

BECOMING A VOLUNTEER

1. Volunteers must register every year. No person will be allowed to volunteer without completing the registration form.
2. Registration may be accomplished in any of the following ways:
 - Complete the online registration form at <http://www.wakullaschooldistrict.org/volunteers>. When completed, this form is automatically submitted to the Volunteer Coordinator of any school or organization selected.
 - Print the online form, complete it and submit it to the school site where you wish to volunteer.
 - Contact the district office or any school office or teacher and request to volunteer. The completion of the registration form will be required at this time.
3. Once the Registration Form is completed and submitted, school personnel will check the applicant against the FDLE Sexual Predator/ Offender Registry. Please see the "Background Checks" section of this handbook for additional information on Background Checks.
4. The school or organization Volunteer Coordinator will contact the volunteer to conduct a brief volunteer orientation and assign volunteer placement and/or responsibilities.



BACKGROUND CHECKS

All school volunteers will be checked annually against the FDLE Sexual Predator/Offender Registry prior to being placed in any volunteer position.

Additional screening may occur if deemed necessary.

Level II screening and clearance is required for any person wishing to serve as a mentor or a volunteer coach (athletics, cheerleading).

The school principal has the right to decline the services of any volunteer at any time if he/she determines that this is in the best interest of students or the educational process.

SCHOOL VOLUNTEER CODE OF ETHICS

As members of a group with the purpose of enriching and improving the lives of children, volunteers have a challenging role to play.

Here are some guidelines to help:

Volunteers may work directly or indirectly with students. Volunteers never replace the teacher. Volunteers offer a supplementary service and are there to provide motivation and support for the student.

School staff and teachers will decide the specific tasks that volunteers perform and the information and materials volunteers will need.

Appreciation and respect for each student as a person are critical ingredients in working effectively as a volunteer. Self-worth and self-confidence are building blocks in the learning process.

Teachers are in charge of the instruction and the discipline of each student. The volunteer's job is to guide and encourage the student along the path the teacher has provided. The personal interest volunteers show students may be the catalyst that makes them recognize their own innate ability to improve and achieve.

Volunteers will consider any and all information about the students as privileged, and they will hold it in the strictest confidence.

Volunteers support the basic aims of education by:

- maintaining consistent and regular attendance.
- following all regulations and procedures of the school and the district.
- adhering to school dress code.
- discussing school problems and issues with staff members at appropriate times.
- observing discretion in commenting on school matters.

The commitment that volunteers make to our students is a significant one. As they participate in school activities, volunteers are looked upon as role models. Therefore, it is imperative that volunteers conduct themselves in an appropriate and responsible manner.

SEQUENCE OF THE VOLUNTEER REGISTRATION PROCESS:

1. Volunteer submits online registration form.
2. School-based coordinator reviews application, adds any necessary information and submits the form to the district volunteer coordinator.
3. District Volunteer Coordinator/Designee reviews the application and checks the volunteer information against the Sexual Predator/Offender database. If the registration form meets certain criteria it is submitted to the district Safety and Risk Management Officer for further review.
4. Unless disqualifying information is found, the volunteer is approved in the database.
5. The school volunteer coordinator contacts approved volunteers and invites them to a Volunteer Orientation.
6. The school volunteer coordinator with the designated administrator conducts the Volunteer Orientation.
7. Once the volunteer has participated in the Volunteer Orientation, the volunteer may be assigned to volunteer duties.
8. If a volunteer cannot attend an orientation then the volunteer must assure that he/she has reviewed the Code of Ethics and other basic information required for successful volunteering.

If a volunteer is not approved, the volunteer will be contacted by the district volunteer coordinator.

SIGN-IN and SIGN-OUT PROCEDURE

Each time a volunteer enters a school or arrives at an activity to volunteer, she or he must sign in, wear a nametag and sign out when she or he is ready to leave the school or activity. This requirement is necessary for the following reasons:

1. Safeguarding our students and maintaining campus security is of the utmost importance.
2. In case of an emergency telephone call, the volunteer can be located.
3. While volunteering at school for a specific purpose, individuals are covered by school board insurance **provided** they are an approved volunteer and have signed in.
4. In some cases verified volunteer service can be used as work experience for future employment.
5. Each school is recognized for its number of **registered** volunteer hours. The Florida Department of Education presents the Golden School Award to a school with twice as many hours of volunteer hours as students enrolled.

GENERAL VOLUNTEER PROCEDURES

1. Each school year, all volunteers are required to complete a Volunteer Registration Form. Community Resource Volunteers will provide a picture ID and sign in and out at the school office on the day that they speak.
2. Volunteer athletic coaches are required to complete a Volunteer Athletic Coaching form and have it approved and submitted by the school principal in addition to the Volunteer Registration Form.
3. Volunteers must always work under the supervision of a district employee and are never to meet a child alone. Note: Those volunteers who have been fingerprinted, received Level II clearance, and have participated in Substitute Teacher training may provide supervision in a classroom for a short period of time at the discretion of the administrator.
4. Volunteers must wear an identification badge whenever they are serving as a school volunteer or accompanying students on a school activity.
5. If a volunteer is going to be absent for a scheduled activity, or if a community resource volunteer is unable to speak at the agreed upon time, the volunteer should call the school and ask that the teacher and/or student be informed of his or her absence.
6. Volunteers should be prompt; due to scheduling requirements, it is important to make every minute count.
7. Once the volunteer receives his/her assignment from the school volunteer coordinator, the volunteer should meet with the teacher at a time when the teacher does not have students in the classroom. This will provide an opportunity to discuss the assignment, learn about procedures, etc. Volunteers are encouraged to set up additional meetings, if necessary, to get further instructions, discuss any problems, and/or learn about materials.
8. The teacher is in charge of the classroom at all times, and the teacher will provide any discipline that is required.
9. Volunteers are expected to maintain strict confidentiality with information to which they have access while performing their duties. Any question concerning a child's behavior, achievement, and/or needs should be immediately directed to the teacher.
10. If a volunteer has a question about a policy or a procedure, he/she should follow the proper channels within the school, and ask the appropriate person: the teacher, the principal or the school volunteer coordinator. It is usually best to begin with the assigned teacher.
11. Praise and encouragement are the approved methods to demonstrate care and respect for students.
12. Placement of volunteers is at the discretion of the principal and teacher.
13. Volunteers are not to bring other children (not enrolled at the school) to school when they volunteer.
14. Volunteers may not ride regularly scheduled buses to reach their assigned school.
15. Volunteers shall not administer medication to students.

VOLUNTEERS AND FIELD TRIPS

Volunteers provide a valuable service by helping to supervise students on educational and recreational field trips. In order to maintain the security and safety of our students, it is critical that the following procedures be followed:

1. Volunteers should wear an identification badge at all times when escorting children. They should adhere to the schedule communicated by the teacher in charge and any guidelines set forth for the trip.
2. Volunteers are asked to follow appropriate dress code when acting as a volunteer chaperone.
3. Any chaperone who is asked to escort students in a district vehicle must have his/her driver's license checked by the Coordinator of Transportation, Pat Jones, **PRIOR** to the trip. It is the driver's responsibility to provide a copy of his/her current driver's license to Mrs. Jones. Her contact information is: jonesp@wakulla.k12.fl.us; 926-7550.
4. No students are to be escorted during school functions in a personal car.
5. Chaperones must complete and submit a Volunteer Registration Form **PRIOR** to the trip. The service of chaperones who fail to do this may be refused.

