Volunteer Guidelines and Expectations

Volunteers represent our diverse community and may take part in providing a quality learning experience by volunteering at our schools in a number of ways.

Research shows that involved parents and an involved community enhance student achievement!
Table of Contents

1. Thank you for applying, Vision, Mission, Beliefs .............................................................. page 2
2. Goals and General Principals of Volunteering ................................................................. page 3
3. Getting Started! Volunteer Checklist ................................................................................ page 4
4. Orientation Checklist ......................................................................................................... page 5
5. Volunteer Liaison and Volunteer opportunities ............................................................... page 6
6. Program Guidelines and Expectations ............................................................................. page 7 & 8
7. Safety Information ............................................................................................................ page 8 & 9
8. Communication and Feedback ........................................................................................ page 10
Thank you for applying to volunteer!

Schools are safe, nurturing places for students to learn and grow, and the work you do makes that environment even more rich and meaningful. Individuals like you can help a child with their own personal development and make a difference in that child’s life.

These guidelines are designed as a partnership tool. It includes basic information and tips for working with students. It also includes some important information that all school staff and volunteers must understand and abide by to ensure that students and adults in our schools are safe.

We would like to thank you, in advance, for your gift of time.
Dr. Arthur Tate
Superintendent

Our Vision
Education that challenges conventional thinking, prepares all students to compete in a global society, and inspires our students, parents, staff, and community to answer the question, “What if?”

Our Mission
To enhance each student’s abilities by providing a quality education enriched by our diverse community.

Our Beliefs
- We believe all children can and will learn in the Davenport Community School District.
- We believe each child deserves respect.
- We believe we must have high expectations for each child.
- We believe we must never limit children.
- We believe in the power of effective instruction.
- We believe effective instruction encourages students to be inquisitive and to explore and discover.
- We believe every child has the right to a safe environment.
- We believe a caring environment is important for student success because relationships impact learning.
- We believe extracurricular activities engage students in the educational environment.
- We believe effective schools nurture relationships and impact learning.
- We believe in the universal benefits of continuous quality improvement.
Goals of Davenport Community School Volunteer Program

- To provide opportunities for our diverse community to become directly involved with the educational system.
- To strengthen school-community relations through direct and positive participation in the schools.
- To provide support with individualized educational assistance to students.
- To enhance and reinforce the quality education that is provided to students.
- Cultivate ambassadors as a support base in the community for the schools and families served.
- Enrich student's learning opportunities.
- Provide help for individual students.
- Provide opportunities for meaningful service.
- Relieve teachers of some non-instructional tasks (track and field days, family fun nights, etc.).
- Establish a school and community partnership for quality education.
- Enhance all aspects of the educational process.

General Principles of the DCS Volunteer Office

The DCS Volunteer Office is a program of DCS and is at all times guided by the principles and policies of the Davenport Community School Board.

A volunteer is not a substitute for a member of the school staff, but does provide supplemental and supportive services.

The relationship between volunteers and the school staff should be one of mutual respect and confidence.

Volunteers serving in Davenport Community Schools are bound by the policies, rules, regulations and procedures of the school district.

Volunteers, like any other employee, are to be supervised by each building Principal or other authorized school employees.

Why Be A Volunteer?
--(Author Unknown)

It's not for the money;
It's not for the fame;
It's not for any personal gain.

It's just for love of your fellow man,
It's just to give a helping hand;

It's just to give a little of one's self,
That's something you can't buy with wealth;

It's not for a medal worn with pride,
It's for that feeling deep inside;

It's that feeling that you've been a part
Of helping people far and near;

That makes you a volunteer!
Getting Started!
Know your team; know your service area, gather important information

All processed and approved volunteers should get to know their teams! The administrative office or appointed staff where you are volunteering will help you gather the following information and review it with you so you are comfortable and successful as a volunteer. Volunteers may provide service once, sporadically, periodically, or at a regularly scheduled time and day each week. Use this checklist to keep track of information.

My volunteer checklist

Staff contact for this assignment: ___________________________________________
Phone number: __________________________________________________________
Email Address: ___________________________________________________________
(This is your point of contact for questions. If you must be absent, call the office and inform them. Students will be disappointed when you can’t come, but are reassured that you cared enough to call.)

School or office operating and hours of assignment: (from) ________________ (to) ________________

I have provided the school/office with:
My availability: (start date) __________ (end date) __________
(start time) __________ (end time) __________
Contact No.: H# _________________ C# _________________

I understand where and how to sign in and out and about “volunteer” name tags or badges if required.
I will ensure I understand the school’s rules for adults and students.
I will ensure I understand the school’s fire drill and safety procedures.
I understand that I am to review the guidelines and procedures along with the school site procedures.

Helpful Questions to Ask:
• Do the days and times you are agreeing to volunteer work?
• What are the procedures for you and the teacher/supervisor to keep in touch? (email, phone, mail)
• How the teacher/supervisor will inform you of the daily assignment? (folder, note, etc.)
• How students will address you? (the school or the volunteer may have a preference)
• Teacher/supervisor’s classroom or school policies, procedures, and rules? (behavior management, organizational plans, emergency procedures, place for personal belongings, etc.)
• Are there any required or recommended trainings?
• What are the procedures for notifying teacher/supervisor of your absence?
• Are there special needs or circumstances I should know about the students or people I am working with?
• What supplies are okay for me to use, and where will I be working on projects?
• What are the school or office expectations regarding dress code?
• Who should I contact if there is a discipline issue? (Volunteers are not responsible for discipline.)
• May I take photos of students? (Always ask this question before taking photos.)
• What do I do if I am injured while volunteering?
• Are there specific laws I must follow when volunteering?

All volunteers are expected to abide by DCS policies and procedures while serving in the school program or activity. These are available online at http://www.davenportschools.org/schoolboard
Orientation checklist

A. Building
   ___ Tour of building
   ___ Sign-in/attendance procedures
   ___ Fire/Tornado drills/ Emergency closings
   ___ Lunchroom procedure
   ___ Substitute procedure
   ___ Playground rules
   ___ Confidentiality rules
   ___ Support staff
   ___ Supplies/Materials/Equipment

B. Personnel
   ___ Faculty introduction
   ___ Principal
   ___ Teachers
   ___ Reading Specialist
   ___ Other important contacts

C. Curriculum and Materials
   ___ Textbooks used
   ___ Curriculum

D. Volunteer Environment
   ___ Classroom rules/policies
   ___ Room arrangements
   ___ Tutor placement
   ___ Recess/Playground rules

E. Other topics discussed

Helpful Tip!

Top Characteristics of Successful Volunteers
Enjoy students and have patience with young people and adults
Dependability
Flexibility
Confidentiality
Pride in volunteering
Enthusiasm and optimism
Respect for others and the wide array of school roles and responsibilities others have
Volunteer Liaisons
All schools have identified a Volunteer Liaison, who will welcome you and coordinate your contact with a staff member whom you will volunteer. The schools shall:
- Provide adequate orientation and training to prepare volunteers for a successful volunteer service experience.
- Be diplomatic, respectful, and tactful in working with volunteers, while offering appropriate feedback and coaching as part of training.
- Be prepared and organized when volunteers arrive. This includes providing proper supervision, instruction, supplies, and work space.
- Treat volunteers as respected members of the work team, entrusting them with information to successfully complete their assignments.
- Be accessible and open to discussions regarding volunteer concerns and issues.
- Keep volunteers informed of any changes in policies or procedures.
- Maintain accurate records of volunteer hours and service.
- Find projects/assignments that are worthwhile and challenging, that utilize a volunteers current skills and/or provide opportunities to develop new ones.
- Provide opportunities for volunteers to learn and grow while seeing the effect or end result of volunteer efforts.

Volunteer Opportunities
A sincere effort will be made to place each volunteer in the assignment which best matches that individual’s interests and/or talents. Here are just a few opportunities DCS may offer:
- Help in classrooms, library, office or on the playground
- Work with small groups – for example, in reading, writing, math or spelling
- Set up or take down projects for science, history, art or writing displays
- Help with field trips, parties or special events
- First Day Supply Drive or Lights on Afterschool
- Chaperone school dances
- Help with all-school events: vision screening, science fair, art display, track meets or field days
- Help elementary staff welcome new parents for Kindergarten Round-Up

Volunteers may offer their services individually or as part of an organizational project from groups such as, but not limited to, the following:
- Parent Teacher Association (PTA)
- Business
- Community Organizations
- Professional Associations
- Civic Groups
- Faith Based Community
- Senior Citizen Groups
- Universities and Community Colleges
- Student Organizations
- Advisory Boards or Committees
Program Guidelines and Expectations

Please read the following volunteer guidelines and expectations. By signing the volunteer application and release form, you certify that you have read and understand the guidelines and expectations contained in this form as well as the rules and regulations of Davenport Community Schools (DCS) and hereby agree to comply. This is intended to provide guidelines for the volunteer program. No statement herein is intended to conflict with existing School Board policies or with existing Administrative Directives.

For the purposes of application and screening, we reference a volunteer as any unpaid person who performs duties, tasks, and functions giving them responsibility over and/or putting them in direct contact with child(ren) other than their own during school hours and at school-sponsored events.

Volunteers serve as helpers and shall conduct volunteer activities under the supervision of school staff. All instructional service is to be rendered under the control and supervision of staff. Volunteers understand that the volunteer relationship is terminable at-will.

Volunteers shall confirm assigned responsibilities and expectations with the supervising staff member before beginning any activity. Volunteers will follow the building procedures for signing in and out each and every time of service and wear an identification badge/tag/pin if required by the school.

Volunteers will perform to the best of their abilities the volunteer assignment. Volunteers understand that there may be certain risks associated with volunteer assignments.

Volunteers give consent for photographs, videotapes, or audiotapes to be taken during the course of the assignment for use by DCS for publicity purposes.

Volunteers authorize DCS staff to administer basic first aid or appropriate emergency medical treatment in the event of an accident, injury, or illness as the circumstances warrant.

Volunteers will not use computer systems, logins, or accounts that have been assigned to someone else. If authorized to use a DCS computer, volunteers will sign and abide by the DCS Learning Information Services technology user guidelines.

Additionally, every volunteer must complete an application and background check. Each volunteer will be required to disclose prior convictions of the law, other than minor traffic violations or juvenile offenses, and complete an authorization form which contains the following language from the volunteer application and release form:

“I understand that the approval of the volunteer application is conditioned on the results of the background check which includes a criminal records check. My signature below authorizes the school to conduct a background investigation and authorizes release of information regarding general reputation, personal characteristics, criminal history (if any), credit history, prior work history and reports of child abuse or neglect. DCS reserves the right to consider any inquiry of this type to be made at a future date, should I remain as a volunteer for the district. In any instance when an inquiry of the type is made, now or in the future, the scope, nature and results of such inquiry will be made available to me upon written request.”

Where a prior conviction is ascertained, the school system will consider the nature of the offense, the date of the offense, and the relationship between the offense and the position for which the person is volunteering to render services. Volunteers can find out more about DCS background screening and checks on the web site at www.davenportschools.org.

This process shall not be used to keep parents from participating in the academic support of their individual child(ren). Background checks will not be required for parents to attend school functions to support their child(ren).
Volunteer Sign in and Hours Records

It is important for volunteers to sign in and record all volunteer service hours. Sign in sheets have been provided for this purpose in the front office of each school or assignment area. Accuracy and up-to-date records are important to both the schools and volunteers.

Recording your hours of service is important to your school and the Davenport community. Please feel free to visit and register online at the Davenport Volunteer Connection (DVC) to record and keep track of your hours. You can also find out about more ways to serve in your community.

http://volunteer.truist.com/dvc/volunteer/

Kim Hatfield, DVC Coordinator, khatfield@ci.davenport.ia.us, 563.888.3201

Recognition

Volunteers are essential to the DCS mission. Many schools plan an annual recognition event for volunteers. Additionally, DCS employees recognize and show appreciation for the contributions of volunteers on an ongoing basis.

Volunteer Attire

Attire — Volunteers are expected to maintain personal image that is compatible with business casual image. Volunteers are expected to use good judgment in selecting appropriate attire. Appropriate dress may vary depending on the service/work environment.

Safety Information

Schools are to be safe, nurturing places for adults and students to learn and grow. To safeguard that environment, school staff and volunteers are asked to be aware and report activities that threaten the safety and well-being of others to the appropriate personnel; such as staff and administration.

No Tolerance - Harassment

Prohibited harassment includes written or verbal abuse, slurs, jokes, threats, pranks or comments that stereotype individuals because of their race, color, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, disability or other legally protected status. Regardless of the form, Davenport Community Schools has a NO TOLERANCE policy. Visit our web page at www.davenportschools.org and click School Board then scroll down to Policies and Administrative Regulations.

Confidentiality is a Legal Requirement

Any information you learn at school about students or adults is confidential. A good rule of thumb is to treat information about others at school in the same way you would want them to handle that information if it was about you or your family and report to a staff member if you see or hear actions that concern you.

Volunteers shall not discuss the performance, actions, or any other information about any student except with the student's teacher, school counselor or principal. This is not only DCS policy but is also mandated by federal statute, The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, 34 CFR Part 99. Confidentiality pertains to both written records and verbal statements.

Student Photos – FERPA Violations

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) allows every public school parent the right to refuse photographs at school taken of students in that family. School staff and volunteers are obligated to abide by the federal law. If your volunteer assignment is photography, you must review all procedures and process with a staff member prior to any photos. Each student must have on file a Davenport photo release form.
Transportation
Transportation of students will be provided by district authorized transportation/personnel. Student transportation in personal vehicles is strictly prohibited unless authorized by the school district and/or written authorization is provided by the parent of the student and agreed to by the directive supervisor/administrator in advance.

Other Information You Need to Know
We value your volunteer time and experience and the difference you make for students. The district does not have specific insurance coverage for volunteers should you be injured while supporting student activities or programs. Therefore, before you volunteer, please review your health care policy and/or homeowner’s policy to determine what coverage is available if you are injured while volunteering.

If you are injured while operating in an approved volunteer capacity:
- Seek immediate first aid help and/or call 911. This might be your own action or the response of other adults or students with you.
- Report the incident to a staff member as soon as possible. Your report should go either to the staff supervising your volunteer time or to a staff in charge of the school or program where you are volunteering.
- School staff will fill out a district injury report form, secure your signature and forward it to the district HR office.

Guidelines for Safe Interactions with Students
These guidelines for school volunteers may err on the side of caution. We believe you should do the same and be sure to ask questions of a school principal or the Volunteer Manager whenever you need more information or have a concern.

Areas of Caution: Some actions, even without improper motive, are common trouble areas.
- Do not ask a single student to come early to set up for a class or activity.
- Do not give a gift to a student at school.
- Do not allow a student to develop a personal interest in you. Report it to your building Administrator.
- Do not invite students for social activities outside school.

Where Should I Work with a Student?
Locations will vary depending upon space availability and the preference of the supervising staff member. Try to find a quiet space with as few distractions as possible. If you are asked to work in an empty classroom, be sure that the door remains open and you are seated in desks that are visible to those passing by. Always work in a public area, on site.

What Are My Confidentiality Responsibilities?
As your relationship with a student develops, he or she may begin to trust and confide in you. It is appropriate to take the time to listen to them and show that you care. If a student shares sensitive information relating to potentially abusive situations, let the student know that you are required to pass the information on to a teacher, supervisor, or principal who can offer them help. Personal information about yourself should be shared only when it is relevant to work you are doing with the student. Avoid giving personal contact information such as your address, phone number, or e-mail.

May I Hug a Student?
Some students, particularly younger children, may express affection toward you. Children should never sit on your lap. Use “high fives” or handshakes. Remember to be aware of cultural perspectives regarding personal boundaries.
Communication & Feedback

To ensure continued success of the volunteer program and volunteers, we feel it is very important to maintain ongoing communication between volunteers and school staff. We encourage you to share your thoughts, ideas and feedback regarding the program, volunteer assignments, problems, concerns, etc.

Furthermore, when a volunteer makes the decision to no longer serve, they are encouraged to share the reason. We encourage complete and honest feedback, suggestions/recommendations, etc. This information is helpful to us in evaluating the program, ensuring volunteer satisfaction, and to ascertain that the program continues to be successful and efficient.

Thank you for applying to volunteer!
Davenport Community Schools
Achievement Service Center
1606 Brady Street
Davenport, IA 52806
563-336-5000

Davenport Community Schools wants you to carry out your volunteer responsibilities in a caring and appropriate manner. We want you to feel comfortable volunteering and want you and the students to feel safe. These guidelines will assist you in creating and maintaining safe working environments for all.