

WE 
VOLUNTEERS

WINFIELD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK

2016-17 School Year

Winfield Elementary School

2016-17 Volunteer Handbook

Our commitment to you:

“The human contribution is the essential ingredient.

It is only in the giving of oneself to others that we truly live.”

Ethel Percy Andrus

Winfield Elementary believes that schools are responsible for creating and maintaining a student-centered learning environment that fosters respect for everyone in the school: young people, staff, parents, and volunteers. Since our community-based school has such a need for volunteers to make programs available to our students, we promise to:

- Treat our volunteers with care and respect;
- Make every effort to assign volunteers to positions that match what they like to do and know how to do best;
- Provide volunteers with the information they need about our school, policies, people and programs;
- Offer support throughout the volunteer experience;
- Make sure volunteers understand how and to whom to talk about any concerns;
- Give volunteers the opportunity to evaluate and share comments and suggestions about their volunteer experience; and
- Celebrate! Celebrate! Celebrate! – the contributions our volunteers make to the quality and culture of our school with recognition, a smile and frequent thanks!

Your commitment to us:

At WES we strive to “do the right thing for the right reasons so that all children can succeed.” As a school volunteer, you make a world of difference to our students and staff.

You:

- Enrich the school program by sharing your experiences and talents with students and staff;
- Stimulate community interest, concern and support for education through sharing your experiences with our children;
- Enhance student learning through reinforcing specific skills, providing enrichment experiences, and expanding the walls of the school to include the community;
- Strengthen the district’s school-community partnerships through your positive and constructive participation as a member of our school community;
- Make a difference in the quality of the school experience for our students through your honest feedback about our strengths and challenges;
- Support strong student self-concepts by showing them that they are important to you, by taking the time to listen to them and by helping them have an even more joyous learning experience;
- Become a better community member as you learn about the many skills, talents and contributions of the faculty, staff and other volunteers who contribute to the schools;

Our Code of Conduct for Volunteers

- **Maintain confidentiality** – in your work as a volunteer, you may read, overhear or observe information about students that is confidential. It may be the results of classroom or achievement tests, awards or honors, attendance data, financial, health or personal family information, social or behavioral actions, program enrollment, or reports of parent/teacher or parent/counselor conferences. There may be times that another staff person may need to share confidential information with you, or a student may tell you something in confidence. You may hear conversations between students and teachers, students and students, or between district personnel. All these things are confidential and should never be discussed with others who do not have a legitimate need to know.
- The one exception to the confidentiality rule is in the case of suspected child abuse or neglect. Any volunteer who has reason to believe that a child has been subjected to abuse or maltreatment must report it immediately to the principal or other school official.
- Both students and staff have the right to expect that nothing that happens to or about them will be repeated outside the school to anyone, including the students' parents. Only staff that is responsible for the design, preparation and delivery of education and related services may have access to written or oral information about students and their families.
- It is our expectation that volunteers will never share confidential information about a student or staff member with others, including the volunteer's, student's or staff member's family.
- Parents, friends or community members may, in good faith, ask you questions about the progress or problems of a student knowing that you are a volunteer. Discussion of individual students, teachers or staff, their actions and/or their abilities is considered a breach of conduct and may be grounds for your dismissal from our volunteer program.
- The student's teacher is the most appropriate person with whom to discuss a child's progress and problems. You should direct any questions about a child to the child's teacher.
- Be reliable – remember that students and staff members depend on your presence.

- Be a role model – remember that you are acting as a role model for the students. Conduct yourself with dignity, courtesy and consideration at all times.
- Be flexible – remember that you are at school to help all students. You will be making a contribution whether you are working with your child’s class or in another setting.
Determination of the need for and role(s) of classroom volunteers rests with the teacher.
- Be a positive, public representative of the school – address any concerns or issues promptly and productively. If you have an issue with a staff member, please talk to that person face to face as soon as possible. If you need time to think about the situation, please do so, but do not let the concern intensify. If you feel uncomfortable talking with the staff member, please speak to the principal or assistant principal. Please respect the persons involved by avoiding discussion with other school or community members. Communication is the key to establishing good relationships that benefit everyone.
- What we are thinking we say is not always what the other person hears. If you have an issue, go to the person or principal. Do not add to the problem by gossiping or complaining to other people. We are all here for the same reason – the students – be a team player.

Routine Procedures

- Sign in at the office at your arrival and departure.
- Wear your volunteer lanyard and badge so that staff members and students know who you are and can show appreciation for your presence.
- If you must be absent, call the school and ask that the staff member with whom you work be informed so that the student(s) will not be disappointed.
- Please be prompt. We plan our days with your help in mind.
- Volunteers' discussions with teachers should not interrupt class time.
- Volunteers should turn cell phones off.
- Volunteers must always be supervised when working with students. They may not supervise a classroom or give permission for a student to leave a classroom. These are the teacher's responsibilities.
- Volunteers may not take photographs of students, unless permitted by a school administrator for a school project. Never post any student photographs or student information on social networks.
- Do not hesitate to ask questions or to set up a meeting to get further instructions, if needed.
 - If you have questions about your volunteer assignment in general, talk to the principal or assistant principal.
 - If you have questions about student instructional, curricular or behavior concerns, talk to the teacher.
 - If you have questions about school climate issues, harassment or discrimination concerns or conduct of students or staff that upsets you, talk to the principal or assistant principal.

Routine

“If every American donated five hours a week, it would equal the labor of 20 million full-time volunteers.” Whoopi Goldberg

Absences – If you are unable to keep your scheduled volunteer appointment, please contact the teacher via telephone (304-586-2395) or through email to let them know that you are unable to volunteer.

Accidents – students – Please report all accidents and apparent illnesses to the classroom teacher or to the school office immediately. The school nurse will immediately be notified of all student accidents.

Accidents – volunteers – Please report any accident or injury you might sustain while volunteering to the school principal as soon as possible.

Assignment location – Please conduct your business in a way that does not disrupt school activities. Please remain in the area of the school building in which you are volunteering. You are not allowed to roam the hallways or make unannounced visits to classrooms or peak into classroom windows. If you need to speak with a teacher, you should arrange that before coming to the school through phone or e-mail communication. Please remember that it is not proper to conduct a conference with your child’s teacher while you are volunteering.

Copy machine – Workroom #166 has been designated for parent volunteers. Please make all copies, etc. in the room. Please “yield the right-of-way” to teachers for the copier. There are some materials (such as tests, reports, etc.) that they must do themselves. We need to honor their planning times.

Discipline issues – Think instruction instead of discipline. If any discipline issues arise while you are working with children, please notify a teacher/staff member immediately. **At no time should a volunteer ever reprimand or discipline a student in any way during the school day.**

Dress code – Please dress comfortably, but remember you are a role model for our students. We ask that you dress appropriately for an elementary school campus. This would mean no short shorts, no bra straps hanging outside of clothing, no clothing displaying inappropriate slogans or products (beer t-shirts, etc.).

Emergency drills – Volunteers are required to participate in emergency drills.

Gifts, prizes, incentives – Volunteers may not award any gifts, prizes or incentives (including candy, money, gum, snacks) to students while they are volunteering at the school.

Health regulations – Please do not come to school if you are ill. This includes a cold, sore throat, or cough. You may think you are leaving the teacher shorthanded, and you may want to volunteer even though you are not well, but doing so is not good for you, the children, or the teacher. Please call the school (304-586-25655) and let them know you are too ill to be at the school that day. Children learn by example, and we ask that you, as a role model, use good health habits when you are at school.

Hot lunch – Volunteers may purchase school hot lunch at the adult price when they are working at school. Check with the school office for menu and price information.

Language – Please refrain from using inappropriate language (swearing, derogatory comments, etc.). Remember you are a role model.

Siblings– If you are volunteering in the library, a classroom or any other area of the school, we are sorry but younger siblings take away from the instructional time of our students and may not be present. This also applies to field trips.

Substance abuse – Volunteers are prohibited from consuming, possessing, furnishing, selling or being under the influence of alcohol or drugs in school or at any school sponsored, organized or associated function or on/in any property, facility, or vehicle owned or operated by or for the school.

Important Volunteer Guidelines

When working with students:

- VOLUNTEERS MUST MAINTAIN STRICT CONFIDENTIALITY concerning information they see and hear about students and staff, including students' grades, records and abilities.
- Volunteers DO NOT discipline students. Provide "instruction" to students regarding behavior. Report discipline problems to the teacher.
- Volunteers do not diagnose student weaknesses and strengths, prescribe activities for students, or evaluate student progress.
- Volunteers are not to bring preschool children into the classroom during instruction time. This presents a liability issue and is disruptive to the classroom instruction.
- Volunteers should set a good example for students by their manner, appearance, and behavior. They should be well-groomed, appropriately dressed, and maintain professional conduct/language.
- Volunteers should be in good physical and mental health.
- Volunteers may not give any medication to students (including cough drops).
- Volunteers' comments should not be written on student papers.
- Volunteers should not laugh at or belittle student answers or efforts.
- Volunteers should contact ONLY school staff members with any concerns regarding students.
- Comparing and criticizing teachers and students is not acceptance volunteer behavior.
- Volunteers may not hold informal parent/teacher conferences or leisure conversations with staff members or other volunteers during volunteer time.
- Volunteers may not conduct personal business at school.
- Volunteers should never touch students in any way that is aggressive, disciplinary, or sexual in nature.
- All volunteers must sign in/out and wear an identifying lanyard and nametag while on school campus.

Confidentiality Agreement
Winfield Elementary School Volunteer Program

This agreement is a requirement that must be signed before volunteering may be initiated.

I have read the Winfield Elementary School Volunteer Handbook and agree to abide by its policies and guidelines. I agree to maintain the confidentiality of all students, and I understand that my failure to maintain that confidentiality or failure to follow the program guidelines may prevent me from further volunteer opportunities at Winfield Elementary.

Volunteer Name

Phone number

Child's Name

Teacher

Volunteer Signature

Date

Dear WES Parent/Guardian,

Thank you so much for volunteering in your child's class! The PTA and/or your student's teacher will contact you with upcoming events and activities. Attached you will find our school's Volunteer Handbook. Please read the handbook, then sign and detach the confidentiality agreement and return it to your child's teacher. Thank you in advance for helping to make our school the best it can be! 😊

Mrs. Hatfield

Principal