

*Provide an environment that guarantees  
all students learn at a high level*



**Volunteer Handbook  
2024-2025**

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	3
Volunteers and Visitors: What's the Difference	3
Volunteer Opportunities	4
Application/Registration	4
Volunteer Screening	5
Fingerprinting Process	5
Sign in/Sign out Protocol	5
Attendance Records	6
Age Requirement	6
Insurance	6
Volunteer Guidelines	6
Volunteer Responsibilities	8
Working with Staff	8
Working with Students	9
First Few Days	9
School Representation	10
Rewards of Volunteering	10

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## Introduction

The purpose of the Liberty Elementary School District (LESD) Volunteer Program is to assist schools in providing the highest quality education to each and every student. The services of volunteers are utilized in schools and district offices in order to accomplish the following:

- Enrichment of the learning opportunities for students
- Provide individual attention to students who may require additional supports in academics and social/emotional well-being
- Build school-home-community partnerships to maximize student connection
- Provide teachers with additional time to work with students
- Relieve teachers and support personnel of non-instructional tasks

A Volunteer is an individual who performs hours of service for a public agency for civic, charitable or humanitarian reasons without promise, expectation or receipt of compensation for services rendered.

A person is considered a Volunteer if they have signed up for and agreed to serve the school community in a scheduled and/or prearranged activity by a staff member. All volunteers are required to be fingerprinted on an annual basis.

Everyone who cares about children and education is a potential volunteer. Prior teaching experience is not necessary. Volunteers can be parents, grandparents, college students and community members.

School Volunteers have talents that enrich the school program and are needed to promote the success of all students. LESD is always seeking volunteers who are willing to accept responsibility and some supervisory roles, possess high moral character, and align with LESD values.

### Volunteers and Visitors: What's the Difference?

Not every visitor to a school is a volunteer. A visitor is an individual who attends a school on sporadic occasions and for small increments of time. A visitor typically visits a school to meet with staff, pick up students during the school day or perform temporary, contractual and/or guest teacher service in which they receive payment.

Examples of a visitor include, but are not limited to, a district employee from another location, substitute and temporary employees, third-party contracted personnel, parents picking up students, meeting with teachers, or bringing classroom treats.

Individuals who are visiting a school, but not volunteering, do not need to be a registered volunteer. All visitors need to follow the school's sign-in procedures.

- **Visitor Responsibility**

1. Sign in at the kiosk in the front office by scanning the driver's license.
2. Visitors will be asked to complete the required fields using the kiosk.
3. A temporary badge will be printed for your visit.
4. Wear the badge/sticker so it is visible at all times during the visit.
5. Sign out at the kiosk at the end of the visit.
6. Do not perform volunteer services.

- **School Responsibility**

1. Ensure visitor scans identification (driver's license) at the kiosk.
2. Ensure visitor receives a temporary visitor badge/sticker.
3. Ensure the visitor does not perform volunteer services.

## Volunteer Opportunities

There are a wide variety of volunteer opportunities working with children as well as jobs for those who prefer not to work directly with students. Volunteers choose the jobs that interest them and decide how many hours and days they wish to contribute. Here is a sampling of volunteer opportunities.

<b>Student Supervision Outside of Classrooms</b>	Supervises students in non-academic settings to ensure their safety and implement procedures for the specific position. Even though these positions are not directly related to curriculum, they are just as vital to our daily operations and allow school staff to attend to lesson planning and preparation, small group tutoring, and collaborating with staff and parents. These positions include but are not limited to before and after school supervision: cross walks, entry and exit gates, parent drop-off and pick-up areas, etc. It also includes lunch and recess supervision.
<b>Classroom Instructional Volunteer</b>	Works directly with individuals or small groups of students. Listens to students read, reinforces basic math skills, or assists students with written assignments.
<b>Classroom Assistance Volunteer</b>	Works with a teacher and performs tasks such as putting up bulletin boards, correcting papers, photocopying and other jobs that will provide the teacher with more time to plan for and teach students.
<b>Office Clerical Assistance</b>	Works with the school office staff to provide support and assistance with duties such as sorting mail, answering the phone and photocopying.
<b>Library/Media Volunteer</b>	Works with the media specialist by repairing and shelving books, doing clerical work or preparing bulletin boards and displays. Volunteers may choose to work directly with students helping them to locate and use library materials.

## Application/Registration

Members of the community who want to make a difference in the lives of children and support educators are encouraged to apply to become a volunteer at Liberty Elementary School District.

Simply follow the steps below:

1. Parent, guardian or a community member expresses interest for volunteering (school or district office)
2. Complete an application.
  - a. Log in to the District website - [www.liberty25.org](http://www.liberty25.org) Click on the menu, Click on Join Our Team, Click on the link for Volunteers, Inside the Volunteers page, click on the link to complete the Volunteer Application, Click Submit or click on the following link: [Volunteer Application](#)

3. Human Resources will review and screen each Volunteer application prior to sending to site Principals for approval.
4. Upon submission, receipt, and review of the **online** Volunteer application, Human Resources will distribute to site Principals for approval.
5. Volunteers will be notified by the Human Resources Specialist regarding the next steps (fingerprinting, handbook review, training, and ID badge picture). When possible, larger groups will be organized and fingerprinting, handbook review, and training will take place at the District Office.

## **Volunteer Screening**

The Human Resources Specialist will take a photo for the required Volunteer ID Badge, along with fingerprinting Volunteers, if needed. Volunteers will be required to fill out an affidavit which will be notarized at the District Office and have fingerprints taken. (Proof of identity is required at this time)

## **Fingerprinting Process**

All fingerprinting will be conducted by the Human Resources Specialist at the District Office. When possible, larger groups will be organized to maximize efficient operations of HR staff.

1. Fingerprint cards will be submitted to DPS weekly.
2. Results from DPS are expected in approximately 4-6 weeks
3. Upon Fingerprint approval, Volunteer will be notified by the Human Resources Specialist.
4. Human Resources Specialist will notify Principal and Office Manager that the Volunteer was approved and send ID badge to Office Manager
5. The fingerprint fee will be paid by the district.

Volunteer applicants, who are not parents of students in the District, shall be fingerprinted for the purpose of background screening at District expense. District will maintain records of fingerprinted volunteers and require volunteers to be fingerprinted by the District every three (3) years.

***Note: Volunteer chaperones on overnight field trips must be fingerprinted and possess a AZ IVP Fingerprint Clearance Card prior to the approved overnight field trip.***

## **Sign-In / Sign-Out Protocol - ID Badge**

The safety of students and staff is the highest priority. LESD has established a protocol for approved volunteer sign in and sign out.

Upon entering campus, Volunteers will be required to scan their driver's license at the kiosk in the front office. A temporary volunteer badge will be printed at the kiosk. At that time, front office personnel will provide the Volunteer with their district provided ID Badge. ID Badges must be visible at all times while volunteers are on campus. Without the ID Badge, Volunteers could be mistaken for a visitor or a stranger on campus.

When a Volunteer has completed all arranged activities for the day, the Volunteer will need to return the ID Badge to the front office and sign out at the kiosk in the front office.

All ID badges must remain at the school site where Volunteering. When a volunteer discontinues participation in the Volunteer Program, the assigned school site must return the ID badge to Liberty District Office.

## Attendance Records

For security and liability insurance coverage reasons, the District must have a record showing the days and hours each volunteer works on campus. It is imperative that each time a Volunteer works on campus, they scan their driver's license at the kiosk for sign in/sign out. A record of each volunteer's hours enables the school to evaluate its volunteer program and recognize volunteers for their valuable contribution to the district. Additionally, volunteers must maintain hours each year to remain active.

## Age Requirement

All volunteers must be over 18 years of age.

## Insurance Coverage

Volunteers are covered by the district's liability insurance policy while they are on campus and working under the direct supervision of the school staff. Volunteers must be registered at their school site and a record of volunteer hours must be maintained at the school office. For this reason, it is very important for all volunteers to sign in and out during each visit. Volunteers are not covered under the district's health and medical benefits or workers' compensation insurance.

## Volunteer Guidelines

- **Supervision of Volunteers:** School volunteers work under the direct supervision of the professional teaching staff and/or administration at the school. The school is responsible for the education, safety and well-being of each student. Any volunteer whose actions are not in the best interests of the school or students will be dismissed.
- **Student Discipline:** Students rarely have behavior problems while working with volunteers. Our school has a detailed discipline plan included in the Student Rights & Responsibilities Handbook. The responsibility for discipline rests with the school staff. Volunteers may not discipline students. Please make the teacher or administration aware of any discipline problems that arise while you are working with students.
- **Restrooms:** Volunteers are not permitted to use student restrooms under any circumstances. Staff restrooms are located in the school offices and are available to volunteers.
- **Confidentiality:** Issues, challenges, behaviors, problems, and confidential information of students, their parents, and the staff should never be disclosed **to** anyone who does not have a professional right or need to know. Like teachers, volunteers are bound by a code of ethics to keep confidential matters within the school. The staff and students need to know they can trust you. Please do not discuss a child's school progress or difficulties with his/her parents. This is the teacher's responsibility. Occasionally, a child might confide in you about family matters or personal problems. Please keep this information confidential. If you feel it is vital for the school to have this information in order to help the student, discuss the child's conversation with the teacher or principal in private.
- **Mandatory Reporting:** Arizona State law (ARS 13-3620) requires school personnel (any district employee or any other person who has responsibility for the care or treatment of a minor) to report any case of suspected child abuse to Department of Child Safety (DCS) at 1-888-767-2445. Liberty Elementary School District guidelines recommend that volunteers should contact the principal and or health aide for reporting procedures and calling DCS. Police officers or DCS caseworkers may interview students in the investigation of child abuse. They

must present picture identification. The investigator should be provided a room or place that will ensure privacy. The administrator need not be present unless the officer requests his/her presence for the comfort of the child. The investigator will be responsible for any notification of parents or victims or witnesses.

- **Dismissal of Students:** Volunteers may never dismiss a student from school. Children who must leave school early must receive permission from the school office. A parent or guardian must sign the student out before leaving. Under no circumstances may a volunteer take a student off campus.
- **Dress and Behavior:** Take your lead from the school staff and dress appropriately for the job you are doing. Casual clothing is fine, but we ask that your attire follow the LESD dress code policy. Revealing clothing, tube tops, tank tops, and short-shorts are not acceptable.
- **Health:** If you are not feeling well, please don't try to keep up with your volunteer duties. You'll accomplish more in the long run if you allow yourself time to recuperate. Please call the school office and leave a message for the teacher or staff member with whom you work. Let them know in advance if you will be unable to volunteer on that day. We are particularly concerned about keeping students and staff healthy. This is another reason for staying away from school if you have a contagious illness.
- **Your Commitment:** Before you agree to volunteer, carefully consider the commitment you are making. The work of volunteers is important work. Whether in the classroom, main office, media center, cafeteria or health office, the staff and students quickly become dependent upon volunteer assistance. Don't promise to volunteer more time than you will be able to provide. It's better to start out with a few hours per week and gradually build up to more hours or days if you find you have the additional time. The school will accept whatever hours you decide to volunteer.
- **Dependability:** Please be prompt and consistent. We know there will be times when you will be ill, on vacation, or unable to volunteer. Remember that the teacher will be expecting you on the days you are scheduled to volunteer - and so will the children. If you fail to show up at your appointed time on your appointed day, everyone is disappointed. Please call the school office and leave a message for the teacher or staff member with whom you work. Let them know in advance if you will be unable to volunteer on that day.
- **School Rules:** Become familiar with the rules and policies of the school where you will be volunteering. It is a good idea to read through the school's handbook. Ask your supervising teacher or administrator to explain the school's policy for use of telephones, eating facilities, fire drills and emergency procedures. Use reasonable judgment in making decisions when there appears to be no policy or when the policy is not communicated.
- **Younger Children of Volunteers:** Volunteers may not bring non-enrolled children with them to school when volunteering.

## Volunteer Responsibilities

Volunteers are an important part of the educational team. The suggestions and opinions of volunteers are always welcome. It is the professional staff, however, that is held responsible by law for the decisions that are made regarding the instruction of students and the management of the school. For this reason, volunteers always work under the direct supervision of teachers and administrators.

The professional staff at your school is responsible for everything that goes on in your building, including student instruction, safety and discipline. Volunteers supplement and support the program, but ***may not***:

- Provide the curriculum or teaching plan
- Discipline students
- Take over primary supervisory roles in a classroom for any period of time
- Be unsupervised with a student or group of students
- Have access to students' permanent record files (psychological records, grades, health histories, etc.)
- Diagnose student needs
- Evaluate achievement
- Counsel students
- Drive District vehicles
- Give any food to students
- Discuss student progress with parents
- Give students advertisements or fund solicitations

## Working with Staff

The staff will appreciate your willingness to be a part of the educational team. Teachers and support personnel will come to depend upon your assistance.

Below is a list of helpful tips for effective volunteering:

- Working effectively with the staff begins with letting the staff you are working with get to know you. In addition, it is helpful to inform personnel of the types of jobs you have an interest in doing along with the special areas of skill you bring so your services can be fully utilized.
- If you've never been a school volunteer, there are many new and exciting things to learn about volunteering. Please be aware that some staff members have never had an opportunity to work with volunteers before. This will be a new experience for them as well.
- Effective communication is critical in all working relationships. The staff will welcome your questions and comments. If you don't understand something, please ask.
- Volunteering should be an enjoyable and rewarding job. If you are unhappy or concerned about an issue, discuss the situation with the school Principal.
- We all have different ways of doing things. When you have been assigned a task, make certain you know exactly how the teacher expects the job to be done. Ask for clear directions and, if necessary, ask that the teacher give you samples or demonstrate how tasks are to be performed.
- The opportunity to learn new skills is one of the benefits of being a school volunteer. Be willing to try new tasks assigned by the staff, but accept only as much responsibility as you are comfortable with.
- Please arrive for your scheduled time promptly and give the staff plenty of notice when you won't be available at your scheduled time.
- The staff often relies upon volunteers to do routine jobs such as preparing learning aids and organizing materials. Since volunteers are able to assist with these important tasks, teachers are free to spend more time working with students or planning for quality instruction.



## Working with Students

- Get to know the students and build relationships. A child's name is very important. Make every effort to pronounce and spell each child's name correctly.
- Closely observe the techniques used by the teacher. For consistent and effective delivery, try to model these instructional methods when working with students.
- Accept children as they are. Each child is unique. Some children may be very different from your own children. Be ready to accept these differences in background, values, skills, and aspirations.
- Be firm with students, but also warm and friendly. Let each child know that you care about him/her. Your individual attention will be important.
- Encourage and praise students. Use positive comments that will encourage children to feel good about themselves even when they are having difficulty. Avoid saying anything that will make students feel negatively about themselves or affect their ability to learn. Be ready to praise children for every success.
- Encourage students to do their own thinking. Try not to give students the answers before they have had an opportunity to solve questions on their own. Give children plenty of time to answer your questions. Silence often means that a child is thinking. Beware of the occasional students who may try to get you to do their work for them.
- Follow the teacher's lead. Always be consistent with the teacher's rules for classroom behavior. Don't allow children to do things that their teacher doesn't allow. Remember, the teacher is always available and ready to handle discipline problems. Make sure the children with whom you are working do not disturb the rest of the class.
- Reinforce positive behavior. When children (especially younger students) are behaving well, always let them know how proud you are of them and how much you appreciate their effort. This will encourage them to try even harder. If possible, do not pay attention to a child who shows minor misbehavior problems but do note things the child is doing well and praise him/her for it.
- It's OK if you don't know all of the answers. Admit to the children that you don't know the answer or aren't sure what to do. Work the answers out together with students or feel free to ask the teacher for assistance.
- Keep students on task. You'll want the children to learn as much as possible during the short time they spend with you. Try and keep the lesson or activity moving. Try to avoid letting one or more students get you or the group off track for long periods of time by discussing topics that have nothing to do with the lesson.
- Under no circumstances should you leave a student or small group of students without supervision. Always be fully aware of what students are doing at all times.
- Your positive words of encouragement will go a long way in helping students become excited about learning. Younger children may also enjoy stars, stickers, stamps and special little notes of praise from the volunteer. You and the teacher can discuss the use of these motivational materials.

## Your First Few Days

The first days are usually the busiest because there are so many new people to meet and things to learn. As you become more familiar with the school and your assignment, you will feel more at home. Here are some suggestions to make the experience more fruitful:

- **Initial Visit** - At your initial visit to the school, the school delegate will give you a tour of the school. This will provide you with an opportunity to learn your way around the school and be introduced to key people. Please consider the Optional Areas of Consideration when you begin volunteering. If you have any other questions or concerns, add them to the list.

- **Optional Areas of Consideration**

- Plan to consider these ideas:

- Days and times you will work
- How you will let the teacher know if you are unable to work at your assigned time
- Alternate plans for days when the teacher is absent and a substitute is in charge of the class
- How the teacher will tell you of your day's assignments
- How you will tell the teacher what you have accomplished during the day, performance of students with whom you have worked, need for materials, etc.
- Where to leave your personal belongings
- Location of materials and workspace for your use
- Classroom rules and teacher's discipline policy
- Procedure for letting the teacher know when a child is having a discipline problem that requires his/her attention
- Daily class schedule
- Alternate plans if a student with whom you work is absent
- Student roll and/or seating chart
- Other questions or concerns

- **Take Time to Observe** - if you'll be working with students, the first day or two in the classroom might be spent observing the teacher and children. You'll become familiar with the teaching style your supervising teacher uses. You'll also observe what acceptable behavior is for students and what is not, how much freedom is allowed, and what the daily routine is like. If you are observing, you can also work on various tasks the teacher will assign such as correcting papers, filing and preparing learning materials. You'll want to get up from time to time and move among the students as they are working. Don't hesitate to ask individual children what they are doing. Students love to have the opportunity to explain their assignments.

## **You Represent the School**

As a volunteer, you not only serve the needs of the children, you also provide a vital link between the school and the community. Students, their parents, and the community will view you as a representative of the school. They will pay close attention to what you say about the staff and the educational programs. Sometimes the community hears about the negative aspects of education or stories about the few students who misbehave. Because of your volunteer experience, you'll be able to share the many positive things that students and staff are doing. You'll have an opportunity to let the community know what's going right in our schools.

## **Rewards of Volunteering**

We know you'll enjoy your volunteer experience. Each year, many volunteers tell us they receive so much more in return for what they contribute to the program. By sharing your time with our students and staff you will:

- Be given the opportunity to use your skills and talents
- Gain a better understanding of how children learn
- Have a chance to meet and work with teachers and other volunteers
- Know the work you are doing directly affects the quality of education for the children of our community
- Have a great chance to learn valuable new skills that you might use in future endeavors

On behalf of all LESD students, staff and administration, THANK YOU for your commitment and service to the communities we serve.