

Yellville-Summit Public Schools

Volunteer Handbook



BELIEVE.....ACHIEVE.....SUCCEED
TOGETHER WE CAN!!!!!

STUDENTS-----PARENTS-----COMMUNITY-----STAFF

YELLVILLE-SUMMIT SCHOOL DISTRICT VOLUNTEER POLICY

Enlisting the support of volunteers is a way in which the District can expand the scope of resources and knowledge available to enrich the students' educational experiences, while strengthening the relationship between the school and the community. Volunteers can also perform non-instructional tasks that allow certified personnel more time to devote to instruction. Volunteers are required to have a background check completed before volunteering. Check with Central Office for details on background checks.

The Superintendent shall be responsible for establishing and maintaining a program to coordinate the services volunteers are willing and able to contribute with the needs of District personnel. The program shall establish guidelines to ensure volunteers are aware of pertinent District policies and rules. Volunteers who violate school policies or rules, or knowingly allow students to violate school rules, may be asked to leave the school campus. The guidelines should also include provision for evaluation of the volunteer program and a method for soliciting suggestions from both the volunteers and staff for its improvement.

The Yellville-Summit Public School Board recognizes that certain public school programs and activities are enhanced through the use of volunteers. These volunteers have particular knowledge or skills that are helpful to the district staff responsible for conducting the programs and activities. There is an endless variety of activities that volunteers may be doing in our school district. Specific jobs are established by the school staff based on the needs of the children, as well as the talents and abilities of the volunteers. It is this needs-based flexibility that makes our school volunteer program successful.

DEFINITION OF A VOLUNTEER

A Volunteer is defined as a person who provides a service to the school district without financial compensation, has an ongoing relationship with district personnel, often participates in activities as supervisors or helpers to students, and may be involved with multiple activities. Volunteers serve under the guidance and direction of district personnel. Volunteers will wear identifying stickers or badges at all times while on school grounds or at school-sponsored events. All Volunteers, like all adults entering our school buildings, must check in at the respective school office.

SERVING AS A VOLUNTEER

General Guidelines

Being a Volunteer in the schools among many students means you have a special obligation to maintain confidentiality of all the information you see, hear, or collect on behalf of the District. The word “confidential” includes the Latin root *fides*, which means “faith, trust”. This obligation to confidentiality covers all information pertaining to a student, or faculty member, including but not limited to grades, disciplinary issues, medical issues, and personal demographic information. Here are some guidelines to help you strengthen the bond of trust between yourself and the school and protect yourself from violating confidentiality:

- Treat all student information as personal and confidential.
- Share relevant information about students only with the respective classroom teacher or building principal.
- Seek clarification of unusual situations that may occur in the school from the person(s) involved and/or the building principal and avoid discussing such matters with non-school personnel.
- Respect the customs and courtesies of the school and retain a sense of perspective regarding the comments you hear and actions you observe.
- Remember that you are perhaps only seeing a small part of the big picture in any given situation.
- Respect the right to privacy of all students, parents, guardians, and school personnel by not releasing or permitting access to any and all personal information.

Volunteer Dress and Behavior

- Please dress appropriately for the school setting.
- Smoking is not permitted in the school or on the school grounds.
- All adults shall use appropriate language with children and other adults.
- Show you are interested in the students by listening carefully to what they have to say.
- If you are working in a classroom, try to learn the names of the children. This is important to them.
- While we hope you will establish new friendships from your involvement in the volunteer program, remember that you are here to do specific task(s). Please do not use the school as social time.
- Please avoid stepping outside your role as a volunteer and guessing at causes of behaviors or learning problems that you see in children. Take any of your concerns to the teacher of that student.
- Please do not bring preschool siblings or other children to school with you while you are volunteering.

- Do not use student bathrooms. Adult bathrooms are available.
- Volunteers shall not dispense medication of any kind to any student. All medication needs should be routed to the school nurse.
- Volunteers are to use the copy machine and other office machines only after they have been trained.

Volunteer and District Personnel Relations

- Volunteers may park in front of each building in the visitors parking.
- Volunteers must check in the respective school office.
- Volunteers must wear badges while on campus. The badge is for the safety of our students. Please return the badge to the office before leaving.
- All volunteers must serve under the guidance of a Y-S employee.
- Volunteers shall not be given any assignments that would displace employees or existing contracts for service.
- Volunteers may not discipline students. All disciplinary issues must be referred to the teacher or other district employees.
- All volunteers working with individual students must do so in publicly designated areas.
- Teachers may terminate a volunteer assignment.
- Volunteers may terminate their assignment at any time and for any reason by contacting the teacher, or principal for whom they were working.
- The school administrator has the authorization to accept or deny a volunteer for placement within their school.

EXPECTATIONS

What District Personnel expect of the Volunteer:

- Be punctual. Arrive by your assigned time, ready to work.
- Be reliable. If you cannot be there for your scheduled time, please notify the school as soon as possible so other arrangements can be made.
- Wear your identification badge at all times while in the building.
- Complete your tasks in a timely fashion. If you are unable to complete something, leave detailed instructions so that the teacher or next volunteer can easily complete it.
- Be sensitive to the teacher's time and needs and be non-disruptive to the classroom. You may know a lot of the children in the class, but you are there to work and they are there to learn, so please help them to stay on task and be an example.

- Do not use your volunteering time as an opportunity for extra parent-teacher conferences. Conferences are separate from the volunteering experience and should be scheduled separately.

What the Volunteer expects of District Personnel:

- Volunteers shall be treated as professional assistants, with respect, courtesy, and a friendly and welcoming attitude.
- Staff should provide materials and necessary instructions/expectations for assigned tasks and have them ready at the volunteer's assigned time.
- Staff should notify the volunteer about any schedule changes which may interrupt their regular schedule.
- Staff shall assign tasks that volunteers are capable of doing and give assistance as needed.
- Staff shall be open to creative ideas and suggestions from a volunteer.
- Staff shall offer constructive criticism regarding task completion but not in front of students.
- Staff shall explain policies and procedures that the volunteer may need to be familiar with to carry out their tasks.
- Staff shall not leave the volunteer alone with students.

OFFENSES

All volunteers shall be held to a high standard and are expected to adhere to the school's rules and procedures. Negligent acts by volunteers are unacceptable. Negligence is "the failure to do something that a reasonable careful person would have done." Volunteers are advised of grounds for discharge, which may include, but are not limited to: theft, being under the influence of alcohol or drugs during volunteer services, mistreatment of staff or children, inappropriate dress or language, unsatisfactory performance, and/or criminal history. The District Administration shall investigate the complaint and inform the volunteer if the District is no longer interested in maintaining his/her volunteer services or what duties the volunteer will be assigned to in regards to the best interest of the District. All information obtained by the District Administration shall be kept confidential.

VOLUNTEER ORGANIZATION FLOW CHART

To help volunteers understand who to go to with issues, how to resolve a problem, or simply get more information about something, the following flow chart has been developed. The illustration shows how to proceed when there is a question or a need to handle an unfamiliar situation while volunteering. The chart reads from bottom to top.

YS SCHOOL BOARD

SUPERINTENDENT

PRINCIPAL

TEACHER

VOLUNTEER