



Volunteer Handbook

Sarcoxie R-II School District

Dear Volunteer:

Welcome to Sarcoxie R-II School District! On behalf of the entire community, students, staff, and families, we want to thank you for volunteering to help us provide the best possible education for our students. You are an important component in the success of our students. In whatever way you choose to help, whether in the classroom, workroom, library, cafeteria, or in other school programs, you can be sure your contribution is needed and valued.

The staff at Sarcoxie R-II understands that parent and community involvement is a significant factor in the quality of our schools and the success of our students. Volunteers' contributions help not only the students and staff, but help create a sense of community within our building. These opportunities help to enhance our students' learning experiences.

This handbook was prepared to assist you in your role as a volunteer. The role and responsibilities of the school volunteer listed in this handbook will provide you with the guidance for making your volunteer experience an enthusiastic success. Basic techniques and strategies you can use to help children learn are discussed briefly. Naturally, the teacher will be nearby to provide directions and to answer your questions.

To ensure student safety, the front doors will be locked during the instructional day. You will need to push the call box button to be buzzed in by the office. We ask that you sign in at the school office on the "volunteer sign-in" sheet and pick up a volunteer badge. While working within the district, we ask that your badge be visible to staff and students. When you leave school, please remember to sign out.

Please feel free to discuss any aspect of the school volunteer program with us or any member of the staff. We are most appreciative of the time and talents you are donating. We know you will experience the joy of working with young children. Your contributions will make a difference in their lives. We hope you will be rewarded by the love and appreciation of the students and staff.

Thank you very much for caring about our students and for your support.

Across the nation, mothers, fathers, grandparents, businessmen and senior citizens are finding that their involvement as school volunteers is having a positive influence on student achievement.

Volunteers are making a difference in schools!

Sincerely,

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Dear School Volunteer:

The Sarcoxie School District understands that parent and community involvement is a significant factor in the quality of our schools and the success of our students. Every day, hundreds of dedicated volunteers give their time and talents to help students, teachers and staff in countless ways. Their contributions enhance students' learning experiences and strengthen the educational process.

Public schools are a great way to make a difference in your own community. School volunteers are important role models because they exhibit care, model the best in citizenship and create a climate that fosters learning and the love of education. Unique opportunities exist within the district, providing volunteers the flexibility to donate their time in many ways.

Please join us and our volunteer team in support of our students, teachers and staff. This is an exciting time to be a part of education. With your support, we can help students grow, learn and become responsible citizens of character.

Sincerely,

Dr. Kevin T. Goddard
Sarcoxie R-II Superintendent

What does it take *to be a School Volunteer?*

School volunteers help schools deliver services to students and schools that go above and beyond what can be provided through district resources.

Have you considered volunteering in your child's school or classroom?

- Would you like to work directly with students?
- What kinds of volunteer jobs would you enjoy?
- What days and time work for you?
- How much time a week can you give to your child's school?
- Do you feel prepared for the volunteer experience?
- What are you looking for in your volunteer experience?

What do you need to be a volunteer?

- A genuine interest in helping children
- A commitment to volunteering
- A positive attitude
- School volunteer training
- Regular attendance
- Good health

What do school volunteers do?

- Reinforce skills taught by teachers
- Give students individual attention
- Provide enrichment to the curriculum
- Assist teachers with classroom duties
- Help students prepare to be productive members of society
- Provide services that support schools and programs

Who assists school volunteers?

- Teachers can organize tutoring/mentoring opportunities in the classroom
- Schools can help volunteers find opportunities within programs, the office or the library.
- Parent-teacher organizations need volunteers for special PTO events, leadership and committees.

Safety and Security

Important information for School Volunteers

Parents and patrons are encouraged to visit district schools. However all visitors during a regular school days must follow established safety procedures. At Sarcoxie R-II, visitors must be admitted into the building through a monitored locking system. Visitors during school hours will press the buzzer on the system, wait to be identified by a staff member, and then access the building once the door opens. School volunteers can then proceed to the school office.

- All school volunteers must sign-in and sign-out at the school office each time they come to the school.
- Volunteers will be required to wear a name tag/badge identifying them while they are on a school campus.
- All volunteer activities take place under the supervision of school personnel.
- Volunteers will participate in safety drills while at school.

Confidentiality

Important information for School Volunteers

Work with students is always confidential. Please feel free to share school volunteer experiences with others, but it is very important not to use full names of students outside of school. Any information a student shares within the classroom is considered confidential, and must remain between you, the student and the teacher/staff member.

Student Information

All information contained in a student's educational record, except information designated as directory information by the District, shall be confidential. In addition, parents/guardians and students have a right to expect that student health information will be kept confidential. Student educational records shall be directly accessible only to school officials who demonstrate a legitimate educational interest in the student's records and to parents/guardians or eligible students.

Discipline

Building principals are responsible for the development of rules and regulations regarding student conduct needed to maintain proper behavior in schools under their supervision. Teachers have the authority to make and enforce necessary rules for the internal governance in the classroom, subject to review by the building principal. School volunteers will remember that it is the principal's, teacher's and/or staff member's responsibility to discipline students. However, as a volunteer you have the right to verbally redirect to the task at hand in a positive manner.

Communication and Internet Use

The principal/designee shall oversee the maintenance of communication and information technologies for each school and may establish limits and guidelines on their use. Students and staff are authorized to use communication and information technologies in accordance with user obligations and responsibilities.

Reliability

Important information for School Volunteers

- Teachers and staff plan for school volunteers. If you will be absent, call the school as soon as possible so arrangements can be made. We do not want to disappoint or disrupt our students' learning.
- Follow school guidelines for student dress code. Dress comfortably, but remember that you are a role model for our students.
- Parent or patron visits to the classroom must be approved in advance by the sponsor, teacher and/or principal.
- Volunteers will work within the guidelines established by the school administration and will work under the direction and supervision of teachers and staff members.
- Visitation by preschool children and children who are not registered in the school is discouraged. All children who are visiting the school must report to the principal and receive approval prior to attending classes.
- Volunteers may not be given a Wildwood staff member's and/or teacher's personal accounts and passwords in order to access a school Web site.
- All groups using the name of the district, school, or other support groups for any district school will be expected to conduct all operations in such a way as to reflect positively upon the district.
- Smoking, alcohol, drug use and firearms are prohibited on school district premises, including all buildings, grounds and property of the District.
- The Board and administration will not tolerate any one who disturbs classes or school activities or hinders the instructional process. If such persons will not leave the school premises upon request, the building principal/designee may refer charges to the proper legal authorities.
- Realize that volunteers must be positive if mutual trust between staff and parents is to be maintained.
- Please do not gossip about kids or their home situations. If you are concerned about a child's welfare or safety at home, please report it to Division of Family Services.

Field Trips

Important information for School Volunteers

Field Trips/Excursions

A field trip is a planned visit outside the classroom taken by students under the supervision of a teacher or other school official for the purpose of extending the instructional activities of the classroom through first-hand experience and participation in functional situations that relate directly to what is being studied.

Field Trips Involving Out-of-Town or Overnight Travel

School volunteers may assist in the supervision of students where needed and if appropriate.

However, these volunteers will work under the supervision of district personnel.

Building Family-School Partnerships

The evidence is in: When schools and families work together to support learning, everyone benefits.

Did you know?

Parents of high-achieving students set higher standards for their children's educational activities. They are active participants in schools and education.

» **Who:** Most students at all levels—elementary, middle, and high school—want their families to take active roles in between home and school. When parents come to school regularly, it reinforces the view in the child's mind that school and home are connected and that school is an integral part of the whole family's life.

» **When:** The earlier in a child's educational process parent involvement begins, the more powerful the effects. The most effective forms of involvement engage parents in working directly with their children on learning activities at home.

» **Why:** Decades of research show that when parents are involved, students have the following:

- » Higher grades, test scores, and graduation rates
- » Better school attendance and self-esteem
- » Increased motivation
- » Lower rates of suspension
- » Decreased use of drugs and alcohol

Family participation in education was twice as predictive of students' academic success as family socioeconomic status. The more parents participate in schooling, in a sustained way, at every level—in advocacy, decision-making and oversight roles, as fund-raisers and boosters, as volunteers, and as home teachers—the better for student achievement.

- » Students do better in school and in life.
- » Parents become empowered.
- » Teacher morale improves.
- » Schools get better.
- » Communities grow stronger

» **How:** Wildwood supports the framework provided by the National Coalition for Parent Involvement in Education, which includes six types of parent involvement:

1. PARENTING: Families need to establish home environments that support children as students. With guidance and support, parents may become increasingly involved in home learning activities and find themselves with opportunities to teach, to be models for and to guide their children.

2. COMMUNICATING: Families become active participants in communication from a school-to-home and home-to-school perspective. Parents understand how to contact their children's teachers and principals, as well as access their school's Web site, newsletter and parent-teacher organization.

3. VOLUNTEERING: Families can volunteer as tutors and classroom aides, as well as assist with field trips and in other support opportunities. Parents can organize school events, and assist with their children's extracurricular activities and athletics. Schools have many exciting volunteer opportunities for the community.

4. LEARNING AT HOME: Families can help their children develop good study habits, supervise their homework, monitor TV viewing, and supervise regular bedtimes and school attendance. Parents read to their children and provide stimulating experiences that contribute to student achievement.

5. DECISION MAKING: Families can join parent-teacher organizations or long-range planning committees so they can advocate for good schools. They can help develop school improvement plans and provide parent representation and support. These groups can take the lead in assessing school needs, developing goals and monitoring for continuous improvement.

6. COLLABORATING WITH COMMUNITY: Families and schools help students by forming collaborative relationships with many public and private agencies that provide family support services. These partnerships create shared responsibility for the well-being of children, families and schools by all members of the community.

TOP FIVE TIPS

For School Volunteers

1) **Meet the principal and get to know your school.**

Wildwood is a welcoming, safe and supportive school, within a caring community. Share your contact information by filling out the school volunteer registration form. Be sure to get the school contact information as well.

2) **Create a checklist.**

You'll need some information to be a school volunteer. Your school will share with you the following details:

- ___ Days and times you're expected
- ___ Opportunities for you to choose from
- ___ Volunteer procedures at your school
- ___ Building layout and parking facilities
- ___ What is expected of students
- ___ Fire drills and safety procedures

3) **Just ask**

Let the school know if you need more instructions in order to perform a task. Help establish good communication with the teacher and the school so you'll be comfortable with your volunteer assignment.

4) **Enjoy the students.**

Understand that their backgrounds, family values, manners and vocabulary may be different from yours. By sharing time and caring, you are making a difference for children.

5) **Always remember that you are appreciated!**

The teachers, staff members and students value your time and all you give to schools.

BENEFITS

Provided by School Volunteers

School volunteers provide assistance to children and help teachers and staff better meet the needs of students. Everyone benefits when a school has active school volunteers.

Benefits for the Students

- Enriched learning experiences
- Opportunities for exploration
- Additional individualized and personalized attention
- Learning reinforcement
- Increased motivation and improved self-concept
- Positive adult role models

Benefits for the School

- Improved student achievement, attitude and behavior
- Community support of neighborhood schools
- Parent understanding and cooperation
- Positive community attitude toward the educational system
- More opportunities for teachers to provide additional instruction

Benefits for the Volunteer

- Helping children achieve
- Sharing knowledge and talents
- Knowing that you are needed and valued
- Becoming more involved in the school and community
- Providing active support for quality education

Benefits for the Community

- Better quality education
- More responsive school system
- Added pride and confidence in educational system
- Better educated students
- Closer ties between schools and the community