



Frequently Asked Questions

Who does the District consider a volunteer?

- Individuals who will have contact with students, such as working with students in the classroom (this does not include supporting school parties or attending school celebrations when the teacher is supervising students).
- Individuals who have a regular and ongoing assignment at the school - such as working in the library or assisting in the classroom.
- Individuals who will be off campus with students - such as on field trips.
- Individuals who mentor or tutor student(s).
- Individuals who work in the school office conducting clerical work.
- Individuals who facilitate a before/after school enrichment club.

What happens to the paperwork submitted by the volunteer?

- All of the volunteer paperwork (the background check and enrollment form) will be kept in a secure location in the Human Resources office and will be shredded at the end of each year.

Will a criminal record hinder a person from being able to volunteer in the District?

- Should your background check raise any questions, Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources Dr. Tony Arnold will contact you immediately to have a confidential conversation. You will not automatically be disqualified from volunteering in a school. We will consider each situation individually.

Do parents need to complete the volunteer paperwork to attend school parties, school events or classroom presentations?

- Parents do not need to complete the volunteer paperwork to attend school parties, school events or classroom presentations when the teacher is supervising students. If a parent is planning to work in a classroom on a consistent basis, then the paperwork needs to be completed.

Whom should I contact if I am concerned about whether or not my background check will keep me from volunteering in the District?

- Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources Dr. Tony Arnold – 314-854-6012.



Volunteer Training/Enrollment

Dear Volunteer,

Thank you for your interest in supporting the School District of Clayton through volunteering. Within the District, student safety (both physical and emotional) is a priority. As part of an ongoing effort to protect and provide the safest environment for the students we serve, the District has begun requiring training and background checks on all volunteers who will be performing tasks that could put them in close and unsupervised contact with students. Our purpose is to assure parents and the community that our students are safe while at school. As you may already know, all school employees complete a more extensive criminal check before they are hired.

Volunteers who meet one or more of the following criteria must review our volunteer expectations (this is the required training), complete the enrollment form and submit the confidential forms for the Children's Division Central Registry Child Abuse Search and Sex Offender background checks:

- the volunteer will have contact with students, such as working with students in the classroom (this does not include supporting school parties or attending school events when the teacher is supervising students)
- the volunteer has a regular and ongoing assignment at the school - such as working in the library or assisting the classroom
- the volunteer will be off campus with students - such as on field trips
- the volunteer is a mentor or tutor to a student(s)
- the volunteer works in the school office conducting clerical work
- the volunteer facilitates a before/after school enrichment club

Should your background check raise any questions, we will contact you immediately to have a confidential conversation. You will not automatically be disqualified from volunteering in a school. We will consider each situation individually. All of the volunteer paperwork (the background check and enrollment form) will be kept in secure location in the Human Resources office and will be shredded at the end of each year.

Our schools very much depend on the work of volunteers! If you have any questions about the volunteer training and background process, please contact the District's Human Resources office at 314-854-6032.

Sincerely,

Tony Arnold, Ed.D.
Asst. Superintendent of Human Resources



Volunteer Training - Supporting Our Schools and Students

Volunteers Are Important!

- As a volunteer, your work takes on a special significance. Although you are not a member of the faculty, you share their responsibilities while working with students.
- When you volunteer within our schools, you help...
 - your child
 - other children
 - teachers
 - administrators
 - the community

Volunteer Opportunities:

- Classroom activities
- Field trips
- Clerical work for teachers and staff
- Assisting teachers in classroom/lesson prep
- Storytelling
- Tutoring

Important To Remember:

The School District of Clayton strives to meet the needs of our students. It is important for all volunteers to remember the following:

- Be responsible and safe - always put children first.
- Respect confidentiality. Students and staff have a right to privacy.
- Be professional.
- Communicate.
- When things come up and you can't fulfill a promise, let someone know.
- Ask for help - don't suffer in silence!
- Share your experience with others and encourage new volunteers.
- Commitment – once you become a volunteer, others depend on you.
- Adhere to the District's food allergy policy (see enclosure).

Volunteer Expectations:

- Maintain your commitment!
- Be a role model - have a professional attitude.
- Sign in and out of the office.
- Don't expect to talk about your child with the teacher. This is not the time for a conference.
- Remember, students are very observant. Please monitor what you say.
- Refrain from using cell phones in the classrooms.
- Social Networking (i.e. Facebook) about students, teachers and school events is not appropriate.
- All information concerning children, teachers and the school is confidential and should remain in the school setting. It is also important to show high regard for each child, faculty members and other parents by being courteous, impartial and fair. Do NOT impose your own religious or political views upon students. And finally, understand and respect that you will work under the supervision of one of more staff members.

Confidentiality

- In our schools, we respect and honor the confidentiality of every student.
- "Cute" comments or stories shared about children may seem quite innocent to you, however they could be upsetting to the child or his/her parents.
- Do not share what you have seen regarding individual children with anyone outside of the classroom.
- Remember, you are seeing only a small glimpse of the children and their behavior during your volunteer time.
- What may seem like a small issue to you could be a much bigger and more sensitive issue to another parent.

To make sure that all students, staff and families feel comfortable, we all need to respect each other's privacy. Volunteers must be especially careful to honor confidentiality. Breaching that confidentiality and trust can be hurtful to students, their families and the staff.

To help, here are some sample issues that can arise:

"Wasn't it cute when John..."

No matter how innocent, cute or funny a comment about a student may seem, it is never okay to repeat stories about students. What happens in the classroom stays in the classroom.

When parents ask you questions...

Parents might be tempted to ask you about how their children behave at school. This is especially likely if you are friends outside of school. If other parents have questions or concerns, kindly encourage them to ask the classroom teacher.

When you see or overhear something...

As a volunteer, you might see or hear things from staff or students which they would not want to have repeated outside of the school. What happens in the classroom (or the hall, or the gym) stays at school. If you have concerns about something you see or hear, please talk to the classroom teacher or principal if appropriate.

When students tell you about their family, pet, vacation, etc...

As students become more comfortable working with you, they might decide to share personal information. You need to keep this information private, even if you know the child and his/her family outside of school.

The classroom teacher is the best person to consult if you have any concerns about students. If a student shares information with you that could be considered abuse or neglect, contact the classroom teacher or principal immediately.

VOLUNTEER CHECKLIST - Below is a checklist and description of the reading and forms you must complete:

- Volunteer Expectations** – Once you have read the Volunteer Expectations, you then must complete the enrollment form.
- Enrollment Form** – Complete and submit this form to the school where you plan to volunteer. If you plan to volunteer at more than one school, please note it on the form. You only need to complete the enrollment form once.
- Background Check Form** – The background check will be the Children's Division Central Registry Child Abuse Search. There is no cost for this background check. Please return the requested form along with the volunteer enrollment paperwork.
- Review** District food allergy policy.