July 1, 2022

Dear Volunteer,

Thank you for taking the time to consider volunteering for the School District of Manatee County. We appreciate the effort you have made taking a positive step to learn more about volunteering in your neighborhood school.

Your commitment to education offers many students an opportunity to receive the individual attention vital to their education, and personal development. You are a role model for our students by sharing calmness, consistency, civility, confidence and community in their lives.

Volunteers bring help, guidance and real-world experience to our students while supporting teachers and staff. Volunteering in our schools allows you to become part of our family and to see how dedicated our staff are, to the individual development of our students.

Our schools face challenges on a daily basis with limited resources, and by volunteering, you are making a significant difference. Positive attitudes and enthusiasm are vital when engaging with our students, to encourage them to be positive citizens of the community.

We appreciate your interest to volunteer and look forward to a continued relationship for the future success of our students.

Sincerely,

Cynthia Saunders
Superintendent
Welcome Volunteers

Volunteer Mission

_To increase student achievement through family and community engagement, providing diverse resources to schools and students within Manatee County._

When parents, guardians and members of the community support local schools, children behave better, increase achievement and graduate at higher rates.

According to _Florida Statue 1012.01(5)_ “A K-12 school volunteer is any **nonpaid** person who may be appointed by a district school board or its designee. School volunteers may include, but may not be limited to, parents, senior citizens, students, and others who assist the teacher or other members of the school staff. “

Volunteers enhance the quality of education in our schools which in turn, gives our schools the opportunity to excel beyond measure. Volunteers also provide creative avenues of assistance to staff, teachers and students that could not otherwise be afforded.

Your role as a volunteer is a very important one, and we hope that your involvement in our schools will be as rewarding for you as it will be for our students, teachers and school staff. As a volunteer you are taking the time to share wisdom and experience with future academic stars!

The School District of Manatee County offers many exciting and meaningful volunteer opportunities. Depending upon the need of the school, specific jobs may be available at the school in which the volunteer prefers to serve and the time available.

The school **Volunteer Coordinator** will be able to help you with your volunteer application and placement.

“Volunteers don’t get paid, not because they’re worthless, but because they’re priceless.” – Sherry Anderson
HOW TO BECOME A VOLUNTEER

Last year, 5,000 volunteers donated 36,000 hours to our students. This represents over $1,000,000 worth of services donated by the community to our schools! (source: https://independentsector.org/value-of-volunteer-time-2022/)

If you have a genuine interest in helping children, a commitment to your volunteer activity and would like to contribute your valuable time and skills to support our students and teachers, please consider volunteering by completing a FREE confidential Level I volunteer application.

**Level I clearance**, is required for ALL volunteers interacting with students in a supervised environment, such as classrooms, cafeteria, media center, daytime field trips, where you are in eye and earshot of a school faculty member or teacher at all times. Individuals desiring volunteer assignments in the school system must provide social security numbers and other personal information required to perform background screenings.

**Level II clearance**, is required for ALL volunteers who will be interacting with students in an unsupervised environment, such as overnight field trips, one-to-one mentoring, tutoring, and overnight competitions. Instructions to obtain Level II clearance, may be obtained by emailing gambinod@manateeschools.net. (Please note: Application fees for a Level II fingerprint screening are approximately $80 and paid by the volunteer. The results are monitored by the Office of Safety & Security for a period of 5 years).

**Please note**: ALL volunteers who complete a Level II screening MUST also complete the Level I application.

The School District of Manatee County reserves the right to refuse volunteer assignments to individuals who fail to meet district guidelines.

**An individual is NOT eligible to volunteer …**

- If a person has been found guilty of any felony offense, regardless of adjudication, expungement or entered a plea of nolo contendere or guilty to any offense constituting a felony under Florida law or the jurisdiction in which the offense occurred within the last 10 years.

- If a person is found guilty of any misdemeanor offense within the past 5 years.

**An individual MAY BE CONSIDERED to volunteer …**

- If convicted or judicial action of any misdemeanor is more than 5 years old and reviewed on a case by case basis.

**All decisions are based upon the hiring guidelines of the School District of Manatee County.**

Individuals who do not meet requirements for volunteers, as established by state law and the School Board of Manatee County will not be accepted or approved to volunteer. Volunteers will not be placed or will be dismissed if they falsify any information when applying to volunteer.
Volunteers in this category assist in a support role to the teachers, office, lunchroom, field trips etc.

**Business / Community Partner Programs**
Volunteers from local businesses and organizations collaborate with the Chamber of Commerce and the School District of Manatee County to volunteer in such activities as Project TEACH and Big Bank Theory.

**Cafeteria Assistant**
Volunteers supervise student’s in the cafeteria during lunch periods.

**Chaperones**
Volunteers assist school staff to chaperone field trips and on-site activities.

**Classroom Assistant**
Volunteers work with classroom teachers to assist on various projects and student interaction. Elementary school volunteers tell stories, read to children, prepare bulletin boards, and chaperone. Secondary school volunteers work on music, drama performances, operate audio/visual equipment, or make instructional materials.

**Computer Lab Assistant**
Volunteers who have computer skills and knowledge of software can volunteer with students in the computer lab. Volunteers may help students with instructional programs, testing and reading assessment programs.

**Library/Media Center Assistant**
Volunteers work in the circulation desk, catalog and shelve books, mend books, operate audio visual equipment and fill teacher and student requests.

**Office/Clerical Assistant**
Tasks may include typing, computer input, answering telephones, duplicating materials or other office work.

**Off-site and After Hours Volunteers**
“At home” volunteer projects such as creating newsletters, creating bulletin board materials etc.,. Volunteer hours should be recorded on the “volunteer attendance form” in this guide and reported to the school Volunteer Coordinator for data collection.

**Parent Teacher Organization**
Volunteers may choose to serve on the school’s PTO committee supporting the school’s fundraising efforts and student resources. Volunteers may also choose to assist athletics, band, arts and booster clubs in middle and high schools.

**School Advisory Council**
A limited number of volunteers from the community serve as a cross section to collaborate on the school’s School Improvement Plan (SIP).
VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

FIELD TRIPS

All policies and procedures governing volunteers at the school site carry over to field trips, because a field trip is an extension of the school site for educational purposes. Volunteer chaperones must complete an online volunteer application and be cleared through the Raptor system at the school site.

- All chaperones must be 21 years of age, complete a volunteer application and clear a mandatory Level I screening at the school site.

- All overnight chaperones are required to clear a mandatory Level II screening at their own expense via the district’s 3rd party vendor. For more information contact (941) 708-8770 x41048.

Volunteers will receive specific instructions from the school regarding field trip procedures.

INSTRUCTIONAL VOLUNTEERS

Instructional volunteers provide direct services to one or more students on a regular basis. Typically tutors and mentors are in this category. Individuals who would like to work one-to-one with students in unsupervised school-based settings, are required to complete and clear a Level II background screening, at the cost of the volunteer. The school district uses an outside vendor called FieldPrint for its Level II screenings. For more information contact (941) 708-8770 x41048.

Tutors
Tutors work one on one with students or with small groups of students who need remedial help in academic subjects (reading, math, language arts, science, social studies) to reinforce basic skills with students. Tutors also work with non-English speaking students to increase their skills in understanding, speaking, reading and writing English. Adult Literacy tutors work one on one with adults who are learning basic skills. Volunteers are assigned to adult career centers where students are preparing for their GED exams.

Mentors
Mentors encourage and motivate students to improve their attendance, behavior and academic performance. Mentors make a difference!
The School District of Manatee County partners with community agencies to offer both mentor services and supplemental literacy assistance to students in need.

**Suncoast Campaign for Grade Level Reading:** Part of a nationwide movement, the Suncoast Campaign for Grade-Level Reading is a communitywide effort to help all children, especially those from low-income families, succeed in school by ensuring they read on grade level. Donna Puhalovich, Suncoast Campaign for Grade-Level Reading Volunteer Coordinator info@GradeLevelReadingSuncoast.net

**Books For Kids** is a project of the **Rotary Club of Lakewood Ranch**. Their mission is to raise the reading levels of elementary school students by helping with reading comprehension and by providing "Books For Kids.”

The **Boys & Girls Clubs of Manatee County** provide the children of Manatee County with a safe place to learn and grow, life-enhancing programs, character-building experiences, and hope and opportunity.

The **Dive into Reading** summer reading program, provided by **Anna Maria Oyster Bar**, aims to Improve children’s reading levels and mitigate summer learning loss.

**ReadingPals** is a program coordinated by the **Early Learning Coalition of Manatee County**, where volunteers provide positive reinforcement and personal attention to a child (kindergarten through 3rd grade) who would benefit from a little extra reading support. We aim to not only improve children’s reading skills, but also impart a love of reading.

Contact (941) 757-2900 for more information.

Visit the District’s website for more information on our community partners. [https://www.manateeschools.net/Page/10185](https://www.manateeschools.net/Page/10185)

**Big Brothers Big Sisters** (BBBS) provides one-to-one mentoring relationships to children ages 6-18 years old throughout the Gulf Coast of Florida. The organization provides children facing adversity, often those of single or low-income households, with strong and enduring, professionally-supported one-to-one mentoring relationships that change their lives for the better, forever.

**Take Stock in Children** - The mission of **Take Stock in Children** is to break the cycle of poverty for low-income, academically-qualified students by providing opportunities for a post-secondary education.
CHAPERONE GUIDELINES & RESPONSIBILITIES FOR FIELD TRIPS

GUIDELINES

- Chaperones must complete an online Volunteer Application Form, present photo ID and be cleared through the Raptor System at least two weeks prior to the date of the Field Trip. (Chaperones on overnight trips require a Level II screening).
- Chaperones are always under the supervision of School Board personnel and must follow their directives.
- Chaperones must be 21 or older.
- For overnight field trips, Chaperones who have children enrolled in Manatee County Schools (K-12) may, upon express approval of the Principal, have their own children who are enrolled in the District participate in a Field Trip.
- Students are responsible for all personal items that are brought on trips.
- Chaperones and their groups must be prompt returning to the buses at the end of the trip.
- Use appropriate language.
- Alcoholic beverages/illegal drugs are not to be possessed or consumed by Chaperones or students.
- Do not purchase items for the students even if they ask.
- Use of tobacco products is not permitted by students or Chaperones during the field trip.
- Chaperones need to be aware of any medical conditions/allergies etc. of any children assigned to them.
- Chaperones shall not provide any prescription or over the counter medications to students.
- Chaperones shall be seated throughout the vehicle (if applicable) in order to help maintain supervision.

RESPONSIBILITIES

- Chaperones are responsible for ALL of the children in their assigned group-not just the chaperone’s own child.
- Please stay with the group assigned at all times.
- Please touch only your own child.
- Treat all children for whom you are responsible fairly and equally.
- Review and enforce the Student Code of Conduct.
- Report any accidents, disciplinary issues, or problems to the Field Trip Coordinator immediately.
- A Chaperone in each group must carry a cell phone and exchange cell phone numbers with the Field Trip Coordinator.
- Chaperones must inform the Principal/Desigee of any condition that may affect his/her ability to perform their assigned duties.
RESPONSIBILITIES

VOLUNTEER

DOs

- Complete an annual volunteer application form.
- Attend orientation arranged by school based Volunteer Coordinator.
- Always check-in upon arrival, and check-out upon departure.
- Keep student information confidential.
- Set a good example in manner, dress, and appearance in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct.
- Be punctual and reliable.
- The use of cell phones is prohibited during interaction with students based upon the Code of Student Conduct (cell phones or electronic devices that are visible, activated, or inappropriately used).
- Stay home if you are ill (cold, sore throat, cough or fever).
- Volunteers must report any injuries they incur while on school premises or while performing their volunteer duties, to the school volunteer coordinator or principal.
- Volunteers are covered by School Board Liability policies while volunteering.
- If the volunteer is a mentor with an partnering agency, they must follow the guidelines of the prescribed program in which they are mentoring from, in addition to the district volunteer procedures and successfully clear a Level II screening.
- Report suspected child abuse and neglect under Florida Statute 39.201.

DON’TS

- Give medication to students.
- Discipline students and refrain from improper touching of students in an aggressive or sexual manner.
- Divulge individual student’s grades, records and abilities, which are personal and confidential. Students have a right to confidentiality covering: Academic work, family background, test scores, attendance, grades, health data, etc.
- Determine the grade or write comments on student papers.
- Establish instructional objectives.
- Compare and criticize students or teachers.
- Interrupt class time for discussions with the teacher.
- Hold parent/teacher conferences during class time.
- Assume responsibility for the supervision of a class in the absence of a certified teacher.
- Volunteers may not bring children who are not registered in the school when they tutor, mentor, assist in the classroom, media center, office, cafeteria, clinic or health screenings, playgrounds, or when chaperoning field trips.
- Volunteers may not transport students in their personal vehicles.

It is a misdemeanor not to report child abuse (Florida Statute 39.205)
PROTECTING OUR STUDENTS

*Florida Statute 39.202* mandates that “Any person who knows, or has reasonable cause to suspect, that a child is abused, abandoned, or neglected by a parent, legal custodian, caregiver, or other person responsible for the child’s welfare, as defined in this chapter, or that a child is in need of supervision and care and has no parent, legal custodian, or responsible adult relative immediately known and available to provide supervision and care shall report such knowledge or suspicion to the department in the manner prescribed in subsection (2). A call should be made to the central Florida abuse hotline (1-800-96ABUSE) or 1 800 962-2873 at the Department of Children and Families.

The School Volunteer Coordinator or Principal will help you follow proper procedures and assist you with your concerns.

**Student Contact Outside of School**

Volunteers are prohibited from contacting students or their families outside of their volunteer assignment or away from school either in person, by telephone, by online communication, or through social media. Contact is prohibited through traditional phone, cell phone, voice mail, texting, Skype, face time, video images, photographs, podcasts, computers, electronic tablets, e-reader, USB drives, notebooks, MP3 players, iPods, or any other electronic communications device. Volunteers are prohibited from interacting with students through any social media accounts including Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, My Space, Flickr, mobile applications, or any other sites used to share information online. This prohibition does not apply to mentors who have contractual arrangements with a sponsoring agency and prior parent/guardian permission to interact with students outside of school.

**Tobacco, Alcohol & Illegal Drugs**

Tobacco, alcohol and illegal drug use is prohibited anywhere, anytime by anyone on campus during all school sponsored events, whether they occur before, after or during regular school hours.

PROTECTING OUR VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers should always sign into the Raptor system upon entering school grounds. Volunteers are covered under the district’s liability policy with the requirement for volunteers to be signed in.

Volunteers should always be in sight of school staff when working with students, and should refrain from touching students.

Volunteers must always work under the supervision of staff. Make sure you are working in an open, visible area and do not allow yourself to be in a situation where your actions might be misconstrued. Volunteers do not have contact with students outside of school hours.
Responsibilities

**Teacher**

- Determine need for volunteers and communicate to school Volunteer Coordinator.
- Verify that volunteers are approved before using them.
- Notify volunteers when there is a scheduled change.
- Provide proper supervision of classroom volunteers and provide clear directions.
- Report concerns to the School Volunteer Coordinator.
- Provide work space/materials for volunteers.
- Express appreciation to volunteers.

**School Volunteer Coordinator**

- Survey teachers for volunteer needs.
- Register volunteers for approval and ensure that each volunteer completes the volunteer application in its entirety and is entered into the volunteer component of Raptor using a state driver’s license or state ID.
- Enter passport information manually using the full name, date of birth and verify identity with a photo ID.
- Assure that each applicant clears the Raptor System and is interviewed before approval.
- Notify volunteers when approved or denied.
- Ensure any applicant who has a criminal background is reviewed and approval by the District Coordinator.
- Arrange orientation and training of volunteers and assign volunteers to teachers.
- Serve as a resource for volunteers.
- Keep accurate records of volunteer services and hours in Raptor System for district & FLDOE.
- Coordinate volunteer recognition at school site.

**Principal**

- Each school principal shall designate and supervise a school Volunteer Coordinator.
- Principals recognize that mentors provide one to one time with students, therefore, principals shall be responsible for assuring that mentors must have successfully passed a Level II Screening.
- Deny privileges to volunteers as necessary.

**District Community Engagement Specialist**

- Develop and disseminate volunteer materials.
- Train school volunteer coordinators.
- Create district recognition events.
- Monitor State Statutes and Manatee County School Board Policy.
- Maintain state reporting records for Florida Department of Education.
VOLUNTEER GENERAL INFORMATION

Signing In / Out

It is vital that a volunteer signs in and out of the Raptor System each time they enter school grounds, and is issued with a Raptor Name Badge. It is important you maintain proper identification and wear your Raptor Name Badge at all times while on campus. For the safety of everyone on campus, the school staff needs to remain aware of who is on campus at all times. All visitor and volunteer badges must be returned to the front desk when exiting the school campus.

Volunteer Hours

- Please be sure to report ALL volunteer hours into the Raptor System, including volunteer hours at home.
- Keep track of offsite volunteer hours using the “volunteer activity log”.
- Verified volunteer hours can be used as work experience for future employment.
- Volunteer hours for high school students can count towards the graduation volunteer requirement.
- Volunteer hours are reported to the Florida Department of Education (FLDOE) and required for schools to be designated Golden, Silver or Five Star Schools. Schools nominate their volunteers for the annual state Outstanding School Volunteer of the Year Award.

Attendance / Punctuality

Reliability is essential because teachers and school staff plan for volunteer assistance. If you cannot attend your scheduled visit, please call or email the school as soon as possible to notify the teacher or staff of your impending absence. Your point of contact is the School Volunteer Coordinator.

Conduct

Please keep in mind, you are a role model to our students and as such, should be professional at all times. Follow school guidelines for student dress code in the Student Code of Conduct. The use of profanity, drugs or alcohol is never tolerated, selling merchandise, making advances to a student, political or religious conversations are not allowed.

Emergencies

In case of an emergency or when you have concerns for student safety, please report immediately to a teacher or administrator. Your school may have specific guidelines and/or procedures.

Updating Your Information

The school Volunteer Coordinator will update your volunteer record to keep it current when your name, address, or phone number changes.
NEED TO KNOW...

☐ Principal  ________________________________
☐ School Secretary  ________________________________
☐ School Volunteer Coordinator  ________________________________
☐ Assistant Principal(s)  ________________________________
☐ Guidance Counselors  ________________________________
☐ Parent Organization President (PTO, Boosters)  ________________________________
☐ School Advisory Council (SAC) Chair  ________________________________
☐ School Business Partner Coordinator  ________________________________

SCHOOL PROCEDURES

☐ Emergency Drills  ________________________________
☐ Dress Code  ________________________________
☐ Opening & Closing Hours  ________________________________
☐ RAPTOR Sign-in Procedures  ________________________________
☐ Volunteer Sign-in Computer  ________________________________
☐ Parking  ________________________________
☐ Who to contact when you will be absent  ________________________________
☐ Location of restrooms & lunch procedures  ________________________________
☐ Telephone number/email address  ________________________________

Your assignment:

Job  ________________________________

Supervisor  ________________________________
2022-2023
Volunteer Activity Log

Use this form for volunteer hours served during non-school hours.
Please make additional copies as necessary.

Name: ____________________________ School: ____________________________
Date of activity: ____________________________
Activity Description: ______________________________________________________

Function - Circle one:
Chaperone • SAC • PTO • Classroom • Media Center • Office • Tutor • Athletics • Band • Mentor •
Other ____________________________

Affiliation - Circle one:
Parent • Grandparent • Community Member • District Employee • College Student • Business Partner •
Other ____________________________

Organization - Circle one:
AmeriCorps • Big Brothers Big Sisters • Booster Club • Boys and Girls Club • Business Partner • Collegiate •
High School • Kiwanis • PTO • SAC • Take Stock In Children • United Way • Other ____________________________

Total Hours Served: ____________________________
Board Members
Rev. James Golden
Chair
Gina Messenger
Vice Chair
Chad Choate
Mary Foreman
Charlie Kennedy

Superintendent
Cynthia Saunders

“The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others.” — Mahatma Gandhi

Deborah Perry-Gambino
Community Engagement Specialist
gambinod@manateeschools.net
(941) 708-8770 x41048
215 Manatee Avenue West
Bradenton, FL 34205
Website: www.manateeschools.net

The School Board shall comply with all Federal laws and regulations prohibiting discrimination and with all requirements and regulations of the U.S. Department of Education. It is the policy of the Board that no administrative staff member or candidate for such a position, volunteer, vendor or member of the public shall, on the basis of race, color, ethnicity, religion, national origin, age, gender, marital status, disability, genetic information, or legally-protected characteristic, be discriminated against, excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or otherwise be subjected to, discrimination in any program or activity for which the Board is responsible or for which it receives financial assistance from the U.S. Department of Education.