



Jackson R-2 School District

Volunteer Handbook

Your Volunteer Coordinator is:

Welcome Volunteers!

We appreciate your desire to make a significant impact on the excellent education programs offered in Jackson R-2 Schools. Volunteers provide enrichment opportunities that enhance the educational experience for students while supporting our teachers and staff. Volunteers also help us build a strong foundation for students as they select a career path or post-secondary education.

As you enhance and support the academic programs, it is important to also help students be excited about life - to have a positive attitude that will get them through challenging times as they grow and learn. By modeling for students the kinds of character traits and attitudes they need to succeed, you help them develop into productive citizens of the community. We urge you to become a strong advocate by sharing your positive experiences with others and encouraging them to become involved.

This handbook will help you make a smooth transition into your role as a School Volunteer. My hope is that you will find personal satisfaction in what you do.

There has never been a more exciting time to be part of the education experience in Jackson R-2 Schools. Thank you for joining us!

Sincerely,

Dr. Scott Smith
Superintendent

Jackson R-2 Volunteer Program

A volunteer is many things: an extra pair of hands, an extra measure of personal warmth, a valuable special resource for classroom enrichment, a bridge between our school program and the community. We cannot buy what volunteers give our school. It is the intent of our school to utilize volunteers to enhance our educational programs.

As a volunteer, you are assisting the staff in their day-to-day endeavor to provide the best possible educational experiences for each child in the school. Volunteers work under the direction and guidance of school personnel. They will not replace salaried staff, nor will their presence mean that fewer staff members will be needed.

Sign-In Procedure

Volunteers are asked to sign-in and sign-out in the school office each time they work at the school. For security reasons and in case of an emergency, it is important for the principal to know who is in the school and why.

Along with signing in, volunteers will need to obtain a volunteer badge from the office. This will enable staff to recognize you as a registered volunteer and an important part of our school's educational team. Please return the badge to the office and sign out when you leave. Volunteers only need to be in the areas in which they are designated to work.

Dress Code

Dress comfortably, but remember that you are the role model for our students. If you have questions about the dress code, please talk with the building principal or counselor.

Restrooms

All volunteers are asked to use the restroom facility in the teacher's workroom. For security reasons, adults are asked not to use student restrooms.

Volunteers and Small Children

When volunteering, please refrain from bringing small children with you. It can be a distraction for the volunteer and the others in the building. Feel free to schedule your volunteer time when you have time to give undivided attention to the task, and when it benefits both your schedule and the teacher's schedule.

Confidentiality

By School Board Policy, you must keep information you learn about students between yourself and your assigned supervisor. A misplaced comment can be devastating to a student, a family, and the school volunteer program. If you do have questions or concerns, talk with the building principal or school counselor.

Background Checks and Volunteer Screenings

The Jackson R-2 School District requires background checks and screenings each year for those volunteers working directly with students. Please contact your volunteer coordinator or building counselor to see how this may affect you.

A volunteer interest form will also be sent home to parents to obtain more information about the areas in which a parent may be willing to help.

Program Benefits

Students benefit from:

- Added assistance in basic skills and study habits
- Improved feelings of self-esteem
- Expanded knowledge of the community
- Opportunities to enjoy the friendship and help of volunteers
- Improved feelings of security within the school community

Teachers benefit from:

- Additional classroom assistance
- Ideas to enrich the curriculum
- The opportunity to enjoy friendships with volunteers

Volunteers benefit from:

- The creation of meaningful part-time service opportunities
- The recognition of their contributions toward the educational needs of children
- Renewed self-worth and self-esteem

Volunteers should NOT...

1. Discipline students
2. Diagnose student needs
3. Evaluate achievement
4. Counsel students
5. Discuss student progress and concerns with parent

Tips for Volunteers

- Be warm and friendly - learn the children's names and show interest in what they are doing and telling you. You are very important as a listener.
- When working with children, encourage them to do their own thinking - give them plenty of time to answer. Silence often means they are thinking and organizing what they want to say or write.
- If you don't know an answer or are unsure of what to do, admit it to the children and work it out together. Feel free to ask the teacher of the children for help when you need it.
- Use positive comments - encourage children - seek something worthy of a compliment, especially when children are having difficulties.
- Accept each child as she/he is - you do not need to feel responsible for assessing a child's abilities, progress, or behavior.
- Respect a child's privacy. If a child or a teacher reveals personal information, regard it as confidence. If parents and friends ask about your work, tell them you enjoy working with the children and discuss the activities you do, rather than specific information about the child.
- Maintain a sense of humor!

Communication

When working in a classroom, the teacher will be your main source of communication. He or she will request the specific times needed for volunteer support. The teacher will also be the one that prepares or identifies the need for a volunteer. Please respect the requests of the classroom teachers, as well as other staff and administration while working, by adhering to building policies at all times.

The building counselor may also serve as the volunteer coordinator for the individual buildings. Please use them as a resource.

Reporting Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect

Any volunteer who has reason to believe that a child has been subject to abuse must report it to the proper authority. It is recommended that the volunteer report their suspicion to the building teacher, counselor, or principal. The building administrator may suggest alternative actions or assignments. If this option does not meet with success, the administrator has the option to terminate the volunteer's placement.

Orientation

Volunteer orientation will be conducted at each building. Please contact your coordinator for more information. The orientation will cover specific information related to the building in which you will be volunteering.

Information will include:

- Parking for volunteers
- Procedures for sign-in specific to the building
- Volunteer opportunities in the specific building
- Expectations of the volunteer while working
- Tips for specific duties at each building
- Question and Answer sessions

Thank You!

Always remember that you are appreciated! Sometimes we get caught up in the tasks of the day and may forget to say “Thanks!” We value the time you give to the Jackson R-2 School District.

