

Volunteer Management Department
Seattle Public Schools
Volunteer Handbook

Volunteer Agreement (**Initial on each line**)

Safety and Liability Issues

_____ As the relationship with a student progresses, he/she will begin to trust you and may start to confide in you. You should take time to listen and show them that you care about them. However, do not make a promise you cannot keep. If a student reveals information relating to a possible abuse or neglect situation, let the student know that you care and are there to listen but that you are required to pass this information on to a teacher, counselor, or principal who can offer them help.

_____ Personal information about yourself should be shared only as it is relevant to the work you are doing with the student. Do not give personal contact information such as your address, phone, personal website, and email.

_____ Some students, especially at the elementary level, will naturally become attached and show affection. Students may crave affection and attention, so it is important that you handle the situation with sensitivity. Front hugs should be avoided. Instead, carefully put your arm around a child's shoulder and turn it into a side hug. Use other signs of support, such as "high fives." In addition, regardless of age, students should never sit on your lap.

Working with Children from Diverse Cultural Backgrounds

_____ Students in Seattle Public Schools come from many different families, cultures, and communities--each with its own set of values and beliefs. Our individual culture, beliefs, values and behaviors seem so naturally a part of who we are that it is often challenging to understand others with unique traditions. Understanding the students' cultures and helping them to understand the school culture will increase your ability to help them learn.

Confidentiality

_____ Students in Seattle Public Schools have the right to expect that information about them will be kept confidential by all volunteers. Additionally, the U.S. congress has addressed the privacy-related concerns of educators, parents, and students by enacting the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (known more commonly as "FERPA" or the "Buckley Amendment").

_____ Each student with whom you work has the right to expect that nothing that happens to or about him or her will be repeated to anyone other than authorized school department employees, as designated by the administrators at your school.

_____ You may not share information about a student even with others who are genuinely interested in the student's welfare, such as social workers, scout leaders, clergy, grandparents, or nurses/physicians. A grave medical emergency, in which confidential information may be necessary for a student's care, is an exception. Thus, you must refer all such questions to authorized school employees, typically the student's teacher or principal.

_____ Parents, friends, or community members may in good faith ask you questions about a student's problems or progress. Again, you must refer all such questions to the authorized school employees. You may not share information about a student even with members of your own family.

_____ Before you speak, always remember that violating a student's confidentiality isn't just impolite, it's against the law.

Agreement

I, (print name) _____, as a volunteer have read and agree to the above terms. In addition to the remaining guidelines in the Volunteer Handbook, I have been made aware of where to find the Volunteer Handbook and to whom I can speak to regarding any questions or concerns I may have.

Please print full name

Volunteer site

Please sign full name

Date

Volunteer Coordinators signature

Date