

**BUILDING**



**RELATIONSHIPS**

Volunteers In Public Schools

**Volunteer  
Guide**

**2011-2012**



**Texarkana**  
Independent School District

# WELCOME

## *WE WELCOME PARENTS, COMMUNITY, SENIOR CITIZENS AND COLLEGE STUDENTS AS VOLUNTEERS*

Two centuries ago John Adams wrote, *“The whole people must take upon themselves the education of the whole people and must be willing to bear the expense of it.”* The schools, which belong to all of us, are our best guide into the future. We all share the responsibility for our country’s future. We can all work together toward that future.

Anyone can volunteer in our public schools. You need no special qualifications – just a genuine love of children and a desire to help them receive the best possible educational experience. The quality of education makes a difference in the quality of lives. This affects the entire community. You CAN improve the quality of our children’s future. Your decision to volunteer WILL make a positive difference.

This guide is designed so that you may better understand your role as a volunteer. You will be assisting the staff in the day-to-day endeavor to provide the best possible educational experience for each child in the school.

Thank you for caring,



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# Tips For Tutors

## ATTITUDE

Please come to school with a positive attitude, one that will say to the principal, teachers, and students, “I’m glad to be here.” “You are so special; I’m glad to have the opportunity to work with you.”

## DEPENDABILITY

Make the professional commitment – agree to be counted on. Teachers and students are planning activities around your skills. Keeping your commitment is very important for you and others. Please notify the school office, campus contact, class instructor or student, if appropriate, when you are unable to come at your promised time.

## COMMUNICATION

We want your volunteer work to be a learning activity for you. If you have questions about to policy and procedures, please ask the appropriate person – teacher, principal, campus contact or school office staff.

## CONFIDENTIALITY

You will have access to student, teacher and adult confidences, abilities, successes, struggles and other personal information. Please remember that such information must be left in the classroom and with the people responsible for conducting classes or for supervising the activities in which you are involved. As a volunteer, your responsibility is to maintain the confidentiality of learning centers, and you must not share information which can be detrimental to any individual or group.



# Tips For Working With Students

Developing a positive relationship with students will make your volunteer experience more enjoyable as well as more beneficial for the students. Here are some tips for helping students learn:

Learn the students' names right away and use them often.

Be sure that all students know your name.

Get to know each other by first talking about things students like; then share something you like with them.

Let students take their time warming up to you. Trying too hard to establish a relationship with them may seem intimidating or may alienate students who don't know how to deal with such "enthusiasm." Instead, make yourself accessible to them and be kind.

Students gravitate toward these qualities.

Let students discover. Let students try new methods, even if you know an easier way.

Encourage students to feel, smell, taste, and listen as well as look at objects.

Build the student's self-confidence. Praise your students honestly and frequently.

Respect the student's privacy and don't encourage them to tell you something they're uncomfortable with. Most of all, listen to them!

Earn respect by avoiding the "Do as I say, not as I do" syndrome. Arrive at school on time, follow directions, and be a good role model.

Emphasize what the student does well. Talk about the student's strengths.

Don't criticize students in front of their peers.

Ask questions that may lead them to answer instead of telling them the answer.

Don't compare one student to another.

Give attention to all students. Don't favor one or two students more than others.

Give the students as much time as they need for them to understand new ideas.

Be reliable. Students will be disappointed when you are absent. Show you care by calling when you can't go to school when expected.

# Volunteers are Essential!

Many benefits are gained when volunteers serve in the classroom and throughout the school system. School volunteers provide assistance to students, help staff better meet the needs of students, and develop closer ties between the school and community. Most important, however, is the fact that your volunteer experience brings satisfaction to you personally.

## *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:*

- Additional services without extra cost
- Released teacher time to provide additional instructional time
- Improved student achievement, attitude and behavior
- Community support
- Parent understanding and cooperation
- Positive public relations and community attitude toward the educational system

## *Benefits for the Community:*

- Better quality education for students
- More responsive school system
- Added pride and confidence in educational system

## *Benefits for the Volunteer:*

- Assisting students to achieve
- Sharing knowledge and talents
- Knowing that you are needed and wanted
- Becoming more involved in the school and community
- Providing active support for quality education

# Volunteer Procedures

Volunteers are asked to give special attention to the following procedures.

- Complete a volunteer application. This information will help in giving you an assignment.
- Complete required security check form.
- Understand that the principal is responsible for the supervision of volunteers.
- Please attend the school volunteer orientation, if possible. At that time, you will be shown around the school office and workroom.
- Know where you should place your personal belongings (coat, purse, etc.).
- Work in cooperation with an assigned teacher, volunteer, or staff member. Questions, suggestions and feedback should be directed to the teacher, campus contact or to the principal.
- Please sign in and out on the sheets provided in the school office. The school staff needs to know who is in the building, and it is helpful in identifying the number of volunteer hours given to the schools.
- Please wear the nametag designated for volunteers.
- Do not smoke in any District enclosed facility, school vehicle, or in the presence of students at school or school-related activities.
- Report to the nurse and administrators immediately if you are injured at school.
- Please observe bulletin boards in the office. Information affecting you may be posted there.
- Please use telephones for emergencies only.
- Be prompt. If you are unable to come at your appointed time or will be late, please call the office.
- Be familiar with the school building. Ask to have a tour if this has not already been offered.