



# Volunteer Guidelines

## 2024-25

Revised July 2024

Dear Thaden Volunteer,

Thank you for your continued dedication to Thaden. We look forward to engaging you in the life of our school and are grateful for your time and talents. Your efforts make our community stronger and brighter.

This handbook outlines the essential policies and procedures that will guide and advance our purpose. It begins with the mission statement that informs all we do to provide a challenging and balanced education for our students. May your work at Thaden School be meaningful, rewarding, and joyous. In the words of our namesake, “fly higher!”

Michael Maloy  
Head of School

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## Mission and Guiding Principles

Our mission is to provide a balanced and challenging education that ignites in our students a passion for discovery and learning, prepares them to succeed in college, and inspires them to lead lives of integrity, purpose, and responsible global citizenship.

In pursuing our mission, we are guided by these principles:

- The diversity of a school is essential to the quality of education that it provides.
- In a small school, students are better able to form close relationships with teachers that will give them a stronger sense of belonging, self-confidence, and responsibility.
- There is an art in masterful teaching, which requires resources, mentorship, and recognition.
- A well-balanced curriculum empowers students:
  - To think ethically, critically, and creatively about global issues and their local manifestations;
  - To see connections among the humanities, sciences, and mathematics as integrative disciplines in the search for knowledge, meaning, and beauty;
  - To build coherent, compelling, and innovative arguments;
  - To establish their voice in the world by writing and speaking well and expressing themselves creatively;
  - To work independently and collaboratively.
- Activities outside of the classroom (such as acting in a play, competing on a team, or working on a sustainability project) give students essential opportunities to develop as leaders, volunteers, and contributors to the life and spirit of the greater community.
- A school must create a safe and healthy environment where students have time and space for reflection, freedom to make important decisions, and opportunities to learn from mistakes.
- The harmony of a school community depends on a shared commitment to honesty, compassion, and fair play.

## I. General Guidelines

Please adhere to these guidelines when volunteering at Thaden School (the School):

- Arrive at school no more than 15 minutes before your scheduled time.
- Park in the Visitor/Student parking lot on the East Campus adjacent to The Barn.
- Bring a photo ID to check in at the Main Office.
- Wear the identification sticker or badge given to you at all times while you are on campus.
- Wait for a designated faculty/staff member to meet you at the Main Office.
- Check out at the Main Office when you are done volunteering.
- Notify the Executive Director of Community Relations by email ([mfahey@thadenschool.org](mailto:mfahey@thadenschool.org)) if your employer offers matching gifts for volunteer hours served.

### Contacts

- Contact [Mandi Fahey](#), Executive Director of Community Relations, by email with general questions.
- Contact your Thaden School point person with specific event-related questions.
- Contact the Main Office at 479-268-5321 for urgent matters or after business hours.

## II. Community Norms

Suspend Judgment  
Seek to Understand  
Maintain Confidentiality  
Encourage Wild Ideas  
Speak From the “I” Perspective  
Be Crisp, Say What’s Core  
Build on the Ideas of Others  
Listen, Listen, Listen, and Speak

## III. Civility and Respect

Thaden School is a community devoted to learning. To that end, we actively seek students, faculty, staff, and families who will bring a diversity of viewpoints and backgrounds to our campus. By welcoming a broad range of human experiences and a rich variety of human perspectives, we enhance our capacity for learning, enrich the quality and texture of our community, and better prepare our students for life and leadership in a pluralistic society.

As an educational community, we respect the dignity, individuality, and freedom of each member, and we attach great value to freedom of expression and vigorous debate. At the same time, we aim to foster a sense of shared experience and common purpose, along with collective responsibility for each other’s well-being. Although we acknowledge the difficulties inherent in creating a community of individuals who may be very different from one another, we remain unwavering in our commitment to both diversity and community in the service of educational excellence.

With respect for our common humanity, Thaden School prohibits sexual harassment and harassment based on race, religious creed, color, gender, national origin or ancestry, physical or mental disability, medical condition, sexual orientation, or any other basis protected by federal, state, or local law or ordinance or regulation. Our anti-harassment policy applies to all students, faculty, staff, and volunteers, and prohibits harassment (in person or digitally, on campus or off), including, but not limited to, the following:

- Verbal conduct such as epithets, derogatory jokes or comments, slurs or unwanted sexual advances, invitations, or comments;
- Visual displays such as derogatory and/or sexually explicit posters, photography, cartoons, drawings, or gestures;
- Theft, vandalism, or lack of respect for the safety, rights, and property of others;
- Physical conduct including assault, excessive horseplay, reckless endangerment of others, unwanted touching, intentionally blocking normal movement or interfering with work;
- Retaliation for reporting (or intending to report) harassment;
- Badgering, harassment, demeaning, coercion, bullying, hazing, denigration, or intimidation of another person in any manner.

Those who believe they have been subject to harassment should contact the Head of School immediately and provide the details of the incident(s), the names of the individuals involved, and the names of any witnesses. The School will undertake a prompt, thorough, and objective investigation. A volunteer found responsible for harassment will not be allowed to volunteer.

## IV. Safety and Security

### Drug-Free and Alcohol-Free Workplace

Thaden School maintains a drug-free workplace. All volunteers must abide by our drug- and alcohol-free policies. The School reserves the right to discipline or terminate violators from volunteering, even if a first offense.

In keeping with Thaden School's commitment to providing an educational environment that is safe and supportive, the following activities are prohibited:

- Use, possession, sale, purchase, or transfer of illegal drugs while on the job or on Thaden School property, grounds, or at any event sponsored by the School;
- Use or possession of alcohol or illegal drugs while operating Thaden School vehicles;
- Abuse of legal drugs while on the job, including but not limited to, distribution, abusive use, or selling;
- Consumption, possession, or sale of alcoholic beverages on Thaden School property, grounds, or at events except in the case of school-sponsored activities that have been authorized in advance by the Head of School;
- Consumption of alcohol prior to going on duty, while on duty, or while otherwise performing school business, either on or off the premises.

## Smoke-Free and Tobacco-Free Environment

Thaden School prohibits smoking, use of tobacco, and use of electronic cigarettes and pipes or “vaping” in the workplace, on school grounds, and at any location where the School is presenting or sponsoring an event.

## Discrimination and Harassment

Thaden School is committed to providing a professional and courteous work environment that is free from all forms of unlawful discrimination and other conduct that is harassing, coercive, or disruptive. Such conduct is prohibited and will not be tolerated. This prohibition applies to all personnel, including supervisors and temporary staff, and includes all forms of harassment, including harassment based on an individual’s sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, race, color, national origin, religion, age, or any characteristic protected by federal, state, or local law or School policy.

Please note that sexual harassment is a form of harassment. The following is a non-exhaustive list of examples of behavior that constitutes sexual harassment:

- Unwanted sexual advances;
- Offering employment benefits in exchange for sexual favors;
- Making or threatening reprisals after a negative response to sexual advances;
- Sexually oriented conversations or activities that create a work environment that is intimidating, hostile, or offensive to another employee;
- Verbal abuse, kidding, remarks, or comments that intimidate, ridicule, or maliciously demean the status of an individual’s gender or sex;
- Physical conduct that includes touching, assaulting, or impeding movement of another.

If you experience or witness sexual or other unlawful harassment in the workplace, you should report it immediately to your supervisor or the Head of School. If your supervisor or the Head of School is the alleged harasser, report the incident to the President of the Board of Directors. All complaints will be investigated fully without bias and appropriate action, up to and including termination, will be taken based on the outcome of the investigation. All complaints and investigations will be kept confidential to the extent possible.

Retaliation against a volunteer who makes a charge of harassment, is a witness to the alleged harassment, or otherwise participates in the investigation of harassment allegations will not be tolerated. In the case of retaliation, Thaden School will take appropriate action, up to and including termination. False complaints may also lead to disciplinary action against the accuser.

## Non-Fraternization

Thaden School volunteers are prohibited from trespassing beyond the boundaries of a student/volunteer relationship. Some behaviors that seem innocent from an employee’s perspective can be perceived as flirtation or sexual insinuation from a student or parental point of view. The purpose of the following list of unacceptable behaviors is not to restrain innocent, positive relationships between employees and students but to prevent relationships that could lead to, or may be perceived, as inappropriate.

The following is a list of unacceptable behavior with or in the presence of students, which includes, but is not limited to:

- Giving gifts that are of a personal or intimate nature;
- Any type of unnecessary and/or inappropriate physical contact with a student;
- Intentionally being alone with a student away from school;
- Making, or participating in, sexually inappropriate jokes or comments;
- Seeking emotional involvement with a student beyond the normative care and concern required of an educator;
- Discussing inappropriate personal troubles or intimate issues with a student;
- Giving students a ride to/from school or school activities without written parental permission;
- Becoming involved with a student so that a reasonable person may suspect inappropriate behavior.

If a volunteer suspects another community member of having crossed the boundaries specified in the policy, they must promptly report the matter to the Head of School. Prompt reporting is essential to protect students, the suspected employee, any witnesses, and the School itself. All reports shall be kept as confidential as possible.

Volunteers who violate this policy will be subject to discipline, up to and including termination, and may be reported to law enforcement authorities if the conduct is believed to constitute a crime under state or federal law.

## Weapons

No person may bring, carry, or display any weapon of any type (including knives, loaded or unloaded firearms, explosives, and ammunition) on the Thaden School campus or any school facility, in any school vehicle, or at any school-sponsored function, except as may be specifically authorized and limited by Arkansas law. The only persons excepted from this prohibition are appointed Campus Safety Officers.

## Surveillance

Every member of the Thaden School community is involved in monitoring our campus grounds. Anyone who sees an unknown person or who witnesses suspicious activity on campus should report it immediately to a faculty or staff member. In accordance with best practices for ensuring campus safety, Thaden School has video cameras placed at several public and strategic locations such as points of access, drop-off and pick-up areas, and parking lots. The purpose and use of these video cameras are solely to monitor the safety of school grounds.



## Acknowledgment of Receipt and Review

Please review and sign below to indicate receipt and acknowledgment of these Volunteer Guidelines. The completed form should be returned to the Office of Admissions and retained in your volunteer file.

- I acknowledge that I have received and read a copy of the Thaden School Volunteer Guidelines. I understand that the policies, rules, and benefits described herein are subject to change at the sole discretion of the School at any time. I understand that this document supersedes all existing guidelines and/or previous handbooks.
- I further understand that my engagement as a volunteer is terminable at will, either by me or by the School, regardless of the length of my engagement. Nothing in this document should be interpreted as an employment contract or a promise of ongoing employment.
- I understand that, should the content of this document be changed in any way, Thaden School may require an additional signature from me to indicate that I am aware of and understand any new policies.
- I understand that failure to comply with the policies and terms described in this document may result in disciplinary action, up to and including discharge.

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Volunteer's Printed Name

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Volunteer's Signature

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Date