



Douglas County School District
Learn today. Lead tomorrow.

Welcome to Volunteering in Douglas County Schools



Volunteer Handbook



“100 years from now it will not matter what my bank account was, the sort of house I lived in, or the kind of car I drove. But the world may be different because I was important in the life of a child.”

— Anonymous



Welcome Volunteers – We appreciate you!

Dear Volunteers,

On behalf of Douglas County School District, I want to thank you for being on our team to help students succeed. There is no stronger statement of parent and community support than the valuable time you invest in our youth – the leaders of tomorrow. We thank you for the wisdom you share, and the care you provide to Douglas County students.

From helping our young people learn to read, to working endless hours for after-prom, and everything in between, you send a powerful message that you are invested in our community's children and their education. You bring your own life experiences into the classroom and enrich the lives of our students and staff each day.

Our Board of Education's Vision is: *Students will acquire the knowledge and abilities to be responsible citizens who contribute to our society.* As you volunteer your time, in whatever capacity, you make a difference in our students' academic and social success. Ultimately, your active partnership will help us towards our goal of creating responsible citizens.

Thank you so much for your service to others.

Dr. Steve Herzog
Interim Superintendent

Our philosophy is to enrich our students' education opportunities by tapping the multitude of resources available. These include gifts of time, skill, expertise and knowledge found within our community.

- Our goals*
- To enhance school and District goals.
 - To extend and enrich educational programs by making available talents and resources of business persons, civic organization members, retirees, parents and friends.
 - To promote positive school/community relationships.
 - To provide a positive, safe growing environment.



Volunteer Opportunities

Classroom – Performs clerical, tutorial and teacher reinforcement tasks under the direction of the classroom teacher, thus allowing teachers more professional time to spend in their classes and with individual students.

Library/Media Center – Works with the school librarian to assist in operating the library. Shelving, filing, clipping, circulation and book processing are some of the tasks the volunteer may perform. Prepares, inventories and operates audio-visual aids/equipment under teacher's direction.

Project Assistance – Works with art or classroom teachers to prepare materials and help students develop their creativity. The volunteer provides many opportunities for students to discover and develop their abilities to the fullest.

Tutor – Works one-on-one with a student or with a small group of students who need remedial help in academic subjects to reinforce basic skills.

Special Enrichment – Participates with classes or groups on topics related to occupations, community interests, hobbies or other interests. May also assist on field trips.

School Support Activities – Performs important support as needed for a special project or fundraiser. This includes serving on PTA/PTO, School Advisory Councils or Booster Clubs; assisting with fine arts, career fairs, classroom parties, after-prom and/or other school-sponsored activities.

Vision/Hearing Screening – Although District staff conduct the screening, volunteers are essential for a smooth-running event. Volunteers may help with the actual hearing or vision screening and will undergo a short training session prior to working with students.

To more directly assist teachers and staff, most schools in the district have a part-time paid **Volunteer Coordinator**. They are responsible for the recruitment, placement, training and scheduling of volunteers in schools. Volunteer coordinators collaborate with building leadership to align volunteer efforts with school goals and promote good community relations among various community and school clientele. In addition to volunteer coordinators, many schools also have a parent-teacher organization that assists with fundraising, hospitality and other school-wide activities.

Other volunteer opportunities

Book Club/Book Fairs
Special Education
Guest Speaker
Computer Assistant
Playground/Cafeteria
Volunteer Workdays
Newsletters
School Store
At-Home Volunteers
Student Directory
Science Fairs
School Pictures
Junior Achievement
Hospitality
Destination Imagination
Dissection/Science Experiments
Music Enrichment
Field Day

Middle school and high school opportunities

Post-Grad Centers
Student Social Activities
Booster Clubs
Magazine Sales
Student Registration
Planning Events
After Prom
Math Olympiad
Band and Choir Field Trips
Overnight and Multiple Night Trips

Volunteer Guidelines

Legal Regulations

Per Board of Education Policy and Superintendent Regulations, the following Volunteer Guidelines/Legal Regulations must be adhered to.

- All **parent** volunteers must sign the Volunteer Agreement form, agreeing to student confidentiality and consenting to a background check (see “About the Volunteer Agreement Form” on page 5).
- All **community** volunteers (typically defined as a volunteer who does not have a student in a DCSD school) must complete a registration process, involving submission of the Community Volunteer Application, an interview, reference calls and a background check, along with a copy of a valid driver’s license.
- Any volunteer going on a school-sanctioned overnight trip must submit a signed Volunteer Agreement form and a copy of a valid driver’s license.
- For security reasons, volunteers must sign in upon arrival at a school site and wear a nametag while in the building.
- Risk Management requires that every person who volunteers in our schools must register and document the time they are volunteering to be eligible for the volunteer accident medical policy and coverage under our general liability. The District does not cover volunteers under its workers’ compensation policy. “Registered volunteers” will be defined as individuals who have signed and submitted the Volunteer Agreement form.
- Approval must be given before using a private vehicle in a school-sanctioned activity. The Driver Authorization form must be completed and submitted to the appropriate school administrator.
- Douglas County School District will not certify adults needing to complete hours for useful public service (this does not apply to DCSD students who are doing community service).



You do not need a teaching certificate ... you do need to have a genuine interest in students.

Volunteer Definition

A volunteer is an individual who reaches out beyond the confines of paid employment and normal responsibilities to contribute time and service to a nonprofit cause in the belief that his or her activity is beneficial to others, as well as satisfying to himself or herself.



About the Volunteer Agreement Form

As a **volunteer** assisting within the Douglas County School District Re. 1 (“District”), you have been authorized by the Principal or the Principal’s designee to act as a school official subject to the direction and control of the school’s administrators and teachers. Therefore, when signing the Volunteer Agreement, you understand and agree,

- That failure to maintain the confidentiality of all student education records and information to which you are given access may disqualify you from further service as a volunteer in the District.
- That by providing the information requested, you consent to the District conducting a background check and understand that the District reserves the right to decline the volunteer service of anyone.



Code of Ethics for Volunteers

In order to promote volunteerism in our schools, it is essential for all school volunteers to adhere to a professional code of ethics. We ask that volunteers subscribe to the following:

- **Confidentiality** – You may have access to grades and records. You will know the children who are succeeding, and you will know the children who are struggling. Discuss concerns with the staff or the volunteer coordinator, **not** with other volunteers, with other parents, or in the community.
- **Dependability** – Be dependable. The teachers/staff have planned activities for you and the students. If something comes up, please be considerate of those depending on you and notify the office.
- **Communication** – Your volunteer work should be a learning experience for you. When you have questions or concerns about policy and procedures, ask the appropriate person—the teacher, the principal, or the volunteer coordinator. Most problems can be solved with respect and honest communication.
- **Support** – As a school volunteer, you will be in a support position. Your role is to support the classroom teacher and the principal of the building, since they are responsible for the education of the students at school.
- **Attitude** – Come to school with a positive attitude, one that will say to the students, “You are so special. I’m glad that I have an opportunity to work with you.”

Tips for Working with Students

Tip **1**

Encourage children to do their own thinking.

Expectations

What a Volunteer Can Expect

- To work at a position that is worthwhile and challenging, with freedom to use existing skills and develop new ones;
- To have your position defined by a job description and to receive orientation and training;
- To receive sufficient and ongoing training with clear and specific directions from your supervisor or volunteer coordinator;
- To feel that you are an important part of the team by having your accomplishments recognized;
- To receive constructive feedback on your performance;
- To have your skills, dignity and individual needs respected;
- To not be left in charge of an entire class. This does not preclude a volunteer working in a separate room with a child, following the teacher's direction.
- To have the ability to refuse an assignment that you feel you are not trained or qualified to perform;
- And, most importantly, expect to have fun!

What Is Expected of Volunteers

- **Complete the required application paperwork** and confidentiality agreement, and attend orientation and training sessions as needed.
- **Sign in and out** upon arrival and departure. Greet teachers and staff to let them know you have arrived.
- **Wear your name tag** for identification, in the building or at your volunteer activity.
- **Bring your smile** and willingness to work.
- **Be reliable.** Show up for the activity you have volunteered for, as well as the time you agreed to—it is very important. Volunteer only for the time you can realistically expect to fulfill. If you need to be absent, call the school or volunteer coordinator as soon as possible and ask that the teacher or staff you are assisting be notified of your impending absence.
- **Be honest** in your approach and attitude.
- **Be patient** when working with students. They may be having difficulties of which you are not aware. Your patience will work wonders.
- **Be flexible** in responding to the needs of students and staff.
- **Be a positive role model** for students in attitude, behavior, language and dress. Let your conversations demonstrate respect for others, and avoid language that may be perceived as discriminatory, sexist or offensive. Dress comfortably and appropriately for the activity you will be doing.
- **Notify a staff member** if a student confides about an abusive situation. Staff will do the necessary follow-up.
- **Gifts or food for individual students is inappropriate.** With staff approval, volunteers may bring snacks for the entire classroom (for the staff to distribute when appropriate) or they may make a donation of books or supplies for the classroom.
- **Ensure positive closure.** If you plan on ending your volunteer involvement before the end of the year, please notify the staff and the volunteer coordinator. It is especially important that the students be left with the clear message that you have enjoyed working with them.

Volunteer Hours – Your volunteer coordinator must report the number of hours volunteered at your school to the District office each month.

Volunteer Hours Off Site – Those who perform volunteer work at home or outside of the school building should keep a written record of their hours of service and report the hours on a periodic basis to your volunteer coordinator.

Emergencies – In case of an emergency or when you have concerns for student safety, please report your concerns immediately to school personnel. Your school has specific procedural guidelines. In case of a life-threatening emergency, call 911. Additionally, contact our Security Department at 303-387-9999.

Siblings and Preschoolers – In order to give your full attention to your volunteer job, and because we do not have daycare available, we would ask you not to bring your younger children to the school while you volunteer.



Tips for New Volunteers

Ask questions. Know who to go to with questions. Determine what the school expects of you. Ask about common goals/beliefs.

Arrive early.

Ask for a tour to be familiar with the school and its environment.

Live up to your commitment. Be available for your assigned shifts or make arrangements ahead of time if you can't be available.

Be an ambassador for your school. Dress appropriately, and speak positively at all times.

Site Specific Information

Your school should review with you the location and/or procedures that will include the following information specific to your site:

- Restroom
- Parking
- Teachers' lounge
- Fire, tornado and lock-down procedures
- Telephones/cell phones
- Identification (button/badge)
- Copy/workroom
- Lunchroom
- Who to call if you are absent

Why Are You Asked To Record Your Volunteer Time?

Local and national organizations are consistently amazed at the amount of volunteer support Douglas County School District enjoys. This information, however, is solely dependent on volunteers themselves reporting their time to their volunteer coordinator. Your school and the District use this information in the following ways:

- To demonstrate community support when applying for school or District grant monies.
- To acknowledge the contributions of volunteers to school staff, District administration and the Board of Education.
- To document, recognize and celebrate individual volunteer service
- To evaluate program effectiveness – i.e., are volunteer numbers up or down; is it time to evaluate our processes?

Please help your volunteer coordinator by logging your time – whether it is done on-site or off-site, it all adds up!



Guidelines for Field Trips

Field trips offer students unique learning opportunities that could not be offered without parent volunteers. Chaperones play an important role in supervising students. For that reason, we require the following of our volunteers:

- Willingness to help students have a positive and safe learning experience.
- Ability to monitor students, know their whereabouts at all times and enforce the teacher's behavior guidelines.
- Proof of insurance on file with the school District, if driving students other than your own.
- NO unauthorized stops, no matter how brief, may be made, except in an emergency.
- Be reliable and punctual.

About siblings and guests: For most schools, siblings and guests of volunteers are not permitted to ride on the bus. Parents who wish to bring siblings along must have the teacher's permission, must not supervise students and should take care that the siblings do not detract from the overall experience.

with Students

Tip 2

Help students realize that making mistakes is part of learning.



Volunteer expenses that are deductible per IRS regulations:

- You may deduct the cost of transportation (gas, oil and parking expenses) to and from home and the school.
- You may deduct supplies and materials that you personally purchase to use exclusively in your volunteer role.

with Students

Tips for Working

Tip 3

Be consistent with the teacher's rules for behavior.

By giving of yourself, by sharing time, by caring ... you are making a difference.

Harassment/Sexual Harassment

Douglas County School District is committed to maintaining a positive work environment. We strive to provide employees, students and volunteers with an environment that encourages efficient, productive and creative work. Douglas County School District will not tolerate any verbal, nonverbal or physical conduct that harasses, disrupts or creates an intimidating, offensive or hostile environment.

Dismissal of a Volunteer

Volunteers who do not adhere to the rules and procedures of the School District and who fail to perform their volunteer assignments are subject to dismissal. No volunteer will be terminated until the volunteer has had the opportunity to discuss the reasons for the possible dismissal with supervisory staff.

Reasons for Dismissal

Possible grounds for dismissal may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Violating the confidentiality policy;
- Being under the influence of alcohol or drugs;
- Theft of property or misuse of School District equipment or materials;
- Abuse or mistreatment of students, staff or other volunteers;
- Failure to abide by Douglas County School District's policies and procedures.

Characteristics of Children at Different Ages

Preschool

A five year old:

Helpful around the house.
Mother is preferred parent.
Needs some assistance with coats, etc.
Is close-mouthed at home about school activities.
Has short bursts of energy.
Changes from one activity to another with relative ease.
Has vague concepts of time.
Is not fearful.
Asks many questions about how things work.
Enjoys cutting, pasting.
Loves to play dress-up.

Elementary

A six year old:

Handles and attempts to use tools and materials.
Is self-centered, domineering, stubborn and aggressive.
Wants and needs to be first, to be loved best, to be praised most and to win.
Is usually better behaved away from home.
Does a good deal of tattling.
Is very domineering and bossy.
Is interested in simple games.
Carries on long conversations.
Enjoys father.
Is restless, overactive, exuberant.
Usually likes his teacher.

A seven year old:

Does not respond promptly.
May forget easily.
Fights with playmates.
Plays in pairs or in groups.
Is interested in magic, puzzles, collecting and exchanging baseball cards, etc.
Girls like dress-up, paper dolls, jump rope.
Is concerned about being good.
Is easier to discipline, sensitive to praise.
Complains and sulks.
Teacher is really paramount in school.

An eight year old:

Enjoys jokes and riddles.
Is money mad.
Makes fewer complaints about teacher.
Is expansive and speedy.
Attention span is improving.
Is alert, friendly and interested in people but sometimes careless, noisy and argumentative.
Feelings easily hurt by careless remarks.
Understands time and money concepts.
Likes team games.
Is critical of brothers and sisters.
Needs frequent reminders about responsibilities.
Is demanding of mother.
Is sensitive to criticism.
Needs adult praise and encouragement.

with Students

Tips for Working

Tip 4

Don't compare one student to another.

A nine year old:

Has increased independence.
Has increased self-motivation.
Resents interruptions.
Likes secret codes and languages.
Has strong sense of right and wrong.
Is easily discouraged.
Is competitive in work and play, and is afraid of failure.
Cries only when emotions are overtaxed.
Is a great warrior.
Is anxious to please.
Makes fewer demands on parents.
Is a loyal and devoted friend.
Is more interested in talking and listening.

A ten year old:

Is relaxed, casual and alert.
Is one of the happiest ages.
Has a strong sense of justice.
Truly enjoys friends.
Needs schedules.
Loves the outdoors.
Is a hero worshipper.
Critical analysis of teacher begins.
Wants teacher to be fair.

Middle School

Pre-adolescents:

Awkward, lazy and restless because of uneven growth.
Very antagonistic and teasing toward the opposite sex.
Often over-critical, rebellious and uncooperative.
In need of warm affection and a sense of humor from adults.
Turned off by nagging, condemnation and being talked down to.
In need of feeling of belonging and acceptance.

High School

Adolescents:

Often going to extremes, emotional instability and know-it-alls.
Very interested in philosophical, ethical and religious problems.
Showing a step toward adulthood by asserting independence.
Needs acceptance by peer group.
Needs adult guidance that is kind and does not threaten freedom.
Needs constructive recreation.
Peer group oriented.
Values strong adult support.
Responds to appeals to help as partners.



*Children are
25 percent of our
population, but
100 percent of our
future.*

Commonly Used Acronyms in Douglas County Schools

AD	Athletic Director	ELL	English Language Learner
AP	Assistant Principal, After Prom, Advanced Placement	EPR	Elementary Progress Report
AYP	Adequate Yearly Progress	ESL	English as a Second Language
BOE	Body of Evidence or Board of Education	FERPA	Family Educational Rights & Privacy Act
BRT	Building Resource Teacher	FTE	Full Time Equivalent
BSC	Balanced Score Card	G/T	Gifted and Talented
CAPE	Colorado Association of Partners in Education	HR	Human Resources
CBLA	Colorado Basic Literacy Act	IEP	Individualized Education Plan
CDE	Colorado Department of Education	ILP	Individualized Literacy Plan
CFO	Chief Financial Officer	ISS	Instructional Support Services
CIO	Chief Information Officer	ITS	Information Technology Services
CQI	Continuous Quality Improvement	LIFT	Literacy Instructional Framework for Teaching
CRT	Computer Resource Teacher	LRPC	Long Range Planning Committee
CSAP	Colorado Student Assessment Program	LRT	Literacy Resource Teacher
DAC	District Advisory Committee	NCLB	No Child Left Behind
DCEF	Douglas County Educational Foundation	O&M	Operations and Maintenance
DCFT	Douglas County Federation of Teachers	PBS	Positive Behavior Support
DCSD	Douglas County School District	SAC	School Advisory Council
DMC	District Media Center	SAR	School Accountability Report
DOL	Daily Oral Language	SIP	School Improvement Plan
DOS	Director of Schools	SSN	Students in Significant Special Needs
ECE	Early Childhood Education	YRE	Year Round Education
EDM	Every Day Math		

with Students

Tip 5

Maintain a sense of humor.

Tips for Working



Other Parent and Community Programs

Spellbinders™ – Partnership Program with DC Libraries. A national, nonprofit organization that fosters connections between generations through the art of storytelling, Spellbinders tell stories to students in elementary classrooms, they do not read books. Spellbinders must complete a free, eight-hour training session that will equip them with the tools and techniques to be an effective storyteller, along with guidelines when working in our schools. Storytellers need to be 55 years or older. For more information, call 303-387-0032.

The Senior Employment Program – Designed for property owners in Douglas County who are over 60 years old, this program provides an avenue for senior citizens to work in schools while earning a modest hourly income. Benefits of this program are that children love the intergenerational aspect, staff benefits from additional help, and seniors know they are making a difference at schools and for students. For more information, call 303-387-0032.



Douglas County School District

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**For more information about volunteering,
please contact the individual school(s).**

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