



MILL A SCHOOL DISTRICT

1142 Jessup Road, Cook, WA 98605 • (509) 538-2522 • fax (509) 538-2181



Procedure 5630P

MILL A SCHOOL DISTRICT VOLUNTEER PROCEDURE AND HANDBOOK

To be a volunteer in the Mill A School District you must complete the following process prior to being approved for in-school volunteer work. The information disclosed on the following forms will be used only in making the initial determination of whether you are eligible to volunteer and will not be used or disseminated for any other purpose.

1) **Washington State Patrol Request for Criminal History Information**

We request this information to obtain WSP records of any criminal convictions or felony crimes within the last ten (10) years as well as any offenses against persons, and civil adjudications of child abuse. If the WSP report shows evidence of criminal history background and we are unable to consider you for volunteering in Mill A Schools, you will be notified by MASD administration or by mail. WSP Criminal History Background records shall be renewed for each school year.

2) **Criminal History Disclosure**

This form is required by law in order to be in compliance with RCW 43.43.830, RCW 43.43.832, and RCW 9.96A.020.

3) **Volunteer Expectation Agreement and Covid-19 Protocols**

The purpose of this form is for your safety as well as the protection of children you may work with. By signing this form you verify that you understand the expectations and appropriate behaviors required while working as a volunteer with MASD students and staff. Covid-19 Symptom Attestation and/or verification of Covid-19 vaccination may also be required at the office prior to admission to the school.

MASD VOLUNTEER FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

We want your volunteer experience at Mill A School to be a positive one. Understanding school procedures, classroom policies, and expectations are key elements to a successful and rewarding experience. Below are some of the questions most frequently asked by MASD volunteers. Be sure to talk with staff at your selected site about instructions specific to that building.

Do I need to check in somewhere before going to the classroom where I'll be working? Yes. All visitors must check in at the main office of the school.

How should I dress?

Wearing appropriate, practical and comfortable clothing when you volunteer is one way you can be a role model. If you have a question about appropriate dress, feel free to ask the principal.

Do I need to wear a name tag?

Yes. While on any of our campuses, you are required to wear identification provided by the school. You will need to check with the office staff at your specific site to see where the badges are located.

Where do I put my purse and coat while I am at school?

Please check with the main office at your specific site. They will tell you where the best place is for you to store your personal belongings while at school.

What restroom do I use?

Staff will show you where the adult restrooms are located at your specific site.

What about the phone use?

If you carry a cell phone, please make sure it is silenced or turn it off while in the school to avoid any distraction it may cause in the classroom. There is a phone in the office you may use for outgoing calls.

What is the procedure if I am going to be absent or late?

We ask that you inform the school as soon as you know you will be absent or late on a given day. Your specific site will give you the procedure and phone number to call.

Can I stay and eat lunch with the students I tutor?

Due to OSPI and Washington Department of Health Covid-19 restrictions related to meal time, volunteers are not able to eat in the cafeteria with students.

Is it okay to give a child a hug or let a child sit on my lap?

Handshakes/"knuckles", "high fives", or an arm around the shoulder are the *only* safe and friendly way to touch a child when you are volunteering. For some children, or for some cultures, even these gestures may be unwelcome. Please wait for the student to initiate a friendly touch.

What if I am uncomfortable with the way a child hugs me?

Often, children will come running with outstretched arms to give you a hug. Turn your side to the child and gently guide him or her to your side with your hand placed around the child's shoulder.

CONFIDENTIALITY IS CRUCIAL

During your association with the school you inadvertently see or overhear confidential and sensitive information regarding a child, student family, or staff member. It is very important that this information not be shared with persons outside the school. This certainly does not mean you cannot share your own child's accomplishments.

Sharing on social media or in casual conversation outside the school about something you found concerning is not appropriate and could cause embarrassment, humiliation, and/or conflict. If you have any concerns about observed behavior or students or staff, please share these with the principal before leaving the school.

It is important that you maintain confidentiality. Student information in our schools is governed by the "Family Education Rights and Privacy Act" which prohibits information about students being shared without parental consent. Students have the right to privacy and to expect that they can entrust you with private information. As a school volunteer, you are required by law to respect and maintain confidentiality in regard to all personal information obtained regarding any MAS child and his/her family.

Child Abuse, neglect or endangerment

Physical or sexual abuse or child endangerment is a crime. Any volunteer who receives from any source or discovers information about abuse, neglect, sexual harassment, or illegal or dangerous activities should immediately report this information to a staff member.

If the child your work with shares anything of a suspicious nature that may indicate that he or she or another child is being abused or in danger, you must report the information to a staff member as soon as possible.

Suicide

Any information that indicates that a student is thinking about or has attempted suicide must be taken seriously. Confidentiality is not applicable when the student threatens himself, herself, or others. If a child shares information with you that may indicate that he or she may be thinking of attempting suicide, the information must be reported immediately to the building principal. If the information the child shares with you, or any visual evidence indicates that a suicide has been attempted, stay with the child. Such a child should never in any circumstance be left alone.

METHODS FOR SUCCESS

Learn names

Introduce yourself as Mrs., Ms., Mr. as appropriate. A student's name is your first contact point. Be sure that you pronounce and spell it correctly.

Set the climate

By being alert and listening, you will develop sensitivity to the needs of the student. By being friendly and caring, you will be approachable. Your working relationship with each individual student will be your best tutoring tool.

Begin each session with positive comments or questions about the student's family, friends, or activities. Use honest praise whenever possible. Always leave the student with a word of encouragement and praise.

Allow the students to be themselves

Every student is unique. Make each one feel that he or she is an important, special person. Avoid comparing students with others in the school or in their families.

Allow discovery

Allow students time to think about their answers. Guide them by asking questions that will lead to correct responses. Remind the student that everyone makes mistakes ... even you. Making mistakes and learning how to correct them is an important part of learning.

Follow the teacher's lead

Keep the students headed in the direction set by the teacher. Hold them to the same class standards of behavior and work. Talk openly and often with the teacher to determine the expectations of your student and yourself as a volunteer.

Remember that the teacher has the final responsibility for all planning, activities and discipline that occurs in the classroom. Discuss specific student concerns with the teacher or principal, but keep all confidential information about students within the school.

STUDENT LEARNING STYLES

Every person has a tendency to acquire skills or learn in a certain way. Even within a family, one child might learn best by doing while another learns best by hearing. Tutors can be more effective if they are aware of a child's individual learning styles. When a student does not understand a concept through one learning style, another can be used.

For example, if a student struggles to understand material written on the board or in a book, then oral presentation may be more effective. Development of many learning styles gives students a better chance to learn.

Research shows that approximately 30% of elementary school-age children learn best through seeing, 25% learn best by hearing, and 15% learn best by touching and doing. The remaining 30% learn equally well by each method. It is estimated that 80% of material presented to school-age children is visual.

Visual Learners

Visual learners learn best by seeing information. Directions and assignments should be written. Presenting material through graphs, charts, outlines, and notes is most effective for these students. Any oral instructions should be presented in short, clear sentences. Recall, for these students, is strengthened through the practice of writing and outlining the subject material.

Auditory Learners

Auditory learners learn best by hearing the information. Questions and directions should be given orally. Discussing material works best with these students. The more they hear the material, the more recall is possible. Tapes, CDs and lectures greatly benefit auditory learners.

Tactile Learners

Tactile learners learn best through hands-on-activities. Task cards, computers, and math manipulatives provide effective methods.

Kinesthetic Learners

Kinesthetic learners learn best by experiencing information. Methods of presentation include acting, building, interviewing, role-playing, and observing.

VOLUNTEERING WITH CULTURALLY DIVERSE STUDENTS

As a volunteer in Mill A Public Schools, it is important to develop a respect and an appreciation of the diverse cultures and backgrounds of the students. Some strategies for making instruction responsive to the ethnic/cultural backgrounds of students include:

Use correct pronunciation of students' names. If you are not sure of the pronunciation say "would you pronounce your name for me?" Avoid comments which label the name as "strange" or "funny". Don't shorten a student's name or give him or her a nickname.

Be aware that you may represent a different culture and authority and that may be threatening to some students. Avoid judgments and let the students know that you value them.

Be aware and respect that cultural differences may affect student behavior, attendance, health, and acceptance of tutor assistance.

Respect every student and speak respectfully of all racial, ethnic, cultural, and religious groups.

Use correct ethnicity or racial identity. If you are not sure, ask "What is your heritage?" Do not guess or assume. We want to develop each student's pride in his or her racial or ethnic heritage and promote acceptance and understanding of all.

STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

The English Language Learner

The English Language Learner (ELL) is a student who is learning English in addition to his or her native language. Tutors of English Language Learners help students acquire English skills while studying specific subject areas.

When teaching the English language, you will be given materials developed for the appropriate level of the individual student. Remember that you are working in the student's second language. When helping the student in any subject matter, use the following guidelines:

- Speak clearly and naturally
- Avoid talking too quickly
- Focus on communication, not on grammar
- Use gestures, facial expressions, and a variety of visual aids
- Avoid the use of idioms and slang

- Be patient and help the student to be patient

Special Education

Special education is a service or set of services, not a place. It is defined in the Federal regulations as “specially designed instructions.” This specially designed instruction must be provided in the environment which meets the individual needs of the student.

In order to receive special education services, students are referred to a Multidisciplinary Team (MDT) within the school for evaluation. After the evaluation is completed, the MDT then determines whether the student should receive special education services. The special education program serves students between birth and 21 years of age.

Since the abilities of children vary considerably, special education students may spend as little as 30 minutes per week in specially designed instruction or be referred to a more specialized program. The names and scope of work with special education students, as with all students you may work with, is **CONFIDENTIAL**.

FIRES, THREATS, EMERGENCIES

The expectation is all volunteers will follow staff members’ directions in the event of an emergency.

Fire Alarms

1. A fire alarm will sound.
2. All students, employees and volunteers will follow the emergency evacuation plan, walking students out of the classroom to the emergency exit.
3. Everyone is to remain outside until notified to return to the building.

Intruder Alert/Lockdown

1. An announcement over the PA system or verbal commands by a staff member will indicate an intruder alert, lockdown, or other emergency. Lockdowns can last an indeterminate amount of time. Once the doors are locked no persons are allowed to enter or leave until the end of the lockdown. There are different levels of lockdowns so please follow the directions of the staff closely to ensure the safety of everyone.
2. All volunteers are expected to follow MASD staff directions during a lockdown drill or event.
3. No one is allowed to leave or enter the building until an “all clear” announcement is given by law enforcement and/or administrator, this includes anyone on campus at the time of the lockdown. Do not unlock and open any door for anyone once the lockdown is in place. Law Enforcement and/or an Administrator will have a key to open the door once the threat has been eliminated.

Earthquake

1. If an actual earthquake occurs, no announcement will be made.
2. When you feel the earth shaking, everyone is to “drop, cover and hold.”
3. When the shaking has subsided, wait for emergency instructions to leave the building in the regular evacuation route.

A LEGAL PRIMER

Public schools are governed by state and federal law and district policies. When volunteers work with students and staff in our schools, they also must abide by these directives.

Non-discrimination: No student or staff person should ever be treated differently, spoken to disrespectfully, or denied services on the basis of race, sex, sexual orientation, religion, disability, age, national origin, or marital status. Each student and staff person is to be treated with respect and dignity.

Sexual harassment: No student or staff person should ever be subjected to inappropriate or unwelcome sexual overtures that interfere with the individual's education or work. Examples of prohibited conduct are unwanted name-calling, jokes, touching, or compliments of a sexual nature.

Corporal punishment: Physical, pain-causing punishment is not allowed in our schools. Teachers and building administrators are responsible for all classroom activities and disciplinary steps.

Use of vehicles: A Volunteer Driver form must be completed before transporting students in your vehicle. Parent volunteer drivers must meet all district regulations regarding transportation to and from school-sponsored activities. This includes meeting all insurance requirements. Students must have written parental permission.

Child abuse: Physical or sexual abuse of a child is a crime. Knowledge that gives rise to suspicion of child abuse must be immediately reported to the teacher or principal.

Religious activity: Public schools must remain neutral in matters of religion. Promoting particular religious beliefs by comments, prayers, actions, or invitations to your place of worship are unconstitutional in a public school. Likewise, being hostile toward particular religious beliefs, or favoring either believers or nonbelievers is unconstitutional.

It is always in a volunteer's best interest to be within hearing and sight of a district employee at all times.