

Beachwood City School District

VIBE

Volunteers Interested In Beachwood's Education

Volunteer Handbook

Dear Volunteer,

Thank you for deciding to take an active role in helping to make Beachwood City Schools the best

that they can be! A strong, positive partnership between schools, parents, community members and local businesses is a great indicator of a successful school district. There is no better way for a community to learn about its schools than through the firsthand experience of volunteers.

This handbook will help answer any questions about the VIBE Volunteer Program. It will give you ideas on how you can assist in the schools and tips for working with children. The handbook also provides guidelines and procedures to follow while working in the schools.

I hope you will find great personal satisfaction and experience a deep sense of accomplishment and pride as you participate as a VIBE Volunteer, knowing that YOU are making a difference. Thank you for the gift of your time, energy and talent.

Sincerely,

Philip H. Wagner, Ph.D.
Assistant Superintendent

YES, I would like to volunteer in the schools!

What do I do now?

Placement of volunteers:

A teacher or other staff member must request a volunteer before anyone can be placed into a position in one of our school buildings. Volunteer opportunities exist which do not require coming into the schools and working with students, such as athletic events or clerical activities to be conducted in your home. However, if you will be volunteering in one of the schools, there are certain guidelines you must follow.

- Fill out a volunteer availability form which includes your name, address, phone number, e-mail address, etc. A form must be on file in the Human Resources Office before you volunteer. Forms are available in any school office or by contacting the Director of Human Resources at 216-464-2600. In addition to the volunteer availability form, volunteers will need to sign the volunteer release form and confidentiality clause.
- Discuss your assignment with the teacher or staff member you will be working with before you actually begin the job. This will give you an opportunity to become acquainted and learn what to expect from each other.

NOTE: If you are volunteering for an ongoing classroom assignment, an advance meeting with the teacher would be especially helpful to establish your work schedule, learn any teacher guidelines, receive any training, or find out how to contact each other in emergencies.

- We would appreciate it that younger siblings not accompany you when volunteering.
- Always report to the MAIN OFFICE when entering a school building, including volunteering. You must sign both the school's visitor sheet and the VIBE Volunteer sign-in sheet.

NOTE: By signing the school's visitor sheet, the school is able to maintain security by knowing who is in the building, as well as making it easier for school personnel to find you in case of an emergency.

Signing the VIBE Volunteer sheet and properly logging your hours assures accurate monthly records. Volunteer hours are forwarded to the Human Resources office by building representatives.

After signing the school visitor and VIBE Volunteer sheets, pick up your name badge. If you do not have a name badge, one will be made for you. This shows the staff and students at the school that you have properly signed in at the office and have the right to be in the school. It also recognizes you as a VIBE Volunteer.

Need some ideas of how you can volunteer in our schools?**You can . . .**

- Tutor students in math, English, foreign languages, science, spelling, reading, writing, or on a musical instrument.
- Provide assistance in writing or math readiness activities.
- Type, copy, collate or file students' writing or compositions.
- Assist students with disabilities or special needs.
- Help students on computers.
- Help with special annual or one-time events.
- Make charts, games, costumes, or props for plays in school or at home.
- Provide career or hobby information in different interest areas.
- Read or tell stories to children.
- Listen to children read.
- Set up or assist in learning centers.
- Prepare teaching materials.
- Proctor testing groups.
- Reinforce literacy initiatives.
- Help with handwriting practice.
- Help with spelling or vocabulary words.
- Work in a school library.
- Supervise lunchtime or recess activities.
- Escort children to activities.
- Assist in Kindergarten registration.
- Assist Art or Music teachers in special assignments or programs.
- Help as needed in a school office.
- Support sports activities at athletic events.
- Help children with motor skills.

The “3 C’s” to successful volunteering . . .**Confidentiality**

Any information you may hear or incidents you may see while in one of the schools concerning individual students, their families and/or staff members is considered *privileged information* and should **NEVER** be discussed with anyone.

Confidential information can only be discussed with the teacher or building principal, never with other students, parents, volunteers or anyone outside the school.

We cannot stress enough the importance of confidentiality. After all, would you want a volunteer discussing your child or family with anyone else?

Commitment

Please appreciate the importance of the job you agree to do, as teachers and students will be counting on you. Teachers often plan their daily schedules around a volunteer who has agreed to come in, and students look forward to seeing you.

Inform your teacher as far in advance as possible if an emergency or illness arises and you must be absent. Get to know the other volunteers, so in emergencies you can substitute for each other or trade volunteer days.

Concern

Always try to be warm and friendly. Learn students’ names and show interest in what they are doing and telling you. Show the students you care by encouragement and positive reinforcement. If you sense that a student has a problem, please inform the teacher. Students can sense genuine concern and will appreciate you for it!

SUGGESTIONS FOR WORKING WITH STUDENTS

- Encourage students to do their own thinking and give them plenty of time to answer. Silence often means they are thinking and organizing their answers.
- If you don't know an answer, admit it and find the answer together. Feel free to ask students or the teacher for help.
- Use tact and positive comments. Seek something worthy of positive comments, especially when the students are having difficulty.
- To avoid confusing the students, always follow the teacher's guidelines in handling the children you are working with.
- Don't be judgmental. Students have diverse degrees of progress, abilities and behavior. Accept each student as he or she is.
- Wear comfortable clothes so you can "get down to a child's level."
- Always try to maintain and encourage a sense of humor.

For more information about Beachwood's VIBE Program, email Assistant Superintendent Philip Wagner, Ph.D., at <mailto:%20phw@bw.beachwood.k12.oh.us>