

OSSEO AREA SCHOOLS

ISD  279



**VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK**





## THANK YOU

Thank you for volunteering in Osseo Area Schools. Many of the schools' activities and projects would not be possible without your help. The work you do is vital to the success of our students.

Here are some of the many ways students benefit:

- Students see a clear relationship among families, school and community.
- Students develop a feeling that school is important when they see that their parents and community members are interested in their education to take an active part in it.
- Volunteers expand the variety of a student's educational opportunities.

It is our hope that the benefit to you is your knowledge that, no matter the job you take on, you are providing a valuable service for the school and promoting student success.

Thanks for all you do!

District 279 Staff

# WHY VOLUNTEER

Volunteering is an opportunity for you to:

- Show your children or the youth of our community that you are interested in their school life and their future
- Show your commitment to the community
- Help others and develop new skills
- Meet new and interesting people and develop friendships
- Share your time and talents
- Open communication between you and your child when you're involved and know what is going on at school
- Give your child a boost -- studies show that parent and community involvement and volunteering enhances student success
- It's fun!





## **PURPOSE OF OUR VOLUNTEER PROGRAM**

ISD 279 provides staffing support for our volunteer program in order to:

- Support student success
- Allow teachers time to offer more individual attention to their students
- Build and strengthen the partnership between families, community and the school
- Provide volunteers an opportunity to participate in a variety of activities within the school
- Provide a safe environment
- Organize appropriate, meaningful tasks for volunteers

# GETTING STARTED

## PROCEDURE FOR VOLUNTEERING

Volunteer Application – Each school year a Volunteer Application form must be completed by every individual interested in volunteering in District 279. This form lets us know where you are interested in volunteering, and what opportunities you are interested in. By completing this application, you are not committing to volunteering but this is a starting place for us to create a calling list.

If you know the school where you would like to volunteer, go directly to the school's web site and print out an application form.

If you would like to volunteer at a school in your neighborhood, go to the District 279 web site and find a school near you. Once you've determined the school where you'd like to volunteer, go directly to the school's web site and complete the application for that school.

Sign in as a volunteer on the sign-in sheet every time you enter the school building. The staff needs to know who is in the building for security reasons, and in case of an emergency. We also record the number of volunteer hours in the school.

Put on a visitor/volunteer name badge provided by the school. A visitor/volunteer name badge must be worn at all times when you are in the building. Wearing the name badge lets the staff know you are in the building to volunteer.



Go directly to the designated location and perform the volunteer task you were instructed to help with. Staff will provide volunteer assignment instructions.

Follow the school guidelines which are provided in this book.

Sign out when you leave the school. Volunteer hours are calculated and sent to the district office. We like to recognize volunteers for their contribution to the community.

Call if you must cancel. Call the school's volunteer coordinator as soon as possible if you are unable to come in when you're expected.

## **TIPS FOR WORKING WITH STUDENTS**

As you are working with students, here are a few quick tips/ideas to keep in mind to help you make your work with students successful:

- Call students by name; be friendly and caring.
- Be enthusiastic, patient and kind.
- Praise success.
- Be honest with students. It's OK to say, "I don't know."
- Be comfortable with silence. Allow the student time to think and form answers.
- Do not give any student materials on your own without first discussing it with the teacher.
- Accept students as they are. Be sensitive to differences in background, culture, religion, values, vocabulary and aspirations.
- Never make a promise you can't fulfill.
- Do not eat candy, snacks or gum when working with students unless it is part of programming.
- Be dependable and prompt.
- Keep calm in an emergency.
- Maintain your sense of humor and smile!
- And by all means, enjoy yourself! You have the opportunity to make a positive difference in someone's life! How wonderful is that?!

# STUDENTS OF OSSEO AREA SCHOOLS IN GRADES 9 – 12 ARE ENCOURAGED TO VOLUNTEER

## In the community

Volunteering is helping out at school, helping a neighbor, or getting involved in the community. It is help without getting paid or receiving classroom credit.

## In the schools

If you decide to volunteer at a school within District 279, you will be required to complete a Student Volunteer Application Form. The application form is available at the school you will be volunteering at or on the district web page.

## Getting Started

1. Decide what you are interested in.
2. Determine what fits your schedule.
3. Find a place to volunteer. Here are some ideas:
  - Contact a teacher you had in elementary or middle school and ask if they could use help in their classroom.
  - Search the internet or look in your local phone book under ‘volunteer’.
  - Call an organization directly and ask if they need volunteers in your area.
  - Ask friends or relatives for ideas and contacts or look on bulletin boards in school or the local library.

## Why YOU should volunteer:

- Learn new skills and responsibility
- Invest in your future as Volunteer Hours can be included on your report card/transcript. Volunteer Hours on a transcript can look impressive on college applications, job applications or when applying for scholarships.

## How do you get Volunteer Hours on your transcript?

- A Student Volunteer Hours form must be completed and given to the Volunteer Coordinator at your school **before the end of the trimester**. The form is available through your Volunteer Coordinator or can be printed by accessing your school's web page.
- Remember: Students are responsible to give the completed Volunteer Hours form to their Volunteer Coordinator one week before the end of the trimester to have the hours recorded on the transcript.

# **POLICIES AND GUIDELINES FOR VOLUNTEERS**

## **ISD 279 Policies for Volunteers**

### **School Volunteers**

#### *Policy 924 – School/Community Relations – School Volunteers*

The school board encourages and promotes the involvement of volunteers to support programs and activities of ISD 279. Volunteers are individuals who are not paid for their services and who do not assume primary responsibility for instruction, but provide a supporting role in programs and activities.

Volunteers are required to comply with state and federal laws, ISD 279 Procedures and Policies, and Data Privacy Laws. This obligation is binding at all times, including at the volunteer's site, at other District sites, and in the community.

### **Bullying Prohibition**

#### *Policy 514 – Bullying Prohibition*

It is a violation of Policy 514 for any student, employee, volunteer, or agent of the school district to bully a student, employee, volunteer or agent of the school district through conduct or communication in person or through misuse of technology including cyber bullying.

### **Communicable Diseases**

#### *Policy 420 - Communicable Diseases*

Those with communicable diseases will not be excluded from volunteering as long as they are physically, mentally and emotionally able to safely perform tasks assigned to them, and so long as their employment does not constitute a health threat to other employees or to students of the district.

### **Confidentiality/Data Privacy**

#### *Policy 515 – Protection and Privacy of Education Records*

Volunteers are bound by data privacy laws regarding student records and information. This obligation is binding at all times, including at the volunteer's site, at other District sites, and in the community.

You may observe, read or hear things about individual children while you are volunteering. Please do not repeat any of this to anyone. If you have a concern, talk to the volunteer coordinator, principal or teacher.

Public information is detailed in Policy 515 as a student's name, address, date of birth, school of attendance, dates of school attendance, grade level completed, awards and degrees, participation in officially recognized activities or sports, height and weight if a member of an athletic team, student's photograph. All other forms of information or records are either private or confidential. Private or confidential information may not be shared.

## **Policies (continued)**

### **Discipline**

#### *Policy 507 – Corporal Punishment*

Volunteers may not discipline students beyond maintaining order in their group activity. Report any problems with students' behavior to a staff member.

### **Drug, Chemical, Alcohol and Weapon Free Schools**

#### *Policy 921 – Non-use of Tobacco on School Premises*

#### *Policy 922 – Non-use of Chemicals on School Premises*

#### *Policy 926 – Conceal and Carry on School Premises*

ISD prohibits the distribution, transfer, possession or use of any defined prohibited drug, chemical, alcohol or weapon while on school property, in school vehicles or while accompanying students on a school affiliated activity.

### **Harassment and Violence**

#### *Policy 413 – Harassment and Violence*

ISD prohibits any form of sexual, religious or racial harassment and sexual, religious or racial violence.

### **Mandated Reporting**

#### *Policy 414 – Mandated Reporting of Maltreatment of Children or Vulnerable Adults*

The state requires the reporting of suspected neglect and physical or sexual abuse of children in the home, school and community settings. Volunteers should report any incident or suspicions to the building principal.

### **Network/Internet Acceptable Use**

#### *Policy 441 – Technology and Internet Acceptable Use by Staff*

Use of the district's network/internet resources is intended only for educational and informational purposes such as research, professional development, instruction, collaborative education projects and dissemination of district information.

## **ADDITIONAL GUIDELINES FOR VOLUNTEERS**

### **Appearance**

Volunteers are responsible for presenting a good image to students and to the community. Volunteers shall dress appropriately for the conditions and performance of their duties.

### **Application**

A Volunteer Application must be completed EACH SCHOOL YEAR. A standardized volunteer application is available at each school within ISD 279.

## **Background Checks**

ISD 279 prohibits volunteers with prior sexual abuse records from volunteering within the schools. A formal background check may be required upon completing a volunteer application.

## **Communication**

As a volunteer, questions or concerns may arise. Feel free to ask questions of the staff personnel you are working with or talk with the school's volunteer coordinator. Your input is always welcome.

## **Cultural Diversity**

We believe that everyone benefits when cultural differences are acknowledged and understood, and individuals are treated respectfully and equitably.

## **Dependability**

If you choose to volunteer it is our expectation that you will honor your commitment.

## **Field Trip Guidelines**

There should always be two chaperones with a group of students on a field trip. This is not only for the safety of students, but also for the safety of volunteers. In certain circumstances it may be necessary for the teacher and the chaperone to remain together as the two chaperones for a group.

## **Fire, Severe Weather, Lockdown, Shelter in Place**

Know where the interior and exterior meeting places are located, the emergency exits locations, and where you should be when a particular emergency arises. See "All-Hazard" Emergency Reference Guide, pages 11 & 12.

## **Job Duties**

We require that all volunteers stay within the parameters of the assignment that the teacher, supervisor, or Volunteer Coordinator has directed. Talk with the teacher, supervisor, or Volunteer Coordinator if you have any questions regarding your assignment.

## **Job Assignment**

If the assignment was not what you expected, please notify the assignment supervisor or the Volunteer Coordinator.

## **Restrooms**

For the safety of our students and volunteers, all volunteers are requested to use the staff restrooms.

## **Sign in**

- Sign in at the school office each time you enter the building
- Wear a visitor/volunteer name badge while in the building
- Sign out when you leave the building

This information supports safety in our schools and helps us to determine future program planning.

## **Student Contact / Line-of-sight**

As a volunteer you may meet many students. However, volunteers cannot contact students without the express permission from parents and/or school principal. Examples of such contact are Facebook, telephone, visit to student's home, meet students off school grounds. While at school, volunteers must maintain line-of-sight with school staff or supervisor at all times. Volunteers will not ever be alone with students.

## **Tax Deductions**

Some of your out-of-pocket expenses connected with volunteering, i.e. mileage, auto expenses, parking fees, direct gifts of money, may be deductible when you file your income tax return. Consult with your own tax advisor concerning your personal tax situation.

## **Volunteer Program Risk Management Plan**

Building Volunteer Coordinators or designated staff are assigned to support volunteer involvement in district programs and activities. Building Volunteer Coordinators and/or designees will work in consultation with principals and/or site leaders. A district-wide risk management plan will be maintained for the screening, placement and supervision of volunteers.



# **“ALL-HAZARD” EMERGENCY REFERENCE GUIDE**

In case of imminent danger or a medical emergency, call 911 immediately!  
For in-class emergencies, call the office emergency number.

## **Evacuation**

*Activation Method:* Fire Alarm or Intercom Announcement

1. Rescue anyone in imminent danger, if possible.
2. Follow fire exit routes posted in each classroom or Exit signs to get outside.
  - a. **DO NOT USE ELEVATORS!**
  - b. Ensure that all students have evacuated.
  - c. Teachers must take class attendance list and Emergency Status Report with them.
  - d. Do not allow students to stop for coats, books or personal items.
  - e. The last person out of the room should close the door, but not lock it.
3. Proceed to your designated assembly area outside, at least 100 feet from the building.
4. Once outside, teachers will take attendance and report any missing, injured or trapped individuals to the Operations Chief or the Principal.
5. Remain in designated assembly area and wait for further instructions.

## **Reverse-Evacuation**

*Activation Method:* Intercom Announcement

1. Gather all students into the building as quickly as possible.
2. Close and lock all exterior windows and doors.
3. Close window blinds.
4. Instruction and class changes may continue as scheduled, unless directed otherwise.
5. Remain inside the building until the “All Clear” signal is given.

## **Severe Weather Shelter**

*Activation Method:* Intercom Announcement

1. Proceed immediately to pre-designated tornado shelter area.
  - a. Do not allow students to stop for coats, books or personal items.
  - b. Teachers should take class attendance list and Emergency Status Report with them.
  - c. Direct students to “duck and cover.”
2. Close hallway doors and windows if time permits.
3. Remain in shelter area until the “All Clear” signal is given.

## **Shelter-in Place**

**(Potential danger outside the building)**

*Activation Method:* Intercom Announcement

1. Gather all students into the building if outside.
2. Close all exterior windows and doors.
3. Shut off building ventilation systems, exhaust fans, etc., as necessary to prevent hazardous agents from entering the building.
4. Instruction and class changes may continue as scheduled, unless directed otherwise.
5. Remain inside building until the “All Clear” signal is given.

## **Lockdown**

**(Potential danger inside the building)**

*Activation Method:* Intercom Announcement

1. Scan the hallway and quickly move students into the nearest classroom.
2. Close and lock all doors and windows.
3. Cover room and door windows or turn off lights.
4. Keep students QUIET, while sitting on the floor, away from doors and windows.
5. Teachers outside will move to a safe area away from the building.
6. Verify attendance and prepare a list of any extra or missing students.
7. Do not allow anyone to leave the room for any reason.
8. Keep phone lines open unless you need to report “critical” information.
9. Disregard fire alarms and bells. If the building needs to be evacuated, an announcement will be made.
10. Wait for further instructions or until the “All Clear” signal is given.

Independent School District 279 does not discriminate on the basis of disability.

If you need auxiliary aids or services in order to participate in or attend a district activity, please call your local school or the school district through Minnesota Relay Service (TTY/TDD) 1-800-627-3529 at least seventy-two (72) hours in advance (two-week advance notice preferred).



**GET INVOLVED!**

**BE A VOLUNTEER  
Osseo Area Schools**



OSSEO AREA SCHOOLS

ISD  279

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