



**WASECA PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

Independent School District No. 829

**HANDBOOK  
FOR  
VOLUNTEERS**

*In a tradition of excellence, Waseca Public Schools empowers each learner to thrive in an ever-changing world.*

Waseca, MN

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## Introduction

This handbook contains information that will help you perform the services at your school that may be required of you. We hope you will find it helpful.

You are strongly encouraged to attend Orientation and Training sessions offered by Community Education personnel and/or the school. These sessions are designed to help you feel more comfortable in your volunteer position and provide you with the tools necessary for literacy and math activities.

We appreciate your willingness to share your time and talents to increase educational opportunities for students. Your service will help students achieve academic success, provide an “extra pair of hands” for busy teachers, and will contribute to the general welfare of the schools.

We wish for each of you a successful, rewarding, and satisfying experience. Should you have any additional questions or need other information, please feel free to call the teacher to whom you are assigned, or the Community Education office.

### Community Education

501 E Elm Ave

Waseca, MN 56093

507-835-5626

Fax: 507-835-1161

*The Waseca Public Schools is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Educator and Employer.*

## What Can I Give as a Volunteer?

You can...

- Give a child time – precious time
  - Give a child a chance to compete only with himself
  - Help a child feel accepted
  - Bring a child new experiences and “know how”
  - Expand a child’s world of adult friendships
  - Offer a child a listening ear
  - Be a good friend
  - Reinforce skills taught in the classroom
  - Strengthen school-community relations through direct and positive participation in the school
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## What Will Be Expected from Me?

If you will be working with individual students or small groups of students, you are a Tier II volunteer. All Tier II volunteers are required to complete an application and background check, which includes past volunteer experience and your preference as to areas in which you are interested in volunteering. This information is used to find a suitable volunteer position for you.

Although there are no education requirements for school volunteers, there are certain human qualities that enhance a volunteer’s efforts, such as:

- Desire to motivate children and help them succeed in school
- Sincerity
- A warm and understanding personality
- Ability to get along with others
- Patience
- A sense of humor
- A positive attitude

## What Will Be Expected from Me? (Continued)

### **The following are expected from good volunteers:**

- Respect for the dignity and uniqueness of all human beings
- Ability to be flexible
- Confidentiality
- Conform to school policies; know importance of volunteer's role as a good example of behavior, speech, and dress
- Support the teacher in all situations
- Follow the teacher's plan completely
- Ask, if they do not understand the assignment
- Dependability and punctuality
- Good health
- Willingness to accept supervision
- Remember the teacher is in charge of the classroom
- Acceptance that the teacher is a professional educator and the volunteer is there to supplement
- Advance notice if impending absence
- Neat appearance

## What do Tier I Volunteers Do in the School?

This includes volunteer activities that occur in a group, on or off site, with staff supervision.

### **Field Trip Chaperone**

These individuals will supply “extra hands” to assist teachers and other staff to help make a field trip the safest, most educational and enjoyable experience possible for students. They are usually parents of students on the trip.

### **Lunch Room Helper**

Lunch Room Helpers may assist kitchen staff in serving students and/or helping clean tables.

### **Other Helper**

There may be times when volunteers assist with classroom parties, office tasks, and other jobs around the school.

## What Do Tier II Volunteers Do in the School?

This includes volunteer activities in a group or one-to-one setting, on or off site, with minimal supervision.

### **Basic Skills Tutor**

*Basic Skills Tutors* serve as a critical link in the learning process by providing remedial, one-on-one attention to a student outside the classroom. Reading, writing, and mathematics are the most frequently requested subject areas. Basic skills tutors reinforce academic learning, review homework assignments, and help develop study and organizational skills.

## **English Language (EL) Volunteers**

*EL Volunteers* work with students who need assistance with verbal and written English.

Knowledge of a foreign language is not required. Volunteer activities may include: listening to students read, reviewing grammar and spelling assignments, reinforcing classroom learning, or building the young learner's English language confidence.

## **Classroom Assistant**

*Classroom Assistants* serve as role models to help students increase academic performance, confidence, and self-esteem. Classroom assistants work with a small group or an individual student under the direction of a classroom teacher. Volunteers give extra attention and help provide skill reinforcement.

## **Enrichment Tutor**

*Enrichment Tutors* enrich the lives of students who are performing above grade level by introducing activities that stimulate and challenge. Enrichment tutors work in a variety of subject areas including mathematics, science, writing, and computers.

## **Overnight Field Trip Chaperone**

When students have overnight field trips, the school may need a higher adult to student ratio than can be funded. As the name implies, Overnight Field Trip Chaperones may work with students individually or in small groups assuring that their experience is safe and maximized.

## Routine Procedures to Follow

- Always remember to sign in at the office when you arrive, and sign out when you leave.
  - Be sure to wear your Waseca Public Schools Volunteer name tag for identification.
  - Be reliable. If you must be absent, call the school and ask that the teacher be told you cannot come that day. The student will be disappointed that you cannot come, but will be reassured that you care enough to call.
  - Once you receive your assignment, meet with the teacher sometime when she does not have students in her classroom. This will give you an opportunity to discuss your volunteer assignment, learn about classroom procedures, etc. Do not hesitate to set up additional meetings, if necessary, to get further instructions, discuss a problem, or learn about materials.
  - Do not accept this responsibility lightly. Teachers will have planned on you; your student is dependent upon you. Volunteer for only the time you can realistically expect to give.
  - Remember that you are acting as a role model for your student and you should dress and act appropriately.
  - Wear clothes that are comfortable for sitting on the floor and small chairs. Hats are not allowed in a classroom.
  - Share any problems you encounter with the teacher with whom you work or the principal.
  - Never share your telephone number, email address, home address information or accept this information from students. Do not interact with students on social media.
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## The Students Need...

- To think you are working with them, rather than talking at them. Patronizing can do more harm than good.
- To know you will handle minor behavior problems fairly, firmly, and in a friendly manner. Disruptive behavior must be dealt with by the classroom teacher.

- To talk about their problems now and then. When this happens, just listen and refrain from prying. Avoid taking sides; you may not know the “whole story.”
  - To be accepted as they are, rather than to have our personal standards imposed upon them.
  - To find success in their school work each session. Praise and acceptance will speed their progress. Ridicule and sarcasm do not increase success.
  - To succeed in learning by working with others and sharing ideas. “Lecturing” turns most students off.
  - To have your complete attention during the tutoring sessions. Interruptions may cause a student to lose his train of thought.
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## A Bill of Rights for Volunteers

### **A Volunteer has:**

- The right to be treated as a co-worker, not as free help or a once-in-awhile convenience.
- The right to be treated with respect by students and staff. If students are unmanageable or disrespectful, alert the teacher immediately.
- The right to a suitable assignment, with consideration for personal preference, temperament, life experience, education, and employment background.
- The right to know as much about the organizations policies, its people, and programs.
- The right to training for the job, offered through Community Education.
- The right to continued information and new developments affecting your assignment.
- The right to a convenient place to work, conducive to learning, and worthy of the job to be done.
- The right to be heard; have a part in planning, freedom to make suggestions, ask questions, and get answers.
- The right to recognition in the form of awards and through day-to-day expressions of appreciation.

## Giving Individual Attention

You may be asked to help a student who needs some individual attention. A student who has been absent or who is having difficulty with a particular problem will benefit greatly from your special help. Students need this kind of help most often in reading and math, but it could be any subject. The following guidelines may help you in your first tutoring situation.

- First, don't be hesitant about refusing the assignment if you feel you don't understand the materials well enough to help the student. The teacher will understand and will find another area in which you can help.
- Get specific directions about the assignment from the teacher.
- Find a quiet place in or out of the classroom where the two of you can talk quietly without disturbing the rest of the class.
- Establish a one-to-one relationship with the student by talking first for a minute about the student.
- Find out exactly where the student is in his work by asking the student to explain to you some of the work which has preceded this assignment.
- Let the student work out as much as she can on her own. Provide encouragement, but don't step in too soon.
- Rather than giving the student the answer when he asks, direct the student's thinking so he can discover the answer himself.

### Examples

Student: "How can I subtract \$.82 from \$1.00?"

Volunteer: "Well, how many cents are there in one dollar?"

Student: "Who made the first American flag?"

Volunteer: "Does your social studies book have an index? Perhaps you could find the information if you look under 'flag.'"

## Tutoring Tips

Set a positive, warm learning opportunity when working with students. It will take time and patience for you and the student to feel comfortable working together. You will be taking the first step toward building the desired relationship by simply being yourself. Remembering some of the following points may also help in working with students:

- A student's name is very important. Make sure you say the student's name the way the student wants it said. Learn to spell the name correctly.
- Make sure the student knows and can pronounce your name. Your volunteer name tag will help the student remember.
- Be a careful listener. Show that you are interested in the student as a person. Listen carefully to what the student has to say. Ask questions about favorite activities, family members, good friends, and personal hopes and dreams. By your words and actions, let the student know that you care. Don't talk about his home life, unless the student brings it up. It may be embarrassing to them.
- Make it your first goal to become friends with the student. If nothing else is gained in the tutorial sessions, the student will benefit from this personal relationship. The student will be more willing to learn from someone he likes.
- Relax, be yourself, and keep a sense of humor.
- Build your relationship slowly and keep it growing by your acceptance of the student, faith in his ability, honesty, sensitivity, and trustworthiness. Never promise something to him that you cannot follow through or produce.
- Students make mistakes. Let them know that making mistakes is part of learning. Do not be afraid of making mistakes yourself.
- Build the student's self-confidence. Praise your student honestly and frequently. Remember attentiveness and effort can be as important as performance. Accentuate the positive, minimize the negative.
- Be patient. Student's learn at different rates and in different ways. Any sign of progress, as little as it might be, will be your greatest reward. Most underachievers work more slowly on academic problems often because they are less secure.
- Repetition is important. As many different ways as you can devise to get the student to repeat what is being learned, the better it will be.

- Be sincere, and praise any honest effort. Look at failures as opportunities for another try at the same task. The student should never see failure as negative. A student quickly loses respect for the giver of undeserved praise.
- If the student starts to digress from the work assignment, focus her back on the subject by saying, “How does this apply to what we started talking about?”
- Make all tasks appear challenging. Do not tell students, “this is easy” or they will feel defeated if they fail in the task.
- Avoid scolding a student for an incorrect answer. Instead, reply to the response with a statement such as: “Let’s think about this.” You can then review a few facts and help her discover the correct conclusion.
- Avoid “don’t” and “no.” Try to be positive. If you view the student as capable of listening, he will also perceive himself as capable and worthy.
- Praise the student when they succeed at the activity you have been doing together. Let the student know you expect their success by saying, “I knew you could do it.”
- The volunteer’s interest and enthusiasm may be the single and most important part of the student’s success!!

## What Can I Expect?

### **A five year old...**

- Is helpful around the house.
- Prefers mother.
- Needs some assistance with coats, etc.
- Is close-mouthed at home about school activities.
- Has short bursts of energy.
- Changes from one activity to another with relative ease.
- Has vague concepts of time.
- Is not fearful.
- Asks many questions about how things work.
- Enjoys cutting and pasting.
- Loves to play dress-up.

### **A six year old...**

- Handles and attempts to use tools and materials.
- Is self-centered, domineering, stubborn, and aggressive.
- Wants and needs to be first, to be loved best, to be praised most, and to win.
- Is usually better-behaved away from home.
- Does a good deal of tattling.
- Is very bossy.
- Is interested in simple games.
- Carries on long conversations.
- Is restless, overactive, and exuberant.
- Usually likes his teacher.

### **A seven year old...**

- Does not respond promptly.
- May forget easily.
- Fights with playmates.
- Plays in pairs or in groups.
- Is interested in magic, puzzles, collecting, and exchanging.
- Is concerned about being good.
- Is easier to discipline, sensitive to praise.
- Complains and sulks.
- Looks up to his/her teacher.

### **An eight year old...**

- Is often interested in money.
- Makes fewer complaints about teacher.
- Is expansive and speedy.
- Has a longer attention span.
- Is alert, friendly, and interested in people – but sometimes careless, noisy, and argumentative.
- Has feelings easily hurt by careless remarks.
- Understands time and money concepts.
- Likes team games.
- Is critical of brothers and sisters.
- Needs frequent reminders about responsibilities.
- Is demanding of mother.
- Is sensitive to criticism.
- Is in need of adult praise and encouragement.

### **A nine year old...**

- Has new forms of self-independence.
- Has increasing self-motivation.
- Resents interruptions.
- Likes secret codes and languages.
- Has a strong sense of right and wrong.
- Is easily discouraged.
- Is competitive in work and play and is afraid of failure.
- Cries only when emotions are overtaxed.
- Is a great worrier.
- Is anxious to please.
- Makes fewer demands on parents.
- Is a loyal and devoted friend.
- Is more interested in talking and listening than in working.

### **A ten year old...**

- Is relaxed, casual, and alert.
- Is one of the happiest ages.
- Has a strong sense of justice.
- Truly enjoys friends.
- Needs schedules.
- Love the outdoors.
- Is a hero worshipper.
- Wants the teacher to be fair.

### **Preadolescents are...**

- Awkward, lazy, and restless because of rapid and uneven growth.
- Very antagonistic and teasing toward the opposite sex.
- Often over-critical, rebellious, and uncooperative.
- In need of warm affection and a sense of humor from adults.
- Turned off by nagging, condemnation, and being talked down to.
- In need of a feeling of belonging and acceptance.
- In need of increasing opportunities for independence.

### **Adolescents are...**

- Often going to extremes, emotionally unstable, and know-it-alls.
- Having tremendous variations in attainment of physical maturity.
- Acquiring adult capacity for abstract thinking.
- Using aggressiveness in seeking independence.
- Resenting conditions that make them dependent on adults.
- Having difficulty adjusting to the hypocrisies of adult society.
- Oversensitive, indulging in self-pity, and having intense fear of ridicule.
- Concerned about popularity.
- Showing an acute sense of injustice.
- Tending to oversimplify.
- In need of adult guidance that is kindly and does not threaten freedom.

# The Benefits and Rewards of Volunteers

The benefits of the school volunteer program are more obvious to the student, the teacher, and the school than they are to the volunteer. To the volunteer, the reward are deeply personal and virtually impossible to measure, such as:

- There is the satisfaction of seeing the student come up to grade level.
- A former teacher may want to “keep in practice” so she can return to teaching.
- A volunteer may have a special talent or resource and derive satisfaction from sharing it with students.
- The volunteer may want to feel needed and useful.
- Volunteer experience can be used on job applications.
- Some volunteers have a desire to be recognized.
- Volunteers may want to use the experience to help get ready to move out of the home and back to work, using the program as a stepping stone to accomplish this.
- And perhaps the most common reward is the satisfaction in helping to fill an explicit need in the school.

## Please Note

### **We are not responsible for:**

- A child’s hug or kiss.
- A teacher’s comment, “You’ll never know how much you being here means to me!”
- A teenager saying, “Gee, thanks for your time.”
- A principal giving you a hearty welcome and sincere thanks for a job well done.
- Anyone saying, “Thanks so much for caring!”

### **You are responsible for that!**

**Thank you for your willingness to share your time with our students. You can help make a difference in the lives of Waseca youth!**

Adapted from the Depends School Volunteer Program, Seminole County Public Schools, Florida.

# Information

## **Waseca Junior & Senior High School**

Principal: Jeanne Swanson

Assistant Principal: Darren Nelson

1717 2<sup>nd</sup> St. NW

Waseca, MN 56093

507-835-5470

Fax: 507-835-1724

## **Waseca Intermediate School**

Principal: John Huttemier

400 19<sup>th</sup> Ave. NW

Waseca, MN 56093

507-835-3000

Fax: 507-837-5530

## **Hartley Elementary School**

Principal: Ben O'Brien

605 7<sup>th</sup> St. NE

Waseca, MN 56093

507-835-2248

Fax: 507-835-1005

## **Waseca Area Learning Center**

Principal: John Sakellariou

501 E Elm Ave.

Waseca, MN 56093

507-835-5588

Fax: 507-835-1161

## **Waseca County Off-Campus**

501 E Elm Ave

Waseca, MN 56093

507-835-0918

## **District Office**

501 E Elm Ave

Waseca, MN 56093

507-835-2500

Fax: 507-835-1161

Hours: 7:00am – 5:00pm (School Year)

7:00am – 4:30pm (Summer Hours Vary)

**Website:** [http://www.edline.net/pages/Waseca\\_Public\\_Schools\\_ISD\\_\\_829](http://www.edline.net/pages/Waseca_Public_Schools_ISD__829)

# Volunteer Policy

## Waseca Public School Policy 906

Adopted: August 21, 2014

### 906 VOLUNTEERS

#### I. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

Volunteers play an important role in education as they help to individualize instruction, promote school/community interaction, support school activities and events, provide multigenerational and multi-cultural experiences, and enrich curriculum for all learners. Therefore, the Waseca School District promotes the use of volunteers to the extent possible by appropriate recruiting, screening, placement, orientation, training, monitoring, and recognizing volunteers. Waseca School District also recognizes that volunteers do not assume primary responsibility for the instruction of learners, but reinforce skills taught by the professional staff. Volunteers will be placed with careful consideration of how their presence supports the educational objective of a class or the curriculum.

Volunteers acting as resource speakers will be selected on their effectiveness in furthering curricular goals because of their specialized knowledge, skill or more direct relationship to a problem or experience. Volunteers are subject to all standards set forth by Waseca School District Policies including, but not limited to: Policy/Regulation 906 Volunteers, Policy 417 Chemical Health Policy, Policy/ Regulation 419 Tobacco-Free Schools, Policy 501 Weapon Free Schools, and Policy/ Regulation 506 Student Discipline.

#### II. VOLUNTEER MANAGEMENT

##### A. Selection Criteria

Volunteers should be selected because their contributions will enrich instructional programs. Their effectiveness in furthering our curricular goals should be the basic criterion for their identification and use.

##### B. Risk Management

Risk Management is the process of evaluating each volunteer position 1) against the potential risk imposed on the learner, volunteer, and school district, and 2) using appropriate management tools to prevent liability to these parties. We are concerned mostly with tort liability. There are four main components of tort liability (tort is a wrong that causes harm to an individual).

1. Negligence
2. Strict Liability
3. Intentional misconduct and criminal conduct
4. Invasion of privacy rights

Each volunteer activity is categorized to one of three tiers of potential risks to learners, volunteers, and the staff supervisor. The Minnesota Chapter of the National Association of Partners in Education (NAPE) has established these categories as a standard. Depending on the tier, there are twelve tools to manage volunteer activities (sign-in, registration; job description; handbook; orientation; training; monitoring, evaluation and recognition; signed parental release (for minors); application; screening/reference checks; interview; and criminal background check).

**Tier One** includes volunteer activities that occur in a group, on or off site, with staff supervision. Management tools include: BCA (free) background check, signing in, \*completing a registration card; receiving a job description, \*a volunteer handbook and orientation information. Additional training may be needed. The activity of the volunteer will be monitored, evaluated and recognized by supervising staff. Any personal needs of students during such activities will either be handled by staff or more than one volunteer (at least pairs). \*Optional (discretion of hosting teacher) for one-time resource speakers.

**Tier Two** includes volunteer activities in a group or one-to-one setting, on or off site, with minimal supervision. Tier Two management tools include those listed under Tier One with the addition of a signed parental release, a completed application, screening/reference checks, an interview and volunteer criminal background check (current cost \$11.95 bore by the volunteer).

**Tier Three** includes volunteers serving adult learners and it includes volunteers serving adults with disabilities with minimal supervision. Tier Three management tools include those listed under Tier Two.

C. Volunteer Manual will be updated annually and reference the following management tools.

- Sign-in
- Registration Card
- Job Description
- Orientation
- Training
- Monitoring, Evaluation and Recognition
- Parental Release
- Application
- Screening/Reference Checks
- Interview
- Criminal Background Check

D. Guidelines For The Use Of Resource Speakers: It is the responsibility of the hosting classroom teacher to approve all requests for the use of resource personnel according to the following guidelines:

1. The age and maturity of the students shall be considered in the identification of resource personnel. Resource personnel will be instructed to communicate in a manner, which is appropriate to the age group, they are addressing and consistent with our educational goals.
2. The primary concern in the use of any resource personnel shall be their role in furthering the educational goals as identified in the curriculum of the Waseca Schools.
3. While varying viewpoints regarding issues need to be represented by resource personnel, efforts shall be made to achieve balance in the viewpoints presented by various presenters.
4. The host teacher will obtain and keep record of the names, contact information, and occupations or titles of all resource personnel utilized during the school year. The invitation will be made sufficiently in advance of the visits to ensure the educational quality of the presentation by appropriate program design and by direct participation of the hosting teacher throughout the program.

### III. VOLUNTEER MANAGEMENT GRID

\*Optional (discretion of hosting teacher) for one time resource speaker

#### **Tier One:**

e.g. Chaperones, Event Volunteers, Resource Speakers, Office Volunteers, Advisory Boards, Councils

#### **Tier Two: Volunteers Serving Young Learners (E-12) in a Group or One-on-One Setting, On or Off Site, with Minimal Supervision:**

e.g. Chaperones for Overnight Fieldtrips, Tutors, Mentors, Classroom Assistants (ongoing), Coaches, Chaperones of field trips where staff supervision of volunteers is difficult and the volunteer will most likely be alone with small groups of students (e.g. Valley Fair).

#### **Tier Three: Volunteers Serving Adult Learners Including those with Disabilities:**

e.g. Basic Skills Tutor, ELL Tutor, Career Coach

### IV. VOLUNTEER MANAGEMENT RESPONSIBILITIES

**The Principal or designee** is responsible for:

- Assessing the school's needs.
- Defining objectives for the program.
- Determining guidelines for volunteers in the classroom, use of lounge etc.
- Selecting a designee for volunteer management.
- Ensuring that the volunteer is not assigned the responsibility for disciplining students but assists the teacher in maintaining proper behavior of students and reports behavioral problems to the teacher for appropriate action.
- Ensuring that a criminal background check is completed (at least two weeks prior to the trip) on each overnight fieldtrip volunteer.
- Providing support to all persons involved in the program.
- Reporting any accidents or injuries involved in the program.
- Evaluating program effectiveness.
- Having each volunteer complete and submit a volunteer registration or application form.
- Recruiting volunteers.
- Orienting and training volunteers.
- Consulting with principals and teachers.
- Submitting list of volunteers to appropriate contact person.
- Disseminating materials to volunteers.
- Monitoring and evaluating volunteers and the program.
- Planning building or program appreciation functions.
- Coordinating building/program level volunteer opportunities between staff and volunteers.
- Receiving training and support from District Office.

**The Teacher or Staff** is responsible for:

- Getting to know volunteer's skills and abilities.
- Serving as a liaison between students and volunteers.
- Providing appreciation and recognition.

- Providing feedback to volunteer coordinator with affirmations/concerns about volunteers.
- Informing volunteers of schedule changes.
- Following the guidelines for use of resource speakers.

**District Office Personnel** is responsible for:

- Directing risk management of volunteers.
- Recruiting volunteers on a district wide basis.
- Coordinating reference checks and screening of volunteers.
- Forwarding volunteer referrals to appropriate placement with building personnel
- Providing standards, guidelines, and other volunteer program materials for
- Establishing and conducting training in volunteer program materials for staff

**The Volunteer** is responsible for:

- Signing in or out when reporting to or leaving the school.
- Carrying out those duties assigned which are in their job description.
- Completing all application or registration forms and attending any training or orientation necessary.
- Becoming familiar with the volunteer handbook including Waseca School District, school or classroom policies.
- Providing support services, but not substitute for a professional staff member.
- Confidentiality of all information.
- Receiving and following specific instructions including use of necessary materials for any job undertaken.
- Clearing misunderstandings with the school or teacher by communicating, not criticizing.
- Notifying the school or teacher if he or she must be absent.
- Working under the direct supervision or a teacher or member of the staff.