BISMARCK
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK

Volunteers play an essential role in the success of Bismarck Public Schools. Your time, energy, and commitment directly support our students, staff, and community. Whether you assist in classrooms, activities, or special events, your contributions make a meaningful difference in creating a positive and supportive learning environment.

We are deeply grateful for your willingness to share your talents and heart with us. Thank you for being an important part of our BPS family.

Benefits of Volunteerism in Schools

Volunteer / Community Member

- Personal satisfaction from helping children learn.
- Opportunities to learn new skills, polish old ones.
- Work experience that may lead to a future career.

Student

- Additional individual adult attention.
- An accepting atmosphere for reinforced learning.
- A warm and caring adult who is a friend and role model.

School

- Positive interaction with the community.
- Improved student achievement and behavior.
- Additional services without extra costs.

Responsibilities:

District:

- Provide Background Checks (if required) and notify the school when volunteer is cleared.

School Volunteer Coordinator (Not every school has such a person. The school principal or other designee may fulfill this role):

- Survey needs of teachers
- Arrange for volunteer orientation and training at the school level
- Place volunteers by matching their skills/interests to job assignments
- Serve as a resource for volunteers
- Keep records of volunteer service hours

Teachers/Staff

- Identify volunteer opportunities/time of day
- Communicate with volunteer coordinator regarding volunteer performance

Volunteer Job Description Examples:

Art/Project Volunteer
Works with small groups on special projects.
Helps teacher with preparations and clean-up
Seasonal projects

Classroom Volunteer
Reading support
Math support
Writing support
Hangs artwork or displays projects
Small group leader

Junior Achievement Volunteer
International organization that prepares students to succeed in a global economy. Please contact the Bismarck-Mandan Chamber of Commerce if you are interested in becoming a Junior Achievement Volunteer. Phone number 701-223-5660

Clerical Volunteer
Assists the school office staff with large mailings
Organize Box Tops and other school coupons
Assist with fundraising record keeping

Field Trip Chaperone
Assists teachers during field trips, picnics, performances
Takes responsibility of a group of students assigned by the teacher.

Special Events Volunteer
Parent Night
Bingo for Books
Screen Free Night
Book Fair

Volunteer Checklist / Guidelines – **familiarize yourself with these prior to volunteering.**

- Confidentiality
- School layout, parking, and facilities
- Classroom behavior policy
- Classroom procedures and rules
- Procedures for fire drills, etc.
- Sign in procedure

Volunteer Guidelines

Thank you for volunteering your time and talent. Below are some guidelines to ensure a positive volunteer experience for you, the students and staff.

1. Check in at the office when you arrive and check out as you leave.

2. Notify the school in advance if you are unable to volunteer. This will allow the teacher time to make other arrangements.

3. Encourage all students to do their personal best.

4. Volunteers are not responsible for managing student behavior. Behavior concerns should be reported to the classroom teacher or another staff member.

5. Demonstrating appreciation and respect for different cultures and family backgrounds in our school will increase your ability to help students learn and achieve academically.

6. A volunteer is required to protect the confidentiality of all student information. Do not discuss student performance or behaviors with anyone other than authorized school employees who are directly involved with the student.

7. If you have a disagreement with a staff member, discuss it with them privately. If the issue is not resolved, discuss the matter with the volunteer coordinator or school principal.

8. Keep adult conversations to a minimum when you are volunteering in a classroom or learning area.

9. Cell phones must be silenced while volunteering. Phone conversations should be carried on outside the classroom areas to avoid disrupting student learning.

10. Volunteers should familiarize themselves with school safety procedures for such things as fire, tornado, lockdown and shelter-in-place.

11. All Bismarck Public School facilities and grounds are drug, alcohol and tobacco free.

Emergency Procedures

Fire/Evacuation

A "Fire Response" is initiated by the fire alarm. Teachers and aides will escort kids through the nearest exit and out of the building. Every school has a designated "Marshalling Area" where all classes meet and teachers take roll. During fire drills, administrators may stand in front of one exit and imitate a fire, giving student and staff experience in rethinking their way through different situations.

- Tell students where to go before anyone leaves the classroom.
- Notify Support Team of students with disabilities who need help to evacuate the building.
- Take the Classroom Emergency Kit with you.
- Evacuate with a Teacher Partner.
- Follow the assigned evacuation path OR evacuate from the nearest safe exit OR as directed by the Support Team member or Emergency Responders.
    - **DO NOT EVACUATE INTO**:
        - Smoke
        - A chemical spill
        - The proximity of a suspicious object
        - School parking areas
- Upon arriving at the Marshaling Area, take roll.
- Notify Support Team Members of any missing students.
- Monitor students until otherwise directed.
- When instructed, re-enter the building and return to the room with the students.
- Report any found students to the Support Team members so the students can be escorted to the appropriate classroom.

Tornado/Severe Weather

A "Tornado or Severe Weather Response" is usually initiated by the National Weather Service. Teachers and aides will escort students to pre-designated safe areas. These areas are generally interior rooms with no windows, hallways with no open ends and basements.

- Get beneath heavy furniture or line up along the wall of an interior hallway on the lowest floor possible.
- Kneel on the floor with elbows touching the floor and hands clasped behind the neck to protect the head.
- Stay away from windows and glass.
- Avoid auditoriums, gyms or other rooms with wide free-span roofs.
- Each teacher will report to the Principal or Support Team Member regarding the welfare of the students in the class.

Lockdown

A lockdown occurs when there is an immediate threat to students/staff safety. All normal activity stops, and students are taken to designated safe areas.

BPS uses the **Run, Hide, Fight** model while responding to a lockdown. These are three different options when responding to a lockdown.

RUN – If your best option is to run, run out of the building and far away until you are in a safe location. Leave personal belongings behind, visualize escape routes, avoid escalators and elevators, grab any unclaimed students along the way, call 911 when safe to do so.

HIDE – Hide in as safe a place as possible. Lock the doors, cover any windows, barricade the doors with heavy furniture, turn off lights if safe to do so, silence all electronic devices, remain silent.

FIGHT – This is a last resort option. Use physical force and any object in the environment to incapacitate the shooter.

Support Teams & Teachers:

- Go to nearest secure area keeping in mind this may be outside of the building.
- Grab any unclaimed students along the way.
- Lock all doors and windows.
- Direct students to stay away from doors and windows.
- Use furniture for protection, barricade, concealment, stay low, and remain quiet.
- If safe to do so, quietly take roll.
- Do not open the door or leave the room unless otherwise directed to do so by the Principal or Police Department, EVEN IF FIRE ALARMS ARE SOUNDING, because there may be a gunman in the hallway! Exit only if you are in imminent danger due to smoke or fire. Exit outside of the building via classroom windows, if possible.
- **<u>If an intruder is entering your room</u>**:
    - Get everyone out of the room, if possible.
    - If your fortified lockdown has failed and evacuating is not an option, the goal is to disarm and neutralize the threat.
    - Use any possible item in your room to assist – books, office supplies, computers, hot coffee, flashlight on phones, noise, furniture.

Shelter-In-Place

A "Shelter-In-Place Response" is called when there is not an immediate threat to students or staff safety. A shelter-in-place is used as a PRECAUTIONARY measure. Examples of situations where a shelter-in-place may be called: reports of a wild animal in the area; robbery (armed or unarmed) reported at a nearby location but not on school grounds; escaped prisoner in the area; police responding to a domestic dispute; or an arrest being made near a school, etc.

- Depending on the situation, doors and windows may or may not be locked.
- Students may or may not be allowed to leave the classroom without adult supervision.

People may or may not be allowed to enter/exit the building.

Bismarck Public Schools Volunteer Agreement

Name of Volunteer:			
Email Account:			
Phone Number:		**School (s):**	
Conviction of a crime is not an automatic bar to volunteering. The district will consider the nature of the offense, the date of the offense, and the relationship between the offense and the position for which you are volunteering.			
Have you ever been convicted of a violation of law other than a minor traffic violation? If yes, please explain			
Have you ever had to register as a sex offender? If yes, please explain			
Have you been convicted of any offense for physical or sexual abuse of a child? If yes, please explain			
Have you ever had a charge of child abuse against you substantiated? If yes, please explain			

Volunteer Screening
Volunteers who will be working unsupervised with students or in high-risk positions shall undergo a fingerprint-based background check prior to volunteering. The Human Resources Department will provide information to potential Volunteers.

Methods used to screen volunteers shall in no way discriminate against any protected status.

Adjudication
The Superintendent or designee shall adjudicate final volunteer applicants' criminal history records and shall make final determinations about suitability for service with the District. The District is not obligated to utilize the services of any final applicant who, in the adjudicator's judgment, exhibits qualities inconsistent with the district's mission; is potentially disruptive to district operations; or, potentially threatening to district safety.

Final volunteer applicants shall be disqualified for service for at least the following reasons:
1) The Volunteer has committed a felony, sexual offense (as defined by NDCC 15.1-13-26), crime against a child (as defined by NDCC 15.1-13-26), or any other offense involving a child victim.
2) The Volunteer falsified or omitted information submitted during the application process, including, but not limited to, information concerning criminal convictions or pending criminal charges.

Final Applicant Rights
Records obtained by the District for background and other record checks will be used solely for purposes that they were requested and will only be disseminated and retained in accordance with the Bismarck Public Schools records retention policy. The adjudicator shall advise applicants that the procedure for obtaining, correcting, or updating federal records is contained in 28 CFR 16.34 and shall give the applicant a reasonable time to correct

and/or complete his/her criminal history record or decline to do so before making a determination on qualification for service.

☐ I have read, understand, and will abide by the guidelines set forth in the Bismarck Public Schools Volunteer Handbook.

Volunteer Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Please obtain School Official signature prior to sending to human resources.

School Official Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

☐ This volunteer will have **unsupervised contact** with students and will require a fingerprint background check.
(**Unsupervised Contact**: Volunteer is not supervised by someone who has completed a background check)

Human Resources Signature: _____**Date:** _____

☐ Sex Offender Search has been completed on this volunteer

Date: _____

Initial: _____

*A signed copy of this agreement shall be retained in the Human Resources Dept. and the Building Site.

VOLUNTEER CONFIDENTIALITY RULES

Under federal law, state law and school policy, all information related to the Bismarck Public School District students is confidential, with only a few exceptions. As a result, students have the right to expect that all information about them will be kept confidential by all volunteers except as authorized below.

Volunteers are required to comply with the following confidentiality procedures:

1. Each student has the right to expect that nothing about him/her and nothing that happens to him/her will be repeated to anyone other than authorized school employees at your school as designated by the principal.
2. Even when discussing a student with those who are directly involved in a student's education, you may not share confidential information with them unless you have been authorized to do so by the principal and the information is relevant to the student's educational growth, safety, or wellbeing.
3. You may not use confidential information for any unauthorized purpose even if you believe doing so is in the best interest of the student. You may not share information about a student with others who are genuinely interested in the student's welfare, such as: social workers, clergy, nurses/physicians, friends, community members, members of your family, and/or members of a student's family.
4. You must refer all questions concerning a student to the building principal unless you have otherwise received the principal's authorization to respond.
5. Upon authorization of the principal, you may release information such as a student's name, address, phone number. (For more information, please reference policy FGA.) This information is called directory information under law and is typically not considered confidential. However, if a student's parent chooses not to allow for its release, even directory information is confidential. This is why the principal's authorization is necessary before releasing such information.
6. The only exception to the above rules is when a student has a serious medical or safety emergency, and you must share confidential information for the student's care or protection. A serious medical emergency is when a student's health or safety is in immediate risk.

Before you speak, always remember that violating a student's confidentiality isn't just impolite, it's against the law! Under federal student privacy law (commonly referred to as FERPA), the government is allowed to withdraw federal funds from any school that discloses information from a student's education records without his or her parent's consent.

VOLUNTEER CONFIDENTIAL AGREEMENT FORM

I, (print name)_____,as a volunteer for the Bismarck Public School District acknowledge that I have read and understand the above privacy and confidentiality requirements. I agree never to disclose information about a student to anyone other than as authorized by the principal (and as listed below) or in the event of a serious medical or safety emergency.

_____ _____

Volunteer's Signature Date

Authorization and Acknowledgement

The only school officials to whom the volunteer may release a student's confidential information are:

_____ The school attendance office staff

_____ The student's classroom teacher

_____ The classroom aide

_____ The student's individual aide

_____ The student's special education teacher

_____ The school counseling office staff

_____ The building principal and school district superintendent

_____ Other: _____

_____ _____

Principal's Signature Date