

OMAHA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

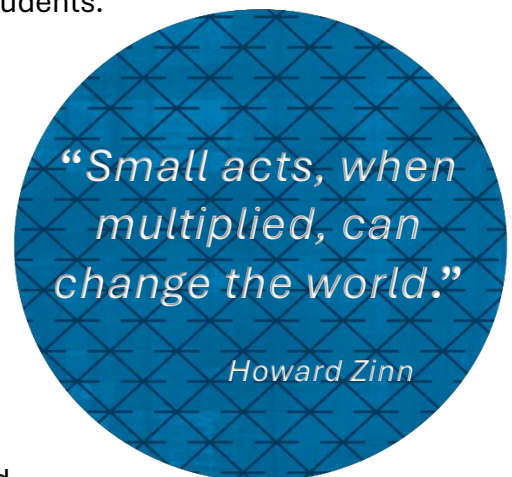
Volunteer Guidelines

Welcome and thank you for volunteering with Omaha Public Schools. OPS strives to improve student learning through strong partnerships with dedicated volunteers, passionate educators, and our school community. Your involvement helps build a community that values academic excellence, skill development, individual strengths, technology use, community engagement, and a lifelong passion for learning. Whether you volunteer for one hour, one day a week, a special project, or on a field trip, your efforts make a difference for students. Please carefully review the volunteer information and guidelines included in this document.

The following information contains guidelines and information to facilitate a successful volunteer experience:

- **Safety.** Always enter the building through the main office entrance. Doors are locked for the safety of all students and staff; please do not prop/block doors open.
- **Sign in and sign out.** Always report to the main office first to sign in and get a visitor pass. Please wear the school-issued identification badge while participating in volunteer activities. Upon departure, make a final stop in the main office to sign out and return the visitor badge.
- **Use adult/staff restrooms only.** Do not accompany a student into the restroom.
- **Safe Interaction with Students:**
 - Avoid being alone with students unless approved by the principal and Talent Services. If not approved, a certified district employee must be present.
 - Handshakes, high fives, and fist bumps are appropriate.
 - Never touch a child in anger. **Volunteers are not permitted to discipline students.** Any behavioral issues must be immediately referred to the classroom teacher or a building administrator.
- **Medications.** Medical treatment for any student is the responsibility of the school nurse or other designated staff. Volunteers may not administer medication to a child. If a student becomes ill, follow the school's protocol regarding notifying the teacher and taking the child to the school nurse.
- **Report concerns.** If a student shares information that raises concerns about their safety or health (such as suspected abuse or neglect), or if you observe concerning behavior or interactions, **FIRST** call Child Protective Services immediately at 800-652-1999. **NEXT**, notify the school principal. Keep the details and your actions confidential.

- **No photos or contact information.** To protect student privacy and your own, do not ask to take a student’s picture, request a student's phone number, or share your contact information. Do not connect on social media or other digital platforms.
- **Keep information confidential.** Anything you learn from staff about your student, or from your interactions with your student, is confidential. All information regarding student grades, behavior, or family matters is strictly confidential under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act. It must not be discussed with anyone other than the assigned teacher or administrator.
- **Emergency Protocol.** Do not wait for an emergency to arise before learning what must be done. Find out in advance about all types of building alarms for various disasters, and be prepared to follow the rules for fire and disaster drills. In any event, if you are alone with students when an emergency arises, stay with them until you are relieved by a school staff member. Familiarize yourself with all emergency procedures and exits. Faculty and staff are trained to handle emergencies, and your role is to support their efforts. It is important that you remain calm.
- **Respect diversity.** Omaha Public Schools students come from diverse backgrounds, families, and communities. We celebrate diversity and promote students' cultural and ethnic pride.
 - Treat students with dignity, care, and respect, just as you wish to be treated.
 - Take time to listen and learn about the backgrounds and values of students you work with.
 - Do not impose your personal values or beliefs on students.
 - Avoid soliciting students or staff for commercial, political, or religious reasons.
 - Refrain from language that could be seen as discriminatory, sexist, racist, or offensive.
 - When unsure, choose your words carefully.
- **Be a role model.** Engage respectfully and age-appropriately with students while maintaining professional, moral, and ethical standards.
- **Professional Standards:**
 - Schools depend on your attendance. Be punctual and reliable. If you cannot attend your scheduled volunteer time, inform the school office promptly so adjustments can be made.
 - Wear neat and appropriate attire that serves as a good model for students. Avoid revealing clothing or items with offensive logos and messages.
 - Volunteers are prohibited from bringing their own children or guests while on duty to avoid distractions and liability issues.



- **Tobacco products, drugs, and alcohol:**

- Volunteers are prohibited from using or being under the influence of tobacco products, drugs, or alcohol.

- **Respect for Authority**

- A volunteer must respect the authority of all school staff. If there is an issue or disagreement, please bring it to the principal's attention privately at an appropriate time.

- **Electronics and Technology:**

- Silence cell phones and refrain from personal business or making calls while on campus.
- Only use cell phones for emergencies.
- Do not take photos or videos of students without the administration's explicit permission.
- Volunteers should exercise appropriate and responsible use of school and District technology and information systems.

- **Access to School Property and Materials**

- As appropriate, volunteers shall have access to school property and shall receive training in the operation of any equipment. Property and materials should only be used for school-related purposes.

- **Resignation/Dismissal**

- Volunteers may terminate volunteer service with the school at any time. Similarly, the school may end the volunteer relationship at any time and for any reason. Possible reasons for dismissal may include, but are not limited to:
 - Breach of confidentiality
 - Sexual misconduct
 - Unlawful conduct or violation of Omaha Public Schools' Board policies and regulations
 - Inability to cooperate and work effectively with school staff and students
 - Erratic or unreliable attendance or behavior
 - Criminal charges or conviction
 - Establishing inappropriate relations with any student

Board Policy

Policy 4042 – Code of Ethics

Policy 1210 – Title IX

Policy 1200 – Anti-discrimination, Anti-harassment, and Anti-retaliation

Policy 6800 – Online and Digital Access and Education