

## **Introduction**

A key objective of Dayton Public Schools' volunteer initiative is to encourage and strengthen parent and community participation in the education of our children.

Your role as a volunteer is significant! It is our hope that your involvement with Dayton Public Schools will be as rewarding for you as it will be for our students and school personnel.

The following guidelines will acquaint you with Dayton Public Schools volunteer procedures. Please read the information carefully.

### **Goals for DPS Volunteer Initiative:**

- To increase participation of parents and local business in the education of students.
- To assist teachers and staff in providing more enriching and individualized instruction to students.
- To increase student motivation for learning.
- To supplement children's school experiences beyond what is normally available, through the unique contributions of volunteers.
- To assist teachers with many nonteaching duties.
- To foster greater understanding of schools among citizens, resulting in community support for public education.

### **Getting Started...**

Thank you for your interest in becoming a Dayton Public Schools volunteer. Before starting, all volunteers must comply with and complete the following annually:

1. Submit the volunteer form and a copy of your state identification (e.g. driver license).

2. Follow all volunteer guidelines. Read the guidelines carefully; when you sign this volunteer form, you are stating that you have received and read it thoroughly. If you have any questions, the principal, staff, and/or Title I Regional Parent Resource Teacher is available to assist you.
3. Secure a DPS volunteer identification badge from the school where you volunteer.

## **What You Should Know**

1. Respect confidentiality. Students and staff have a right to privacy.
2. Honor your commitments and be on time.
3. Choose what is manageable and interesting to you.
4. Be professional, prepared, responsible and safe at all times.
5. Communicate appropriately. Do not distract teachers while they are teaching. When talking to students, be positive and use an appropriate tone of voice.
6. Strive to give each child your best effort.
7. Respect each child as an individual.
8. Never share personal information about a student or student's family with others.
9. Never share specific information with a parent about his or her child based on the volunteer's classroom experience, whether positive or negative.
10. Never make comments that could be harmful to the reputation of any pupil, professional or other volunteer.
11. Never share opinions about the behavior and/or academic progress of students.

*Please note – 109.575 of the Ohio Revised Code states "At the time of a person's initial application to an organization or entity to be a volunteer in a position in which the person on a regular basis will have unsupervised access to a child, the organization or entity shall inform the person that, at any time, the person might be required to provide a set of impressions of the person's fingerprints and a criminal records check might be conducted with respect to the person."*

## Background Checks

**Unsupervised volunteers:** Background checks are conducted by the DPS Office of Safety and Security for individuals who will work one-on-one with students or groups of children without the continuous supervision of school personnel. This could be a tutoring session or other activity at which teachers or administrators are not always present. If you are a volunteer interested in this type of assignment, you must report to the Office of Safety and Security for a background check. All unsupervised volunteers will require background checks.

If you have already completed a background check in the past year, submit a copy of your records to the Office of Safety and Security; otherwise, the check will be completed by DPS.

**Supervised volunteers:** Volunteers working in the classroom or in the school setting in clear view of teachers and other school personnel will **not** require background checks.

## Confidentiality

**When you have a concern...** if you hear or observe something that troubles you, tell the classroom teacher. The teacher is usually in the best position to deal with the issue appropriately. If you feel your concern cannot be addressed appropriately by the classroom teacher, discuss it with the school principal.

**The Ohio Revised Code Abuse Reporting Law (ORC 2151.421)** requires mandated reporters, who are generally attorneys, health providers and school employees acting in their professional capacities, to personally report known or suspected abuse/neglect of a child to the applicable county children service agency or law enforcement agency. School volunteers are not required by law to make reports of abuse or neglect to those agencies but may do so in good faith if they wish.

**If you need help** or have any questions, concerns or just want to talk about your volunteer assignment, please speak with the classroom teacher or school principal.

## Maintaining a Safe School Environment

These guidelines are designed to provide our students with a safe environment, as well as protect our volunteers. If volunteers are uncomfortable with or uncertain about circumstances under which they are asked to work, they are encouraged to discuss any concerns or questions with the classroom teacher or principal.

- **Restrooms** – Volunteers are asked to use the staff-designated restroom(s) and should not enter the student restroom(s). If a student is in need of assistance in a restroom, volunteers should notify the teacher or educational assistant.
- **Personal Space** – Volunteers should be sensitive to a student’s personal space and comfort level. All hugs including shoulder-to-shoulder hugs and hugs from the side should be given only when initiated by the student. Face-to-face hugs are not appropriate.
- **Medications** – Absolutely **NO** volunteer may administer any medications to students.
- **Snacks and Treats** – Volunteers should not give students snacks without the building administrator or classroom teacher’s permission. As a volunteer, you may not be aware of students’ food allergies.
- **Visibility** – Volunteers should be visible in a location where others can see them at all times, while working with students. If in a room, a staff member should be present or the door left open. Volunteers should avoid taking a student out on the playground, unless other students are present with a teacher or educational assistant.
- **Discipline** – Our district/schools have detailed discipline plans, and the responsibility for discipline rests with the staff. Please make the teacher aware of any behavior or actions you believe to be inappropriate while you are volunteering. All discipline is always under the principal’s or teacher’s direction and follows the school’s guidelines and Student Code of Conduct. A copy of the Student Code of Conduct is available online at [www.dps.k12.oh.us](http://www.dps.k12.oh.us) in the student section.
- **Dismissal of Students** – Volunteers may never dismiss a student from school. Under no circumstances may a volunteer take a student off campus. Volunteers may not walk or drive a student to his or her home unless the child’s parent has notified the school office in advance and given written permission for the volunteer to do so.

To fill out the Confidential Volunteer Form, please click [here](#) or go to <https://dom1-public.dps.k12.oh.us/dps/PublicForms.nsf/Volunteer>.