

Hoonah City Schools Volunteer Handbook



*Volunteers do not necessarily have the time;
they just have the heart.*

~Elizabeth Andrew

*We cannot always build the future for our youth,
but we can build our youth for the future.*

~Franklin Delano Roosevelt

Volunteer Requirements BP1250

The wealth of experience available in the community is a resource that should be used in appropriate ways to enrich the educational program and strengthen our schools' relationships with homes, businesses, public agencies and private institutions. By their presence, volunteers also can make school environments safer and more closely supervised. The School Board encourages parents/guardians and other members of the community to share their time, knowledge and abilities with our students.

All persons who wish to perform more than 8 consecutive hours of volunteer service or any volunteer service requiring overnight or travel away from home with or around students must pass a State of Alaska background check. No person who has ever been convicted, or plead guilty or no contest (including forfeiture of bail) to a crime involving violence or sexual abuse can be a volunteer for the District.

The Superintendent or designee may authorize the use of volunteers. The Superintendent or designee shall establish regulations to protect the safety of both students and volunteers.

The District has the right to deny volunteer service to anyone for any legal reason.

The District and its employees shall not unlawfully discriminate against or harass volunteers or volunteer applicants on the basis of sex, race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, age, marital status, changes in marital status, pregnancy, parenthood, physical or mental disability, Vietnam era veteran status, genetic information, or good faith reporting to the board on a matter.

Like employees and students, volunteers shall act in accordance with district policies and regulations.

Expectations and Guidelines for Volunteering

Thank you for your interest in volunteering in the Hoonah City School District! Our district depends on volunteers and values their contributions. Your willingness to serve the students and staff of the district is greatly appreciated. This handbook outlines the guidelines and expectations that volunteers must follow to create safe and successful experiences for students, staff, and volunteers. All volunteering relationships established through Hoonah City School District must be appropriate in nature even when working with family members and relatives

You Are Part of an Education Team

Volunteers who are committed to helping students be successful are important members of the school team. These individuals are essential to bringing the outside world to the school. Students need contact with individuals who can share experiences and bring other perspectives into the classroom. They need adults who can guide them through the learning process.

Goals:

- Enrich the curriculum
- Enrich students' learning opportunities
- Provide assistance to individual students
- Provide opportunities for meaningful service
- Relieve teachers of some non-instructional tasks
- Establish a school and community partnership for quality education
- Enhance all aspects of the educational process

Working closely with the classroom teacher and school staff includes:

- Following the direction of a school staff member
- Accepting direction and suggestions from teachers
- Respecting the privacy by not discussing school matters away from the classroom
- Understanding that evaluation of a student's learning can only be done by the teacher
- Committing to working in a classroom to support the education for all students.
- Seeking help from the teacher when you need additional information or instruction.
- Sharing ideas and constructive comments with the teacher
- Acknowledging that teachers are responsible for discipline in the classroom
- Referring to the classroom teacher or regular school staff member for final solution of any student problem which arises, whether of an instructional, medical, or operations nature

Enjoy working with students by:

- Finding ways to establish a good rapport with students
- Providing help and assistance without doing the work for students
- Showing a genuine interest in each student
- Accepting each student and encouraging the best from him or her
- Using patience and kindness

Sometimes a volunteer placement may not be a fit for the volunteer, the teacher, or the school. If your volunteer placement does not work for you, the teacher, or the school for whatever reason, your volunteer assignment may be ended, modified, or changed to a new assignment. You may request a different placement if you wish to continue volunteering. *Volunteer Handbook 2 Personnel Services October 2014*

Volunteers are expected to:

- Sign in before entering the classroom on school grounds at all times
- Wear professional attire.
- Show respect for all staff and students
- Share concerns regarding students with the appropriate school staff only

If you cannot make your scheduled volunteer time, please call the school so the teacher and students will know you will not be there. Please do not bring younger children to the school during your volunteer hours. You will also be asked to turn off your cell phone while you are volunteering in the classroom and are discouraged from making personal calls while on the school campus.

Essentials for School District Facilities

- No smoking or tobacco allowed, including on athletic fields and in district vehicles.
- No weapons allowed.
- No drugs or alcohol allowed.
- No use of school equipment for personal purposes allowed.

Maintain Student Confidentiality

Volunteers are expected and required to keep all student information that they obtain while working as a volunteer for the district confidential and are **required to sign a confidentiality agreement**. In fact, federal law strictly prohibits school districts and district volunteers from releasing any student information without parent/guardian permission. Student information includes all academic, medical, and personal information. Volunteers cannot take photos of students during their volunteer activities and post them publicly without authorization from the school. Student work, like artwork or papers, is also protected by law and cannot be shared publicly without written permission.

Disclosure of student information by a volunteer is a violation of the **Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA)** and may subject the volunteer and the district to civil liability. It is very important that you keep information about students confidential. It is important that you do not discuss students or their progress with others even their parents. Do not make references to students' abilities in front of other students. The only person who should be told about a student's work is their teacher. If parents ask about their student's progress, suggest in a friendly way that they contact their teacher.

Community Service Hours

Hoonah City School District strives to find volunteer opportunities that are mutually beneficial to both the volunteer and the students in our schools. We understand that people need community service hours for a variety of reasons and ask that volunteers work with their direct supervisors at the school to arrange for signatures that confirm hours worked. However, Hoonah City School District cannot allow volunteers to complete court-ordered community service hours through our schools.

Harassment at School

The Hoonah City School District harassment policies call for a commitment to an educational environment that is free from all types of discrimination and harassment, including sexual harassment, bullying, and intimidation. Volunteers are expected and required to respect and uphold both of these Hoonah City School District policies: BP 4119.12 Harassment which can be located under “Important School District Policies” at the end of this handbook. The district asks you to review each of these policies in detail prior to volunteering.

Important Guidelines

Safe Interaction with Students

The school board expects that all staff and volunteers will strive to set the kind of example for students that will serve them well in their own conduct and behavior and contribute toward a school atmosphere that is friendly but has a degree of formality.

General Guidelines for Safe Interaction with Students

All interactions with students should be professional and focused on teaching and learning. These guidelines protect both the student and the volunteer.

Do not:

- Take a student or students on private outings.
- Initiate social activities with students.
- Engage in social networking with students via Facebook, Myspace, Instagram, Snapchat, Vine, Twitter, or any other social networking website to initiate or maintain relationship(s) with any student that is not consistent with appropriate professional behavior and/or boundaries.

Communication

Do not say or write things to a student that you would be uncomfortable sharing with the student’s parents, district/school administrators, or the teacher you are working with.

Do not:

- Make any comments that are based on gender or could be construed as sexist.
- Make any comments or innuendos that are sexual in nature or could be construed as sexual.
- Make jokes that belittle or diminish another person.
- Give students compliments that focus on physical attributes.
- Initiate conversations or correspondence of a private and/or personal nature with students.

Working Alone with Students at School

- Always keep the door open and lights on.
- Do not post anything on class windows that would obstruct a clear view into the room.

Gifts

In general, giving gifts to students is not encouraged. If gifts are provided they should be of nominal value, identical for all students in the class, and approved by the teacher or administrator in charge of the class or program.

Physical Contact with Students

It is the district's expectation that all physical contact between volunteers and students must be professional and appropriate.

Field Trips and Off-Campus Activities

It is the general policy of Hoonah City School District that all off-campus field trip and activities chaperones must be at least 21 years of age. Volunteers who wish to drive students should be at least 25 years of age and must have a valid Alaska State driver's license and appropriate insurance.

Volunteer Coaches

Individuals who wish to become volunteer coaches for Hoonah City School District must complete the following steps:

1. Complete the Hoonah City School District Volunteer Application and be approved as a volunteer.
2. Provide proof of valid First Aid and CPR card to the building athletic director.
3. Review and agree to comply with mandatory reporting information.

Report Suspected Abuse or Neglect

As a volunteer, you are in the unique position to observe students. If you suspect that a student may be the victim of abuse or neglect, report it immediately to the principal/administrator.

The Hoonah City School District complies with all federal and state statutes and regulations and does not discriminate in any programs or activities on the basis of sex, race, creed, religion, color, national origin, age, veteran or military status, sexual orientation, gender expression or identity, disability, or the use of a trained dog guide or service animal. This holds true for all district employment and student opportunities.