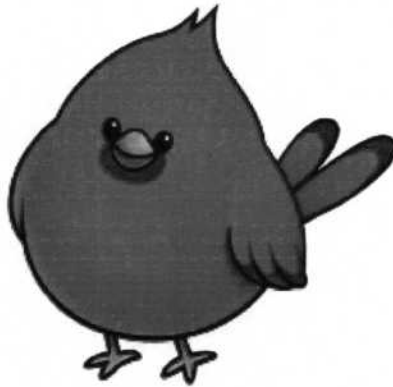


**Oakwood  
Elementary School**

**VOLUNTEER  
HANDBOOK  
2017 - 2018**

**Jennifer Coeburn, Principal**



## PTSO and School Volunteer Guidelines!

Here is some helpful information to get you started volunteering at Oakwood

- **Training session:** Before any parent/guardian may work as a volunteer you must read and sign each page of this document.
- **Name Tags:** You must wear a name tag while working as a volunteer. Please log into the computer located on the counter and a name tag will be created for you each time you come into the building.
- **Signing In and Out:** When you go to school to volunteer please sign in and sign out when you leave. Your volunteer hours are counted and sent to the county, so it is important to log your hours.
- **Teachers:** Classroom teachers make their own volunteer schedules; most teachers will not start with classroom volunteers until sometime in October/November. It is up to each teacher to choose to wait and see what their needs are.
- **Using School Machines:** Please be respectful of the teachers/staff when using any of the machines. They always have first dibs!! Please do not use these machines until you have been trained.
- **Rewards:** Please remember we are a treat free school and we want to protect our students who have allergies. For these reasons food of any kind is not permitted.
- **Cell Phones:** Must be on vibrate when in the school building during the instructional day. This includes the cafeteria and specials areas. All phone calls must be made and/or answered outside the school building.
- **Injuries/Accidents:** Volunteers are covered by the school district's liability insurance in the same manner in which employees are covered. Please report any accidents immediately to the school office.
- **Instructional Time:** Please remember that while you are in a classroom, your primary purpose is to volunteer. The classroom teacher will also be busy working with students. Volunteering in the classroom is not an opportunity to have an impromptu conference with the teacher, or to just chat with the teacher or the students. Please respect the teacher's teaching time and our student's learning time. When done volunteering it is not appropriate to stop by or peak into another child's classroom. This is an interruption to the other student's instructional time and the teacher's instruction.
- **Pre-school children should not accompany their parent to the classroom while they are volunteering.** A pre-schooler can be very distracting for you, as well as the other children in the classroom.
- **Confidentiality:** Totally respect the confidentiality of your relationship with the school and make no criticism of the school staff or procedures. If you have a question or concern please discuss this with the classroom teacher or principal.
- **Emergencies:** In the event of any type of school-wide emergency, please go directly back to the classroom where you are working and follow the teacher's directions.

Last but not least, enjoy your time working with the students and teachers! Never forget what a wonderful difference you are making by getting involved and how much you are appreciated!

I \_\_\_\_\_ have read and understand the contents of this page.



### **School Volunteer Tips – Remember To Be:**

- Honest – in your approach and attitude. It will aid in developing trust.
- Patient – when working with students. When they are having difficulty with a subject, they do not need additional pressure.
- Flexible – with a smile and thank you, you can accomplish miracles.
- Respectful – treat individuals in the same manner you wish to be treated.
- Confidential – it is very important that what is observed in the classroom remains confidential and student performance or behavior is not to be discussed with other parents.

### **FIRST DAY CHECKLIST**

- Find out where you are to set your things down and where your work station is located.
- Determine the way in which the teacher will communicate with you.
- Find out classroom standards and how you are to enforce them.
- Meet and develop rapport with children.
- Try to learn names of children or have name tags.
- Assist pupils when possible.
- Be punctual. Call the office or the e-mail the teacher if you need to be absent.
- Find out where equipment/supplies are kept and how they are obtained.
- Be patient when dealing with children.
- Pupil successes and efforts should be praised.

### **HOW CHILDREN LEARN**

- Children learn by doing, not by observing.
- Children learn by asking questions and by searching for answers to their questions.
- They learn by discovery and experimenting.
- They learn by using all their senses when possible.
- They learn by sorting and combining objects and ideas.
- They learn by repeating experiences.
- They learn by building confidence in themselves.
- Children learn behavior by observing people they respect.

I \_\_\_\_\_ have read and understand the contents of this page

## HOW YOU CAN HELP CHILDREN LEARN

1. Let children participate in activities as frequently as possible.
2. Ask children questions which may lead them to the correct answer instead of telling them directly.
3. Let children explore and discover by themselves.
4. Encourage children to feel, smell, taste, and listen, as well as look at objects.
5. Let children try new methods of doing things even though you already know an easier way. Avoid making models for children when they use art media.
6. Let children sort and combine according to their own ideas.
7. When speaking to children:
  - Praise their good efforts
  - Use a tone of voice which will encourage them and promote success.
  - Avoid comparing children and their work.
  - Give children a choice only when you intend to abide by the choice. Either/Or opportunities works very well ☺
  - State directions in a positive form.
8. Let children observe you as a model for appropriate behavior (sharing, showing respect, talking quietly, taking turns, etc.).

## EFFECTIVE WAYS TO WORK WITH CHILDREN

1. Be warm and friendly – learn the children’s names and show interest in what they are doing and telling you – you are very important as a listener.
2. When working with children, encourage them to do their own thinking – give them plenty of time to answer. Silence often means they are thinking and organizing what they want to say or write.
3. If you don’t know an answer or are unsure of what to do, admit it to the children and work it out together – feel free to ask the teacher for help when you need it.
4. Use tact and positive comments – encourage children- seek something worthy to compliment, especially when children are having difficulties (catch them being good!).
5. Accept each child as he/she is – you do not need to feel responsible for judging a child’s abilities, progress, or behavior.
6. If a child is upset, encourage him/her to talk the problem over with you. You need not solve the problem, but by listening and talking you help the child feel you care.

I \_\_\_\_\_ have read and understand the contents of this page

7. Respect a child's privacy – if a child reveals personal information about a himself, regard it as a confidence.
8. Maintain a sense of humor.
9. Be consistent with the teacher's rules for classroom schedules and behavior.
10. Wear comfortable clothes and don't hesitate to "get down to a child's level".
11. If parents and friends ask about what you do at school, tell them you enjoy working with the children and discuss the activities you do rather than specific information about the child, the teacher, or the school.
12. Keep your commitment, the children expect you and look forward to your coming. If you know you will be gone, tell them in advance.

### **TIPS FOR MAINTAINING DISCIPLINE**

1. Call each child by name (name tags are helpful at first).
2. The best techniques are preventative. Know the standards. Set them before very lesson. Then instruct the children as though you expect them to comply.  
*"Today we will walk slowly to the media center".*  
*"You will raise your hand when you finish with your work".*
3. Give positive, specific praise.  
*"I like the way Suzy is working quietly".*  
*"What good math workers. You are doing a great job of working cooperatively".*
4. State positive actions.  
*"Walk quietly" instead of "Don't run!"*
5. Give sufficient warnings and time.  
*"Morgan, in 5 minutes you'll need to stop painting and put your apron away, wash your hands, and then come sit on the rug".*  
*"Chantelle, I asked you not to play with the headsets. Now you need to leave the listening post and go to the book corner. Tomorrow you can work with the listening post again, but you'll need to remember the rules".*
6. Keep your voice as low as possible. The children will get louder as your voice gets louder. Have an unhurried attitude. Enjoy them and they will enjoy you.
7. Offer each child a chance to participate. Quiet children are sometimes ignored.
8. Count slowly from 1 to 5 when you want clean-up to occur.
9. Keep lowering your voice to a whisper to be heard and to quiet the group. If students don't respond to a soft voice use group body action. Hand clap a signal for quiet.  
*"I'll know you're listening if your hands are on your shoulders (touching head, folded in your lap, etc)".*

I \_\_\_\_\_ have read and understand the contents of this page

10. Be sure a child understands what you're saying. We sometimes use words that children do not know. Ask them to repeat the directions to check for understanding.
11. Excuse kids from group by who is wearing blue, has blonde hair, 2 dogs, etc.

### **THE THREE R's FOR SCHOOL VOLUNTEERS**

#### **Responsibility – the effective volunteer is:**

- Dependable and recognizes the vital importance of regular attendance
- Professional in their commitment, dress and manner
- Appreciative of the efforts of the school to educate all children and to provide maximum learning opportunities for each
- Supportive of the administration and teaching staff
- Aware of the importance of planning
- Sincerely concerned about the students
- Able to generate enthusiasm about each child
- Willing to be discreet, dedicated, and punctual

#### **Rapport – the understanding volunteer:**

- Recognizes the child's need to improve self-image and independent study habits
- Supports the child by offering genuine friendship
- Recognizes the individuality of each student
- Provides a relaxed, friendly and caring atmosphere with students
- Respects the teacher and school's ultimate responsibility for the health, welfare and education of each student
- Provides opportunities for each child to be successful
- Cooperates, coordinates and communicates continually with teachers, school administrators, and classified staff
- Is comfortable asking for clarification and is willing to express concerns and questions with school staff
- Recognizes the essential need for confidentiality and will not comment or gossip about individual students, staff members or the school

#### **Rewards – the successful volunteer:**

- Shares with the child the warm personal satisfactions which result from successful human relationships
- Provides the teacher or staff member with the satisfaction of knowing that the students' needs are being met and that quality education is being promoted, extended, and enriched
- Receives the sincere gratitude of the school community
- Celebrates in the knowledge that they have made a difference in a child's life!

I \_\_\_\_\_ have read and understand the contents of this page

**Parent Volunteer Training Completion Form  
2017-2018**

I \_\_\_\_\_ have read and understand the  
Oakwood Elementary Volunteer Training handbook on (date)\_\_\_\_\_.

I understand and will follow the policies and procedures at Oakwood Elementary and in the Volunteer Handbook. I understand and will follow the confidentiality policy. If I should ever have a question or concern about what I see or hear I will contact and discuss these with the Volunteer Coordinator, Classroom Teacher, or the Administration.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student's Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Teacher's Name/Grade