



EDEN PRAIRIE SCHOOLS

Inspiring each student every day

VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK

Eden Prairie Community Education

Education Center

8100 School Road

Eden Prairie, Minnesota 55344

952-975-6940

comed@edenpr.org

www.edenpr.org/epcommunityed

Eden Prairie Schools

The mission of Eden Prairie Schools is to inspire each student to learn continuously so they are empowered to reach personal fulfillment and contribute purposefully to our ever-changing world. Every day, and in each building across the district, we work to fulfill that mission. Our volunteers are one of the best and most effective assets we have in accomplishing this goal and bettering the Eden Prairie community.

As a school district, we are grateful to have community members who are willing to take time out of their days to volunteer in our classrooms. Thank you for your volunteerism.

Our Values

- Each person has intrinsic value.
- Each person has individual gifts and talents.
- Community benefits when each person contributes.
- Relationships flourish on a foundation of mutual trust and respect.
- Continuous learning is essential for personal fulfillment opportunity and success.

District Strategies (2018-2023)

- By 2023, we will **personalize learning** to achieve our mission.
- By 2023, we will **eliminate achievement disparities** to achieve our mission.
- By 2023, we will **engage our stakeholders** to achieve our mission.

Enrollment & Student Demographics

- 2018/2019 district-wide enrollment increased, with certain grades exceeding enrollment estimates
- Approximately 9,000 students in grades K-12
- 9% of students within Eden Prairie Schools are English Language Learners
- 12% of students receive Individualized Education Programs
- 22% of students qualify for Free or Reduced Lunch
- 43% of students reported being two or more races or a race other than white
- 70+ languages spoken by our diverse student population

Source: Minnesota Department of Education Minnesota Report Card, 2018

Achievements

- 88% of students at Eden Prairie High School graduate
- 70% of students scored at or above proficiency levels on state assessments
- 91% of our students continue on to higher education after graduation.

Source: Minnesota Department of Education Minnesota Report Card, 2018

Community Education

- 8,065 Students (K-12) being served in Eden Prairie Schools.
- Almost 400 three and four year old students are being served through top-rated Little Eagles Preschool.
- 385 families are enrolled in a variety of classes offered through Early Childhood Family Education

Source: FY 2021 Community Education Enrollment Data

Lifelong Learning with Community Education

It is our mission to connect, empower, and enrich people's lives through lifelong learning and service to our diverse and evolving community. That's why our Community Education Department offers hundreds of classes and opportunities for people of all interests, ages, and skills to be inspired, acquire new knowledge, and reach personal fulfillment.

Community Education consists of three types of programming:

- Early Childhood Programs
- Youth Programs
- Adult & Community Engagement Programs

Learn more about all of our programs at www.edenpr.org/epcommunityed.

Learning & Fulfillment Through Volunteering

We strive to create meaningful volunteer opportunities for community members, some of whom wouldn't otherwise be engaged in our schools, to share their gifts and talents with students. Our volunteers also gain new skills and grow both personally and professionally through their service.

Volunteers are key members of our team. As mentioned above, our volunteers are essential in helping us carry out our district mission and strategies. The more volunteer support we have, the more we can personalize learning for our students. Similarly, volunteers are helping us eliminate achievement disparities by providing additional academic support.

Volunteers also form caring relationships with students, which research suggests is an important tool in helping students succeed. We believe children thrive when they know they have a community that supports them, and your presence in our schools sends a powerful message to students about the values of Eden Prairie residents.

Regardless of how frequently you volunteer, or the ways in which you do so, we appreciate you and all of the work you do. Please know our administrators, teachers, and other staff view volunteers as incredible assets to our school communities.

We hope your service is a mutually beneficial experience, and we look forward to getting to know you!

Our Volunteer Program

Community Education places community members in volunteer positions across the district, not just within Community Education programs. Our volunteers serve in a wide variety of roles in almost every building in the district. It's important to note, however, that the district-wide program is not intended to serve parent volunteers who wish to volunteer within their own children's classrooms, on field trips, or through organizations such as Boosters or the PTO.

Volunteer Team

Olivia Antilla is the Outreach and Engagement Supervisor. She processes volunteer applications and teacher requests, facilitates the onboarding process, and works with volunteers on schedule changes, hours tracking, and regular volunteer communication. She can be reached at ointilla@edenpr.org.

Molly Patil is the Director of Adult & Community Engagement Programs. She works with a number of Community Education programs, including the Volunteer Program, Family Resources Program, Facilities & Adult Enrichment Program, Somali Cultural Liaison, and the Family Literacy Program. Molly works with volunteers and district staff to determine mutually beneficial placements. She can be reached at mpatil@edenpr.org or 952-975-6942.

Camille Sherman is the Community Education Staffing Coordinator. Camille coordinates the background check process for new volunteers. She can be reached at csheerman@edenpr.org or 952-975-6951.

District Host

Each volunteer is assigned to a single designated staff host. These volunteer hosts are always district employees and provide onsite support and supervision to their assigned volunteer. Additional employees may provide work direction, depending on the role, but the district host is typically the staff member volunteers work most closely with.

Community Education Program Supervisor

A Community Education Program Supervisor is housed at each elementary building and serves as an additional onsite support to volunteers placed within that school. Program Supervisors may assist in providing a building tour and introducing volunteers to their assigned hosts.

Volunteer Process

Once you have decided to become a volunteer with us, there are just a few steps to get started!

- _____ Complete the [Volunteer Application](#)
- _____ Submit information for a Background Check (if applicable)
- _____ Interview & Orientation
- _____ Assignment/Specific Placement & Approval of the Volunteer Assignment Description (VAD)
- _____ Building Tour & Host Introductions

Volunteer Expectations

The majority of volunteers serve in classrooms and work directly with students. Roles outside of the classroom may have different expectations regarding tasks, but we have the same expectations regarding behavior for all volunteers.

A volunteer is expected to:

- Be supportive and interactive
- Arrive on time and be dependable
- Assist in creating a safe and fun learning environment for students
- Take direction from teachers and other district staff members
- Behave in a respectful manner at all times
- Spend the majority of your time working with students (unless your role is intended to serve another purpose)

Appropriate tasks for a Classroom Volunteer:

- Engage with children one-on-one or in small groups through things such as: literacy games, vocabulary practice, reading, writing help, storytelling, drawing, letter or number recognition, math or counting games, or other forms of play
- Provide assistance to classroom teacher in supervising classroom activities
- Participate in or co-leading crafts, activities, story time, experiments, etc.
- Engage students in conversations surrounding specific study areas or topics of interest

Classroom Volunteer tasks that should not exceed more than 30 minutes per session:

- Assisting with cleanup after an activity or after class
- Project preparation, such as cutting, tracing or assembling projects (unless your position is specifically related to such work)
- Rotating books or any other classroom materials (unless your position is specifically related to such work)

Tasks that are NOT appropriate for a volunteer:

- Taking a child to the restroom, changing diapers, or cleaning up after “accidents”
- Disciplining children
- Writing lesson plans or filling roles that would otherwise be paid

- Instructing substitutes or other staff
- Answering questions asked by parents regarding the care or progress of their child
- Unsolicited interrupting or advising of teachers/staff
- Doing any work that seems outside of the volunteer role

Important Notes:

As with any school, we have students who have experienced trauma or are enduring significant challenges outside of school. We may or may not be aware of these scenarios. Due to data privacy laws and district policies, staff may not be allowed to share certain information with you regarding a student and his or her family.

While we encourage you to build connections with students, it is important that personal boundaries are respected, to protect both students and volunteers. Young children often need help understanding acceptable behavior around affection and personal space. Norms related to physical touch also vary by culture. Please err on the side of caution and ask your teacher or other staff if you have questions.

Volunteer Policies

We are passionate about ensuring your volunteer experience is as rich and rewarding as possible, for both you and the students. The following policies and guidelines will contribute to creating a safe and successful volunteer environment.

Confidentiality

Volunteers are responsible for maintaining the confidentiality of all proprietary or privileged information to which they are exposed, including information on students.

Eden Prairie Schools and its volunteers have the obligation to respect the privacy of our students, staff and families. Please ensure all information and conversations remain confidential. Do not share any private information regarding students with anyone other than appropriate Eden Prairie Schools staff members. We understand you may want to talk about your experience here (we hope you do!), but please do not use the names of students in discussing your experiences with others.

Attendance & Dependability

As a volunteer, students and staff are depending on you. We rely on you to honor your commitment and ask that you let us know as soon as possible if you know you will be unable to attend your scheduled shift for any reason. Please contact both Olivia Antilla at (952) 975-6949 or at ointilla@edenpr.org and your staff host.

Continuous absenteeism may result in being removed from the position.

COVID-19

To mitigate the risk of COVID transmission and to ensure proper contact tracing can be completed in the event of a positive case, opportunities will be limited and focused on providing targeted

academic support during the instructional day. Other types of volunteer tasks are only permitted if completed outside of the instructional day. Face coverings are required for any visitor who cannot maintain six feet of social distance with students. Visitors who are not fully vaccinated are required to wear a face covering. Face coverings are recommended for visitors who are not fully vaccinated and maintain social distance with students.

Diversity

EPS is firmly committed to equity in all areas of its work. We believe that we have much to learn and benefit from by honoring the diverse cultures and perspectives that make up our community. It is essential that all volunteers treat participants of all cultures, races, genders, and socio-economic backgrounds with respect. We understand you may have questions regarding the culture of the students you are working with, and we encourage you to reach out to our team for help navigating cultural differences.

Cell Phones

When it comes to technology, volunteers are held to the same standards as district staff. We ask that volunteers refrain from using their personal cell phones while they are in the classroom. If for any reason you need to use your phone, feel free to do so in the staff lounge or in the hallway.

Student Behavior

Disciplinary actions are the responsibility of employees only; volunteers should not discipline children. If there is a student with problematic behavior, please report it to the child's teacher or another member of staff.

Signing In & Out

Safety and security are a priority in our schools. You must sign in and out every time you volunteer. It is important the staff knows who is in the building at all times for safety reasons. We use a system in which a photo identification card (e.g. driver's license) is scanned when you enter a building, producing a visitor badge. Through this system, we are also able to easily keep track of your hours throughout the year. It is important, both for safety and documenting your service hours, to stop by the school office on your way in and out of the building each day. Volunteers are also provided with a volunteer badge, which indicates that you have a legitimate reason for being in the building. Please ensure your badge is visible at all times.

Dress Code

Be sure to dress casually and comfortably. Depending on the role, volunteers could be engaged in a variety of physical activities. Volunteers are representatives of Eden Prairie Schools, so they must dress appropriately. If you have any questions, please let us know.

Weather Closures

When school is cancelled due to inclement weather or physical problems, volunteers should not report. Consult WCCO radio (830), TV channels 4, 5, 9, 11 or the district website: www.edenpr.org

On delayed start days, volunteers who are scheduled to start after students report may use their discretion to decide whether or not to come in for their volunteer shifts. Should an early release be called during your shift, you will be dismissed at that time. See school hours below.

Drug-free/Tobacco-free Environment

Per district policies 418 and 419, Eden Prairie Schools prohibits the use or possession of controlled substances, toxic substances, medical cannabis, alcohol, tobacco and tobacco-related devices, or electronic cigarettes before, during, or after school hours, at school or in any other school location. Smoking, vaping, and the use of tobacco products are not allowed on any school district property. Volunteers may not be under the influence of alcohol or any other chemical while on the school grounds.

Weapon-free Schools

Weapons shall not be possessed, used or distributed in any school location, including parking lots. See district policy 501 for more details.

Harassment

Harassment of any kind is not tolerated in the Eden Prairie School District. Harassment is any form of conduct that creates an intimidating environment, interferes with an individual's work, or adversely affects an individual's experience. If you suspect, witness, or are a victim of any sort of harassment, please alert a member of the school's staff. View the complete definition of harassment, view policy #413 on the district website.

Mandated Reporting

Minnesota state law requires that education professionals, including volunteers, are mandated reporters of suspected abuse. Volunteers have valuable access to our students. If you ever hear something alarming or that causes concern for the wellbeing of a student or staff, please inform a staff member immediately. See district policy 414 for more definitions and details.

Injuries

Injuries and accidents that occur during your volunteer time, no matter how minor, must be reported to EPS staff immediately. If a child is hurt, please report it to the teacher or staff as soon as possible.

Student Contact

As a volunteer, you are only to spend time with students you meet through your service within your scheduled times according to your Volunteer Assignment Description (VAD).

Restrooms/Diapers

A volunteer is not to take any student(s) to use the bathroom. Volunteers may not change any diapers or help with cleaning up any "accidents." These tasks are the sole responsibility of district employees.

District Policies

Eden Prairie School District policies can be found online at:

www.edenpr.org/community/school-board/policies-and-procedures

Ongoing Support

Once you are assigned and have begun volunteering, you are welcome to provide feedback. As part of our commitment to providing an excellent volunteer experience for you, we want to ensure your assignment is a good match for you and you are satisfied in this position. If you are not satisfied with any portion of your experience, please let us know. Community Education team members can assist in navigating challenges or conflicts that may arise.

Additionally, we will share training opportunities and tips that may be helpful in your role as a volunteer. Our goal is to connect you with resources so you feel prepared to make a meaningful difference! Please don't hesitate to reach out if we can be of assistance.

Our Schools

Administrative Services Center 8100 School Road Eden Prairie, MN 55344 952-975-7000 Office Hours: 7:30am-4:30pm	Cedar Ridge Elementary 8905 Braxton Drive Eden Prairie, MN 55347 952-975-7800 Principal: Amy Jahnke Associate Principal: David Freebug, Stephen Shepherd School Hours: 8:00 am - 2:30 pm	Central Middle School 8025 School Road Eden Prairie, MN 55344 952-975-7300 Principal: Nate Swenson Associate Principal: Rich Larson School Hours: 9:25 am - 4:07 pm
Eagle Heights Spanish Immersion 13400 Staring Lake Parkway Eden Prairie, MN 55347 952-975-7721 Principal: Hernan Moncada Associate Principal: Mitch Hegland School Hours: 7:45 am - 2:15 pm	Eden Lake Elementary 12000 Anderson Lakes Parkway Eden Prairie, MN 55344 952-975-8400 Principal: Tim Beekmann Associate Principal: Valora Unowsky School Hours: 8:40 am - 3:10 pm	Eden Prairie High School 17185 Valley View Road Eden Prairie, MN 55346 952-975-8000 Principal: Robb Virgin Associate Principals: Meagan Bennett, Clayton Ellis, Victor Johnson, Russell Reetz School Hours: 8:35 am - 3:20 pm
Forest Hills Elementary 13708 Holly Road Eden Prairie, MN 55346 952-975-8600 Principal: Connie Hytjan Associate Principal: Thomas Walters School Hours: 8:00 am - 2:30 pm	Lower Campus/ Little Eagles Preschool 8100 School Road Eden Prairie, MN 55344 952-975-7200 Early Childhood Coordinator: Katelyn Johnson Office Hours: 8:00am-4:30pm School Hours: 9:30 am - 12:00 pm & 1:00 pm - 3:45 pm Full-Day Preschool School Hours: 6:30am-6:00pm	Oak Point Elementary 13400 Staring Lake Parkway Eden Prairie, MN 55347 952-975-7600 Principal: Joel Knorr Associate Principal: Stephanie Baker School Hours: 7:45 am - 2:15 pm
Prairie View Elementary 17255 Peterborg Road Eden Prairie, MN 55346 952-975-4770 Principal: Felicia Thames Associate Principal: Brett Lobben School Hours: 8:40 am - 3:10 pm	Directions to each site are available at www.edenpr.org. For information on opportunities within each location, please call 952-975-6940 or visit www.edenpr.org/volunteer.	