



Brownsboro ISD Volunteer Handbook

Help Make A Difference.



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Mission

BISD will encourage, empower, and equip all students to achieve their full potential.

Vision

Better today. . . greater tomorrow

CORE Beliefs

- Every student is a perfect creation who deserves a chance
- Every child has value and deserves the very best we can give
- Everyone matters at Brownsboro ISD
- A small-town atmosphere leads to stronger relationships
- We are a family-community-first district
- The BISD community will support anything that benefits students
- We use different measures of success than just test scores
- Out of the box thinking excites students and teachers
- Facilities are not a measure of what can happen inside them
- We can be the “go to” district

Volunteer Guidelines and Expectations

The following guidelines have been developed for the BISD Volunteer Program. They are designed to protect both students and volunteers from harm and to prevent even the appearance of impropriety on the part of the individual mentors, volunteers, students and schools participating in volunteer programs.

Acceptance of and adherence to these guidelines is mandatory to participate as a volunteer in Brownsboro ISD. Please know that we appreciate your participation and that we appreciate your adhering to these guidelines. If you have additional questions, ask your school principal or the Director of Student and Staff Services. In addition to this assistance, following these guidelines and expectations will help you to have a successful volunteer experience:

- Complete the required application and please read over the Volunteer Handbook.
- Be prompt and dependable. Please notify the school by phone or email if you cannot come at your scheduled time.
- Sign in and out upon arrival and departure according to school procedures. Wear your issued RAPTOR printed badge.
- Communicate. Ask questions, share ideas, get to know the staff and other volunteers. Please don't hesitate to call, leave a note, or ask for a meeting to discuss any problems or concerns that may arise. Every problem is solvable with respectful, honest communication.
- Support the work of the classroom teacher and school staff. The volunteer's role is one of assistance.
- Be a positive role model for children and youth in attitude, behavior and language. Let your conversations demonstrate respect for others, and avoid language that may be perceived as discriminatory, sexist, or offensive.
- Dress appropriately and follow school policies.

- Maintain confidentiality. Respect the confidential nature of the knowledge you gain concerning the academic performance, behavior and personal information of the students with whom you work. Discuss concerns with the teacher and/or principal, not with other volunteers, parents/family members or acquaintances.
- Maintain appropriate contact only in school settings. Do not initiate contact with the students with whom you work or their families outside of the school or program setting.
- Protect privacy. Do not ask for students' addresses or phone numbers or social media information and do not share yours with the students.
- Refrain from gift-giving. Don't bring gifts or food treats for individual students. With teacher or principal approval, volunteers may bring snacks for the entire class or group, or they may make a donation of books or supplies for the class or group.
- Follow "safe touch" guidelines. Volunteers do not initiate touching a student (pats on arm or back, or for younger children, hand-holding, hugs, or lap-sitting), but may respond to the student's initiation of appropriate touch.
- Notify the teacher, principal, or counselor if a student tells you something or you notice something that may indicate his/her safety is at risk or he/she is in emotional distress. • Know and adhere to school district regulations regarding Internet use and social media. Please silence cell phones during volunteer assignments.
- Never arrive to your volunteer assignment while under the influence of alcohol or drugs, or use alcohol, drugs, or tobacco during your assignment. Never carry a weapon on school premises or other program sites.
- Fundraising, solicitation of donations, and using a volunteer placement for personal gain are prohibited. Some program fundraising and solicitation of donations may be appropriate in collaboration with designated school and program staff. Only they are authorized to publicly represent the program and/or serve as spokespersons.

- Promotion and/or solicitation on behalf of your own personal interests or those of your organization or business is not allowed.
- Follow non-harassment and safe workplace rules and regulations.
- Ensure positive closure. If you plan on ending your volunteer involvement before the end of the school year, please notify your teacher and the principal. It is especially important that the student is aware of your final tutoring session. The student needs to be left with the clear message that you have enjoyed working with him/her.
- Adhere to all BISD policies and procedures.
- Enjoy knowing your investment of time and interest is making a difference for students!

Keeping Student Information Safe

All student information should be treated confidentially. Both state and federal law protect the privacy of student information, including the Family Educational Rights & Privacy Act (“FERPA”). FERPA is a federal law that governs the disclosure of school and personal records for students. As a volunteer you may find yourself having access to protected student information during the course of your service. We must keep all student data and information confidential pursuant to FERPA. Sharing student information with others may be a violation of the law.

Confidential information includes any personally identifiable information regarding a student, including, but not limited to:

- Academic and health records
- Test scores and grades
- Family information
- Discipline or behavioral incident information
- Status or accommodations given an academic or developmental special need
- Student’s name
- Parent name(s)
- Name of another family member
- Parent address
- A personal identifier (like Social Security number), or
- A list of characteristics that would make it possible to identify the student with reasonable certainty

Volunteers must respect the confidential nature of the knowledge you gain concerning the academic performance, behavior and personal information of the students with whom you work. Discuss concerns with the teacher or principal, not with other volunteers, parents/family members or acquaintances.

As a volunteer, you must not disclose such confidential information except as may be allowed and/or required by law or BISD policy. You further must exercise due diligence to safeguard against the negligent disclosure of confidential information by ensuring confidential information is not left

unattended or unsecured in paper or digital format. If you have any questions about whether certain information is confidential or the disclosure of student information, ask campus administration for clarification.

For additional information about FERPA and to read the FERPA regulation visit: <https://studentprivacy.ed.gov/faq/what-ferpa>

Student Disclosures

As a consistent volunteer, you will build trusting relationships with students. These relationships may lead to students sharing thoughts, experiences and feelings with you. Resist the urge to promise a student that you will not reveal confidential information to a parent or school officials. It may be necessary to reveal information to protect the welfare of the student and to protect you from violating the law. Although the student is free to share confidential information with you, there are certain things that you are required by law to tell the campus administrator. Any personal information learned from a student or student's files, should be held in strictest confidence except:

1. If a student confides that he or she is the victim of sexual, emotional, chemical, or physical abuse;
2. If a student confides that he or she is involved in any illegal activity;
3. If a student confides that he or she is considering homicide or suicide.

Should one of these exceptions arise, you are required to immediately notify the student's principal AND appropriate agencies. In case of suspected child abuse or neglect, contact the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (TDFPS) at 1-800-252-5400 within 24 to 48 hours.

https://www.dfps.texas.gov/Child_Protection/Child_Safety/report_abuse.asp

Note on your calendar when this information was reported and to whom it was given. Remember, this information is extremely personal, so do not share it with anyone except the appropriate authorities. If you have questions, please ask a campus administrator.

"Texas law requires that any person suspecting that a child has been abused or neglected must immediately make a report. If there is an emergency, call 911 and then call the DFPS Texas Abuse Hotline at 1-800-252-5400. You can also make a report online . Professionals must make a report no later than the 48th hour after first suspecting a child has been abused or neglected or is a victim of an offense under Section 21.11, Penal Code. A professional may not delegate to or rely on another person to make the report (Texas Family Code, Section 261.101)"

Important Information for Volunteers

Appropriate Interactions with Students

As a volunteer, you will be interacting with BISD students in a variety of settings over varied periods of time. Appropriate interactions as per BISD policies are outlined below:

Physical Contact

- Volunteers should practice appropriate touch: side hugs, fist bumps, and high fives are appropriate if students initiate them.
- Restrict other physical contact.
- Use common sense.
- Remember that what you see as simple, friendly affection between you and the student may be viewed as something entirely different by someone else.

Pictures and Recordings

- Volunteers should not photograph or record any students who are not their own; without prior permission from the teacher and/or the campus principal.
- Volunteers should never post photos of students on social media. Both state and federal law protect the privacy of student information, including pictures and recordings of students.
- Volunteers should not photograph or record any students' work without prior permission from the teacher and/or campus principal.
- Volunteers should never post, distribute, or publish any photograph or recording of any student not their own on any social media site.

Transportation

- Transporting a student in your personal car as part of your volunteer activities is prohibited. Do not put yourself in the position of being alone with any student in any vehicle.
- Students must be transported in a school district vehicle for field trips or in the vehicle of a parent or legal guardian.
- Sometimes a parent may provide written consent for you to transport the parent's child. That may not protect you from liability because you would not be acting within the scope of your duties as a volunteer.

Positive, Respectful Role Modeling

- Do not criticize parents, teachers, school personnel or guidelines publicly or with your student. If a problem arises, consult with the campus principal.
- Do not discuss your students and their problems publicly or with others. If you need help with a student, discuss the matter professionally and confidentially with the teacher, counselor, assistant principal, or principal.
- Address the student directly and with sensitivity, be honest and model an appropriate manner.

Respecting Boundaries

- Volunteers should never give the student personal contact information (email, phone numbers, etc.) or take student information.
 - Volunteers and students should never meet outside of the program.
 - Volunteers should never give students gifts, candy or any other item.
- Opportunities may exist for student recognition, but must be approved by the campus principal and designated staff.

In Case of Emergency

In case of an emergency on the campus, volunteers must follow the campus plans, policies, and procedures. If there are safety drills, volunteers are expected to participate if they are on campus.

There are numerous opportunities at BISD schools to volunteer. Whether you would like to volunteer as a classroom/office assistant, tutor, field trip chaperone or at a one-time event, you are encouraged to contact your school directly to learn about current opportunities.

Sample activities:

Office/Classroom Assistant:

Assist the teacher with assigned duties and tasks in the classroom. Assist with assigned duties and tasks in the office.

Field Trip Chaperone Serves as a chaperone during BISD-sponsored field trips to ensure students are properly supervised.

Volunteer Code of Ethics

As a volunteer, you are also expected to adhere to the Volunteer Code of Ethics.

As a volunteer, I realize I am subject to the same high code of ethics as that of the paid professional. I expect to be held accountable for fulfilling my responsibilities. I promise to serve with an attitude of open-mindedness, a willingness to be trained, and a respect for confidential matters. My goal is dedicated service to the students of the Brownsboro Independent School District (BISD).

- Be sure to sign in and out of the school and wear the required Volunteer photo ID badge.
- Be a positive role model by acting professionally and dressing appropriately.
- Be familiar with all school policies, such as use of office machines, parking regulations, and emergency procedures.
- Remember that all school, staff, and student information is confidential per FERPA.
- Remember that it is the principal's decision when to allow volunteers into the building and what tasks the volunteers are allowed to do. This is determined based on the needs of the school and may differ from campus to campus.
- Never verbally or physically discipline or touch a student.
- Never allow a child to leave your care.
- Discussions with students should remain on-topic, school and age appropriate, and within the context of the nature of the assignment.
 - Treat fellow volunteers, teachers, students, parents, and administrators with respect and kindness.
- Please remember the parent role is separate from the volunteer role. Please refrain from visiting your child's classroom or teacher during instruction hours.
- Notify, as soon as possible, the school if you must be absent.
- Discuss any concerns with the principal. Failure to follow the Volunteer Code of Ethics and the responsibilities thereof will result in the termination of my volunteer services.