

Volunteer Handbook

Cranston School

2015-2016



***“Volunteers are not paid, not because they are worthless,
but because they are PRICELESS.”***

-Anonymous



Message from Administration

Cranston School is a unique learning environment for students in grades Kindergarten through 4. This CBE site first opened in September 2010 to 305 students and currently is the community school for approximately 660 students. Cranston School was established and continues to operate on the principles of Peace Education – the philosophy of everyone lending a hand in the world to make this the best possible living experience for all beings on the planet. For young children, fostering this perspective on living and learning is rooted in the relationship between their homes and their school. Without the tremendous volunteer support Cranston School receives, we simply would not be able to offer the significant array of learning opportunities and enhancements the school has become noted for in just a few short years.

At the beginning of each school year, we appeal to our families to engage in as many ways as possible to support your child's learning development. One of the most rewarding and beneficial ways to be supportive is to volunteer! Children love to see their parents working in the school, on field trips and to be able to share stories of their experiences with parents who have assisted the school in fundraising to support activities. Cranston School would simply not be the amazing place it is without parent support. We strongly encourage all families to get involved in volunteering at the school in whatever ways best suit your family situation. Volunteering can be done from home or in the school. It can require a minimal commitment of hours to significant time in the school. Volunteering can look like working in classrooms or becoming a part of School Council or the Fundraising Society – two opportunities that take place almost exclusively outside of school hours. Volunteering is an outstanding way to be connected to your child's learning environment and we hope to welcome as many family members as possible to our school as Volunteers in the 2015-2016 school year. You will be greatly appreciated and amazingly rewarded with smiles, laughter and hugs!

Lorraine Kinsman

Principal

Volunteer Coordinators Message:

Dear Volunteers:

We are looking forward to another great year of volunteering at Cranston School. Welcome to all new volunteers, and returning volunteers who generously give their time each year. Your assistance helps to enrich each and every child's school experience. Thank you. For any questions please email me at cranston.volunteers@outlook.com.

Sincerely,

Shannon McMaster

Volunteer Coordinator



Volunteer School Procedures

Sign In

All volunteers must sign the Sign-In book at the front counter at the office, and wear a name tag. Name tags are available on the front counter of the office in the white binder. Please wear one at all times in the school and on school field trips.

Parking

Due to limited space in the parking lot, please park on a street near the school. Please do not park in the drop and drive between 8:05 – 8:45 am.

Coats and Valuables

We suggest you avoid bringing valuables into the school unless absolutely necessary. Keep wallets/purses with you. The CBE is not responsible for lost or stolen personal property. There is a coat rack in the nurse's room (off the main office) for our volunteers to use.

Younger Siblings

When you are volunteering in the school or on a field trip, please do not bring toddlers or younger siblings with you in order that your attention can be fully on the students and the task at hand.

Attendance

You are a very important person to the students and staff. If you are unable to attend on your volunteer day, please notify the school or the teacher in charge as soon as possible.

Emergency Procedures

Cranston School has a plan to deal with emergency situations. In the event of an emergency, the teacher in charge and/or school administration will provide further direction to you. While volunteering, you are expected to participate fully in fire drills or other safety-related training conducted during the school day.

Volunteer Orientation

New volunteers are expected to attend a Volunteer Orientation at the school:

Thursday October 1st 10:00-11:00am

We will outline the volunteer program and answer any questions that you have.



HELPFUL HINTS

- You are a very important person to our students and staff. They really count on seeing you at your appointed time. If you must be absent, please notify the school as far in advance as possible.
- Please understand and accept the students in terms of their own backgrounds, culture, values, manners, vocabulary and aspirations. They may be very different from you or your children.
- Refrain from asking leading questions that will probe into a child's and/or staff member's personal or family life. Everyone has a right to privacy.
- Children appreciate a cheerful smile from their volunteer. A smile to a child means warmth and acceptance.
- Learn to be comfortable with silence. Children appreciate a good listener rather than a talker.
- Remember that gossip is a negative, harmful and unacceptable form of conversation that is not condoned by CBE or the school administration
- Don't try to handle difficult situations yourself. Refer the matter immediately to the supervising teacher and/or the principal.

Questions or concerns about volunteering, please contact our Volunteer Coordinator:

Shannon McMaster
cranston.volunteers@outlook.com



Cranston School Parent Volunteer Program 2015-2016

Welcome to a new school year. The role of parent volunteer is very important to our students' success at Cranston. Our teachers need you more now than ever before. Parents are encouraged to become volunteers in a variety of ways. If you're interested in volunteering, please read on, complete the attached form and return it to the school.

All volunteers working within the Calgary Board of Education are required to complete a Volunteer Registration form on an **annual basis**. (Available at the front office or on the website at cbe.ab.ca/b408) In addition, a Police Security Check must be completed prior to volunteers beginning their work in our school. A completed Police Check is good for five years. Please see Mrs. Hunter in the office if you have not initiated this Check, and would like to volunteer.

At Cranston, we have created a position called **Classroom Representative** to improve communication and volunteer recruitment for school wide events with parents/guardians. The role of the Classroom Representative is to recruit volunteers (from their class only) to participate in school-wide events. The Representatives will only contact those parents who have filled out the volunteer forms and completed a police clearance check. We are asking that in addition to working with the classroom to help with school wide volunteer activities, the Class Representative attend at least **ONE (1)** school council meeting per year.

Some teachers have their own volunteer sign up for work within the classroom. We see the "Room Representative" role as supplementing this. Good communication between the teacher and room representative will enhance the volunteer experience for each classroom. For some events a letter or note requesting volunteers will be sent home with students.

Attached you will find a preliminary list of volunteer opportunities for the 2015-2016 school year. As you can see, we'll need your help! Some dates are not available at this time, but will be updated on the Parent Information Board as dates are confirmed.

Younger siblings who are not students at the school are not allowed to accompany volunteers for Duty of Care reasons. There are **no exceptions**. If you would be interested in sharing childcare with other parents so that you may volunteer, please indicate this on your form. We will distribute the names and numbers of those interested parents so they may make their own arrangements.

Your participation in school events will enhance your child's school experience. Parent volunteers make a difference between a good school and a great one, and we want to make Cranston a great school for our children. Thank you for being a vital part of our school community.



Cranston School

2015-2016 VOLUNTEER PARENT INFORMATION QUESTIONNAIRE

"inspire – innovate – create – nurture – think – inquire – imagine"

Name of Volunteer : _____

Phone Number : (home) _____ (work/cell) _____

Parent Email Address(es) : _____

Child attending Cranston 2015-2016

Name _____ 2015-2016 Grade _____

Please select those volunteering opportunities that interest you:

- Fun Lunch Day -- distributing lunches to each class 11:15am-12:05pm
- Room Representative -- contact person for the teacher to organize help
- Classroom Volunteer -- help teacher w/projects, field trips, bulletin boards, etc.
- Special Events -- swimming, skiing, sports day, carnival, staff appreciation lunch, family barbeques
- Fundraising/Casino Volunteer -- chip runner, cash counter, etc.
- School Council
- Calgary Reads
- School Bound and Safe Committee

Please remove me from the email list as I am unable to volunteer my time this year

I prefer to be contacted for volunteer opportunities by: Email Phone

I am available to volunteer: Daytime Evening (or check both)

I am interested in sharing childcare so that I may volunteer YES

I need additional volunteer forms (parents, grandparents etc) This can be emailed to:

**** Please be aware that a valid police clearance done by the school is required to volunteer at the school and on all field trips.**

The information collected on this form will only be used by the School Council Volunteer Coordinator to organize lists and facilitate the recruitment of volunteers. This information is required every year.