BECOME A NEW CANEY ISD *Volunteer*

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HOW TO BECOME A *Volunteer*

Volunteers will need to complete these steps each school year to become an approved designated volunteer.

1. Complete the online volunteer orientation and acknowledgement of completion.

2. Apply online and upload all required documents: Volunteer Application

3. Agree to a criminal background check.

4. Once approved sign up for volunteer opportunities at the campus.

Utilization of the Raptor Volunteer Management System

All New Caney ISD schools use the RAPTOR Volunteer Management system to track volunteers who are regularly providing services for the school district. Being a volunteer may involve service for a single event on district property or at a school-related event off school property.

You will be required to register online each school year in the RAPTOR Volunteer Management System. All volunteers must pass an annual criminal background check before volunteering at any New Caney ISD school. New Caney ISD reserves the right, in its sole discretion, to refuse and/or restrict an individual's access as a New Caney ISD volunteer based on an individual's criminal history, by applicable law and New Caney ISD policy.

Becoming a Designated Volunteer

1. Complete the online volunteer orientation and certify the acknowledgement of completion.
2. Apply online, agree to a criminal background check, and upload all required documents.
3. You will receive an email notification upon submission of your application confirming that it has been received and is being processed. You will receive another notification upon completion of the background check.
4. Once approved, your name will appear in the Raptor Volunteer Management System for the campuses you chose during the application process. Approval means you are eligible to volunteer, but you must coordinate your volunteer activities with the campus and/or program for which you are volunteering.

Designated Volunteer Credentials

- Designated volunteers volunteering at a campus during the school day will receive a volunteer sticker badge for that day's service upon signing in at the campus.
- Designated volunteers volunteering for a campus event that is away from campus will receive a volunteer sticker badge/plastic lanyard for that event from the campus subject to approval by campus personnel in charge of the event.
- Designated volunteers volunteering on an extended basis for a school program will receive a custom credential for that program subject to approval by the program director.

Volunteer Guidelines & Expectations

Acceptance and adherence to these guidelines is mandatory to participate as a volunteer in New Caney ISD. Please know that we appreciate your participation and adherence to the guidelines. Following these guidelines and expectations will help you to have a successful volunteer experience:

All visitors to campus, including designated volunteers, will be issued a Raptor temporary sticker, which they are required to wear while on campus.

- **Complete the required application, volunteer orientation, and any other required training sessions**
- **Be prompt and dependable.** Please notify your child's teacher or campus administrator if you cannot come at your scheduled time.
- **Sign-in and sign-out upon arrival and departure according to school procedures.**
- **Support the work of the classroom teacher and school staff.** The volunteer's role is one of assistance.
- **Be a positive role model for children and youth in attitude, behavior, and language.** Let your conversations demonstrate respect for others, and avoid language that may be perceived as discriminatory, sexist, or offensive.
- **Dress appropriately and follow district policies and procedures.**
- **Maintain Confidentiality.** Respect the confidential nature of the knowledge you gain concerning the academic performance, behavior, and personal information of the students with whom you work. Discuss concerns with the teacher or campus administrator, not with other volunteers, parents/family members, or acquaintances.
- **Maintain appropriate contact only in the school setting. DO NOT** initiate contact with the students with whom you work or their families outside of the school or program setting.
- **Protect Privacy.** Do not ask for students' addresses or phone numbers, and do not share yours with students.
- **Refrain from gift-giving.** Don't bring gifts or food treats for individual students. With teacher or campus approval, volunteers may bring snacks for the entire class or group, or they may make a donation of supplies for the classroom or group.
- **Follow the "safe touch" suggestions.** Volunteers do not initiate touching a student (pats on the arm or back, or for younger children, hand-holding, hugs, or lap-sitting), but may respond to a student's initiation of appropriate touch.

- **Notify the teacher or campus administration if a student tells you something or you notice something that may indicate his/her safety is at risk or he/she is in emotional distress.**
- **Know and adhere to school district regulations regarding Internet use and social media.**
- **Never arrive to your volunteer assignment while under the influence of alcohol or drugs, or use alcohol, drugs, or tobacco during your assignment.** Never carry a weapon on school premises or other program sites.
- **Fundraising, solicitation of donations, and using a volunteer placement for personal gain are prohibited.** Some program fundraising and solicitation of donations may be appropriate in collaboration with designated school and program staff. Only they are authorized to publicly represent the program and/or serve as spokespersons.
- **Promotion and/or solicitation on behalf of your own personal interests or those of your organization or business is not allowed.**
- **Follow non-harassment and safe workplace rules and regulations.**
- **Adhere to all NCISD policies and procedures.**
- **Enjoy knowing your investment and interest is making a difference for students!**

If you have additional questions, ask your designated campus.

Protecting Student Information

All student information should be treated confidentially. Both state and federal law protect the privacy of student information, including the Family Educational Rights & Privacy Act ("FERPA"). FERPA is a federal law that governs the disclosure of school and personal records for students. As a volunteer you may find yourself having access to protected student information during the course of your service. We must keep all student data and information confidential pursuant to FERPA. Sharing student information with others may be a violation of the law. Confidential information includes any personally identifiable information regarding a student, including, but not limited to:

- Student's name
- Parent name(s)
- Name of another family member
- Parent address
- A personal identifier (like Social Security number), or
- A list of characteristics that would make it possible to identify the student with reasonable certainty
- Academic and health records
- Test scores and grades
- Family information
- Discipline or behavioral incident information
- Status or accommodations given an academic or developmental special needs.

Volunteers must respect the confidential nature of the knowledge you gain concerning the academic performance, behavior, and personal information of the students with whom you work. Discuss concerns with the teacher or campus administration, not with other volunteers, parents/family members, or acquaintances.

As a volunteer, you must not disclose such confidential information except as may be allowed and/or required by law or New Caney ISD policy. You further must exercise due diligence to safeguard against the negligent disclosure of confidential information by ensuring confidential information is not left unattended or unsecured in paper or digital format. If you have any questions about whether certain information is confidential or the disclosure of student information, ask the campus administration for clarification. For additional information about FERPA and to read the FERPA regulation visit:
https://studentprivacy.ed.gov/faq/what-ferpa

Student Disclosures

As a consistent volunteer, you will potentially build trusting relationships with students. These relationships may lead to students sharing thoughts, experiences, and feelings with you. Resist the urge to promise a student that you will not reveal confidential information to a parent or school officials. It may be necessary to reveal information to protect the welfare of the student and to protect you from violating the law. Although the student is free to share confidential information with you, there are certain things that you are required by law to tell the campus administrator. Any personal information learned from a student or student's files should be held in the strictest confidence except:

1. If a student confides that he or she is the victim of sexual, emotional, chemical, or physical abuse;
2. If a student confides that he or she is involved in any illegal activity;
3. If a student confides that he or she is considering homicide or suicide.

Should one of these exceptions arise, **you are required to immediately notify the student's principal AND appropriate agencies. In case of suspected child abuse or neglect, contact the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (TDFPS) at 1-800-252-5400 within 24 to 48 hours.**
https://www.dfps.state.tx.us/Child_Protection/Child_Safety/report_abuse.asp

Note on your calendar when this information was reported and to whom it was given. Remember, this information is extremely personal and capable of damaging lives, so do not share it with anyone except the appropriate authorities. If you have questions, please ask a campus administrator.

"Texas law requires that any person suspecting that a child has been abused or neglected must immediately make a report. If there is an emergency, call 911 and then call the DFPS Texas Abuse Hotline at 1-800-252-5400. You can also make a report online. Professionals must make a report no later than the 48th hour after first suspecting a child has been abused or neglected or is a victim of an offense under Section 21.11, Penal Code. A professional may not delegate to or rely on another person to make the report (Texas Family Code, Section 261.101)".

Appropriate Interactions with Students

As a volunteer, you will be interacting with New Caney ISD students in a variety of settings over varied periods of time. Appropriate interactions as per New Caney ISD policies are outlined below:

Physical Contact

- Volunteers should practice appropriate touch: side hugs and high fives are appropriate if students initiate them.
- Restrict other physical contact.
- Remember that what you see as simple, friendly affection between you and the student may be viewed as something entirely different by someone else.

Pictures and Recordings

- Volunteers should not photograph or record any students who are not their own without prior permission from the teacher and/or the campus principal.
- Volunteers should never post photos of students on social media. Both state and federal law protect the privacy of student information, including pictures and recordings of students.
- Volunteers should not photograph or record students' work without prior permission from the teacher and/or campus principal.
- Volunteers should never post, distribute, or publish any photograph or recording of any student not their own, even if the teacher or campus principal consents, on any social media site.

Transportation

- Transporting a student in your personal car as part of your volunteer activities is prohibited. Do not put yourself in the position of being alone with any student in any vehicle.
- Students must be transported in a school district vehicle for field trips.

Positive, Respectful Role Modeling

- Do not criticize parents, teachers, school personnel or guidelines publicly or with your student. If a problem arises, consult with the campus principal or your designated point of contact.
- Do not discuss your students and their problems publicly or with others. If you need help with a student, discuss the matter professionally and confidentially with the teacher, counselor, assistant principal, or principal.
- Address the student directly and with sensitivity, be honest and model an appropriate manner.

Respecting Boundaries

- Volunteers should never give the student personal contact information (email, phone numbers, etc.) or take student information.
- Volunteers and students should never meet outside of the program.
- Volunteers should never give students gifts, candy, or any other item. Opportunities may exist for student recognition but must be approved by the campus principal and designated staff.

In Case of Emergency

In case of an emergency on the campus, volunteers must follow the campus plans, policies, and procedures. If there are safety drills, volunteers are expected to participate if they are on campus.

Volunteer Opportunities

There are numerous opportunities at New Caney ISD schools to volunteer. Whether you would like to volunteer as a classroom/office assistant, coach, tutor, field trip chaperone or at a one-time event, you are encouraged to contact your school directly to learn about current opportunities.

Sample Activities

Office/Classroom Assistant

Assist the teacher with assigned duties and tasks in the classroom. Assist with assigned duties and tasks in the office.

Field Trip Chaperone

Serves as a chaperone during New Caney ISD-sponsored field trips to ensure students are properly supervised when traveling away from the campus.

Code of Ethics

As a volunteer, you are also expected to adhere to both the Code of Ethics and Code of Civility. (See below and on next page.)

Volunteer Code of Ethics

As a volunteer, I realize I am subject to the same high code of ethics as that of the paid professional. I expect to be held accountable for fulfilling my responsibilities. I promise to serve with an attitude of open-mindedness, a willingness to be trained, and respect for confidential matters. My goal is dedicated service to the students of the New Caney Independent School District (NCISD).

- Be sure to sign in and out of the school and wear the required Raptor sticker.
- Be a positive role model by acting professionally and dressing appropriately.
- Be familiar with all school policies, such as use of office machines, parking regulations, and emergency procedures.
- Remember that all school, staff, and student information is confidential per FERPA.
- Remember that it is the principal's decision when to allow volunteers into the building and what tasks the volunteers are allowed to do. This is determined based on the needs of the school and may differ from campus to campus.
- Never verbally or physically discipline or touch a student.
- Never allow a child to leave your care.
- Discussions with students should remain on-topic, school and age-appropriate, and within the context of the nature of the assignment.
- Treat fellow volunteers, teachers, students, parents, and administrators with respect and kindness.
- Please remember the parent role is separate from the volunteer role. Please refrain from visiting your child's classroom or teacher during instruction hours.
- Notify, as soon as possible, the school's Family Liaison or administration if you must be absent.
- Discuss any concerns with the campus volunteer coordinator, principal, or the central office (281-577-8600).
- All volunteers will follow the New Caney Independent School District Code of Civility.

Failure to follow the Volunteer Code of Ethics and the responsibilities thereof will result in the termination of my volunteer services.

Code of Civility

Civility is the affirmation of what is best about each of us individually and collectively, not just an absence of harm. Therefore, as we uphold a level of safety and civility, New Caney Independent School District (NCISD) requires that when we communicate, we (students, NCISD faculty and staff, parents, guardians, and all other members of the community) will:

1. **Treat each other with courtesy, honesty, and respect at all times**
   - Listen willingly to each other, even when opinions differ
   - Share opinions and concerns with professional discourse; calm body language and mindful tone of voice

1. **Take responsibility for your actions**
   - Share accurate information
   - Manage negative responses (ex: anger) appropriately
   - Observe operational schedule

1. **Cooperate with one another**
   - Notify each other when we have information that affects student safety and/or success
   - Respect each other's time
   - Respond when asked for assistance
   - Resolve disagreements respectfully with relevant people present
   - Honor the school and district policies to promote consistency and safety

As a New Caney Independent School District (NCISD) Volunteer who values a safe, civil, and productive environment, I pledge to:

✔️ Treat NCISD faculty and staff, colleagues, students, parents, and community members with courtesy, honesty, and respect at all times.
✔️ Take responsibility for my verbal, written, and physical actions.
✔️ Cooperate with everyone to ensure student success.