



DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD OF PASCO COUNTY

SCHOOL VOLUNTEER GUIDELINES

General Principles:

1. The District Volunteer Programs Office operates with the approval of the District School Board of Pasco County and the school administration and is at all times guided by the principles and policies of the school district.
2. Volunteers are authorized through the District School Board of Pasco County Volunteer Registration Form application and Pasco County Sheriff's Office criminal background check process including sexual predator/offender screening through Florida's Department of Law Enforcement.
3. Each school has a designated school-based volunteer coordinator. The District Supervisor of Volunteer Programs provides in-service training, recruitment, recognition, and supportive services to volunteers and school staff.
4. Volunteers are assigned to schools by request and approval of the principal. Teachers and other school personnel may be asked to make recommendations for the principal's consideration.
5. Volunteers serve only in an auxiliary capacity under the direction and supervision of professional school personnel.
6. Volunteers provide supplemental and supportive services and are not a substitute for a member of the school staff.
7. Volunteers do not have access to sensitive confidential records or files.
8. The relationship between volunteers and the school staff must be one of mutual respect, confidence and consideration.
9. Volunteers must always sign in and out and wear their Pasco County Volunteer identification badge on Pasco school property.
10. Volunteers representing religious organizations will not be discriminated against on the basis of religious affiliation, and will be advised to keep their focus on assisting schools in reaching their goals of student achievement.

School Volunteer Program

1. Definition: A volunteer is a non-paid person functioning under the sponsorship of the School Board and at the direction of a principal or the Supervisor of Volunteer Programs. The efforts of volunteers are to support and advance the goals of the school and school district.
2. The District School Board of Pasco County encourages volunteer participation by individuals and groups in local schools, district offices and for supervised off-school activities, before, during, and after school hours.
3. The Supervisor of Volunteer Programs shall be responsible for the volunteer program and its compliance with all laws pertaining to volunteers, which shall include the recruitment of volunteers and the evaluation of the volunteer program.
4. **All volunteers must be approved prior to volunteering in any capacity in the school or school district.**

Volunteer Registration Form Application and Approval Process

1. Complete an online Pasco County Volunteer Registration Form at:
<http://www.pasco.k12.fl.us/communications/volunteer/>.
2. The applicant's background is checked against the Florida Sexual Offenders and Predators list and law enforcement records through the Pasco County Sheriff's Office.
3. If the background checks returns showing no criminal background, the individual will be placed on the approved volunteer list. If a valid email address was supplied at the time of application, the individual will receive an approval email message.
4. Volunteers whose background check is not clear will receive a letter from the Office of Human Resources and Educator Quality requesting additional documentation. The District's Professional Review Committee determines if the applicant is approved to volunteer based on the documents submitted.
 - a. An applicant is deemed "Pending" if failing to provide documentation and may not volunteer in any capacity in the school or school district.
 - b. An applicant who does not receive clearance by the District's Professional Review Committee is not approved to volunteer in any capacity in the school or school district.

Volunteer Guidelines

1. Volunteers shall work within guidelines established by the School Board and the authorized administrator(s).
2. Volunteers shall work under the direction and supervision of the principal, teacher(s) or other members of the school staff or the District Supervisor of Volunteer Programs.
3. Volunteers may perform any task assigned by their supervisors if approved by the principal or the District Supervisor of Volunteer Programs.
4. Volunteers may not have access to the student information system or cumulative records unless they have principal permission and clearly understand the need for confidentiality of student records.
5. Volunteers may not grade subjective assignments that result in a grade for the student or are considered a formal assessment of the student's achievement or ability.
6. Volunteers may not supervise a class in the teacher's absence.
7. Volunteers may come in contact with student information in the course of their duties. Volunteers are advised that they are required to maintain strict confidentiality with all school or classroom information and shall agree in writing that they will comply with the requirement.
8. Teachers, administrators, and volunteers shall be aware of all state and local policies, procedures, and laws relevant to volunteer responsibilities.
9. Volunteers may not take students off-campus during the day unless approved by the principal and accompanied by a faculty/staff member.
10. Volunteers may not work with students before or after school hours unless part of an authorized District School Board of Pasco County Volunteer Program.
11. Volunteers may not chaperone an approved field trip unless the volunteer is registered, approved, and accompanied by a faculty/staff member.

Volunteers and Personal Children

Volunteers should never bring preschoolers or children not registered in school when volunteering at the school. An option may be to seek out opportunities to volunteer from home if unable to find alternative childcare for their own personal children not enrolled in our schools.

Management and Insurance

1. Volunteers must be registered with the District Communications and Government Relations and when registered are protected by the District School Board of Pasco County's Self-Insured General Liability Program. The extent of this protection shall not exceed \$100,000 per claimant or \$200,000 per occurrence in damages. In case of accident or injury the volunteer must immediately report to the school or district administrator on duty. The administrator will report the accident or injury following standard procedures.
2. All schools must utilize Raptor's Volunteer Module to sign in/out and manage volunteer logs. Raptor will record volunteer names, dates, hours of service and tasks assigned and produce data logs for school and district reporting. All volunteers must sign in and out in the front office when volunteering in a school.
3. Off-Campus Volunteer Instructional Services: Volunteer instructional tutoring services provided by groups in conjunction with public schools must first receive the approval of the principal. All volunteers must be pre-approved (See Pasco County Volunteer Registration Form application and Approval Process.)

Equal Opportunity

The District School Board of Pasco County does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, marital status, sex, religion, age, or disability.

Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is any unwelcome behavior, demand, comment, or physical contact of a sexual nature that interferes with either a volunteer or employee's responsibilities.

Bullying and Harassment

The School Board of Pasco County is committed to providing an educational setting that is safe, secure, and free from harassment and bullying for all of its students and employees. The District will not tolerate unlawful bullying and harassment of any type. Conduct that constitutes bullying and harassment is prohibited: (A) during any education related program or activity conducted by the District; (B) during any school-related or school-sponsored program or activity on a school bus of the District, or (C) through the use of the Internet, cellphones, and related technologies. For the information on bullying, cyber bullying and harassment, please go to

http://www.pasco.k12.fl.us/library/student_services/brochures/bullying.pdf

Dress Code

Dress codes are established at each school. School administrators have the authority to enforce the dress code as needed. School volunteers should dress neatly and professionally. Clothing and shoes should be such that the volunteer will be comfortable and safe. As with students, attire which advertises drugs or alcoholic beverages, or which is vulgar or obscene in nature is not permitted. Some volunteer assignments require the use of special safety equipment such as back supports. Volunteers who fail to use safety devices or disregard the dress code may be directed to no longer volunteer.

Access to Student Records

By District School Board of Pasco County policy, volunteers must keep information learned about students between themselves and their assigned supervisor. A misplaced comment can be devastating to a student, a family and the volunteer program. Volunteers who have questions or concerns are directed to talk with their principal or the District Volunteer Program Supervisor. Volunteers who breach confidentiality will have their privilege of volunteering revoked.

Parental Notification of Volunteers Working with Students

When a student will be working with a volunteer mentor, the school notifies the parents of the potential match of their child with a mentor and reminds them of the necessity of a joint commitment from the student, teacher, school, family and volunteer mentor.

Reporting Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect

Any volunteer who has reason to believe that a child has been subject to abuse or maltreatment must report to the principal, assistant principal or guidance counselor. The school official will call the necessary authorities in the volunteer's presence. Volunteers may call the child abuse hotline directly; however, the school administration must be informed. The following should be reported: neglect; malnutrition; sexual abuse; physical injury; mental injury and/or failure to provide sustenance, clothing, shelter or medical attention. Failure to report is a misdemeanor of the second degree and is punishable by law. Persons reporting are guaranteed immunity from any civil or criminal liability.

Court Ordered Community Service

Court ordered placements are not volunteer placements. Those individuals who are required to complete court ordered community service are directed to contact other non-school agencies.

Teacher-supervised Programs

Any teacher instructing in a District School Board of Pasco County sponsored program either on or off a school site, or before, during or after the school day, will abide by the District School Board of Pasco County's District Volunteer policies and procedures.

Volunteers working in a teacher-supervised program as defined above will abide by the program guidelines outlined in School Board Policy.

Pre-Kindergarten Services Early Childhood Programs Head Start/Early Head Start Volunteer and Visitor Procedures

Head Start Performance Standards, 1304.40(d)(2) addressing Head Start/Early Head Start settings require that the classroom must be open to parents during all program hours. Parents must be welcomed as visitors and encouraged to observe children as often as possible and to participate with children in group activities. (The term "parent" shall refer to "parent" or "legal guardian.")

In order to meet the intent of the Head Start Performance Standards, and at the same time protect our students, schools should follow these guidelines regarding parents participating in their child's classroom:

1. All parents who have children participating in the Head Start/Early Head Start programs must complete an online volunteer application. The application will be processed as described under the section entitled, *District School Board of Pasco County Volunteer Registration Form Application and Approval Process*.
2. Parents who are approved school volunteers will become familiar with the school's volunteer coordinator and procedures. These approved volunteers should sign in with the school volunteer coordinator so that their hours can be submitted to the District Volunteer Programs Office on a monthly basis. They should also sign in on the Weekly Class Volunteer Time Sheet maintained by Head Start/Early Head Start staff.
3. Parents who are approved volunteers will wear a school volunteer badge, which clearly communicates that they have been approved as a volunteer and are allowed to volunteer, as needed. All approved volunteers operate under the direction of the school administration or designee(s).
4. Parents not completing a volunteer application will be assigned to "visitor" status. Visitor status does not exclude parents from participation but limits their involvement to working only with their own child and under direct supervision of a professional staff member.

5. If a parent has applied to be an approved volunteer and the background check does not return clear, the parent is asked to provide further documentation as described in the section entitled, *District School Board of Pasco County Volunteer Registration Form Application and Approval Process*.
6. A parent whose volunteer application has been denied by the Professional Review Committee may, at the Professional Review Committee's discretion, be given "visitor" status. Persons assigned visitor status may be permitted to participate in the classroom but will not be allowed to work with any child other than their own and only while under the direct supervision of an authorized staff member.
7. Parents assigned "visitor" status must sign in at the school office. They must obtain and wear a visitor identification badge. They must record their classroom participation time on the Weekly Class Volunteer Time Sheet maintained by Head Start/Early Head Start staff. These hours should not be submitted to, nor recorded by the School Volunteer Coordinator. These parents are not allowed to visit other areas of the school. Their participation is restricted to the Head Start/Early Head Start classroom with their own child while under direct supervision.