

**Rolla Public Schools**

# **BRAVO!**

**Building Relationships and Volunteer Opportunities**

## **Volunteer Handbook 2023-24**



**ROLLA**  
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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**BRAVO!** Volunteer program  
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# School Volunteers

## Board Policy/Code ICC

The Board of Education recognizes that one of the greatest resources of the school district is to be found in the patrons of the community who have special knowledge and particular talents to contribute to the school programs. The Board, therefore, encourages the use of community resources and citizens to assist in furthering the educational program.

The superintendent or designee will create appropriate procedures for attracting, screening and training community and parent volunteers. Volunteering in the district is a privilege, not a right.

Selection and recruitment of volunteers are completed through the district's volunteer coordinator. Interested individuals should contact the volunteer coordinator. The volunteer's interests and abilities are considered when making assignments. The district will conduct screening and criminal background checks before any volunteer is placed.

The district may decline the services of any volunteer for any legal reason. All information collected on volunteers will be considered confidential to the extent allowed by law and will only be used to protect the students or minimize disruption to the educational environment.

Once the selection process has been concluded, orientation and training are provided.

Orientation and training will include instruction on the confidentiality provisions of the Family Educational Rights Privacy Act (FERPA) and all volunteers who have access to personally identifiable information regarding students will be required to sign a form indicating their willingness to comply with the provisions of that law prior to being permitted to volunteer.

Volunteers are bound by the same code of ethics and all applicable laws as the professional staff. Volunteers will not be discriminated against in relation to age, race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex or marital status. The Rolla School District is prohibited from discriminatory practices by Title VI and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1984, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Section 504 and various other state laws and regulations.

School liability insurance shall include coverage for authorized volunteers.

Although volunteers will provide support services, they are not substitutes for the professional building staff. Volunteers will work under the direction and supervision of district staff.

Adopted: 06/18/1998

Revised: 05/27/2004; 05/25/2006; 01/07/2019; 08/03/2021; 07/28/23

# Volunteer Procedures

## **Application:**

All volunteers must complete an application, a DHSS Family Care and Safety Registry background form, and a privacy and confidentiality agreement. Make sure to note any volunteer assignments you are interested in on your application as well as your general interest areas and experience. After you submit your completed application, it will be reviewed for any special requests. You may choose the school in which you wish to volunteer.

Each applicant's background is checked with the Missouri DHSS. A criminal conviction does not necessarily disqualify an applicant from volunteering in the schools. The individual's history will be reviewed. The district will determine if the individual's volunteer efforts should be declined, if they may be restricted in some way, or if there should be no restriction.

## **Placement:**

If you know a position you are interested in, we will make every effort to assign you to that role. If you do not know what you want to do, the volunteer coordinator will take into account your interests, skills, and experience in assigning your placement. The schools make volunteer requests and they will be discussed with you. If you have no preferences, you will be assigned to the school that has the greatest need for volunteers, taking into account your skills and interest areas.

## **School Assignment:**

Once you have been assigned to a school, the coordinator will follow up with a phone call or email. Arrangements for volunteering and scheduling will be established and a meeting time will be arranged to further refine your volunteer role and for orientation to the physical layout of the school.

## **First Day:**

Upon confirming the placement, the teacher and coordinator and you will choose a start date and time. If you have any questions about dress code, the job description, or any expectations, this is a good time to get clarification. On your start day, check into the main office. You will be given a volunteer/visitor badge and you will sign in. The volunteer coordinator or building secretary will let you know where to go.

## **Ongoing Visits:**

On subsequent visits, always check into the office, sign in and get your volunteer/visitor badge. If you cannot make your scheduled volunteer time, please call the school so the teacher and students know you will not be there.

## **Signing In:**

Every school has a volunteer sign-in book that is located in the main office – usually at the front counter. It is critical that you stop at the office and sign-in so that a record of your service is maintained. When you sign in, make sure to put on your approved volunteer/visitor badge so that you are recognized as a volunteer in the building.

The goal of the volunteer program is to provide support for the educational process. Sometimes a volunteer placement may not be a fit for the volunteer or the school. If your volunteer placement does not work for you, the teacher or the school for whatever reason, your volunteer assignment may be ended or changed to another assignment. You may request a different placement if you wish to continue volunteering.

# Goals of BRAVO!

Volunteering in any of the Rolla Public Schools is a unique and exciting experience and a benefit to both the school and the volunteer. It is designed to promote and maintain a supportive relationship between students, their schools and their community. Volunteers who are committed to helping students be successful are important partners in academic achievement.

- Enrich the curriculum.
- Enhance children's learning opportunities.
- Provide help for individual children.
- Increase students' self-esteem and motivation to learn.
- Establish a school and community partnership for quality education.
- Assist teachers and other staff.
- Enhance all aspects of the educational process.

## Responsibilities of Volunteers

- Support and supplement the instructional program of the classroom teacher.  
The volunteer's role is assistance, not replacement.
- Show a genuine interest in each student.
- Accept each student and encourage the best from him or her.
- Be prompt, reliable, flexible and regular in attendance.
- Discuss problems that arise with the teacher, school administrator or director of volunteer services.
- Respect the privacy of teachers and students' learning by not discussing school matters away from the classroom.
- Know and observe all regulations and procedures in the assigned school (i.e. fire drills, accident reporting).
- Commit to work in a classroom to support and improve education for all students.
- Seek help from the teacher when you need additional information or instruction.
- Remember that you are acting as a role model for children, not only in how you interact with others at school, but who you are as a person.

# Ethical Expectations of Volunteers

- Keep all student information confidential.
- Wear appropriate attire.
- Do not photograph or record students, teachers, or the school/classroom environment without permission or on your personal device.
- Share concerns with the school staff only.
- Do not use school equipment for personal purposes.
- Show respect for all staff and students.
- Do not share personal religious or political beliefs.
- No smoking allowed on school grounds.

## Tips for Volunteers

- Encourage and support student successes. Build self-confidence by praising them honestly and frequently. Attentiveness and effort can be as important as performance. Accentuate the positive and minimize the negative.
- Names are important. Make sure you say the student's name the way a student wants it to be said. Learn to spell it correctly. Make sure the student knows your name and can pronounce it correctly.
- Be trustworthy and honest in your approach and attitude. Students will trust and respect you when you are "real".
- Avoid making comparisons between students, between teachers and between schools.
- Always remember to be fair and consistent.
- Students make mistakes. Let them know that making mistakes is part of learning. Don't be afraid of making mistakes yourself.
- Show that you are interested in the student as a person by listening carefully to what they say and showing you care by words and action.

# Safety & Liability Issues

## **Safe interaction with students:**

- If working one-to-one with a student, always do so in a public area, i.e., a hallway, classroom or library. Be visible.
- Treat all students in the same manner.
- Maintain appropriate boundaries between adult and student.
- Do not engage in tutoring sessions outside of the school building days/hours of operation.
- Do not offer or agree to transport any student at any time.
- Always wear a volunteer/visitor badge when in the school building.

## **Safe touching:**

- Touch should be brief
- Touch all students in the same manner.
- Touch should not linger

## **Touch only:**

- Shoulders
- Upper Back
- Arms
- Hands

## **Safe verbal communication:**

- Do not make sexist comments.
- Do not make sexual comments.
- Avoid innuendo.
- Talk to all students in the same manner.

## **Where should I work with a student?**

Locations will vary, depending on availability and the preference of the student's teacher. Many schools work with students in the hallway. Sometimes a teacher will direct you to an empty classroom. Be sure to leave the door open at all times and to sit in two desks which are easily seen by those passing by. Always work in a public area, on site.

## **What are my confidentiality rights?**

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. If a student reveals information relating to a possible abusive 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 school administrator who can offer them help. There is also a chance that someone may already have insight into the situation, which could help you to understand and work better with that student.

Personal information about yourself should be shared only as it is relevant to the work you are doing with the student. Avoid giving personal contact information such as your address, phone and email.

## **Can I hug a student?**

Some students, especially at the elementary level, will naturally become very attached and affectionate toward you. Many students are craving affection and attention, so it is important that you handle the situation with sensitivity. A front hug is unacceptable, so carefully put your arm around a child's shoulder and turn it into a side hug. Remember the appropriate/safe place to touch students (shoulders, upper back, arms & hands). Regardless of age, students should never sit on your lap. Some children are not inviting of touch and may want more personal space; respect their wishes. In general, touch all students in a consistent manner.

The Rolla Public School District wants you, as a volunteer, to carry out your responsibilities in a caring and appropriate manner. We want you to feel comfortable about contact with students and we want you to feel safe and to have guidelines that will assist you in creating and maintaining a safer environment for you and the students you work with.

# School Information

Assigned School \_\_\_\_\_

School Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

School Address \_\_\_\_\_

Principal \_\_\_\_\_

Director of Volunteer Services: Gina Zervos; 458.0100; gzervos@rolla31.org

School Secretaries \_\_\_\_\_

Counselor \_\_\_\_\_

Librarian \_\_\_\_\_

Assigned Teacher(s)	Room #/Grade	Time/Days
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_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Student \_\_\_\_\_

The Director of Volunteer Services, teacher or building administrator can assist you with any questions, concerns, problems, etc. that you might have.

Rolla Public Schools

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