

Merrill Area Public Schools

COMMUNITY VOLUNTEER PROGRAM GUIDELINES

A. Overview

The Merrill Area Public School's Community Volunteer Program literally brings the community into District schools. It provides an opportunity for parents/guardians and other interested adults to reinforce the efforts of teachers and thus enrich the educational opportunities of children.

As "working partners" of school staff, volunteers represent a unique educational resource:

- Volunteers help deepen the community's understanding of school needs and goals.
- Volunteers are invaluable in promoting positive school-community relations.
- Volunteers enrich and broaden learning opportunities for children.
- Volunteers supplement the school curriculum by making available the talents and resources of the community.

B. Community Volunteer Coordinator

Relationship to the Principal: The Community Volunteer Coordinator reports to the principal and carries out functions under his/her direction.

Coordination with Staff: In order to coordinate with staff, the Community Volunteer Coordinator may participate in unit meetings and/or staff meetings, survey the staff for their needs and communicate through notes and telephone calls.

Responsibilities: Recruitment, orientation, screening and distribution of materials to volunteers shall be the responsibility of the Community Volunteer Coordinator. All other duties and activities shall be assigned on a site-specific basis.

Job Description: The Community Volunteer Coordinator's job description shall be developed by each site in order to accommodate the specific needs of each school and shall be constantly changing to meet the needs of each site.

C. Identification of Needs for Volunteers

Volunteers are needed in the schools to provide many services, including but not limited to: fundraising, tutoring, chaperoning events, serving as guest speakers,

supervising group areas, serving as classroom, office or research assistants, assisting with career exploration and providing assistance with school-wide events and programs.

A school volunteer may be a community person with a variety of connections to the students. Some examples of school volunteers may be: parents/guardians, grandparents, siblings, responsible elementary/middle/high school students, retired citizens, business and industry members, extended family, community service organization members, social club members and parents/guardians who no longer have children in school.

Recruitment efforts for school volunteers is an ongoing process. Some methods for recruitment may include: surveying parents/guardians, telephone calling, personal contact, organizing businesses and direct advertising through the media.

D. Explaining the Program to Staff

It is clear that the success of the Community Volunteer Program rests with the principal and staff of a school. It is therefore imperative that the Community Volunteer Coordinator be integrated into the mainstream of staff and school programming. One way to do this is to, at the start of the school year, introduce the Community Volunteer Coordinator at the first staff meeting and distribute the volunteer policy and procedure handbook to all staff members. The Community Volunteer Coordinator may attend staff meetings and take an active role in the happenings of the school. It is important that the Community Volunteer Coordinator work with the staff to meet their needs and to periodically survey the staff for their future needs.

E. Relations with Booster/Parent Organizations

The Board of Education identifies booster clubs/parent organizations as important partners with the school district to promote and enhance school programs and activities. The Board of Education welcomes these efforts by parents and community to provide support for the students involved in their respective programs. However, because of the partnerships, there needs to be an understanding of certain federal/state laws, WIAA rules and regulations, and school policies and procedures to protect parent/community members, schools staff, students and the school district as a whole.

- Booster/parent organizations will comply with all school rules and regulations and Board policy.
- Booster/parent organizations shall not interfere with board operations and the process of education.

- Booster/parent organizations shall establish and maintain bylaws, which are to be submitted to the Activities Director. Modifications should be submitted as soon as they are adopted by the booster/parent organization.
- Booster/parent organizations will submit, to the Activities Director, for information purposes, an annual report, which will include fundraising plans and club officers by the date designated each school year (June 1 or December 1).
- The goal of the booster/parent organization fundraising activities should be for school and/or educational purposes.
- Students may become involved in fundraising activities only in accordance with the district's student fund raising board policy and administrative rule.
- Booster/parent organizations shall keep accurate and complete financial records in order to maintain a historic record of the organization finances.
- The Board reserves the right to accept or reject any gift made to the district from the booster/parent organization.
- The Board reserves the right to withdraw permission to use the district's name, logo or mascot by a booster/parent organization.

F. Volunteer Background Checks

In order to provide for the safety and well-being of the students of the Merrill Area Public School District, the Board of Education requires a background check for all volunteers who work directly with students.

G. Volunteer Policy and Procedure Handbook

A volunteer policy and procedure handbook has been developed at each educational level (i.e., elementary, middle and high school) and shall be maintained by the Community Volunteer Coordinator and principal of each building.

APPROVED: 7-21-99

AMENDED: 2-15-10