

Cypress Elementary School

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Cypress Elementary Volunteer Program Mission

To provide our valuable volunteers with open communication, a friendly working atmosphere, and to recognize the precious gift they give so freely—their time.

To provide our Cypress students with encouragement to achieve academic success, direction to become better students and citizens, and to enrich their elementary education.

To extend the effectiveness of the Cypress teachers and staff through active parent and community involvement and support.

Cypress Elementary Volunteer Information and Expectations

Volunteer Sign In and Badges

A photo ID OR District issued badge is a requirement to gaining access to any Pasco County School. We expect our volunteers to be role models for all visitors by adhering to our signing in/out procedures. Please ensure the office staff properly signs you out each time you volunteer. At-home volunteer hours need to be emailed to the volunteer coordinator. Name badges need to be worn at all times.

School hours

Please do not remove your child for early dismissal if you are volunteering. If you are leaving at the end of the day with your child, we ask that you provide your child's teacher with a note to have them sent as a car rider at dismissal time. When signing in for the day, please obtain a green slip from the office staff (this is given to car rider staff at dismissal). Teachers are not to release students unless the student is signed-out and called for early dismissal by the front office.

School Emergency Plan

Flip charts with emergency procedures are located near the televisions in the classrooms. If there is no classroom, they are located by the doors. If you are working in a classroom and an emergency/drill comes to pass, please stay calm and follow the directions given to students by staff members. It is recommended that you familiarize yourself with the School Emergency Plan.

Volunteer Opportunities

We offer a wide range of volunteer opportunities. If you are wanting to help in the classroom, field trips, school activities, or are only available to volunteer at home, we can help you! **Don't wait for a call—please reach out to us!**

Lunches/snacks

Vending machines are located in the Staff Lounge. Breakfast and lunch can be purchased in the Café. Be sure to ask for an adult portion entrée and you will get 2 side vegetablea and 2 side fruits. The cafeteria also frequently offers a "special" entrée for adults. An outdoor lounge is located behind the cafeteria (privacy fence).

Be Cautious

Never allow yourself to be put in a possibly compromising situation. If you feel uncomfortable in a particular situation, please let a staff member know immediately.

Younger Siblings

For liability and safety reasons, non school-age children may not accompany a parent when volunteering at school.

Volunteer Orientation

As volunteer applications are approved from District Office, volunteers will receive training pertaining to volunteer expectations, roles and responsibilities.

Volunteer Brunch

Volunteers, who have 25 or more volunteer hours, excluding field trips, will be invited to attend a brunch at the end of the year.

Volunteer Schedule

Volunteer time must be prearranged ahead of time. The teacher or person you are assisting will notify the office to expect your arrival. Report on time to the staff person who will supervise your job. If, at any time, this person is not available, or for any reason the job does not materialize, please contact the volunteer coordinator or principal. Please do not expect to conference with the teacher during your volunteer time.

If You Must Cancel

If illness or an emergency arises, please call the school office as soon as possible. Ask the office to inform the teacher that you will not be there. Instructional time may be interrupted if you are not where you expected at the scheduled time.

Appearance and Language

Your appearance in dress and grooming should be neat, clean and appropriate for working with elementary age children. Dress may be comfortable and casual (i.e. walking shorts, slacks, etc.) and project a positive image to our students. Volunteers may not wear short shorts or tank tops. Also, adults may not use inappropriate language or gestures on school grounds as we have a responsibility as role models to gain the respect of our students. Personal conversations should not take place around students.

Accept Direction

Accept direction and supervision, recognizing that you are an important helper. You do not take the place of a staff member. You are a supplementary person who offers assistance and enrichment with your personal skills and competence.

Assignment

If the assigned job does not prove to be what you expected or can handle, and you are hesitant to discuss this with the staff member, please contact the volunteer coordinator or the principal.

Using the Equipment

All volunteers must be properly trained before using any equipment. Please be aware that staff members may need to use the equipment (i.e. copy machine) at the same time you are using the equipment. Please allow them to do so, as they are on a schedule.

Enjoy yourself

Your enthusiasm will be conveyed to the students who are eager to learn about new topics and ideas.

Volunteer Fraternization

We encourage all our parents to network as a useful learning tool to help their child succeed. It is natural, as children form positive friendships in school, that volunteers who work together do the same. We only ask that the following points be considered:

- While volunteering, we realize there may be down times. While engaging in conversation, please be aware of your surroundings, your topic of conversation and level of voice.
- While on school grounds, at school functions off campus and publishing on-line (i.e. Facebook and Myspace), it is not appropriate or acceptable for a volunteer to speak about a student, parent, staff member or school activity (on or off campus). This also includes sharing photos.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Respect the confidential nature of anything you see or hear. Share your concerns you may have only with those in authority over the volunteer program (principal, assistant principal and volunteer coordinator).

Field Trip Regulations

Thank you so much for volunteering to go on field trips. In an effort to keep students safe while attending school sponsored trips, the Pasco County School Board requires us to notify you of the following guidelines that volunteers must follow:

All volunteers attending a school sponsored event must be a current registered volunteer with the county.

Please be at the school no later than the designated time. This is an important time for teachers to communicate with you about the day's events.

Please find another teacher or volunteer to be your buddy. This will be helpful during bathroom breaks.

Children should be supervised at all times during the trip, including bathroom breaks.

You may not smoke or drink alcoholic beverages (some amusement parks have such items).

Since the event is school sponsored you may be chaperoning your own child with additional students. No other siblings may attend the trip with you.

You are responsible for your group of students until the end of the trip, unless an emergency arises.

If the trip is during the school day, all students must ride the bus to and from school. If the trip lasts longer than the school day and you want to drive yourself, you may check out your son/daughter with his/her teacher. You may not check out any other student under any circumstance.

Please refrain from using a cell phone while performing school duties.

Abuse Reporting Tips & Information

During the course of volunteering, if a student gives you cause to be concerned about possible abuse, neglect or other safety issues out of school, we advise the volunteer to follow the appropriate course of action:

1. If the student is sharing disturbing information with you, it is extremely important that you stop the student. Politely excuse yourself and share your concern with the student's teacher, principal, assistant principal or guidance counselor. These staff members know the student and their situation and are the best equipped to handle the situation appropriately.
2. If you feel the situation was not handled correctly, we encourage you to discuss the situation with the **Principal or Assistant Principal**.