

Spotswood Elementary School

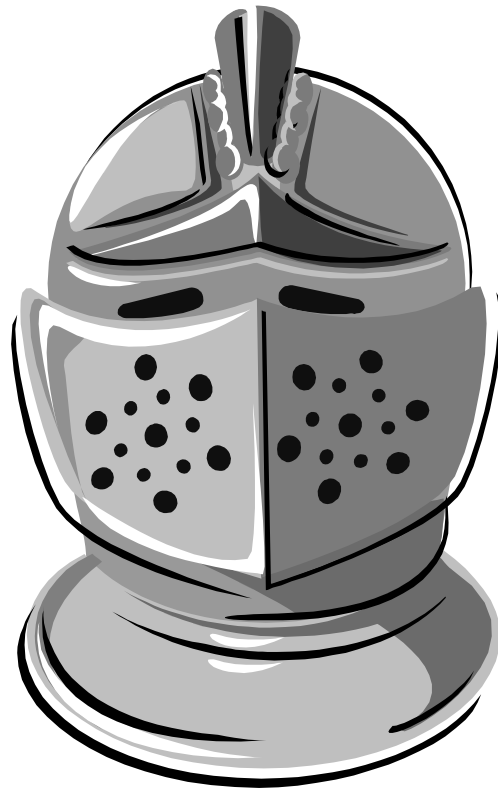
Volunteer Handbook



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Table of Contents

- ◆ Benefits provided by volunteers –Pg.3
- ◆ Opportunities for volunteering—Pg. 4
- ◆ Safety Procedures—Pg. 5-6
- ◆ Guidelines and Responsibilities—Pg. 7
- ◆ Volunteer Etiquette—Pg 8
- ◆ Helpful Hints for the Classroom—Pg. 9
- ◆ Agreements—Pg. 10
- ◆ Signature Page—Pg. 11



Benefits Provided by Volunteers

School volunteers are a vital asset to Spotswood Elementary School. Volunteers provide numerous benefits including:

1. Enriching school experiences of individual children. As a volunteer you will use your special talents to support a nurturing educational environment which can help increase a child's interest and motivation for learning.
2. Providing a variety of experiences that support the instructional program.
3. Enabling teaching staff to devote more quality time to the duties of classroom teaching.
4. Helping the community to better understand the needs of public schools.
5. Showing our children that we care about their education and supporting our community.
6. The curriculum is enriched.
7. Community appreciation of the school and the educational process is increased.



Opportunities For Volunteering

Those who request volunteers will have specific directions to go along with given tasks. Volunteers may be asked to participate in some of the following or similar activities:

- ◆ Materials Preparation—Cut paper, take down bulletin boards, etc..
- ◆ Reading practice—read with students one-on-one or in small group
- ◆ Writer’s Workshop—assist the teacher with student conferences and guide them through the writing process.
- ◆ Individual review—work one-on-one or in small groups to review skills already taught by the classroom teacher.
- ◆ Sight word vocabulary—Monitor student’s progress with sight words or other vocabulary words.
- ◆ Centers— monitor a specific activity with small groups.
- ◆ Chaperones— Supervise students and assist the teacher on field trips.
- ◆ Special projects— assist teachers with special projects in the classroom.
- ◆ Media Center/Library— assist the librarian in gathering teacher and student requests. This may also include cataloging and shelving books.
- ◆ Working on ongoing PTA sponsored programs.
- ◆ Demonstrating special talents that you may have.
- ◆ Serving as a Room Parent.
- ◆ Assisting with lunchtime.

Safety Procedures

FIRE DRILLS

We are required by law to hold fire drills once a week for the first month of school and once a month thereafter. The following procedures will be in effect for all drills, actual alarms, and bomb threats:

The signal for a drill or actual alarm/threat will be a loud horn-like sound from the fire alarm and/or directions from the public address system. The all-clear signal to re-enter the building will be a long, uninterrupted ring from the regular bell system.

Upon hearing the signal all personnel are to exit the building according to the exit route posted in each room and are to wait outside in their designated area until they hear the all-clear signal or receive instructions from the principal or assistant principal.

Teachers are requested to go over the exit route posted in each room with their students during the first few days of school and at regular intervals during the year. Teachers are also requested to discuss alternate escape routes should the designated exit become blocked.

All windows and doors are to be closed upon leaving the room.

Each teacher is to carry a class roster with him or her on each drill/alarm and should conduct an attendance check as soon as the class is evacuated from the building. Each class is to stay together as a group. Teachers need to take their Emergency Kits with them.

In the event a drill or fire occurs during cafeteria periods, students will exit from the doorway closest to the outside.

Safety Procedures

INTRUDER POLICY

THESE PROCEDURES ARE IN PLACE SHOULD WE BE FACED WITH AN ARMED OR VIOLENT INTRUDER OR AN UNKNOWN INTRUDER DURING SCHOOL HOURS.

If you observe such an intruder, go immediately to your classroom/work area and if possible lock your door.

Use the intercom/telephone to alert the office.

An "Intruder Drill" will be called on the PA system. In addition, the following will be said, "There will be an extended class period."

Teachers are to lock doors, move students away from the door and away from intruder visibility.

If you hear shots....

Have students lay flat on the floor or take cover under desks or tables. If the office is compromised....

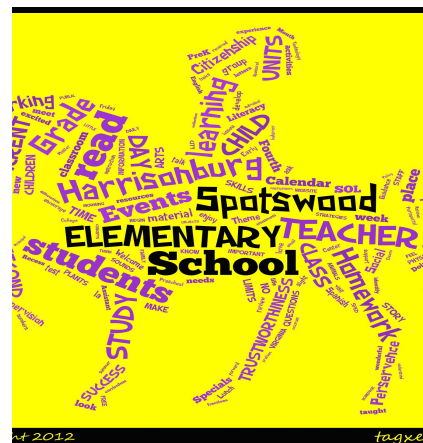
Any staff member/volunteer who knows that the office staff cannot help should call 911 on the nearest available telephone. Remember that we have a telephone in the primary wing, in the home school liaison's office, and in the library - 911 can be dialed anytime from these phones.

Guidelines & Responsibilities

Code of Ethics

As a volunteer, there is a code of ethics which must be honored. With a code of ethics, you assume certain responsibilities and will be expected to account for what you do during your volunteer experience. Listed below are some guidelines and responsibilities:

- ◆ Sign in/out at the main office. In the main office you will receive a photo name tag. Wear your name tag at all times while volunteering in school.
- ◆ Be a positive role model. Set a good example of appearance and behavior for students.
- ◆ Dress appropriately while in the classroom.
- ◆ Take your directions from the teacher and/or principal. Be able to adjust to each teacher's individual style.
- ◆ Remain with your task, and do not venture to other parts of the building.
- ◆ Be punctual and reliable. Please notify the school/teacher if there is a change in plans.
- ◆ Enter the classroom with as little disruption as possible. It is important to respect the students, the teacher, and the classroom working environment.
- ◆ Follow universal first-aid precautions.
- ◆ Become familiar with school, classroom policies, practices and emergency procedures prior to volunteering.
- ◆ Keep matters confidential!!
- ◆ Have a positive attitude while volunteering at Spotswood.



Volunteer Etiquette

1. Office: When in the office, please try to use quiet voices and keep socializing to a minimum. The counter area must be kept available to parents and students who need assistance from the office staff. No children or students are allowed behind the counter unless they are accompanied by school staff.
2. Cell Phones: Cell phones cannot be used in our classrooms as they disrupt the teaching/learning process.
3. Phones: Please ask office staff's permission prior to making a phone call. Avoid using the telephone during recess or lunch breaks, as these are the only times the teachers may make phone calls.
4. Restrooms: Volunteers are requested to use the rest rooms located in the hallway leading to the primary wing.
5. Copy Room: The copy room is for school personnel only.
6. Staff Lounge: Volunteers are not permitted in the staff lounge, unless prior approval has been granted by Mrs. Connors or Mr. Romero and no teachers are present.
7. Messages for the Principal or Teachers: Parents may leave messages for the principal or teachers with the Office Secretary.

Helpful Hints for the Classroom

We hope you will find these tips helpful when you volunteer in the classroom.

- ◆ Be Cheerful, friendly and relaxed. Don't worry about making mistakes.
- ◆ Start off by learning the school and classroom rules and procedures. If you are unsure of the right course of action, check with the teacher.
- ◆ Give your full attention to the children and the tasks at hand. Avoid using your classroom time to socialize with the teacher or other volunteers.
- ◆ Treat all children fairly and equally.
- ◆ Allow each child to work at his or her own pace.
- ◆ Encourage children to ask questions and make responses.
- ◆ Listen with interest to what children have to tell you.
- ◆ Allow students the time, space and opportunity to do a task independently before offering assistance.
- ◆ In the event of an emergency, stay calm and the children will follow your example.
- ◆ Ask the teacher for help if you can't handle a problem.
- ◆ Be sensitive and responsive to the feelings of the children.
- ◆ Remember, you are there to assist all the children in the classroom, not just your own child.
- ◆ Learn to use the "how" word. Ask " how can I help you?"
- ◆ Always remember that you are appreciated!! Sometimes staff members get caught up in the task of the day and may forget to say, "Thanks!" The time you give to the school is valuable.

Agreements

Please remember the following guidelines when it comes to any discussion regarding students or teachers/classrooms:

1. Any information regarding a student's school performance or behavior is confidential. It is not to be discussed with anyone else.
2. Questions regarding a specific child or incident at school should be referred to the teacher or principal.
3. Comparisons of either teachers or classrooms are not to be discussed with other community members. You are in a trusted position and with trust comes the responsibility of confidentiality.
4. Concerns regarding classroom procedures should be discussed with the teacher.

Confidentiality

When a volunteer is working with a student or group of students at Spotswood, the basic right to privacy for each student and family must be respected at all times.

Confidential information includes any personal identifiable data, information, observation, or records pertaining to a student or family.

Volunteers must treat all such information as confidential and should discuss it only with the teacher or assigned supervisor. The information should not be discussed with other volunteers, other teachers or staff, or with anyone outside the school.

The one exception to this rule is in the case of suspected child abuse or neglect. Any volunteer who has reason to believe that a child has been subjected to abuse or maltreatment must report it immediately to the principal or other school official.

Volunteers who do not follow this code of confidentiality will no longer be permitted to participate in school volunteer activities.

Spotswood Elementary School Volunteer Signature Sheet

Thank you for volunteering!! You enrich and extend the teaching at Spotswood Elementary School!!

I, _____, (print name), agree that when talking with others, I will only discuss the activities I engage in. I will respect children's' rights to privacy and not make evaluative comments about their abilities or skills. If I am concerned about a child's performance, I will not hesitate to talk to the teacher.

I have read and understand the guidelines and confidentiality policy for volunteers outlined in this handbook and agree to abide by them.

Please sign your name and return to Mr. Romero

_____ (Your signature)

_____ (Teacher's name)