

Introduction

The School District of Palm Beach County is proud of the scope of volunteer involvement in schools throughout the district. The active participation of parents and community members in the classroom extends the effectiveness of teachers and staff. Volunteers also help the district deliver valuable services to students and schools that would not be possible without the support of the community.

The Volunteers in Public Schools (VIPS) program provides an avenue for individuals and organizations to become involved with education in Palm Beach County Schools. The Office of Community Involvement (OCI) organizes volunteer efforts district-wide and serves all schools in the areas of recruitment, program development, training, recognition, and more. What cannot be measured, however, is the intrinsic value of the services volunteers bring to the students. The encouragement, the patience, and the boost in self-esteem are incalculable and critically important to students.

Each school's volunteer program reflects individual school needs and strengths. Key to the success of the school based volunteer program, is the leadership of the volunteer coordinator and staff liaison for volunteers. These leaders manage their school's many outstanding volunteer activities and programs.

This handbook provides you with:

- District standards and procedures regarding volunteers
- Strategies for recruiting, training, recognizing, and retaining volunteers
- Guidelines for individual, school, district, and state awards
- Suggested orientation outlines for teachers/staff and volunteer trainings
- Samples of letters, flyers, evaluations, and other information for school use.

The School District of Palm Beach County's Volunteers in Public Schools program welcomes your comments and suggestions. Department staff is available to assist and support school-based volunteer programs throughout the year.

Office of Community Involvement
Fulton-Holland Educational Services Center
3300 Forest Hill Blvd., South IBIS Building "E" Suite 50-116
West Palm Beach, FL 33406
(561) 434-8789 / (561) 434-8771

Program Goals

The Office of Community Involvement facilitates community involvement with individuals, businesses, and organizations to provide on-going support for the mission, goals, and services unique to the concept of volunteerism:

- To orient school administrators and coordinators
- To provide guidance in matters of volunteer program policies
- To supply schools with items needed to implement and maintain their volunteer program
- To help ensure a safe school zone for students by providing district policies and procedures for screening volunteers
- To offer opportunities for interested community members to become directly involved with the educational system and process of Palm Beach County schools
- To enrich students' curriculum, broadening their awareness and experiences
- To reinforce lessons taught in schools
- To assist school personnel with instructional tasks and duties
- To enhance all aspects of the educational process
- To provide individualized educational assistance to students
- To assist in solving problems that cannot be resolved at the school level
- To strengthen school-community relations through direct volunteer and business partner participation.

Framework of the Volunteer Program

At the District

Volunteers in Public Schools (VIPS) provide district-wide support and coordination to the school-based volunteer programs in Palm Beach County public schools.

VIPS is responsible for:

- Providing initial orientation and training to school volunteer coordinators at the beginning of the school year and providing assistance and training throughout the year.
- Developing and disseminating volunteer materials
- Recruiting volunteers from the community
- Working with school-based coordinators to develop and maintain programs
- Networking with community involvement programs
- Sponsoring district-wide recognition events
- Reinforcing district volunteer policies and guidelines

At the School

School-based staff liaisons for volunteers and volunteer coordinators are a vital link to successful volunteer programs. In cooperation with the principal, they jointly coordinate and direct their school's program and the many outstanding volunteer activities. Each school models its volunteer program to meet the needs of the students and teachers at the school.

The responsibilities of the school volunteer program include:

- Assuring school volunteer coordinator attends district training and orientation
- Assessing needs of teachers for volunteer assistance
- Recruiting, registering, and coordinating volunteers
- Arranging for orientation and training of volunteers, front office staff, teachers, and staff
- Assigning volunteers to specific teachers when requested
- Providing a resource person for volunteers
- Monitoring accurate records of volunteer services and hours
- Coordinating school recognition events for volunteers
- Making sure front office is a family-friendly environment

Role of a School Volunteer Coordinator

As a volunteer coordinator, you have one of the key positions in the school volunteer program. The success or failure of the program in your school depends upon your skill in helping coordinate the many factors involved.

The duties of the volunteer coordinator will vary greatly from one school to another depending upon the desires and needs of the principals and teachers. Therefore, this handbook is not designed to be rules and regulations, but rather guidelines and ideas to help you, the volunteer coordinator, organize your own program.

The school volunteer coordinator works under the direction of and in cooperation with the principal, his/her designee, and the assistance of staff and other volunteers. The school coordinator may perform some or all of the following tasks:

- participate in establishing goals for the volunteer program
- recruit volunteers within community
- interview and provide training orientation for volunteers
- assure that all volunteers have completed a volunteer application on the volunteer tracking system
- assign volunteers in coordination with principal and designated staff member or community representative
- inform volunteers of training opportunities
- support and assist in organizational and administrative tasks
- arrange reassignment of volunteers to provide compatible work situations or growth opportunity as necessary.
- work with staff to provide ongoing and formal recognition

Role of a Principal

Select an Effective Coordinator

Volunteers in Public Schools (VIPS)

A principal who is strongly committed, enthusiastic, and understands the program, is the key to its success. Leadership from the principal gives the program increased credibility and impact with the teachers, students, parents and the partner. The Volunteer Coordinator, whether a volunteer or an appointed staff member, is an agent who will be acting on your behalf. As principal, you will be held accountable for his or her actions, as well as the actions of any school volunteer on your campus. You should, therefore, make the selection personally. Some characteristics to look for in a coordinator are:

- Good public relations skills, since the coordinator will be interacting frequently with your school's community
- Strong organizational skills to help you assess your school's volunteer needs and subsequently to recruit, place and recognize your volunteers
- Time for the job: A volunteer coordinator, especially during the first few months, may need at least 10 hours a week to structure your school's program for that school year.

A COORDINATOR RELIES ON A PRINCIPAL TO:

- Communicate school needs and goals to the coordinator
- Provide administrative support for volunteer activities
- Encourage teachers and staff to support and participate in volunteer programs: e.g., schedule faculty orientation by coordinator
- Provide guidance in matters of SDPBC policies and procedures
- Provide space and resources to meet volunteer program objectives (e.g., a voice mail station, a mailbox, district email account, access to VIPS COUNT!)
- Communicate with volunteers.

Faculty Responsibility

Unfortunately, the size of a campus may prevent a VIPS Coordinator from conducting individual interviews with everyone who wants to volunteer. Subsequently, the SDPBC staff person who works directly with a volunteer is responsible for overseeing the actions of that person and making sure they complete the registration application. If a faculty member is concerned by a volunteer's actions, the faculty member should immediately report those concerns to the school's principal and/or the VIPS Coordinator.

Setting the Tone

As principal, you will set the tone for your school's volunteer program. Please meet with your VIPS Coordinator to discuss your policies on the following questions:

- May volunteers bring their toddlers to school when they work?
- May volunteers work in their own child's classroom?
- May volunteers use the teachers' lounge? The copier? The lunchroom?
- What are your school's safety procedures for volunteers?
- What is the appropriate dress for a volunteer?

School Needs

What volunteer help does your school need? Please help your VIPS Coordinator assess your school's volunteer needs. This can be accomplished by distributing a survey to your faculty at the very beginning of the school year. VIPS Coordinators are encouraged to recruit volunteers first for classroom assistance.

Sign-in procedures

All volunteers are required to sign in at the front office each time they volunteer. Please provide a designated computer in the front office for volunteers to sign-in on the VIPS COUNT Tracking system. This sign-in station can also be used to post any notices for volunteers and visitors.

Faculty Orientation

Your VIPS Coordinator is required to conduct a faculty orientation at the beginning of the school year. This orientation session must be completed by October 31 to meet the Golden School Award criteria. The purpose of this meeting is to re-acquaint your faculty with the school's policies regarding appropriate use of volunteers, sign-in procedures, identification of a volunteer, and other liability issues.

Dismissal of a Volunteer

If your VIPS Coordinator has a concern about a volunteer/business partner or if a volunteer acts inappropriately and disrupts the academic environment of your school, then s/he should inform you about the concern. Once you have reviewed the facts about the concerns of a volunteer, then you, not the coordinator, should make the decision about whether to keep or dismiss the volunteer. Dismissal should be done by the principal or a designated administrator. The Office of Community Involvement will be glad to assist you with this process. For security purposes and to help the district maintain its records, please inform the Office of Community Involvement of any dismissals as this will impact the volunteer's application status.

Recruitment of Volunteers

Volunteer recruitment is a vital process that requires careful planning. A recruitment program can be formulated to meet the total volunteer needs of a school. It can also be designed for special projects occurring at certain times of the year. Recruitment is an ongoing year-round activity.

Parents are a school's most accessible source of volunteers. Try to reach them through flyers sent home with the students, PTA/PTO, advisory committee meetings, signs posted in the office and around the school, and by having recruitment speeches at back-to-school nights and special school events. Remember that parents who work can also help in some way, such as making or collecting materials for learning centers. Reach the community through speaking at civic, religious, or social organizations in your area; publicizing recruitment or special interest articles in community newspapers; preparing handouts for libraries, stores, restaurants, or senior citizen centers in the area. Effective recruitment is also done by teachers who have used volunteers and by dedicated volunteers themselves.

Recruitment Methods

Individual recruiting:

1. Peer recruitment: parents recruit parents, teachers recruit teachers, students recruit students, and senior citizens recruit senior citizens.
2. Contact with key community leaders and business partners.
3. Face-to-face approach at PTA/PTO meetings, school fairs, student councils, school assemblies, service clubs, and religious groups.
4. Contact previous volunteers from last year's roster.

Mass or public recruiting:

1. Letters to homes, organizations, and civic groups.
2. Selected mailing lists, including email lists.
3. Telephone committees.

Delegated recruiting:

1. Contact local chapters of civic, religious, and social organizations. Ask them to announce the need for volunteers, distribute information, and possibly appoint a recruitment chairman.
2. Form a recruitment committee in your school to develop resources and techniques.
3. Use the faculty and administration of your school. Explore their social and civic contacts.

Where and how to get volunteers:

1. Contact volunteers from last year, get them recommitted, and have them help secure more volunteers.
2. Principal should make an appeal in his/her letter to parents.
3. Send a volunteer request form with school packets or give them out at room parent's meetings, at pre-school round-up, fall open house, pre-school, PTA/PTO meetings, etc. This form, stating specific needs at your school for volunteer services and days and times desired, should be in the form of a checklist with "boxes," so parents could check capacities in which s/he wishes to serve and could designate days and times available to serve.
4. Advertise in your school newsletter and PTA/PTO newsletter.
5. Remember that in your community, outside of your school, there is great volunteer potential. Contact people in your area – senior citizens, religious groups, service groups, civic organizations, and businesses.
6. Place a message on the VIPS COUNT! Tracking System to communicate with and recruit volunteers for specific events at your school.
7. Recruit at each PTA/PTO meeting.
8. If you still need help in recruiting for special needs, call your area volunteer coordinator or the VIPS office at (561) 434-8789.

Sample Parent/Citizen Recruitment Letter

(Place on School Letterhead)

Dear Parent/Citizen:

As good citizens and conscientious guardians, we hope that you are aware of the very important work being done by the Volunteers in Public Schools (VIPS) of the School District of Palm Beach County.

Palm Beach County is faced with a year of tremendous growth and limited funding. Yet, we are still challenged with providing exceptional education to our children. You can help by providing your own time and talents to your child's school as a school volunteer or forming a business partnership with your school.

What are ways you can help? Here are just a few of our many needs:

(Fill in information here.)

Please contribute a little of your time to help enhance education for today's youth. If you want to help, but are limited by hours or transportation, please contact our Volunteer Coordinator who can possibly lend some assistance or ideas. S/he can be reached at (enter phone and/or email contact information).

Sincerely,

Principal

Volunteer Coordinator

Sample Parent/Citizen Recruitment Letter *(Place on School Letterhead)*

Dear Parent/Citizen:

Our children are our most important resources. We share a common purpose – educating children. Many children need individualized attention. You may have had varied experiences which can help many of our children in school. We need volunteers to help the teachers in ways that allow them to provide more personal assistance to our children.

If you are interested in serving as a volunteer, we will be delighted to hear from you. The Volunteers in Public Schools (VIPS) program is a project sponsored by our school.

We have attached a list of ways volunteers can assist our school. If you have a special ability or interest that has not been listed, please insert it on the bottom of the sheet.

You are invited to a brief meeting to discuss the volunteer program in more detail. Let us know if you can come.

OR

You are invited to meet with the Volunteer Coordinator to discuss your participation as a volunteer.

DATE: _____

TIME: _____

PLACE: _____

Sincerely,

Principal

Volunteer Coordinator

Volunteer Orientation Outline

All volunteers are expected to assume responsibility for the health, safety, and welfare of pupils or to assist a teacher in promoting student's achievement learning. Therefore, volunteers must possess a clear understanding of state and district rules, regulations and policies relevant to their responsibilities. Thus a volunteer orientation is imperative to your program. At this event (or events) your school will give volunteers:

- An overview of the program.
- The guidelines established by the School District of Palm Beach County.
- The procedures for your school.
- A summary of volunteer needs.
- An opportunity to register as a volunteer, on the VIPS COUNT tracking system.

Registration and refreshments:

1. Light refreshments are suggested.
2. Workshop Sign-In – Include the following:
 - a. Name and phone number.
 - b. Email if available.
 - c. Parent of a child in the school?
 - d. Name of child's teacher?
 - e. Veteran volunteer or new volunteer?

Welcome and introductions:

1. Volunteer Coordinator and Staff Liaison.
2. Principal.
3. Staff.

Role of volunteers:

1. Complete an application on the VIPS COUNT Tracking System.
2. Work under direction and supervision of teacher or staff member to whom they are assigned.
3. Notify teacher or school if they must be absent.
4. Log in and out of the VIPS COUNT Tracking System when volunteering.

Volunteer Orientation Outline

Volunteer Guidelines – In the Classroom:

1. Volunteers are assigned only to requesting teachers.
2. Volunteers should not disagree with teachers in front of students.
3. Teachers supervise all volunteer activities.
4. Volunteers never replace teachers or take responsibility for the class. Students must not be left unattended.
5. Volunteers should not be left alone or be unsupervised with students at any time.
6. Volunteers should not diagnose student strengths or weaknesses, prescribe learning activities, evaluate student progress, discipline students, or issue grades.
7. Tasks as assigned by teacher or staff member.

Volunteer Guidelines – Working with Students:

1. Call each student by his or her name.
2. Ask leading questions rather than giving answers to students.
3. Realize that a student must feel that it is acceptable to make mistakes.
4. Do more listening than talking.
5. Be reliable. Your consistent attendance shows students that you are committed to helping them.
6. Look for and praise each small success. Don't expect huge leaps in achievement.
7. Self-esteem and self-control are basic to learning.
8. Information about students is confidential. Information from students that may affect their health and safety must be reported to the teacher or other staff member.

Volunteer Orientation Outline

Volunteer Guidelines:

1. Maintain consistent and regular attendance.
2. Record attendance for each visit.
3. Follow regulations and procedures of school.
4. Wear school ID, such as volunteer pin, nametag or VIPS Count! printed nametag.
5. Discuss school problems with staff members, at appropriate times.
6. Call your school if you cannot be present on your regular volunteer day.
7. Observe discretion in commenting on school matters.
8. School attire should be neat, clean, and appropriate for school.

A volunteer is a goodwill ambassador for the School District of Palm Beach County.

Registering Volunteers:

1. Instruct volunteers to fill out their application form online using the VIPS Count! Volunteer Tracking System and to sign in and out each time they come to volunteer.
2. Talk about volunteer requests made by teachers and ask if anyone is interested in specific jobs.
3. Tell all volunteers that they will be called with their volunteer assignments within a specified amount of time.
4. Offer a school tour to all new volunteers.

Additional Points for Discussion at the orientation:

1. Location and explanation of fire drill routes.
2. School traffic patterns.
3. Parking situation and restrictions.
4. Absentee procedures for volunteers.
5. School calendar.

Volunteer Orientation Outline

School Tour:

The school community is especially important if you have volunteers who are new parents to your school, community volunteers, and senior citizen volunteers.

On the school tour, point out the location of:

1. Sign-In procedures and school volunteer buttons or name tags.
2. Telephones that volunteers can use.
3. Media center.
4. School clinic or health room.
5. Restroom facilities (adult)
6. Lounge (Are there restrictions on its use?)
7. Cafeteria (What is the price of lunch? How do volunteers get lunch if they desire?)

A Special Reminder to Parents:

Parents who volunteer in a school that their children attend are in a special situation. It is the Principal's discretion to allow parents to assist in their child's classroom. If allowed, it is essential that they hold in confidence any information learned about or from the students in the school. These volunteers must refrain from discussing the capabilities, behavior, attitudes, etc., of students with anyone besides school personnel. They must also be cautious about remarks made which their own child may hear.

Parent volunteers should not work directly with their own child or students who are playmates of their child. *It is strongly recommended that parents do not work with students who are in the same room as their own children.*

Volunteers who work in their children's school must show discretion and tact in conversations about the school and teachers. Volunteers who are in such a situation may wish to rely heavily on the volunteer office to act as liaison between themselves and school personnel.

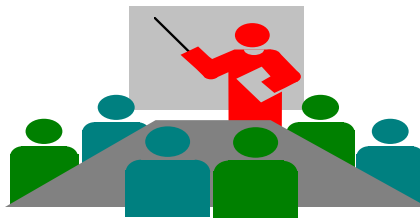
Volunteer Training

Training differs from orientation in that it is the process of providing the volunteer opportunities to acquire specific skills and techniques. The goal of the training program should be the continual development of the volunteer's confidence, skills, knowledge, and motivation to perform the tasks involved in the job.

Training can be divided into three basic categories:

1. Initial orientation – School volunteer coordinator provides training at initial orientation.
2. In-service or on-the-job training – Volunteer will be trained by the teacher or staff member to whom the volunteer is assigned.
3. On-going training.

Training programs should consider all those involved; volunteers, teachers, administrators, and other school personnel.



Interviewing & Placing Volunteers

Once a volunteer has been recruited, the interviewing process is used to ensure appropriate placement of a volunteer. The volunteer coordinator usually interviews, coordinates, and makes placements of the volunteer.

The specific tasks which volunteers are needed to do should be outlined before interviewing and placement begins. The coordinator should confer with the school's administrators and teachers in defining the needs for volunteer jobs.

The interviewer collects data on the skills, abilities, talents, interests, and personality of the volunteer. The volunteer finds out about the purposes of the program, the need for his help, and the responsibility involved in various jobs within the program. Each volunteer should be selected according to the job to be done and the qualifications required for effective job performance.

Place volunteers as quickly as possible and offer choices when available.

Methods for interviewing and placing volunteers:

1. By volunteer coordinator – Review applications on VIPS COUNT tracking system according to job desired (math tutors, etc.)
2. By teacher's requests – Information can be gathered from teachers at faculty orientation.
3. By volunteers – Allow individuals to request their own assignment.

Placement might be done at an orientation meeting, but it usually done afterwards. The volunteer and teacher then need to be notified of the assignment and starting date by telephone and/or written form.

Handouts for Volunteers

Guidelines for Volunteers

Your interest and concern for students have motivated you to volunteer in the School District of Palm Beach County. Thank you. ***This is a challenging and rewarding role.***

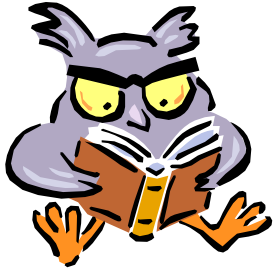
To make your experience as a school volunteer a beneficial one for both the students and you, please follow these guidelines as you assist in the schools.

1. The safety and education of students must be the main concern of volunteers while engaged in school activities.
2. Volunteers may not give students medication, food, candy, or any type of snacks unless approved and overseen by classroom teacher.
3. Individual student's grades, records and abilities are personal and confidential information. Students have a right to confidentiality under Florida Statute 228.093 that covers:

Academic work completed
Standardized test scores
Health data
Interest inventory reports
Teacher or Counselor rating
and observations

Family background information
Attendance records
Grades
Reports of serious or recurrent
behavior patterns

4. Classroom supervision and student discipline are the responsibilities of the teacher and school. If you see a student misbehaving, notify the teacher in charge.
5. Volunteers will be assigned only to staff members requesting assistance.
6. Volunteers should set a good example for students by their manner, appearance, and behavior. Volunteers must adhere to a standard dress code while volunteering during any school sponsored activity.
7. Volunteers are required to complete an on-line application form annually before volunteering in the school.
8. Volunteers are required to log in and out on the VIPS COUNT Tracking System **each time** they are working on school campus.
9. For identification, volunteers are required to wear a volunteer nametag or VIPS COUNT printed nametag when volunteering.



General Tips for the School Volunteer

Volunteering in a school is an experience and a privilege for both the school and the volunteer. It is designed to promote and maintain a supportive relationship for students, teachers, and school staff.

REMEMBER:

BE HONEST.....in your approach and attitude.
It will aid in developing trust.

BE PATIENT.....when working with students.
They are having difficulty with a subject
and do not need additional pressure.

BE FLEXIBLE.....in responding to the needs of students.

BE FRIENDLY.....with a smile and a thank you, you can
accomplish miracles.

BE RESPECTFUL.....treat individuals in the same manner
you wish to be treated.

Suggestions for Developing Volunteer/Teacher Relationships



1. Establish a good firm working relationship with the teacher.
2. Discuss the level of class, special help needed for students, times that the teacher needs assistance the most, and areas and goals that the teacher is pursuing. Notify the teacher if you have received any special training.
3. Exchange phone numbers and/or email so that, if necessary, contact may be established.
4. Come to the class at the time and day prearranged with the teacher. He/she will have changed their work schedule to include you. Also, the student will be relying on your arrival.
5. Be warm, friendly, and courteous at all times.
6. Never disagree with the teacher in front of the students or let the students play you against each other.
7. Keep channels of communication honest and open. If there is a problem, speak about it to the teacher or volunteer coordinator.
8. Notify the teacher if you have discovered a serious problem or handicap that may affect the student's work.
9. Be willing to receive direction and supervision from the teacher or other members of the school staff.
10. Clearly understand the task that has been assigned, and work toward a specific goal.
11. Complete the assignment as quickly and thoroughly as possible in order to work independently without having every activity assigned.

Teacher Expectations

A good volunteer will display:

Promptness.

Love of children.

Enthusiasm.

Flexibility.

Dependability.

Patience.

Loyalty.

Businesslike attitude.

Imagination and creativity.

Non-disruptive influence.

Tact.

Sense of humor.

Initiative.

Interest in helping for the benefit of the community.

Volunteers must:

Be willing to help, ask for directions, follow instructions, take training, try a variety of approaches and techniques with students.

Be pleasant, friendly, have a warm, positive attitude.

Dress appropriately for any activity. Adhere to school dress code.

Be sensitive to children's needs.

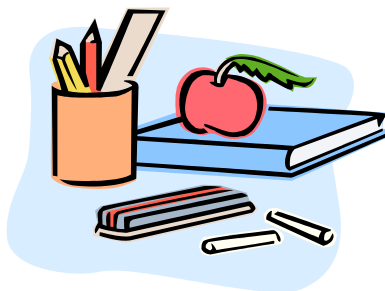
Know that the teacher is the authority.

Be sensitive to teacher's time needs.

Be trustworthy with confidential matters relating to students.

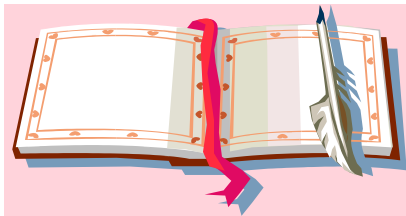
VOLUNTEER INVENTORY

YES	NO	
		I have completed an online application form.
		I have participated in an orientation session.
		I know where I am to report to work.
		I know the hours the school is open and the phone number.
		I have met the school principal.
		I have had a conference with my supervising teacher or school volunteer coordinator.
		I am familiar with the school facility.
		I know where and how to sign in and out.
		I know the school fire drill procedures.
		I know the school safety rules.
		I know what to do in case of an emergency.
		I know the discipline policy in this school.
		I have been provided with a specific place to work.
		I have been shown where materials are located.



Teamwork

I dreamed I stood in a studio
And watched two sculptors there,
The clay they used was children's minds
And they fashioned them with care.
One, the teacher used the tools of school
reading, music and art.
The other, the volunteer, worked with a
guiding hand, and gentle loving heart.
Day after day, the teacher toiled
With a touch that was deft and sure,
While the volunteer labored
By the teacher's side
And polished and smoothed them o'er.
And when at last, their task was done
They were proud of what they had wrought.
For the things they had molded together
Could neither be sold nor bought.
And each agreed working together
Was better than working alone.
For beside the teacher and volunteer
Stood confident children on their own.



Hints for Working with Students

1. Our names are very important to us because they give us a special identity. Make sure you learn your student's name and pronounce it the way the student wants it pronounced. Learn to spell the name correctly. Make sure your student knows and can pronounce your name.
2. Understand your student in terms of her/his own background and values. These may be different from yours.
3. Show that you are interested in your student as a person. Listen carefully to what they say. Ask questions about favorite activities, family members, friends, hopes and dreams. By your words and actions, let your student know you care.
4. Be reliable. If you must be absent, call or fax and ask that your student be told that you cannot come that day. Your student may be disappointed, but they will be reassured by the fact that you cared enough to call or write a quick note.
5. Build self-confidence. Praise your student honestly and frequently.
6. Know and observe school regulations (i.e. fire drills, walking in the right direction, using phones, vending machines).
7. Act as a role model for all students through your dress and behavior.
8. Communicate regularly with the teacher or staff member you are assisting, either in person, by phone or by mail.

What To Do If ...

A Child is Injured:

If a child should receive an injury while under your care, no matter how minor the injury, you should notify the teacher or a staff member immediately.

A Child Becomes Ill:

If a child complains of not feeling well, you should notify the teacher immediately. You should never administer any form of medication to the child.

You are injured:

Should you become injured while performing the duties of your job, notify the school office immediately. The office staff will assist you and ask you to fill out the proper accident forms.

You are asked to take the Class Alone:

Because you are not a paid School Board employee, you are not legally permitted to supervise a class alone. Consequently, if the teacher must leave the room, arrangements should be made to have a paid staff member present.

Someone Asks to See a Child:

If a person who is not a member of the school staff should ask to speak to or take a child, you must direct that individual to the teacher. Under no circumstances should you grant such a request.

Someone Asks You How a Child is doing:

You must not discuss a student's behavior or academics with others. All information regarding a student is confidential.

Staff and Faculty Orientation

Faculty Orientation

Each year the faculty of your school must participate in an orientation concerning the use of school volunteers. This is a requirement of the Gold and Silver School Awards and the Five Star School Award. The orientation session also provides an opportunity for the staff to become aware of the VIPS coordinator and Office of Community Involvement's role. Staff training usually occurs during a school faculty meeting. The length of time for this orientation should be determined by you and your principal.

Prior to conducting the faculty orientation, you will want to meet with your school's principal and/or designated assistant administrator to clarify the principal's priorities for the current year's volunteer program. These priorities should dovetail with the current goals set by the school's administration and School Advisory Committee.

Within this section you will find:

1. Conducting the Faculty Orientation.
2. Welcome Back Teachers!

In the Handouts for teachers section you will find:

1. Request for volunteer services.
2. Teacher concerns.
3. What volunteers do.
4. Volunteer's task assignment(s).
5. Do's and Don'ts of school volunteers.
6. Teachers need many hands.

Conducting the Faculty Orientation

The Faculty Orientation session is your chance to create interest in and support for your school's volunteer program. This is your opportunity to initiate the momentum that will last throughout the school year. You, the volunteer Coordinator, are the catalyst to successful full-school involvement.

Schools are encouraged to customize this training component to meet the specific needs of the school's program. For example, some schools may need to reinforce and remind staff members about policies and procedures (volunteer registration and logging hours, communicating with volunteers, advanced planning for field trips, etc.). Listed below are ideas for brief announcements that can supplement the district training.

Since a faculty orientation regarding volunteers has different objectives from the school's regular faculty meetings, you will want to select the most important – and impressive- points to include in your orientation. Among topics which have proven to be useful are these:

Policies and Procedures for volunteers:

1. All volunteers must complete an application in the VIPS COUNT Tracking System. All volunteers are subject to a criminal history sexual predator/offender background check via said application.
2. Volunteers must be approved in the VIPS COUNT Tracking System prior to going on a field trip.
3. School volunteers work only with teachers that request assistance.
4. School volunteers DO NOT:
 - a. Diagnose student weaknesses and strengths.
 - b. Prescribe activities for students.
 - c. Evaluate student progress.
 - d. Discipline students.
5. It is recommended that school volunteers do not assist in their own child's classroom unless requested by that teacher, with the Principal's approval.
6. All volunteers must attend an orientation session, either school based or sponsored by Volunteers in Public Schools (VIPS)
7. Volunteers must not be left alone with children and always be within the site of a teacher or staff member at all times
8. All volunteers must log in and out while volunteering to record their hours of volunteer service.

Recruitment:

Solicit the faculty's help with recruitment of volunteers since they are directly involved with parents, students, and the community.

Teacher Responsibilities:

Teachers should have clear-cut descriptions of tasks for volunteers to complete, share mutual expectations with volunteers, and devise a planning folder with instructions for volunteers which will be available each time a volunteer serves. Explain procedures for absences and changes in class schedule, classroom policies and procedures, location of the planning folder, and information needed to work with special students.

Getting to Know the Volunteer:

After establishing necessary rapport with a volunteer, provide comfortable ways for the volunteer to fit into the classroom family, as well as ways to best utilize the volunteer's special skills and talents.

Recognizing Volunteers:

Since volunteers are a dedicated group and expect to work, school staff members need to respect the time and effort of these individuals. Volunteers genuinely want to help the teacher and students by doing something meaningful.

Student Achievement:

- Review and clarify volunteer job descriptions.
- Discuss the critical importance of teacher communication for effective volunteer placements.
- Highlight teacher/volunteer teams that have seen improvement in student academic performance.
- Ask staff members to share success stories about volunteers.

Safe School Practices:

- Remind teachers about the requirements regarding volunteer registration, logging hours and wearing ID badges while on campus
- Discuss advance planning and registration requirements for field trip chaperones, drivers and extracurricular activities volunteers.

Program Management:

- Encourage teachers to request help if they have a concern about a volunteer situation.
- Encourage teachers to recruit volunteers.
- Teach them how to recognize and reward good volunteers.
- Request participation in nominating for Outstanding School Volunteers.

WELCOME BACK TEACHERS!

Greetings from your volunteer coordinator:

Name: _____ Contact Info: _____

Reminders ...

1. Volunteers must complete an online Volunteer Application registration prior to volunteering.
2. All volunteers, by district policy, **must sign in and out** with the FRONT OFFICE during school hours, BEFORE proceeding to their volunteer sites on campus.
3. All volunteers or visitors MUST WEAR IDENTIFICATION, via a label or name tag provided at the front office while volunteering.
4. Volunteers MUST NEVER BE ALONE WITH A STUDENT. They should always be where a school staff member is present.
5. Volunteers participating in any off-campus activity; i.e. field trips, must be background checked and APPROVED prior to volunteering. Please review PBSB 1894, page 2, Trip/Activity Planning Report and Approval Report.
6. Appropriate volunteer activities can be counted as volunteer hours, whether completed at school or at home. All such hours must be registered in the volunteer tracking system.
7. Faculty members are responsible to supervise the actions of the volunteers they recruit.

Let me know if you have a specialized volunteer need or have a volunteer with special skills. Let's network our volunteers so that our school can benefit from working together.

I look forward to a productive, successful school year.

Retention of Volunteers

Retention begins very early in the relationship with volunteers. From the first contact to the registration and final placement of the volunteer, follow-up is extremely important. The attitude the volunteer develops based on the follow-up will determine whether a volunteer will become dedicated to your school and continue service.

What are the keys to retaining volunteers?

- Provide benefits, incentives, perks, rewards and recognition. *Examples:* letters from students, teachers, and/or principal; certificates, bulletin boards, and sweet treats. Let them know how valued they are.
- Don't overload them with multiple jobs.
- Offer ongoing education.
- Promote deserving volunteers to roles of greater responsibility.
- Provide volunteers with personal workspace.
- Provide volunteers with ongoing supervision.
- Have clear job descriptions.
- Get a volunteer's commitment.
- Offer meaningful work. If it appears senseless, explain why it's necessary.
- Say "thank you" often.
- Do frequent evaluations.
- Let volunteers know the impact of what they are doing.
- Provide start and end times for jobs.
- Provide an "open door" for discussion of any problems that may arise.
- Train your staff how to work with and support volunteers.
- Plan and prepare for the volunteer's visit.
- Some volunteers are motivated by new challenges, others by relationships. Find out what is motivating to each volunteer, and provide it as appropriate.
- Place your volunteer in the most suitable role.
- At the end of the school year, conduct exit interviews or evaluations to determine what can be changed to make the next year better.



Handouts for Teachers



Request for Volunteer Services

Do you wish school volunteer services? _____ Yes _____ No

In what areas are you interested in utilizing volunteers?

_____ Tutoring in specific areas: _____ Reading _____ English _____ Science
_____ Social Studies _____ Spelling _____ Math _____ Other

_____ General assistance in the classroom

_____ Make bulletin boards, posters, displays

_____ Help set up or assist in learning centers

_____ Work with individual students

_____ Assist with: _____ Art _____ Music _____ Physical Education

_____ Chaperone on field trips

_____ Media Center assistant

_____ Clerical: _____ Typing _____ Filing _____ Mailing _____ Copying

_____ Speakers on: _____ Travel _____ Careers _____ Hobbies _____ Other

_____ Other _____

Day(s) and time(s) you would want volunteers to work:

DAY(S)	TIME(S)
Monday _____	_____ to _____
Tuesday _____	_____ to _____
Wednesday _____	_____ to _____
Thursday _____	_____ to _____
Friday _____	_____ to _____

Name _____ Grade _____

Room Number _____ Team (if applicable) _____

Return to: _____ Room _____ By _____
Name Date

Teacher Concerns and Possible Solutions

1. Volunteers are not dependable.
 - a. Have realistic expectations of their time.
 - b. Their commitment is stressed at orientation.
 - c. Volunteers must continue to feel needed and have accomplishments recognized.
2. Volunteers cannot maintain confidentiality.
 - a. Stress confidentiality at orientation.
 - b. Teachers can exercise control over sensitive materials.
 - c. Provide outlets for observations and grievances.
3. Volunteers become disillusioned.
 - a. Commitment is based on satisfaction, acceptance, and recognition.
 - b. Match volunteers to tasks that they can do effectively.
 - c. Short-term commitments, assignments, and an observation period.
4. How do you fire a volunteer?
 - a. Avoid it by clearly presenting roles and expectations initially.
 - b. Place volunteer in another job category.
 - c. Provide continuous evaluation.
 - d. Talk to volunteer coordinator.
5. Volunteers are a threat to teachers.
 - a. Volunteers are assigned only to requesting teachers.
 - b. Teachers need to understand specified goals of volunteer program.
 - c. Volunteers do not replace paid staff.
6. Volunteers sometimes want special treatment for themselves and/or children.
 - a. Strongly recommend parents not volunteer in classroom with their own child.
 - b. Candid discussions about the rewards of volunteering for the entire school, as well as their own children.

What School Volunteers Do

School Volunteers work with teachers who request them to:

EXTEND the teacher's teaching time –

- Read stories.
- Assist in labs.
- Answer questions.
- Check student work.
- Create learning centers.
- Tutor in math and reading
- Operate audio-visual equipment.
- Find materials for classroom use.
- Help older students with research.
- Work with non-English speaking students.
- Reinforce skills by providing extra drills.
- Play spelling, phonics, language, and math games.
- Assist child with makeup work and missed tests.

ENRICH the learning environment –

- Dramatize stories.
- Make educational games.
- Assist with art projects.
- Help children choose books.
- Assist with creative writing.
- Help children use filmstrips.
- Record children's stories.
- Type and reproduce class newspapers.
- Record textbooks for students with reading difficulties.

EXPAND the resources of the school –

- Display special collections.
- Explore career opportunities.
- Add expert resources in special classes.
- Give performances or demonstrations in the arts.
- Show slides and comment on experiences in other cultures.

ENLIST the community as partners with the school –

- Provide a two-way bridge between school and community.
- Stimulate greater citizen understanding and support of school programs.
- Enable citizens and taxpayers to know school's challenges and successes.



Volunteer's Assignment Sheet
Non-tutoring Form

Date: _____

Volunteer: _____

Teacher: _____

It would be helpful if you could work on the following tasks. Please check if you finish. Indicate where you are with a task if you do not finish.

1. _____ **Comment** _____

2. _____ **Comment** _____

3. _____ **Comment** _____

If time permits, you may wish to assist me with:

1. _____ **Comment** _____

2. _____ **Comment** _____

3. _____ **Comment** _____

Location of task assignments: File Back Table Art Room

Other: _____

Location of necessary materials: Closet: _____ **Drawer:** _____

Cabinet: _____ **Other:** _____

Comments: _____

Do's & Don'ts of School Volunteers

DO

Make volunteers feel welcome.

Confer often with volunteer.

Plan the work volunteers are to do before they arrive.

Be generous in offering praise, encouragement and support; judicious in offering constructive criticism.

Start simply, then give additional activities as you feel the volunteer is ready for them.

Plan enjoyable experiences through which volunteers can establish good relationships with children.

Make sure instructions are clear with adequate time allotted for preparation.

Supply materials appropriate for lessons.

Provide guides, keys, or corrected papers for explanation. Be honest and open in talking over small problems.

Treat volunteers as educational team members.

Give volunteers proper notice of schedule changes.

DON'T

Leave volunteers in charge of the class.

Give volunteers more than they can handle in the allotted time.

Expect volunteers to do things for which they are not trained nor prepared to do.

Assign duties that belong to the teacher.

Expect volunteers to be housekeepers.

Criticize volunteers in front of children

Expect volunteers to change their schedules without proper notice.

Speak to volunteers in acronyms (ESOL, SLD, ADHD) without explaining the terminology.



TEACHERS NEED MANY HANDS

There are many non-teaching jobs in the classroom which can be done effectively by someone other than the teacher. Teachers need many hands and some of these belong to volunteers. Volunteers allow you the time to do the specialized job for which you were trained.

The additional help and encouragement that volunteers offer students can sometimes make the difference between a school's success and failure. Their gift of time and talent, whether small or substantial, supplements, but does not supplant, the effectiveness of the professional staff.

The willingness of volunteers to help is concrete evidence of the community's encouragement and support of the teacher. It is a demonstration that the community shares the teacher's interest in and concern for the education of our children.

Appreciation

Recognition should be an ongoing process, a smile or a word of thanks from you, the teacher, students, etc. Official recognition should take place during February, which is Florida School Volunteer Appreciation Month or at the end of the academic year. Appreciation functions should be financed by the school, not the coordinator.

Volunteer appreciation:

- A. Certificates of appreciation are available from the Volunteers in Public Schools (VIPS) office to be filled in at the local school and awarded to each volunteer.
- B. Each local school volunteer program will want to recognize their own volunteers in some way. You might have a breakfast or luncheon for them at the end of the year, thank them in the school newsletter, or write a personal thank you, *as well* as giving them each the Certificate of Appreciation which are available from the Office of Community Involvement by request. Certificates will be sent by pony mail.
- C. Use every opportunity available to stress the importance of volunteer contributions.



Ideas for School Volunteer Month

1. Mention volunteer contributions and expressions of appreciation in every memo, newsletter, etc., sent home to parents.
2. Encourage Principal to send letters to volunteers expressing appreciation and providing coupon good for free cup of coffee in the school cafeteria or inviting volunteers to enjoy refreshments provided during School Volunteer Week.
3. Suggest that Principal send letter to volunteers with red heart coupon enclosed that could be redeemed for free lunch (possibly paid for by PTA/PTO) during School Volunteer Week. Might phrase invitation to join students and/or teacher for lunch.
4. Make a bulletin board in school office or prominent location in hallway, media center or cafeteria. Suggest Valentine theme. Might also include student thank you notes, poems or pictures. Examples of bulletin board ideas are: We Are Volunteers! (with photos of volunteers working throughout the school or hearts with volunteers' names in them surrounding the board); name of school Volunteers are Real Sweethearts; name of school Volunteers Give from their Hearts; happy Snoopy picture with saying "Love is Volunteers" with volunteer names in hearts.
5. Have faculty wear buttons "We Love Our Volunteers" during School Volunteer Month. These can be made at minimal cost and can be used again in the fall for recruitment.
6. Provide flowers for your regular volunteers near the volunteer sign-in location. Suggestions: flowers from someone's yard, paper flowers made by kids, floral arrangement for their enjoyment donated by florist, or vase of red carnations. Might use the slogan: "For all you do, this bud's for you."
7. Provide heart-shaped box of candy at volunteer sign-in location with note to help themselves.
8. Provide large valentine signed by all school faculty and staff on bulletin board near sign-in location.
9. Make a large valentine from the whole class and have everyone sign it. (Laminate it. Your volunteer will treasure it forever!)
10. Make a huge valentine for a class bulletin board with the words, "Our heart is not as big as your love." Have all the kids in the class sign it.
11. Make class bulletin board using any theme expressing appreciation for volunteers: picture of strawberries and message, "We'd be in a jam without your help!" or large valentine tree (leaves are hearts with names or pictures.)

Activities to Recognize Volunteers

Letters and cards of appreciation (from administrators, teachers, parents, and students.)

Nominate your volunteer for outstanding volunteer of the year.

Presentation of awards, pins, and certificates for service. The Office of Community Involvement can provide you with certificates suitable for framing.

Gifts made by the students for the volunteers.

Coffee hours, teas, and luncheons, volunteer appreciation event at the end of the school year.

Invite your volunteers to district appreciation functions.

Volunteer bulletin boards announcing volunteer activities, pictures of volunteers, etc.

Poems or songs to the volunteers written or performed by students.

Recognizing volunteers over the P.A. system.

Providing time to ask the volunteers for feedback about their progress. The volunteers need to know whether or not they are effective.

Day-to-day recognition; examples of common courtesy and small expressions of thoughtfulness will, in the long run, be more meaningful than certificates or annual letters.

Recognition of the volunteers in the school newspaper or on school website.

Recognizing volunteers at the PTA/PTO meetings, back to school night, and other school ceremonies.

AWARDS

GOLDEN & SILVER SCHOOL AWARDS

Each year the Florida Department of Education presents the Golden and Silver School Awards to schools with exemplary school volunteer programs. The Golden School Award is offered to all schools that meet the required criteria. The Silver School Award is only offered to secondary (middle and high) schools.

Specific instructions to qualify for the Golden and Silver School Awards are included in this section. The Golden and Silver School Awards application forms must be submitted to the Volunteers in Public Schools office by the designated date.

OUTSTANDING VOLUNTEER AWARDS

The Outstanding School Volunteer Award is presented annually to those student, adult, and senior school volunteers who have shown outstanding dedication and commitment to quality education in Florida. These volunteers are selected and awarded regionally in each of the five Florida reporting regions, Panhandle, Crown, West Central, East Central, and South).

The application form for the Outstanding School Volunteer Award is included in this section. The same form is used for nominations in each category: Youth (20 years and under), adult (21 to 61 years), and Senior (62 years and over).

Outstanding volunteers are selected based on the following criteria:

1. Hours of service.
2. Years of service.
3. Unusual type of contribution.
4. Commitment to improving student learning.
5. Commitment to personal growth and knowledge, including training sessions.
6. Dedication to serving as a school volunteer – dependable, confidential, considerate, cooperative.
7. Appointed by the School Board or its designee.
8. Served within the structure of an organized school volunteer program.

To nominate a candidate:

1. Submit nominee applications to the District School Volunteer Program Coordinator for Palm Beach County.
2. Submit no more than one nomination in each category – youth, adult and senior.
3. Submit an application form for each nominee.
4. You may submit additional pages, pictures, news clippings, etc.
5. Return completed application form by the designated deadline date.

GOLDEN SCHOOL AWARD CRITERIA.

The Florida Department of Education presents the Golden and Silver School Award in an effort to recognize exemplary programs to increase student learning through promoting parent and community involvement. The Golden School Award is presented to those elementary, secondary, and adult schools having exemplary volunteer programs that meet the following criteria:

- 1) **A Staff training program** in which a minimum of 80 percent of the school staff have participated in training related to school volunteerism during the school year.
- 2) **A school volunteer coordinator** is designated to provide leadership for the school volunteer program through recruitment, placement, training, and supervision of all participants.
- 3) **A total number of hours in volunteer service** that equals twice the number of students enrolled in the school. Any volunteer activity that contributes to student improvement may be counted. This can include fundraising.

NOTE: Up to (8) hours per day may be counted by volunteer chaperones of academically-related field trips (i.e., bands, plays, museums, Washington D.C., etc.).

SILVER SCHOOL AWARD CRITERIA

The Silver School Award is presented annually to recognize secondary schools with Exemplary peer volunteer/tutor programs that meet the following criteria:

- 1) **The sending school must have a school volunteer coordinator** who provides coordination of the program, placement of students, orientation/training for the students, evaluation of student/program, and supervision of student volunteers.
- 2) **The receiving school must have a volunteer coordinator** who provides coordination of the program, placement of secondary students, orientation/training for the receiving staff, evaluation of student/program, and supervision of student volunteers.
- 3) **Student volunteers and the receiving faculty must both receive orientation and training.** Student volunteers must receive continuous supervision.
- 4) **The composite student volunteer hours must equal at least one half the total. Number of students (FTE count) in the sending school** (e.g., 2,000 students – 1,000 volunteer hours.)

Tips for Writing the Outstanding School Volunteer Award Nominations

Writing a good, concise award nomination can be a challenge. Here are some guidelines to help in the development of clear and explicit nominations.

Because of the large numbers of nominations received for many awards, readers are asked to evaluate the forms. Points are usually assigned to each category on the form. Points are often deducted if the person filling out the form does not follow directions. It is important to give only the information requested and to use the exact space allocated. Do not attach additional pages or information, unless noted on the form; all back-up materials will be discarded.

All forms should be easy to read and appear well organized. Always type, rather than print the information requested on the nomination form. Leave clear margins; never cover every clean space allotted with words. State your thoughts in paragraphs. Never write one giant paragraph if several ideas are expressed. Use the same type font throughout.

Check the eligibility requirements before you prepare the nomination. Most forms will be disqualified immediately if the volunteer being nominated does not meet the requirements. For example, one requirement is that the individual has been volunteering for at least one year. Don't nominate a person who has been volunteering for less than one year. This award is for an individual volunteer. Do not nominate a husband and wife, team, group of volunteers, or a program, institute, or agency.

Provide a clear picture of the volunteer's skills and activities. Be sure to emphasize any unique contribution the volunteer has made. Show relevance by stating how the volunteer's work fits into the "big picture." Explain how the volunteer's work helps accomplish the school district's goals or goals that have been set for the students being assisted.

The nominator must demonstrate the positive outcomes from the volunteer's service. This is your chance to tell about the impact of the volunteer's work on students and teachers. Be sure to include quantitative information; list such things as changes in attitudes of students or staff, pre-test and post-test data, or how a student's attendance rate was improved.

If endorsements are required, give what is requested. Be sure to label each quote so the reader will clearly understand who wrote it. Be sure to have all required signatures on the nomination form.

Nominating individual volunteers for awards is an effective way to provide positive feedback for people who share their time and talents with students and teachers. Take the time to do a good job in preparing the form, and you will increase your chances of submitting a winning nomination.

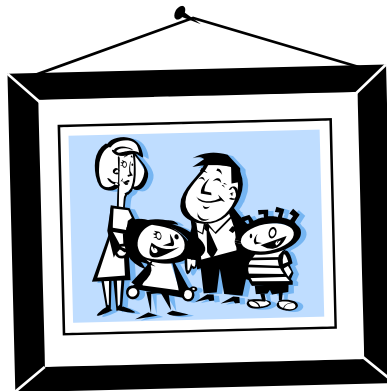
PARENT INVOLVEMENT AWARD

Annually, schools are invited to nominate an outstanding program for family involvement in one of these categories: elementary (preschool - 5th grade) or middle/high (6th grade -12th grade).

There are many successful programs that involve parents in our district. The Florida Department of Education wants to recognize them and share the information with all Florida school districts. As a result, best practices for family involvement will be able to be duplicated throughout the state.

This is an opportunity for schools in Palm Beach County to share their successes with others around the state. To be selected, family involvement programs must be innovative, increase parent involvement, and be easily replicated. The nomination should be generated after input from the school's PTA/PTO or parent organization. Entries must reflect a school project that focuses on a specific school-initiated parent/family involvement program or strategy.

Program winners will have their program outlined in the SPARKPLUGS FOR FAMILY INVOLVEMENT and THE FAMILY RESOURCE DIRECTORY. These are circulated throughout the state by volunteer coordinators, PTA leaders and other family involvement program coordinators. The Commissioner of Education annually recognizes the parent representatives of these programs at the Florida PTA Leadership Conference.





FIVE STAR SCHOOL AWARD



What is the purpose of the Five Star School Award?

The Five Star School Award designates and recognizes schools that have total community involvement. The purpose of this award program is to provide a yardstick for schools to use in an annual self analysis of their level of community involvement. Should a school fall short of 100% achievement, the standards can serve the school as a road map to their destination of community involvement in the school improvement process and in their quest for Five Star status. The Five Star Award program can be compared to an annual road check. In some schools, all the community involvement parts are working at 100%. Some schools will need to re-tool things a bit, while others may need all new parts and still others may need a whole new vehicle. The requirements are reasonable. Some are tougher than others, but they set high expectations for “top of the mountain” achievement.

What is the incentive for the Five Star School Award?

Schools that receive the Five Star School Award will be designated annually, in the fall, reflecting the achievement of the preceding year. It is intended that the celebration of this achievement at the beginning of the traditional school year be a positive way to start the year. It spotlights the value the school places on community involvement and the school's commitment to such. The question of incentives is on the mind of many in the state. Recipients of the Five Star School Award will always receive a certificate of designation from the state, along with the possibility of incentive items provided by the district. Palm Beach County holds the "Superintendent's Five Star Reception" to honor the school recipients where they are presented with a framed certificate and a Five Star Flag to display proudly at their school.

VIPS COUNT! Volunteer Tracking System

The VIPS COUNT! is a web-based application that allows volunteers to enroll and submit their hours for volunteering in any Palm Beach County Public School. With this system, volunteers are screened with a background check performed by the School District Police Department. All approved volunteers are then allowed to log hours volunteering at their favorite school. These include activities such as PTA/PTO, SAC, chaperoning, mentoring, tutoring, office or classroom assistance and more.

In the event a volunteer logs in and receives a message on the screen to “see school coordinator”, it is imperative the school coordinator or school contact the VIPS office. This message appears for various reasons: application error; system error; background questions; or the volunteer needs to be linked to your school. The VIPS office will need to be notified in order to clarify the problem.

Volunteer coordinators can produce several reports that can pinpoint the areas in which volunteers are serving as well as areas in which they are most needed. The ability to create reports on demand allows the volunteer coordinators to spend less time accounting the volunteer hours performed and more time helping students.

When a volunteer would like to volunteer at more than one school, the volunteer will need to tell their school volunteer coordinator. The school coordinator will then contact the VIPS office in order to link the volunteer to the other school(s). A volunteer can only be registered at a total of 6 schools. Should the volunteer need to be registered at more than 6 schools please contact the VIPS office.

Features

- **User friendly format.**
- **Volunteers apply electronically.**
- **Quicker processing of background checks.**
- **Secures sensitive data.**
- **Sign in and out electronically.**
- **Compiles volunteer hours.**
- **Automates record keeping tasks.**



Requirements/ Technical Details

The VIPS COUNT! Tracking system is located on a district server behind the district's fire wall at: <https://vips.palmbeach.k12.fl.us>

VIPS Count! combines several technologies to ease the burden of record keeping. The data is housed in a SQL server back end and uses Active Server Pages technology to display the data.

Microsoft Internet Explorer 5.0 or greater, with the latest service pack, is required to be loaded on the school computer. These browsers are available for free to download from Microsoft's web site.

BENEFITS

- Quicker processing and background checks. This application allows volunteers to apply at the school site and have their application processed quicker than previously possible. Since much of the paper work has been eliminated, the time required to apply and to be approved has been reduced.
- Reports created on demand. With the data being stored electronically, reports can be created quickly and easily. Available reports include total hours volunteered by category, approved volunteer lists and more. Additionally, it can be easily modified for future enhancements.
- Data Security. The data is housed behind the school district's firewall. This means that only computers that are on the school district's network can access data. The data cannot be accessed from non-school site systems. Additionally, the system uses 128 bit SSL data encryption as a protection.



Volunteers Count

VIPS COUNT

VOLUNTEER COMPUTER TRACKING SYSTEM

Condensed Instructions for Volunteers

Application: To complete a new application:

- Enter your user ID (last name, first initial and last 4 digits of your Social Security number).
- Move the mouse pointer and select the “Click to Continue” button. *(Please be sure to read all messages that appear on screen for you.) When you are a new volunteer a message will appear on screen that says, User _____, ending with _____ is not on file, If you would like to sign up to register as a volunteer, please press the “Click to Continue” button. After you click to continue...*
- Fill out application and be sure to complete all sections.
- Once you have completed your application it is electronically transmitted to School Police for review and background screening.
- You can now follow the Sign In procedures.

Sign In:

- Enter your user ID (last name, first initial and last 4 digits of your Social Security number).
- Select the “Sign In” button.
- Fill in your primary volunteering location box giving your physical volunteer location today; e.g: media center, office, classroom number or teacher’s name *(It is very important that you complete this accurately for your own safety and security.)*
- Select the “Submit” button.
- On this screen you will see 4 buttons and several messages: a “Print Name Tag”; “Click to Finish”; “Update Personal Info”; and a “Cancel” button, as well as a Sign Out reminder message and welcome message from the school and volunteer coordinator. Please take a few moments to read the message regularly, as this will be another form of communication used by the coordinator to keep you advised of current events at your school.
- Select the “Print Name Tag” button (Only do this if your school has a label printer.)
- Select the “Click to Finish” button.

Sign Out:

- Enter your user ID (last name, first initial and last 4 of your Social Security number).
- Select “Sign Out” button.
- If you are working in Instructional (e.g., reading/language arts, as a Big Brother/Sister, ESOL), select the down arrow in the instructional column and choose from the list provided. Then, using the down arrow under hours, select your hours.
- If you were working in support services (e.g., as a classroom assistant) select the down arrow, choose from the list provided. Then using the down arrow under hours, enter your volunteer hours.
- Select the “Click to Continue” button.
- Periodically be sure to read this screen because it gives a summary of your hours. This will help you keep track of your time.
- Select the “Click to Finish” button to complete your sign out.

Condensed VIPS Count Computer Instructions

Coordinator's Version

How do you get on the website for VIPS Count? Enter the following address

<https://vips.palmbeach.k12.fl.us>

Application: To complete a new application:

- Enter your user ID (last name, first initial and last 4 digits of your Social Security number).
- Move the mouse pointer and select the “Click to Continue” button. *(Please be sure to read all messages that appear on screen for you.)*
- *When you are a new volunteer a message will appear on screen that says, “This USER _____, ___ ending with _____ is not on file. If you would like to sign up to register as a volunteer please press the “Click to Continue” button. After you click to continue...*
- Fill out application and be sure to complete all sections.
- Once you have completed your application it is electronically transmitted to School Police for review and background screening.
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- Enter your user ID (last name, first initial and last 4 digits of your Social Security number).
- Select “Sign Out” button.
- If you are working in Instructional (e.g., reading/language arts, as a Big Brother/Sister, ESOL), select the down arrow in the instructional column and then choose from the list provided. Then using the down arrow under hours, select your hours.
- If you were working in support services (e.g., as a classroom assistant) select the down arrow, choose from the list provided, then using the down arrow under hours and enter your volunteer hours.
- Select the “Click to Continue” button.
- Periodically be sure to read this screen because it gives a summary of your hours. This will help you keep track of your time.
- Select the “Click to Finish” button to complete your signing out.

Fingerprinting and Background Check

On September 1, 2005 the Jessica Lunsford Act (HB1877) went into effect. This law requires all contracted individuals who are permitted access on school grounds when students are present, who will have direct contact with the children or any other students of the school district, or will have access to or control of school funds to be fingerprinted and background checked.

All volunteers, school based and **contracted volunteers***, will be required to complete an application online at a school-site and will be screened through the district's software system by having his/her name searched against the sexual offender/predator database. There is no cost to the volunteer or school as a result of this clearance. All volunteers are required to complete an application on a yearly basis. It is recommended that you discuss this with your Principal.

** **Contracted volunteers:** This only applies to volunteers whose sole purpose is related to volunteer service and whose contract does not require fingerprinting; including but not limited to volunteers from Foster Grandparents, Junior Achievement, Take Stock in Children, The America Reads Challenge, Listen to Children, etc.*

Generally, volunteers are not fingerprinted. However, if a volunteer had contracted with the district for some other reason unrelated to their duties as a volunteer, they must be fingerprinted to come on campus or have direct contact with students for purposes related to the contract. **Important Note:** Some contracted volunteers may also be required to be fingerprinted if there is a contractual obligation or stipulation requiring that certain volunteers be fingerprinted due to the nature of their specific service.

For a full text of the Bulletin outlining the Fingerprinting and Background Check Guidelines please see Bulletin #P-11949-CAO/COO/CPIO or go to our website at <http://www.palmbeachschools.org/pao/Volunteers/index.asp>

Evaluation of School Volunteer Program

It has been said, “A man’s reach should always exceed his grasp.” So we keep striving for that elusive “perfect program”. To maintain the strengths and improve any weaknesses, to be responsive to and aware of different and changing needs, we must evaluate.

The most important question to be asked during any evaluation is of course, does the program help the children?

Evaluation of the volunteer program ideally should be conducted several times a year; particularly after the first month or two in order to determine a sound and productive working relationship. Toward the end of the year, the evaluation assumes an even greater importance in order to plan for a smooth transition of volunteer services for the next year.

The evaluation can take many forms. One approach may be an informal grouping of administrators, teachers and volunteers, either together or each group separately, discussing expectations and results attained. A formal evaluation can be a written form developed for the teacher, volunteer, or administrator to fill out.

After evaluating the current year, some changes might be indicated for the coming year. Then have a planning conference with the new team – principal, staff liaison, business partner coordinator, and volunteer coordinator to determine needs and strategies for the next year. Or, you might want to consider using a co-coordinator so that someone else would be involved throughout the year and transition would be easier.



VOLUNTEERS IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS PROGRAM EVALUATION

SCHOOL _____ COORDINATOR _____

Directions: You are being asked to complete this questionnaire to assist in the evaluation and improvement of the Volunteers in Public Schools (VIPS) program. Please add any suggestions or comments on the back of this page, including your experiences as a volunteer coordinator. Return the questionnaire to the VIPS office via Pony mail at the close of the school year.

1. Please check the type of volunteers you have at the school:

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| _____ General classroom assistant | _____ Arts and crafts assistant |
| _____ Tutoring | _____ Field trip chaperone |
| _____ Media center assistant | _____ Room parent |
| _____ Mentor | _____ Clinic assistant |
| _____ Typing and clerical work | _____ Fund-raising activity |
| _____ Resource speaker | _____ PTA/PTO board member |
| _____ SAC member | _____ Media center assistant |
| _____ Other (please describe) _____ | |

2. Has the general reaction of the staff to the school volunteers been:

Good _____ Fair _____ Poor _____

3. How many on your staff worked with volunteers? _____

4. Has the liaison between you and the principal in your school been satisfactory?

5. Has the liaison between you and the district VIPS office been satisfactory?

6. Has the help given to individual children or small groups of children tended to improve their achievement level? _____

(If you have statistics or specific examples, please attach.)

7. Were there any problems in connection with volunteers?

8. Has the on-the-job training of volunteers been satisfactory?

9. Do you believe the program is worthwhile? _____

10. Did this service make a contribution to the students in your school?

11. Would you like to the Volunteers in Public Schools (VIPS) program continued at your school next year? _____

12. What type of services would you like to have?

13. What do you feel is the strongest feature of the Volunteers in Public Schools (VIPS) program? _____

14. What do you feel is the weakest aspect of the Volunteers in Public Schools program?

15. What changes, additions or deletions would you suggest in the program?

Evaluation of School Volunteer Program
(To be completed by school volunteer)
VOLUNTEER

Please fill out the following questionnaire to help us evaluate the school volunteer program. Please answer candidly. Your opinions, judgments, and suggestions are needed and will be used to improve next year's volunteer program.

What was your job as a school volunteer? _____

Did you enjoy working as a volunteer? _____

Of all the duties assigned to you, which did you enjoy the most? _____

Which did you enjoy the least? _____

Did you find the people with whom you worked willing to give you guidance and direction?

Did the orientation you received give you all the information you needed before you started to work? _____

How did the children react to you as a volunteer? _____

Did you have a sense of accomplishment in the job you were performing? _____

Do you believe this program is worthwhile? _____

Would you volunteer in the school volunteer program again? _____

Do you have any suggestions for the improvement of next year's volunteer program? (feel free to indicate these) _____

Thank you for your assistance.
Please return to:

Name

School

Special thanks to:

Florida Department of Education

Florida Partners in Education

Orange County Public Schools

Volusia Partners, Volusia County Schools

Partnerships and Alliances Linking Schools (PALS), Sarasota County Schools

Seminole County Public Schools

Community Involvement Office, Duval County Public Schools

Department of Community Involvement, Pinellas County Schools

Partnerships Department, Broward County Public Schools

Business & Education, National Association of Partners in Education, Inc

School-Business/Community Partnerships, San Francisco School Volunteers

