ALEXANDRIA
Public Schools

Community Education

Volunteer Handbook

Our Vision

To be an extraordinary school district that tailors learning for each child, by working together.

Our Mission

To achieve educational excellence and to inspire a lifelong passion for learning.

Alexandria Public Schools Community Education
1410 South McKay Avenue Suite 201
Alexandria MN 56308
Phone: 320-762-3310 Fax: 320-762-2765
alexschools.org

Welcome

Welcome and thank you for caring about our schools and sharing your time and talents for the benefit of the students. Volunteers are important role models for our students who provide a variety of services that help enrich and enhance school curriculum while offering valuable life experiences. The rewards you receive may not be monetary, but by passing on a little bit of yourself, you will have the satisfaction of knowing that you may have influenced a student for a lifetime.

We hope you will enjoy your experience and the time spent in our schools!

Purpose

The purpose of the Volunteer Program is to:

- Assist in providing students with more individualization and enrichment of instruction.
- Build an understanding of school programs and activities.
- Strengthen school/community relations through positive participation.

Opportunities

There are a variety of ways to volunteer in Alexandria Public Schools, from Pre-K through Transition Tech. Some opportunities you'll work directly with classroom teachers. For district-wide initiatives, you'll work with Alexandria Public School Schools Community Education.

- Classroom support for literacy, math or other core subjects
- District-wide events such as STEAM Expo
- Lunch Buddy Program
- Junior Achievement Program

Or share your interest and we'll work together to find opportunities!

Expectations

- Complete a volunteer application. (www.alexschools.org)
- Always enter schools through the main doors and go through the office.
- Sign-in and out and wear a volunteer identification badge during every visit.
- Maintain confidentiality with any information shared by students.
- Wear appropriate attire for service and working with students.
- Maintain communication with immediate supervisor.
- Adhere to all district policies.
- Follow the District 206 Code of Conduct - Respect, Honesty, Kindness, Responsibility, and Fairness.
- Refrain from any religious, racial or sexual harassment and violence of any kind.
- Arrive promptly and communicate with staff if you have a conflict.

Guidelines

Discipline

- Your immediate supervisor will be the staff person you are assisting.
- Please refer any discipline problems to the person in charge of the area.
- Reinforce positive behavior.
- Keep students on task.
- Ask for assistance.

Student Contact

- Avoid or minimize physical contact with students. Handshakes, high fives or an arm around the shoulder are your best options if the student initiates contact.
- Work in a highly visible area where there is direct supervision of district staff.
- Refrain from giving students gifts, rewards or food items without the teacher's permission.
- Interact with students only at scheduled times and in the school.
- Do not leave students unsupervised.

Student Communication

- Address students by name.
- Model techniques used by the teacher.
- Be ready to accept differences in background, values and aspirations.
- Encourage and praise students.
- Encourage students to do their own thinking and solve problems.

Cell Phone Use

- Please turn off cell phones while volunteering.
- Conduct cell phone conversation away from areas of learning.
- Refrain from communicating with students via text or other social media.

Photos

- Talk to your volunteer supervisor before taking any photos of students.
- Do not share photos of students on social media. If you have photos you'd like shared, work with your supervisor.

Accidents or Injury

- Immediately report any accident or injury to the school office or supervisor.
- District coverage does not extend to use of personal automobiles for volunteers traveling to and from the site or transporting others while volunteering.

Mandated Reporting

- A person who volunteers in Alexandria Public Schools automatically becomes a mandated reporter according to Minnesota Statutes.
- In the event you have knowledge or reason to believe a child is being physically or sexually abused, that information is no longer confidential and needs to be reported immediately to your volunteer supervisor.

Children Not Registered at the School

- Volunteers may not bring non-registered or non-school-aged children with them on volunteer assignments.

Parking

- Park in the school parking lot.
- Work with school staff for best parking options.

Personal Needs

- Work with the school staff to determine where to put your coat or other personal belongings.
- Use the staff restroom facilities rather than the student facilities.

Tax Records

- Some of your out-of-pocket expenses connected with volunteering (such as mileage) may be tax deductible.
- Check with your tax preparer or the IRS for more information.

Volunteers should be aware and trained in the following policies linked below and viable online at https://www.alexschools.org/district/meet-the-school-board:

1. Policy 404 – Employment Background Checks
2. Policy 406 - Public and Private Personnel Data
3. Policy 413 – Harassment and Violence
4. Policy 414 – Mandated Reporting of Child Neglect or Physical or Sexual Abuse
5. Policy 418 – Drug-Free Workplace Drug-Free School
6. Policy 419 – Tobacco-Free Environment 912 - 3
7. Policy 541 – Code of Conduct
8. Policy 506 – District Wide Student Discipline
9. Policy 515 – Protection and Privacy of Pupil Records
10. Policy 524/453 – Internet Acceptable Use and Safety

Lunch Buddy (Grades K-5)

Purpose

- Create a connection between elementary students and adults in the community.
- Provide undivided, individual attention to students from an adult friend outside of their family.
- Support academic and social development for students through role modeling and interaction.

Responsibilities

- Commit to attend **twice a month (45 min)** on a regular basis for the duration of the school year.
- Spend one-to-one time with your student. If the student asks to bring a friend to lunch, use your best judgment and work with their teacher to determine what's best.
- Bring your lunch or enjoy a school lunch.
- Communicate with the classroom teacher regarding behavioral concerns, being absent or late.

Additional Guidelines

- Call the school or email the teacher the morning of your visit to ensure your student is in school that day.
- Contact Community Education before connecting with your lunch buddy outside of school hours which includes any mailings.
- Stay inside with your student rather than going outside with them for recess, allowing them to maintain the one-to-one connection with you.
- Use your discretion on any gift giving. Although it's not expected, some choose to offer a *small*, thoughtful gesture. Contact their teacher with questions.
- Use your discretion when accepting gifts.

Junior Achievement Classroom Leader (Grades 1-4)

Purpose

- Inspire and prepare young people to succeed in a global economy.
- Help students learn the basic concepts of business and understand the important role of education in preparing for a future career.
- Lead hands-on programs that teach students financial literacy and equip them with the knowledge and skills to succeed in school and beyond.

Responsibilities

- Attend an orientation to learn about Junior Achievement and your role.
- Commit to 5 lessons (30-45 minutes).
- Use the materials provided to you in the Junior Achievement Program Kit.
- Prepare for each lesson prior to teaching.
- Work with the classroom teacher to make it a great experience for the students.
- Communicate with the classroom teacher and school staff regarding:
    - Behavioral concerns
    - Suggestions for leading lessons
    - Being absent or late

Additional Guidelines

- Share your personal and professional experiences to help the kids connect with the content.
- Work with the classroom teacher to keep the students on track with the lessons.
- Contact your Community Education coordinator with any questions.
- Utilize the name tents in your Junior Achievement Program Kit so you can get to know the students' names.