cultural characteristics and life experiences may affect a student's background knowledge, learning style, behavior, and social skills. It is essential volunteers approach working with students with openness and in a non-judgmental frame of mind, conveying respect and consideration for all students and staff.

It is also important to remember each student is an individual. Though many factors influence how a student learns and performs academically, they do not define the student. Understanding students' **individual needs** will increase your ability to help them learn.



Academic Standards

Educational excellence and equity for every student are essential priorities of our district as reflected in the UDV (*Also see page 4*). Our academic program is grounded in standards-based curriculum with vigorous targeted instruction delivered by qualified teachers to ensure every student graduates and is ready for either college, skilled trade, or career, and a productive life following high school.

Benefits of Standards-Based Learning

For Students

- Clarity of expectations for performance
- Understanding of how standards relate to what is being taught
- Expectations to show what they have learned
- Increased opportunities for students to evaluate their own work before the teacher does, using the same criteria as the teacher
- Performance is based on individual progress, not as it relates to other students
- Multiple opportunities to demonstrate achievement using different learning modalities
- Students know their performance is evaluated
- Increased motivation and engagement of students

For Teachers

- Understanding of how each lesson aligns with district and state academic standards
- Clearly articulated framework for teaching and well-defined expectations for student performance
- Latitude to use varying teaching modalities to help students learn fosters greater creativity in lesson planning and activities
- Clarity in student assessment process
- Gratification of seeing greater engagement and motivation of students
- Increased collaboration with other teachers as the framework for teaching is identified and aligned

For Community

- Shared language and framework for approaching partnerships leads to greater receptivity from schools
- Understanding of how and where community services align with schools increases effectiveness and impact of partnership and services
- Clarity for volunteers for working with students
- Continuity and consistency enhanced between and within schools

Learning More

The positive effects of academic standards are felt throughout the district and by those in partnership with the district. It will be helpful for you to have a general understanding of the standards and their benefits. For more information about the academic standards, please consult the supervising staff or go to the Minnesota Department of Education's website:

<https://education.mn.gov/MDE/dse/stds/>

Sharing the Volunteer Spirit

Robbinsdale Area Schools has a proud history of volunteer involvement. In October 1975, the community volunteer program was established in the Community Education department, welcoming community volunteers into our classrooms and programs. Our name, Volunteers In Partnership (VIP), truly reflects our commitment to building partnerships within our district and beyond to support our learners, schools, and programs. This commitment is founded on the belief that community members are essential, valued partners in educating and supporting our students.

Each year, VIP volunteers generously contribute thousands of hours in a variety of ways. As a VIP volunteer, you join the dedicated team of teachers, staff, and administrators who work together for the success of all students. Please know your efforts have a positive impact whether you volunteer in direct service to learners or “behind the scenes”.

VIP’s Mission

Connect the community to the district in meaningful ways through volunteering

VIP’s Goals

- Provide a personalized, successful, and rewarding volunteer experience through a variety of opportunities
- Enhance students' learning and increase their motivation for learning
- Enable teachers to provide more individual attention to their students
- Provide positive role models for students
- Enrich the school learning environment
- Build and strengthen school-community partnerships by providing increased opportunities for engagement

Who are VIP Volunteers?

VIP volunteers are community volunteers. VIP volunteers are:

- Age 16 and above
- Not the legal guardian of a current district student at the location where they volunteer
- From our seven-city service area and beyond through business, faith, higher education, high school, and service partnerships
- Volunteering in schools and programs more than one time
- Not paid for their services nor provided employee benefits

VIP Operation, Staff

VIP streamlines the placement process through our office which is managed by VIP's administrative staff, the Coordinator and Program Specialist. In the elementary schools and the Adult Academic Program, VIP's Academic Volunteer Coordinators (AVCs) provide on-site assistance with volunteer placements and additional support. VIP staff are committed to our best to ensure your experience is rewarding and our placement process is designed intentionally to prepare you for success. Volunteers are encouraged to contact their AVC and/or the VIP Coordinator for assistance at any time.

Website

For additional VIP information, go to ced.rdale.org and click VOLUNTEERS

Benefits of Volunteering

For Volunteers

- Help others
- Enjoy a rewarding experience by sharing your time and talents
- Make a difference
- Develop new skills
- Explore career possibilities
- Meet new people
- Fulfill civic responsibility
- Have first-hand experience of school activity in your community
- May deduct some out-of-pocket expenses incurred while volunteering; consult your tax advisor concerning your personal situation
- Invest in your future as your volunteer experience looks impressive on college, job, and scholarship applications

"If you think, alone, you can't make a difference, you haven't spent the night with a mosquito".
-African Proverb

For Students

- Receive additional, individualized support resulting in improved academic achievement
- Have time with a caring and supportive volunteer
- Experience the relationship between the community, schools, and students as an integral part of their success
- Increase confidence in their ability and greater motivation to learn as they experience success in school
- Increase positive attitudes about school, school's importance in their life and in the community
- See a positive example of giving back to the community

For Staff, School, and District

- Adds resources to support students, enriching their education
- Improved student achievement
- Allows teachers to focus more time teaching
- Creates positive interactions with the community, generating support and confidence in the educational system and district
- Provides additional resources without additional cost

Special Benefits for Volunteers

- Personal interview to promote a successful placement and experience.
- Orientation materials
- Maintenance of volunteer's file*
- Documentation of volunteer service hours and letters of reference
- Follow-up and support from VIP staff
- Workshops to further develop volunteers' skills
- Background checks paid for by VIP program

**File includes: application, interview information (when applicable), record of service hours and workshops attended, performance evaluations, and Pledge of Confidentiality*

Responsibilities and Rights of Volunteers

Volunteers' Responsibilities

- To be open and honest regarding intent, goals, and skills
- To be courteous, welcoming, and show respect to students and staff
- To complete the placement process prior to beginning volunteer duties
- To be familiar with and follow district expectations, policies, and procedures
- To understand the volunteer is in a support role and accept direction from the assigned staff supervisor
- To participate in required training
- To respect confidentiality
- To address questions and concerns with the supervising or VIP staff
- To remember you are a role model for students

Volunteers' Rights

- To be treated with respect and courtesy
- To be given a suitable assignment
- To be provided with an understanding of the duties, responsibilities, supervisory structure, and time commitment
- To receive training, ongoing support, and communication for the job
- To be given guidance and direction
- To have regular evaluation of job performance for ongoing placements
- To be given the opportunity for a variety of experiences
- To provide feedback regarding the volunteer placement to the supervising or VIP staff
- To receive recognition for volunteer contribution
- To be informed of volunteer support services

What Volunteers Do

Volunteer Duties

Volunteers assist in many ways that support our students, schools, and programs, serving learners from preschool age through adults. From ongoing to one-time events, in direct service to learners to behind the scenes--each volunteer's contribution is appreciated and makes a difference. Volunteers add value working with students **at all ability levels** by providing extra help for individualized instruction. Here are examples of volunteer opportunities:

1-1 Helper: One-to-one volunteers focus on either tasks being completed that day in class or areas in which the learner needs extra attention

- Provide homework assistance
- Literacy partner: read with student, work with flash cards, spelling, writing skills
- Math partner: flash cards, use math manipulatives, number lines, number cubes
- Science: assist with experiments
- Provide extra conversation time for learners who are learning English
- Provide more challenging work for advanced learners
- Assist with childcare
- Expand critical thinking skills: logical thought process, analysis, and problem-solving to reach a goal
- Assist a student who may have a special need for an upcoming event (i.e., driving test, job interview)
- Help student find materials in the Media Center for reading or research
- Assist with computer skills



Floating Volunteer: Volunteer circulates through the classroom to assist with students' progress

- Focus on grammar, spelling, pronunciation, vocabulary building
- Check for general understanding of task
- Correct error
- Check for comprehension
- Answer questions
- Monitor individual, pair, or group activities and report progress/problems to teacher

Small Group Leader: Work with a small group of learners on either tasks being completed that day in class, or areas in which the learners needs extra attention.

- Lead pre-work and follow-up activities for writing, special projects
- Facilitate a discussion
- Monitor a game
- Lead reading groups
- Facilitate group project
- Assist in demonstrations (mock role-play, directions to a game, etc.)

Clerical Support or Classroom Helper: Assist with office duties; provide teacher prep support

- Hand out papers, supplies, etc.
- Make copies, collate
- Set up projects, organize materials, stock supplies
- Create supplies for activities (i.e., cut out items, laminate pictures, collate materials)
- Put up bulletin boards
- Write, edit, and maintain website or newsletter

One-time Events: Provide assistance for special events or projects

- Speaker on special topic, occupation, etc.
- Check-in, take tickets, direct participants
- Help at activity station
- Assist with building and grounds beautification- weeding, planting, painting
- Provide vision screenings for elementary school students

What Volunteers Do (continued)

Volunteer Assignment: VIP strives to find the best opportunity for each volunteer through our placement process and we hope you find the assignment rewarding. If the assignment doesn't meet your expectations, please notify VIP's staff to discuss options better suited to your needs.

It is important volunteers stay within the parameters of the assignment identified by the supervising staff. Talk with your supervisor if you have questions about your duties, responsibilities, and procedures.

What Volunteers Shouldn't Do:

- Have access to students' files and records
- Diagnose student needs
- Make final evaluations on student achievement

Expectations, Policies, and Procedures



To promote a successful experience, it is essential volunteers adhere to guidelines and policies. You will also want to learn the school and classroom rules and procedures. Volunteers need to comply with the following:

Authorization to Become a VIP Volunteer/Returning Volunteers

- Successful completion of the application, interview/orientation, and background check (for volunteers age 18 and over) are required **PRIOR** to volunteering.
- The VIP administrative staff is authorized to determine whether a candidate is suitable for placement based on objective measures and judgement.
- Authorization is renewed annually without the need to repeat the steps to volunteer unless there has been a break in service of a year or more.

Accidents, Reporting

If you are injured while volunteering, seek immediate assistance. Report the incident to supervising staff and the VIP coordinator as soon as possible.

Appearance/Attire/Fragrances

- Volunteers' appearance should reflect a position of authority, with attire neat and appropriate for the conditions and performance of their duties, allowing for comfort. Ask supervising staff for guidance if you have questions.
- Avoid wearing fragrances during your visits due to sensitivities of students and staff.

Behavior Expectations/Substance Use, Weapons

Volunteers should set a good example by maintaining professional conduct and language. ***While on school property, volunteers must refrain from using profanity, possession of illegal drugs, alcohol, tobacco/tobacco paraphernalia, carrying weapons, discussion of inappropriate topics, selling merchandise to promote a business, or proselytizing***

Check-In and Out Procedure/Recordkeeping

Most district sites are ***secured facilities***. For the safety of those within the building, these procedures are followed:

Check-in and out Procedure:

- Upon entering the buildings, volunteers identify themselves as "VIP volunteers" when prompted after pressing the security button.
- Volunteer must go directly to the school's office and provide identification, preferably a driver's license. Volunteers receive a name badge in the school office each visit to wear during their time at the school.

Recordkeeping: Accurate records allow VIP to monitor volunteer activity, document hours for annual state and district reports, observe trends, and recognize years of service.

- Volunteers with ***ongoing placements*** must record their service hours each time they volunteer. ***Special event volunteer*** hours are tracked separately. Volunteers ***working offsite*** are asked to maintain their records and will be contacted by VIP staff during the regular collection of service hour data.
- Volunteer must provide emergency contact information on their service hour form.

Confidentiality/Date Privacy

Not only is confidentiality vital to the integrity of the VIP program, it is required by federal law (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974) regarding student records and information. Out of respect for the privacy of students, staff, and other volunteers in the building, volunteers must maintain strict and professional boundaries around confidentiality. Annually, volunteers will be required to sign a **Pledge of Confidentiality** (see *Forms section*) that acknowledges:

- Academic, behavior, medical, performance, and personal details are **private** and **confidential**.
- Volunteers may not reveal read, heard, or observed information about individual students and staff, nor share questions and/or concerns about students and staff beyond the teacher, principal/program director, and VIP coordinator. This includes not sharing information with the students' family members.
- Volunteers may not use social media to discuss/post photos or information pertaining to individual student, staff, or situations.

Contact with Students: Physical, Outside of School

- Physical Contact with Students: Many preschool and elementary age students are likely to show affection to volunteers. **If the child initiates the contact**, volunteers may respond briefly with a hug (preferably side-to-side), arm around a student, high-5, fist bump or thumbs-up if the volunteer is comfortable doing so. Some students are not comfortable with touch and may want more personal space.

Students are not permitted on volunteer's laps except if directed otherwise in certain preschool programs only. Volunteers are not permitted to kiss or tickle students. Volunteers should avoid physical contact with middle, high school, and adult learners. Any unusual or inappropriate contact demonstrated by students needs to be reported to the teacher.

- Contact Outside of School: For the safety of community volunteers and the students with whom they work, **all communication (including all social media platforms) and meetings between them and/or their families are to take place only at and during the location, date, and time of the volunteer's placement**. Volunteers are not permitted to disclose their phone, address, emails, etc. to students. (Also see *Transportation of Students section*.)

Dependability/Maintaining your schedule

Staff and students are counting on volunteers to honor their commitment, to be prompt, and dependable. **Volunteers are asked to notify the supervising staff person at the site if they will be late or absent, giving as much notice as possible**. This allows the staff to plan accordingly.



Expectations, Policies, and Procedures (continued)

Diseases/Illness/Health

- Illness: Volunteers will be permitted to volunteer provided they are physically, mentally, and emotionally able to safely perform tasks assigned to them, and their volunteering does not present a health threat to others in the building.
- Handwashing: Volunteers are encouraged to practice effective handwashing to minimize the risk of infection to students and themselves.

Duties and Responsibilities

Volunteers are encouraged to clarify their duties and responsibilities with the supervising staff person. Volunteers must be mindful they assist under the direction of district staff who have the final authority.

Ending Volunteer Assignment

- Voluntary (trying new opportunities, leaving program) Volunteers are encouraged to tell the VIP administrative staff and/or the AVC know if they would like to pursue another assignment in the district. They are also asked to inform the VIP administrative staff and/or the AVC if they are ending their commitment as a volunteer.
- Involuntary (redirecting to another placement, dismissal from program) Volunteering is a privilege, not a right. If at any time a volunteer does not follow the expectations, policies and procedures, the volunteer is subject to dismissal or may be reassigned to a more suitable placement. If a volunteer is dismissed, the school district reserves the right not to reassign the volunteer.

Evaluations

Annually, VIP surveys volunteers in ongoing placements and their supervisors to gather valuable information about their experience, evaluate performance, and improve the VIP program. Volunteers' and supervisors' surveys are kept confidential unless VIP receives permission to share the specific information with either party.

Harassment/School Environment

- It is the school district's policy to maintain a learning environment free from harassment, violence, or discrimination based on actual or perceived race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, gender, marital status, disability status, sexual orientation, or age. A copy of the district policy prohibiting offensive behavior and sexual harassment is available by request.
- Volunteers are protected by these policies as well as expected to abide by them.

Incentives, Motivating Students, Giving Gifts, Money, Food

Students respond well to volunteers' *verbal* encouragement and positive acknowledgement of their performance. Volunteers are asked to refrain from using gifts, food, or money as rewards.

Expectations, Policies, and Procedures (continued)

Reporting Abuse, Bullying, Neglect

As you build trust with your students, they may begin to confide in you. You may also become aware of disturbing information about their life experiences. Take time to listen patiently, calmly, and in a non-reactive manner to show you care without displaying judgement. Please keep in mind the following:

- Some comforting responses may be: "I'm sorry this happened to you." "I imagine this was difficult. Thank you for telling me".
- Do not promise secrecy to the student. Share you will need to let the supervising staff know what has been disclosed to you.
- Volunteers are required by state law to notify the supervising staff if you have reason to believe through observation, suspicion, or disclosure by a student that the child/adult is being abused, bullied, or neglected. The staff person will follow proper procedures determined by the State of Minnesota.

Restroom Use

For safety considerations, volunteers use the adult restrooms. Volunteers do not accompany students in the restrooms.

Safety/Crisis Plans

Crisis plans are in place in the event of an emergency. While in the building, you may experience a safety drill or an actual event. It's important to follow instructions from the P.A. system and/or staff at all times. An all-clear message will signal the end of the drill and staff will know when it is permitted to return to the classroom, open the door, etc.

Please remember to:

- Stay calm. Students will follow your example.
- Know and follow regulations and procedures; familiarize yourself with appropriate routes.
- Assist staff with following safety procedures.

School Closings, Schedules

- Closings- Schools may be closed for a variety of reasons including holidays/vacation, equipment malfunction at facilities, staff development, and weather. For updates, check the district's website for scheduled closings and emergency updates.
- Schedules- Please know classroom schedules may change. Volunteers will want to check with supervising staff to learn if there are upcoming conflicts with their volunteer schedule.

School Property for Personal Use

Personal use of school property is not permitted by law.

Space, Where to Volunteer in the Building

Locations will vary, depending on the assignment and the teacher's preferences for how best to work with a student. Volunteers often assist students in a classroom, hallway, or media center-- always in a public area with the expectation of being visible to staff for the well-being of the volunteers and students.

Technology/Cell phone Use

- Volunteers are expected to comply with school rules regarding personal electronic devices.
- Use of the district's network/internet resources is intended only for educational and informational purposes such as research, instruction, collaborative projects, and distribution of district information.
- Cell phones should not be used in the classroom as they disrupt the learning environment and are a distraction to building rapport with students and staff.



Transportation of Students

Volunteers are prohibited from transporting students.

Having A Successful Experience

Working with Students: Building Relationships, Building Capacity, Behavior Management

Building a Relationship with Students

Building academic skills is a priority of RAS when engaging volunteers in the schools. Students clearly benefit from time spent with volunteers who assist them through the learning process. It is important to remember the learning flows from the **relationship** between the volunteer and student, a result of the trust and credibility established with the student. You can do this by incorporating these tips:

- Learn the students' names and say them correctly.
(*Tip: Go to www.pronouncenames.com for guidance.*)
- Be enthusiastic, friendly, patient, respectful, and kind.
- Embrace a **Growth Mindset** philosophy when approaching each student, meaning you accept, affirm, and welcome students for who they are and assume only that each has the capacity to grow and learn.
- Be fair, consistent, and honest in your approach, attitude, and interactions. It's okay to say "I don't know".
- Listen attentively. Show students you are genuinely interested in them.
- Encourage and affirm students.
- Avoid making comparisons with other students, between teachers and schools.
- Be reliable and trustworthy so students can count on you. Avoid making promises you can't fulfill.
- Avoid eating candy, snacks, and gum when working directly with students.
- Maintain your sense of humor but not at a student's expense.
- Students may forget your name or what you've taught them, but they remember how they feel about themselves because of the time you spend together.
- Enjoy yourself! You have the opportunity to make a positive difference in someone's life.

Building Capacity

The most significant impact made by VIP volunteers is contributing to a student's sense of capacity as a learner. You guide them to greater understanding in a variety of ways and help them develop the skills needed to persevere when they feel uncertain. Look for opportunities to acknowledge a student's performance, keeping in mind your comments will have a greater impact if you are:

- Positive and affirming
- Intentional about what you want to acknowledge and how to present your comments
- Specific about what you are acknowledging
- Patient while allowing time and opportunity to complete a task independently
- Encourage student's questions and efforts. Assure students mistakes are part of learning.



Having A Successful Experience (continued)

Building Capacity (continued)

Although simple comments such as “good job”, “terrific”, “great” are positive and supportive, they provide little information to students and have less impact. Here are examples of acknowledgements that encourage, validate students, and influence their attitudes and beliefs about themselves as they develop their sense of capacity as learners:

- Look how neatly you lined up the columns of numbers before adding them.
- What an interesting observation!
- You really are a hard worker.
- That shows good effort.
- You make it look easy.
- Now that's quality work.
- You make a strong point when you say... That's an interesting point of view. Tell me more.
- I appreciate your help.
- Keep using those sounding out skills that you do so well.
- That wasn't easy but you continue to show you try even when the work is difficult.
- You're on the right track. What do you think makes sense to do next?
- You read with such expression.
- This is similar to problem X which you figured out. What worked for you before?
- Thank you for being patient.
- I like the way you explained that.
- You are really improving!
- I like how you accept responsibility.
- How creative! That's a creative way to look at this.
- You used your problem-solving skills.
- Now you've got the hang of it.
- I knew you could do it.
- Try questions such as:
 - How did you come up with the correct answer?
 - Have you considered...?
 - Do you remember when you.....?
 - Is there another way to do/solve this?

Behavior Management

Students come to school with their life experiences, emotions, and coping skills. Volunteers are likely to see or meet with students who are learning how to make positive behavior choices. Your relationship with students and the one-to-one attention and encouragement you provide often keep behavioral issues from escalating. If faced with a student's inappropriate language or behavior, here are important considerations to keep in mind:

- **Discipline**, beyond simply maintaining order with gentle reminders, is the responsibility of district staff. Review behavior questions and concerns with the supervising staff. The school discipline policy is available in the office and on the district's website.

Having A Successful Experience (continued)

Behavior Management (continued)

- Stay calm.
- Tell the student, "Let's take a break and see what Mr./Ms. Teacher would like us to do next."
- Try not to take the student's behavior personally.
- Start fresh each time you work with a student. Allow for a "clean slate".

Working with Staff: Staff recognize volunteers are an important part of the educational team. Staff try to show appreciation, support, provide direction and feedback to the volunteers. It is important the volunteer and staff create a positive working relationship, rooted in mutual respect, good communication, flexibility, and shared goals for the students' success.

Here are tips for volunteers to work effectively with staff:

- Professional staff are responsible for the decisions regarding student instruction, school management, safety, and discipline. For this reason, volunteers provide support and supplement the classroom instruction and always work under the guidance and supervision of an assigned staff person. Volunteers may make suggestions, keeping in mind the staff have the final authority.
- Work within the parameters of the assignment the teacher has directed.
- Communicate regularly with staff about absences, scheduling, questions, and concerns. Exchange contact information to notify each other of schedule changes and discuss the best way(s) to reach each other.
- Clarify your duties and responsibilities. Questions are welcomed and encouraged.
- Be respectful of the teacher's time when helping in the classroom, finding opportunities to ask questions when the teacher is less busy.
- Establish a workable schedule, allowing for some flexibility to accommodate classroom changes such as field trips, testing, etc.
- Decide how students will address you.
- Learn the classroom/school procedures, rules and systems for emergencies, behavior and instructional interventions, locations of materials and equipment, where to leave personal belongings, and use of the staff lounge.

If you are assisting with academic support, consider discussing this with the teacher:

- Pertinent background information and tips about the students within the bounds of maintaining confidentiality (effective interventions, learning style, interests, etc.)
- Best space for working with students in a public area with the expectation of being visible to staff.

Application

- The on-line application may be found on-line at:
www.volgistics.com/ex/portal.dll/ap?AP=1185272077
- Hard copy is available upon request from the VIP office.

Pledge of Confidentiality/Volunteer Agreement**Service Hour Sheet**

Forms

Pledge of Confidentiality for Volunteers

I understand that:

- I may be collecting or become aware of information of a personal and sensitive nature.
- All information about specific students will not be disclosed and will be kept confidential. This includes the student's name, behavior, performance, medical and family information.
- The responsibility of fulfilling this assurance of confidentiality begins with me.
- Volunteers may discuss questions and concerns about students with the supervising teacher and/or the VIP coordinator.

In recognition of this responsibility, I hereby give my personal pledge to:

- Keep confidential the names of all students and families, all information and opinions collected during the data collection process, and any information learned incidentally while working with students.
- Refrain from discussion or disclosing, except privately with supervisors, principal/program directors, and/or the VIP coordinator information that might in any way identify or be linked to a particular individual.
- Take precautions to prevent access by others to data in my possession.

Volunteer Agreement

I have reviewed, understand, and will abide by the **Expectations, Policies, and Procedures** set forth by Robbinsdale Area Schools for community volunteers in the Volunteers In Partnership (VIP) program.

Print Name

Signature
