



Volunteers

Poudre School District



Reference Guide for Volunteering in Poudre School District

*Educate...
Every Child, Every Day*





POUDRE SCHOOL DISTRICT

Dear Volunteer:

Welcome to the Poudre School District Volunteer Program. Thank you for contributing your talent to Poudre School District children and staff. We believe volunteers make a difference in our schools by sharing wisdom and caring for our future leaders.

As a school volunteer, you will join teachers and staff in providing education and enrichment to the lives of our students. We offer our commendations to you for caring and contributing a priceless resource—yourself and your time.

We hope that your experience will be enjoyable, and that you will come away with a sense of accomplishment—that you have made a difference by motivating a child and lending a helping hand.

Sincerely,

Jerry Wilson, Ph.D.
Superintendent of Schools



A PSD Volunteer is...

a person who reaches out beyond the confines of paid employment and normal responsibilities to contribute time and service to Poudre School District, in the belief that his/her activity is beneficial to students and staff, as well as satisfying to him/herself.*

Volunteers help students in many ways

In the classroom, volunteers perform clerical work and miscellaneous tasks under the direction of the teacher.

As tutors, volunteers work one-on-one with a student or in a small-group setting to help reinforce and support basic skills and academic achievement.

In the **school library/media center**, volunteers work with the school librarian to shelve, file and process books. They may also assist with inventory.

Volunteers assist district staff with **vision and hearing screenings** to check in students and perform clerical work.

For **special projects**, volunteers assist teachers and staff with:

- material preparation
- art projects/shows
- book fairs
- picture day
- newsletters
- one-day field trips (including chaperoning)



To **support the school community**, volunteers serve on PTO/PTA's and assist with fund raisers and other school-sponsored activities.

Registered businesses in **Share It!** offer job shadowing, mentoring, internships, guest speakers, resources, and additional expertise.

*Adapted from Douglas County School District Volunteer Handbook



P rotocol for volunteers

School volunteers...

- May be of any age.
- Are in good physical and mental health and have a positive attitude.
- Understand that volunteering in Poudre School District is a privilege and does not create any right to continue volunteer activities. PSD may revoke the privilege at any time without cause and without notice.
- Receive information regarding rules and regulations from the building coordinator and/or the proper staff member(s).
- Understand that a background check is done on all first-time volunteers, as well as randomly during their volunteer tenure.
- Receive information and instructions regarding policies and practices as they relate to their position and accept direction and constructive criticism.
- Are provided with proper supervision both during training and in the school.
- Understand their responsibility to report any suspected child abuse to the teacher, counselor or principal.
- Are familiar with the immediate objectives to be performed by the student(s).
- Are covered by and afforded the protections of the Colorado Government Immunity Act and the Colorado Teacher and School Administrator Protection Act.
- Are covered by the district's liability insurance.
- Are provided with protection under the law and where possible, covered by the district's liability insurance.
- Work in their assigned area, and follow specific rules and classroom procedures.
- Respect the confidentiality of everything they see or hear.
- Respect the teacher as the professional educator.





- Are punctual and give advance notice of absence when possible.
- Have a neat appearance and wear their nametag at all times while at school.
- May declare as a deduction from their taxes the cost of transportation to and from home and the school.

School volunteers should not...

- Assume responsibility for the supervision of the class in the absence of a certified teacher.
- Assume responsibility for the discipline of students.
- Establish instructional objectives.
- Diagnose student needs or counsel students.
- Make decisions regarding the relevancy of certain activities or procedures to the attainment of instructional objectives.
- Provide the initial instruction for accomplishing the instructional objectives.
- Make decisions regarding the appropriateness of certain teaching materials for accomplishing instructional objectives.
- Make judgments regarding the attainment of instructional objectives unless these judgments are based upon clear and objective criteria (such as specific achievement standards on a true/false test).
- Enter grades in the computer or grade book if students are identified by name.
- Contact parents regarding the performance of students or write comments on papers that go home.
- Transport children, staff or school guests in their own vehicle unless they have completed and submitted a Volunteer Field Trip Driver Application Form, which has been approved by the site administrator.
- Drive any vehicle owned, rented or leased by PSD.





Know what to expect as a P

You need to...

- Complete the required online Volunteer Application located at www.psdschools.org/partnerships and read and agree to the Volunteer/Confidentiality Agreement, Volunteer Policy KJ, and the Volunteer Reference Guide. If you do not have access to the internet, paper applications and copies of the agreements can be found at the local school, or by calling 970-490-3208.
- Sign in/out upon arrival and departure and record the hours volunteered, either on attendance log or electronically.
- Wear your name tag at all times in the building during your volunteer activity.
- Be honest in your approach and attitude.
- Be patient when working with students.
- Be flexible in responding to the needs of students and staff.
- Be a positive role model for students in attitude, behavior, language and dress. Let your conversations demonstrate respect for others, and avoid language that may be perceived as discriminatory, sexist or offensive.
- Be respectful of the school's infrastructure, taking time to become familiar with the school and staff/students' expectations.
- Notify a teacher, counselor or principal if a student confides to you about an abusive situation. Staff will do the necessary follow up.
- Not present gifts or give food to individual students. With staff approval, you may bring purchased snacks for the entire classroom or donate books or supplies for the classroom.
- Ensure positive closure. If you plan on ending your volunteer involvement before the assignment is complete, please notify the staff and the Volunteer Building Coordinator. It is especially important that the students be left with the clear message that you have enjoyed working with them.



Poudre School District Volunteer

You can expect to...

- Work at a position that is worthwhile and challenging, with freedom to use existing skills and develop new ones.
- Have your position defined and receive orientation and training.



- Receive sufficient and ongoing training with clear and specific directions from the staff or Volunteer Building Coordinator.
- Feel that you are an important part of the team by having your accomplishments recognized.
- Receive constructive feedback on your performance.
- Have your skills, dignity, and individual needs respected.
- Have the ability to refuse an assignment that you feel you are not trained or qualified to perform.

...and, most importantly, expect to have fun and realize you are impacting a child's life!

Attending field trips

Teachers appreciate the extra help provided by volunteers who chaperone a field trip. Please note that you must be an Authorized Volunteer* with Poudre School District in order to be a chaperone.

Volunteers who will be driving their own vehicle and transporting any students other than their own, must complete the **Volunteer Field Trip Driver Application** (available from the school) and provide proof of insurance to the school prior to the field trip. Teacher permission is required for siblings and other guests of the volunteer to attend the field trip. Please note that siblings and guests are not permitted to ride on the school bus for field trips.

*As defined in District Policy IJ (access district policies at www.psdschools.org)



H

ow to register

Whether you volunteer in a classroom, on a field trip or in other capacities, you must complete the online ***Volunteer Application***.

Step 1: Visit the Partnership and Volunteer webpage at www.psdschools.org/partnerships

Step 2: Determine your registration category

- Individual Parent or Community Volunteer – Share time, talent, expertise with students and staff. (If you are already a registered volunteer, log in as a Returning User, you can always edit your profile to be associated with a business).
- Business/Organization – Local businesses and organizations are invited to register to provide mentors, guest speakers, internships and job shadowing opportunities and/or training and internships for teachers.

Step 3: Complete the online registration application

- As part of the application process, you will create a User ID and Password. Please keep for future reference.

User ID: _____ Password: _____

- You will be asked to agree to the terms of the Volunteer/Confidentiality Agreement, Volunteer Policy KJ, and the Volunteer Reference Guide (please feel free to print copies for your records).

Step 4: Background check

A background check will be completed on all first-time volunteers. This process typically takes 5–7 days. If you are not cleared to volunteer, based on the background check, you will be contacted by PSD. ***You may begin volunteering only after you have been approved to volunteer in PSD.*** Once you are approved to volunteer, a nametag will be created for you to wear at all times while volunteering.

Update your Volunteer profile yearly. To keep your record active, access your volunteer profile at least once per year, making any necessary changes at that time. If you do not update your record yearly, your profile may be deleted.

Need assistance? If you do not have access to the Internet or have questions, please call **490-3208**.

Possible reasons for denial or dismissal

Denial of volunteer status in Poudre School District may include:

- Felony conviction
- Two or more DUI convictions
- Any domestic violence convictions
- Any child abuse/reckless endangerment convictions
- Any outstanding warrants
- Any current charges where the court date is outstanding (pre-conviction)
- Any conviction involving the illegal sale of a controlled substance
- Any conviction involving unlawful sexual behavior or unlawful behavior involving a child
- Any other information that suggests an applicant's volunteer service may be incompatible with the protection of student health, welfare, safety or morals



Reasons to dismiss a volunteer from Poudre School District may include:

- Not adhering to the rules and procedures of Poudre School District
- Violating the **Volunteer/Confidentiality Agreement**
- Being under the influence of drugs or alcohol
- Acting in a manner that is incompatible with the protection of student health, welfare, safety or morals
- Abuse or mistreatment of students, staff or other volunteers



C Confidentiality agreement

Poudre School District Volunteer Confidentiality Agreement

As a volunteer assisting in Poudre School District, you have been authorized by the principal to act as a school official subject to the directions and control of the school's administrators and teachers. As a school official, you may under limited circumstances have access to student education records and other information in connection with your authorized duties. Student education records include all records, files, documents and other materials that contain personally identifiable information on any student, as well as the personally identifiable information itself (including student grades and test scores). ***As a volunteer you must agree to the confidentiality agreement requirements listed below.***

You agree not to discuss with others, while serving as a volunteer or when no longer in a volunteer role, the content of any specific confidential student records nor disclose student education records, personally identifiable student information in such records, or other information regarding any student.

While in the possession and control of confidential student records, and while handling, distributing, organizing, mailing, or filing records, you understand that you must protect those documents from being viewed or obtained by non-authorized individuals.

Questions about the content of confidential student records must be directed to a PSD employee who is authorized to review the record and comment on its content. As a volunteer, you should state that you are not authorized to examine or comment on student records. You understand that you must direct anyone requesting information to seek the assistance of the principal or his/her designee.

You will never take any confidential student records off campus unless authorized by the school principal or his/her designee.

You must report any breach or suspected breach in the confidentiality of student records immediately upon discovery to the school principal or his/her designee. You understand and agree that failure to maintain the confidentiality of student education records, and information to which you are given access, may disqualify you from further service as a community volunteer in Poudre School District.



Tips for new volunteers*

Arrive early!

- Ask for a tour.
- Become familiar with the school and learn what is expected of you.
- Know who to go to with questions.



Ask questions

Where do I park? Where is the restroom/lunchroom?
Where is the copy/workroom? Who do I call when I am absent? What procedures do I follow in case of an emergency?

Live up to your commitment

Be available and make arrangements ahead of time if you can't be there.

Be an ambassador

Dress appropriately and speak positively at all times.

Work well with students

- Encourage children to do their own thinking.
- Help students realize that making mistakes is part of learning.
- Don't compare students to one another.
- Maintain a sense of humor.



Enjoy yourself!

**Adapted from Douglas County School District Volunteer Handbook*

***Educate...
Every Child, Every Day***

Vision

*Poudre School District
exists to support and
inspire every child to
think, to learn, to care,
and to graduate prepared
to be successful in a
changing world.*



Partnership & Volunteer Center
1630 South Stover
Fort Collins, CO 80525
970-490-3208
970-490-3209 Fax
shareit@psdschools.org
www.psdschools.org/partnerships

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