

# YouthFriends

## *North Kansas City Schools*



# Partners in Education

- District Partners in Education Director– Dr.AthenaGraham
- Administrative Assistant – Bambi Powell
- Building Facilitators – 32 across district

(816) 321-5018

[youthfriends@nkcschools.org](mailto:youthfriends@nkcschools.org)

# YouthFriends Mission

YouthFriends connects students, teachers and schools with inspiring mentors to promote real world learning experiences in order to enhance student success, encourage healthy behaviors and build stronger communities.

# History of YouthFriends

- Began in 1995 with 36 volunteers
- Celebrating 30 years with 2024-25 school year
- Currently 375+ YouthFriends

# Process for YouthFriends

- Application
- Training Video
- Volunteer Policy Forms
  - North Kansas City Schools Board Policy IICC-AP(1): School Volunteers
  - North Kansas City Schools Standards of Conduct for YouthFriends
- Background Screenings
  - Family Care Safety Registry Background Check
  - Criminal Background Check
- Applicant is notified by email when the process is completed
- Applicant is assigned to a school

# Background Screening Information

- Per district policy, there are two required screenings for YouthFriend volunteers:
  - Child Abuse & Neglect Screening - **Family Care Safety Registry (FCSR)**
    - Register online or by mail.
    - If you believe you are already registered in the FCSR system, please call our office so we can confirm.
    - Use the Family Care Safety Registry Instruction sheet included in the Welcome to YouthFriends email
  - Criminal Background Check - **Visitor Aware**
    - Create a profile
    - Take a picture
    - Provide your Drivers License

# YouthFriends Placement

- After being assigned to a school, you will work with the school's Partners in Education Building Facilitator on your placement, activity and start date.
- The school's Building Facilitator will match you with teacher/students.
- The school's Building Facilitator must receive written Parent Permission for students working with YouthFriends in a 1-1 match or small group match.
- The school's Building Facilitator will notify you when they are ready for you to begin at the school as a YouthFriend volunteer.
- Once you are placed in a school and volunteering, you may add additional schools to expand your YouthFriend volunteer opportunities. Please call our office to add the school(s) to your placement list.
- When volunteering at multiple buildings you will have an individual PIE Building Facilitator at each school that you'll work with to establish a schedule that works best for you and the school.
- During the summer, we send a mailing to all active YouthFriend volunteers that includes program updates & to inquire if you plan to return for the upcoming school year and if you'd like to update your school placement or activity.

# YouthFriends Activities

***YouthFriends are mentors who support students academically and commit to serving in any of the below capacities for at least an hour each month.***

- Before or After School Activities – Coach a group of students in a specific activity or share a skill with students such as acting, sewing, etc.
- Breakfast or Lunch Buddy – Meet with students during breakfast or lunch and take time to have a conversation with them about what's going on in life. Encourage students to always be and do their best in all they do.
- Classroom Helper – Assist students in the classroom with various academic activities.
- Library Assistant – Help students as they come to the library media center looking for books or researching information for a class assignment.
- Mentor – Utilized by buildings in multiple capacities to support students.
- Tutor – Help students build self-esteem and confidence to succeed in school through supporting them with their academic studies.



# YouthFriends Building Visits

**Visitor Aware Volunteer Check-in System** – The Visitor Aware system was implemented to improve security and provide a safer environment for students, staff and visitors.. The Raptor system is how our school know visitors are in the building.

- You will need to provide Drivers License – 1<sup>st</sup> Visit to School.
- Create your profile
- Take your picture

**Name Badges** – must be worn at all times when serving at the school. Will be printed for you by front office staff at check-in

**Breaks in Service** - If you are unable to participate as a YouthFriend due to unforeseen circumstances, please call our office to let us know so we can make a note in your profile, keeping you active until further notice.

# Practical Tips for YouthFriends

- In the event that you cannot make it to the school on your scheduled day. Please call the schools main office so they can let the PIE Building Facilitator know, in which he or she can then let the student(s) know.
- Ask your student(s) teacher to clarify any directions that are unclear.
- Please remember, confidentiality about the students is critical. Student(s) names or situations should never be discussed with people other than their teachers or appropriate staff at the school.
- If a student(s) tell you something of grave concern. Listen, but don't ask probing questions. Encourage the child to talk with their teacher, counselor, principal or parent. You may also wish to discuss your concern with the teacher or building administrators.
- Please be mindful of your role as a volunteer in the school district regarding social media posts.
- YouthFriend volunteers should work under the guidance & direction of a staff member, you should never be in an area where school staff are unable to view you & the student(s).
- Students are expected to behave respectfully and responsibly at all times to all people. If there is a problem, including non-compliance or not following specific directions, the student(s) should be escorted back to their teacher.
- Do give verbal praise to students for their efforts. Your presence, praise and encouragement is much more valuable than any trinket or gift.

# Next Steps

Utilize the “Welcome to YouthFriends” email you received after submitting your application to complete the following:

- **Complete the Policy Forms:** print, sign and return two policy forms
  - North Kansas City Schools Board Policy IICC-AP (1): School Volunteers
  - North Kansas City School Standards of Conduct for YouthFriends
- **Complete the Required Screenings:**
  - Family Care Safety Registry Background Check
  - Criminal Background Check

Once you have completed the above steps and we received your results you will be notified by email, and you will be assigned to the school. At that time the schools Partners in Education Building Facilitator will be in contact with you for placement.