

VOLUNTEERS IN SCHOOLS

The Vance County Board of Education understands that a strong volunteer program is important to the success of every school. The board directs that each school shall develop and maintain a strong volunteer program that provides varied opportunities for parents and members of the community to be active partners in support of the instructional program and school climate. The board encourages schools to be sensitive to a parent's limitation of time and distance from a school which may restrict some parents from volunteer work and to use innovative strategies that support families and their involvement in school-related activities. For example, activities may be developed that allow at-home participation.

Special training for tutoring and mentoring or other volunteer activities that require special skills may be required. Volunteers should understand the expectations of the school program, the issue of confidentiality, and any special procedures required by a particular school.

The board of education maintains comprehensive general liability insurance which covers the board, school system employees, and school volunteers for liability incurred in the performance of their assigned duties.

Adopted: **September 10, 2001**

Vance County Schools: Volunteer Procedures

1. Volunteers will be asked to sign a volunteer commitment agreement and a code of ethics at the beginning of each school year. Background checks will be done on volunteers who work directly with students.
2. Volunteers will be asked to commit to at least one hour of volunteer time each month in a school, if possible.
3. The Community Schools Office will work closely with the local Chamber of Commerce in recruiting and identifying business partners and/or volunteers for schools. The Community Schools Office also will work with the local Volunteer Center, Senior Center and churches in recruiting and identifying school volunteers.
4. Each school is expected to maintain an organized volunteer plan and to handle volunteer paperwork.
5. Each school shall keep a record of the number of volunteers and volunteer hours assisting the school each month and report these figures to the Community Schools Office at the end of each month and at the end of each school year.
6. Each school shall require that all volunteers sign in at the main school office when arriving on campus.
7. Each volunteer shall state where they will be volunteering during their visit in the school.
8. Each volunteer shall wear an identification tag while volunteering in a school.
9. Each volunteer shall sign out at the main school office when departing the campus.
10. Special training for tutoring and mentoring or other volunteer activities that require special skills may be required.
11. Each volunteer should understand the expectations of the school program, the issue of confidentiality and any special procedures required by a particular school.
12. A volunteer who mentors or tutors a student is encouraged to do so through the school system's Keep Empowering Youth in Schools (KEYS) Program. All rules and regulations of the KEYS Program will apply to these volunteers. As part of the KEYS Program, criminal background checks will be conducted for volunteers working with students.
13. School volunteers may help in each of our schools in a variety of ways including, but not limited to: mentoring students; tutoring students; serving as field trip chaperones; serving as PTO/PTA officers; serving as active PTO/PTA members; serving as classroom helpers; serving as school office helpers; helping with school fund-raising efforts; helping with school landscaping; helping with school clean-up efforts; helping with teacher appreciation events; school improvement team members; testing proctors; band boosters; athletic boosters; volunteer coaches; and school business partners or contacts.
14. Adult volunteers who are transporting students in a privately owned vehicle should be aware that they may be held responsible for injuries to the students they are transporting. Volunteers must complete a form which certifies that their vehicle is covered by insurance as required by North Carolina state law before transporting students.

Vance County Schools: Volunteer Program Questions

What are the goals of the Volunteer Program?

The goals of a volunteer program are to improve and expand upon the educational experiences provided for all students. Through a volunteer program students can get the additional support, attention and assistance that many young people need to succeed in school. A whole array of resources will become available to the school via the skills, talents and interests of volunteers. The volunteer program will enhance and broaden the rapport between the school and the parents and community members served by the school. Finally, the volunteer program will assist school personnel allowing educators to focus their time and talents on direct instructional activities.

What are activities volunteers should not participate in?

Despite the background and abilities of volunteers some activities should be left to classroom teachers and other staff members. Volunteers should not be put in the position of direct instructional responsibility, formal evaluation of student progress, handling confidential material, determining group or individual instructional needs, holding conferences with parents or similar activities.

What qualifications are needed to be an effective volunteer?

First and foremost, a potential volunteer should have a sincere desire to help others. In the school situation, it also is helpful and preferable that the individual enjoys working with and among young people! Beyond that a good volunteer program should be able to find a suitable position for any individual who wishes to serve regardless of the interests, experiences or background of the volunteers. If training is needed, the program should provide it. All skills are welcomed skills.

What if a volunteer is not happy with an assigned role?

It serves no purpose to the school or the individual to have a volunteer remain in a role in which he or she is not satisfied. Flexibility should be built into the plan for placement of volunteers. Volunteers should be able to request a change in assignments in which he or she is more comfortable. Likewise, staff members may request to change the parameters of their volunteer activity or the personnel assigned to them.

How much time must volunteers commit to serve the school?

Volunteers are asked to give as much of their time to the school as they can spare. It is more important that volunteers are dependable and punctual for the time that they commit to than the numbers of hours they are able to serve. The hour or two a week that a volunteer can serve may seem insignificant but in fact may have a great impact upon a program or the teacher or student with whom the volunteer works.

Can schools use volunteers who cannot serve in the building?

Yes! Teachers and staff members can use an extra pair of hands to prepare materials, look for resources, contact other parents, grade some assignments, help prepare bulletin boards, etc. If an individual has a desire to help out, but can't make it to the school, there are still many opportunities to serve.

Vance County Schools: Volunteer Survey

Dear Volunteer:

We welcome you working in our schools as a volunteer. Please consider joining us in our endeavour to educate and enrich the lives of our students. We have so many talented parents and local residents who can contribute greatly to the work going on in our schools. A great way to volunteer in school is to mentor or tutor a student. However, school volunteers do not have to work directly with students. There are so many different ways a volunteer may contribute.

If you are interested in assisting in any of our schools, please fill out the survey form below. Return the completed form to your child's teacher or the school office. We will try to match volunteers to their area of interest and to the needs of students and programs within the school.

Thank you for your interest!

Name: _____ Phone: _____ Date: _____

School in which you are interested in volunteering: _____

I would prefer to volunteer _____ mornings _____ afternoons

Day(s) of the week I would prefer to volunteer _____

I could volunteer for the following amount of time _____

(i.e., whatever you can spare 1/2 hour, 1 hour, 2 hours, etc., per week, every other week, etc.)

Please check activities you may be interested in participating in:

mentor _____	tutor _____	testing proctor _____
making bulletin boards _____	reading to students _____	office helper _____
classroom helper _____	field trip chaperone _____	typing/clerical _____
copying materials _____	library helper _____	PTO/PTA officer _____
computer assistance _____	fundraiser _____	PTO/PTA active member _____
social committee _____	science fair helper _____	grade parent _____
field day helper _____	school cleanup _____	homeroom representative _____
business partner _____	athletic team helper _____	band booster _____
business partner contact _____	athletic booster _____	teacher appreciation _____
school improvement team _____		
supervising in lunchroom, on playground _____		
other (please list) _____		

Thank you for completing this survey!