

Volunteer Involvement in Oregon Trail Schools

Staff Handbook



For information or assistance contact
your school volunteer coordinator or principal

Mission Statement

The mission of the Oregon Trail School District Volunteer Program is to provide opportunities for members of our community to enrich the educational development of students through positive participation in our schools educational, extra-curricular, and parent/teacher club programs.



OREGON TRAIL SCHOOL DISTRICT

Volunteer Program

Mission Statement: The mission of the Oregon Trail School District Volunteer Program is to provide opportunities for members of our community to enrich the educational development of students through positive participation in our schools education, extra-curricular, and parent/teacher club programs.

This statement speaks to our commitment to providing students with all of the resources we have available.

Each school in the Oregon Trail School District enjoys the services of at least one Volunteer Coordinator who has taken on the responsibility of facilitating a well-organized program that meets the needs of the staff and students.

Guidelines have been established that when followed by staff and volunteers allow for the best possible coordination of services. Briefly, the guidelines for staff members include:

- 1) *Assess your classroom needs.*
- 2) Fill out a *Task Request Form*, or *Classroom Schedule*, and submit it to your volunteer coordinator.
- 3) Make sure that your volunteers have completed the online application process.
- 4) Once volunteers begin to work in your classroom, make sure they have signed-in at the office and are wearing a *volunteer badge*.
- 5) Please note: field trip volunteers must also complete the online application prior to rendering volunteer service.
- 6) Remember that volunteers should never be placed in an unsupervised situation while working with students.
- 7) If you have questions about your schools volunteer program, talk to your volunteer coordinator or principal. You may also refer to board policy IICC and administrative regulations ICCAR for information.

This is *your volunteer program* and is designed to meet the needs of *your school*. Be sure to keep the lines of communication open with your coordinator to assure the most efficient use of our valuable resources.

Steps to Forming Successful Staff-Volunteer Partnerships

1. Develop Awareness of how to utilize volunteer services.

- a. *Learn about ways volunteers can help.* Often school staff are so accustomed to doing everything themselves that they're unsure of what help to ask for. Dare to imagine what could be accomplished if volunteers were there to help share the load.
- b. *Assess your activities.* Becoming aware of the tremendous scope and variety of your job duties is a critical step in determining what kind of volunteer assistance you may need and want. On a piece of paper, record your activities over several days. You'll be amazed at how many different things you do in only a week's time.
- c. *Define expectations.* Volunteers and school staff should be aware of the expectations each has of the other. Both should have clear and high expectations. Work with colleagues and your volunteer coordinator to establish norms that seem to work well for your school and for your own classroom or situation.
- d. *Deal with your concerns.* Typical staff concerns about volunteers, and some suggestions for dealing with them, include:
 - Extra planning time: Effectively utilizing volunteer service does take extra time. But the amount of time initially required will decline as the partnership develops and the volunteer is able to operate more independently.
 - Volunteer's level of commitment: In order to help volunteers make a realistic commitment that will result in dependability and job satisfaction, provide a clear and honest job description that includes a candid assessment of the time and skills required. Also deal with whether you are willing to make the necessary commitment of planning, supervision, feedback, recognition and evaluation.
 - Confidentiality: Clearly state what confidentiality means, why it's important, expectations regarding it, and the consequences of violating it.
 - "Spying": Volunteers really just want to know what's going on. They're probably expecting something good, not something bad! Remember that volunteers can be the best PR officials in the community.

2. Assess and Request

- a. *Determine where volunteer help is appropriate.* What do you need help with in your classroom? Have you identified the task needed and is there enough work connected with this task to keep a volunteer busy for the specified time? Could a volunteer give extra reinforcement or help to a student or group of students who are behind in their learning level?
- b. *Request.* The school volunteer coordinator will provide you with assistance in recruiting volunteers, developing new volunteer jobs, and learning more about working effectively with volunteers.

3. Preparation and Planning

- a. *Conduct an initial teacher-volunteer conference. When you first orient the volunteer to your classroom, plan to discuss the following:*
 - Days and times the volunteer will work
 - Classroom policies, procedures and rules
 - How the volunteer will be informed of the day's work assignment
 - Materials, supplies and strategies to be used
 - Designation of work space
 - Alternate plans for days when the teacher is absent and a substitute is in charge
- b. *If the volunteer will be tutoring students, the teacher should discuss:*
 - Special strengths of the student(s)
 - Special needs of the student(s) and skills to be developed
 - Tips for working with specific student(s) with regard to learning styles and reinforcement techniques

Volunteer Program Guidelines

Communication

_____ I make sure the volunteer knows whenever an assembly, etc. is scheduled during her regular time for volunteering.

_____ If my volunteer does not come for two consecutive sessions without calling, I either call her or ask the school volunteer coordinator to call.

_____ My volunteer and I have periodic sessions when we talk about student progress, new materials, procedures, etc.

_____ I can offer constructive criticism to my volunteer in a non-threatening manner and can accept ideas or suggestions from my volunteer without feeling threatened myself.

Planning

_____ I keep written plans for the volunteer in a folder so that she can begin working without having to wait for my instruction.

_____ In the volunteer's folder are directions for alternative activities in case I am absent, the students she is working with are absent, or she finishes the tasks ahead of time.

_____ Before she begins working with a particular student, I give the volunteer adequate background information on the student.

_____ Before requesting a volunteer, I consider my schedule very carefully so that I know her services are needed at a particular time.

_____ I never leave my volunteer in charge of the classroom.

Knowing Your Volunteer

_____ I know two interesting things about my volunteer that are not related to school or volunteering.

_____ I know my volunteer's preferences for types of service in my classroom.

_____ I have placed my volunteer with students that can benefit from her special interests, talents or strengths.

Meaningful Tasks

_____ I think carefully about ways volunteers can assist in my classroom before asking for a volunteer.

_____ I explain to my volunteer how the particular task she is performing contributes to my overall program.

Requirements

_____ I confirm that my volunteers have completed the online application process.

_____ I make sure my volunteers have signed in at the office and are wearing a volunteer badge.

Classroom Orientation

_____ I have explained to my volunteer my general classroom rules for students regarding getting drinks of water, going to the bathroom, sharpening pencils, etc.

_____ I have explained why it is important to notify me in case of absence and procedures for doing so.

_____ I have explained school rules on discipline and the types of situations that require my attention.

Questions to Ask When Confronted With Performance Problems

1. Am I giving this volunteer adequate recognition? When was the last time I said “Thank you”?
2. Does this volunteer have the skills to do the job?
3. Does this volunteer have the interest and personality to do this job well?
4. Is this volunteer having personal, non-job related problems?
5. Have I involved this volunteer in decision making that affects his/her job?
6. Is the job meeting this volunteer’s personal goals and needs?
7. Is this a staff-volunteer conflict?
8. Am I making this volunteer feel like part of the team?
9. Am I involving this volunteer in school/classroom events?
10. Does this volunteer have adequate support to get the job done?

Oregon Trail School District
VOLUNTEER ASSISTANCE REQUEST

School: _____ Date: _____

1) Job Description: _____

Grade: _____ Day of Week: _____ Hours from: _____ to: _____

Task timeline from: _____ to: _____ Supervisor: _____

2) Job Description: _____

Grade: _____ Day of Week: _____ Hours from: _____ to: _____

Task timeline from: _____ to: _____ Supervisor: _____

3) Job Description: _____

Grade: _____ Day of Week: _____ Hours from: _____ to: _____

Task timeline from: _____ to: _____ Supervisor: _____

4) Job Description: _____

Grade: _____ Day of Week: _____ Hours from: _____ to: _____

Task timeline from: _____ to: _____ Supervisor: _____

5) Job Description: _____

Grade: _____ Day of Week: _____ Hours from: _____ to: _____

Task timeline from: _____ to: _____ Supervisor: _____

6) Job Description: _____

Grade: _____ Day of Week: _____ Hours from: _____ to: _____

Task timeline from: _____ to: _____ Supervisor: _____

OTSD Policy IICC-AR: Volunteers

A volunteer is a person who donates time at a school site or other educational facility to support instructional programs and co-curricular activities (i.e., organized sports, field trips and fundraisers).

1. School/district volunteers provide direct services to staff or students on either a regular and consistent basis, or a limited basis, under staff supervision;
2. Volunteer Mentors work directly with students on a regular and consistent basis, often without staff supervision;
3. Volunteer coaches work directly with students on a regular and consistent basis, generally with staff supervision, and must be certified through the NFHS Coaches Certification Program (ASEP) in accordance with OSAA rules.

No offer of voluntary services by any otherwise qualified person shall be rejected on the basis of race, color, sex (gender), marital status, sexual orientation, religion, national origin, age or disability. However, no individual who promotes discrimination, harassment, prejudice or racism shall be accepted as a volunteer.

The acceptance and utilization of the services of any person on a voluntary basis shall be at the discretion of the school principal or designee. Such services may be discontinued at any time.

To ensure the safety of Oregon Trail students, all volunteers are required annually to complete an online application that includes a criminal history background check and confidentiality agreement. A person who does not consent to the background check or the fingerprint-based criminal history will not be allowed to volunteer in the district.

- Principals will work with their school volunteer coordinator and district liaison to ensure compliance with this regulation;
- The district will pay the cost for background checks of volunteers;
- Information on completed checks will be maintained at the district's personnel office;
- A person who does not consent to the background check as required by the district will not be allowed to volunteer in the district;
- Under district policy the district is required to deny volunteer privileges to anyone convicted of certain felonies and misdemeanors (those listed in ORS.342.143). In addition the district reserves the right to deny volunteer privileges to persons based on the nature and recentness of crimes and overall criminal record. The

district or the school principal may revoke a volunteer's privileges at any time if the volunteer's presence is considered disruptive or unsafe to the learning environment;

- If a person has been denied the opportunity to volunteer because of an unresolved arrest, and the case is subsequently dismissed or the person acquitted, the person may reapply to become a volunteer.

Further, all volunteers shall:

1. Use established procedures upon entering a school, including signing in and wearing appropriate identification as required;
2. Perform services under the direction of an administrator, program supervisor (including licensed, classified or coaching staff) or trained volunteer coordinator;
3. Maintain a high level of confidentiality in regard to information gained;
4. Adhere to applicable laws and district policies, procedures and rules;
5. Not engage in political or religious activities while performing service for the district;
6. When driving vehicles meet all requirements defined in Policy EEAE - Student Transportation in Private Vehicles, and EEAE-AR - Proof of Vehicle Liability Insurance.