

Huntington Seacliff Elementary School

Volunteer Handbook

Purpose of the PTA

To promote the welfare of children and youth in home, school, community and place of worship.

To raise the standard of home life.

To secure adequate laws for the care and protection of children and youth.

To bring into closer relation the home and the school, that parents and teachers may cooperate intelligently in the education of children and youth.

To develop between educators and the general public such united efforts as will secure for all children and youth the highest advantages in physical, mental, social and spiritual education.

Welcome

Dear Volunteer,

Welcome to the Huntington Seacliff School Volunteer Program. On behalf of the children and their teachers, I want to thank you for helping us provide the best possible education for our children. Your support will offer the staff and students valuable assistance in whatever capacity you have chosen. As a volunteer, you can be sure your contribution is needed and valued.

This handbook was prepared to assist you in your role as a volunteer. Basic techniques that you can use to aid children in learning are discussed briefly. Seacliff staff members are always on hand to offer assistance and answer questions. For those new to Seacliff, we will be presenting a short orientation of the school to include sign-in and safety procedures, in the upcoming weeks.

We are most grateful for the time and talents you are donating to our program. You make Seacliff School a great place to learn.

Thank you for your partnership in education.

Sincerely,

Mr. Andrzejewski

Sign-In Procedures Check- List

PLEASE NOTE: All volunteers must have proof of a negative Mantoux TB test on file with our office before volunteering in our classrooms. This proof is valid for four years from the test date.

- Dress appropriately.
- All visitors and volunteers need to have a valid government ID card that will be scanned by office staff.
- Report to your assignment on time.
- We count on you! If you are unable to attend at your time, please email the teacher as far in advance as possible so students and teachers can be notified. Your reliability is vital to student success and the students look forward to working with you.
- Meet your students and develop a rapport.
- Be patient in dealing with children.
- Praise pupil successes and efforts.
- Refrain from conversation with other volunteers that is unrelated to learning activities, while in the classroom and learning corridors.
- Sign out and return your badge, as you leave. Please total your time.
- Restrooms are available in the school office and on campus. No smoking, eating, or drinking is allowed in the classrooms.
- Younger siblings are not allowed to accompany parents while volunteering in the classroom.
- Staff member(s) should be present when volunteers are working with children

Code of Ethics for Volunteers

1. Classroom work is always confidential. Do not discuss students with anyone except the teacher.
2. Refrain from comparing children within the classroom.
3. Since there are as many different methods of teaching as there are teachers, do not compare teaching methods. There is no one best way to do anything.
4. Work positively for the good of the school. Constructive criticism should be directed only to the supervising teacher or principal.

DO'S & DON'T OF VOLUNTEERS

<u>Do</u>	<u>Don't</u>
*praise and encourage	* berate or belittle
*tell children good things about themselves	* act in an indifferent manner
*be consistent	*criticize the teacher
*try to understand how each child feels	*allow a child to disturb others
*express concern and show interest in each child	* lose control and say something which might be regretted.
*observe school rules	
* practice a "hands-off" policy while working with students.	

Simple Control Techniques

1. The best techniques are preventative. Know the standards and set them before each lesson (e.g., "Today we will walk slowly to the library. You will raise your hand when you finish your work".)
2. State the actions in the positive – "Walk quietly" instead of "Don't run!"
3. Get group body action involved, i.e., "I know you are listening if your hands are on your head, shoulder, lap," etc. (demonstrate).
4. Provide a model. "I am looking for someone who . . . follows directions first, is finished, is listening, is like Tom, and has his eyes on my eyes."
5. Count slowly to 5 or 10 when you want clean-up to occur.
6. Give positive praise – "What a nice line leader, line 'ender' too!"
7. Excuse kids by who is wearing blue, has green eyes, etc.
8. Be firm and consistent. Children are taught to be respectful. If a child chooses not to be respectful or follow directions, kindly take him/her to the teacher.

Positive Words & How Children Learn

- Wow!
- Way to go!
- Good Job!
- Keep it up!
- That was great!
- Fantastic!/Fabulous!
- Don't you feel proud?!
- Right On!
- Bravo!
- Wonderful!

How Children Learn

- Children learn by doing, not by passive observance.
- Children learn by asking questions and by searching for answers to their questions.
- They learn by discovery.
- They learn by using all their senses when possible.
- They learn by experimenting.
- They learn by sorting and combining objects and ideas.
- They learn by repeating experiences.
- They learn by building confidence in themselves.
- They learn behavior by observing the people they respect.

Why Bother

As the old man walked down the beach at dawn, he noticed a young man ahead of him picking up starfish and flinging them in the sea. Finally catching up with the youth, he asked him why he was doing this. The answer was that the stranded starfish would die if left until the morning sun.

"But the beach goes on for miles and there are millions of starfish," countered the other. "How can your efforts make a difference?" The young man looked at the starfish in his hand and threw it safely in the waves. "It makes a difference to this one," he said.

-Irv Furman

Volunteering Tips

- Just ask! If you don't understand the task the teacher has assigned for you ask for clarification.
- The volunteer should leave the technical job of teaching to the teacher.
- Call the child by name at each opportunity.
- Praise the child for even the smallest success.
- Observe the total child and carefully watch his response as you work.
- Approach the subject in a very specific way. In planning with the child, keep your expectations few, short, and clear. Present alternatives instead of "no-no's."
- State directions in a positive form, e.g., "Use the blocks for building," rather than, "Don't throw the blocks."
- Volunteers should remember that each session is also a language experience with speaking, listening, reading, and writing. The volunteer is an example and should speak in a quiet, controlled voice (inside voice.)
- Try to be honest in your responses to the child. Show genuine feeling, and while rejecting inappropriate behavior, accept all children.
- Let children observe you as a model for appearance and behavior, i.e., sharing, showing respect, talking quietly, taking turns, etc.
- Find out exactly where each child is in his work by asking him to explain to you some of the work which has preceded this assignment.
- Let the child work out as much as he/she can on his/her own. Provide encouragement, but don't step in too soon.

Volunteering Tips (Cont'd.)

- Refrain from doing the work for the student. Rather than giving a child the answer when he asks, direct his thinking so he can discover the answer himself. (e.g., "How can I subtract 63 cents from just \$1.00?" Volunteer replies, "Well, how many cents are in one dollar?")
- Let the children combine and sort their own ideas using their five senses.
- When speaking to children:
 - Praise their good efforts.
 - Use a tone of voice that encourages and makes them feel confident.
 - Avoid comparing children and their work.
 - Give children a choice only if you intend to abide by the choice.
- To avoid negative reactions from the children you work with:
 - Instruct them as though you expect them to comply.
 - Give sufficient redirections and time (e.g., "I bet you can get the next 10 problems solved in the next 5 minutes!")
 - Be sure a child understands what you are saying. We sometimes use words that children do not know. Ask them to repeat directions.
 - Keep your voice as low as possible. The children get louder as your voice gets louder.
 - Rewarding good behavior and ignoring poor behavior encourages the good behavior. The reward might be a smile or compliment.
- Using these methods takes more time than just giving children the answers, but don't feel you need to hurry. It is essential that the child understand what he or she is doing before going any further.