

Cypress Elementary Volunteer Handbook

COVID-19 RESTRICTED

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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

Volunteers on the COVID-19 Restricted Campus

During these uncertain times, we have three options for our valued parents and community members wanting to volunteer.

Copy Genies: Volunteers can schedule a time to come copy and laminate items for teachers and staff. All items will be labeled with clear-cut directions, then placed in the teachers mailbox when completed.

Working with Students through ZOOM: If you are interested in being a ZOOM volunteer, we would love to have you read to students, or work with small groups. If you are interested in this, please reach out to Debbie Hemby in the office.

Preparing Materials for Teachers at Home: Communicate with your child's teacher that you are available to prepare materials at home.

Volunteer Sign-in and Badges

A photo ID OR District issued badge is a requirement to gaining access to any Pasco County School. All volunteers must stop at the front desk upon arrival for a RAPTOR badge, and when leaving to be signed out.

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.

Younger Siblings

For liability and safety reasons, non-school age children may not accompany a parent when volunteering at school. All Middle and High School Students need prior approval before volunteering or accompanying a parent while volunteering.

Social Media

Please understand that while volunteering, pictures are not be taken of students and posted on social media. **If this should occur, you may be limited in further volunteer activities.** This is necessary to ensure the privacy of students with non-media consents. If you have taken pictures and would like to submit them to be posted on our Cypress Facebook, please email to dburd@pasco.k12.fl.us.

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.

Volunteer Approval and Orientation

Your volunteer application will not be automatically approved. The school volunteer coordinator must request it to be approved. If there is a volunteer opportunity you would like to participate in, please contact Debbie Hemby in the school office. As volunteer applications are approved from District Office, volunteers will be required to read the Pasco County Schools Volunteer Guidelines and our Cypress Volunteer Handbook.

Volunteer Schedule

Volunteer time must be prearranged ahead of time.

If You Must Cancel

If illness or an emergency arises, please call the school office as soon as possible.

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. jeans, 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 and 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 Fraternalization

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 Social Media, it is not appropriate or acceptable to speak about/photograph students, parents and staff members.

CONFIDENTIALITY

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

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 school 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.