

VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK



**MANZANITA
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
3000 E. Manzanita Ave.
Tucson, AZ 85718
(520) 209-7800**

Principal Kim Boling

WELCOME TO MANZANITA!

Welcome and thank-you for your willingness to volunteer your time and energy working with students and staff at Manzanita Elementary School. We know you'll enjoy your volunteer experience. Each year, many volunteers tell us they receive so much more in return than they give to the program. By sharing your time with our students and staff you will:

- Be given the opportunity to use your skills and talents;
- Gain a better understanding of how children learn;
- Have a chance to meet and work with teachers and other volunteers;
- Know that the work you are doing effects the quality of education for the children of our community;
- Have a great chance to learn valuable new skills that you might use in future endeavors.

VOLUNTEERS REPRESENT THE SCHOOL

As a volunteer, you not only serve the needs of the children, you also provide a vital link between the school and the community. Students, their parents and the community will view you as a representative of the school. They will pay close attention to what you say about the staff and the educational programs.

Because of your volunteer experience, you'll be able to share the many positive things that students and staff are doing. You'll have an opportunity to let the community know what's going on in their schools. (Remember not to share confidential information.)

GETTING STARTED

Every volunteer who works for the Catalina Foothills School District (except parents of children enrolled at the school in which they are volunteering) must be screened and complete a volunteer application and registration/emergency form *before* he/she begins work. The information you provide is especially important in the event that you become ill or are involved in an accident while on campus. In accordance with our district policy, new volunteers **MUST** be screened by the principal of the school in which they are volunteering *before* beginning work.

We also want to make certain that you are aware of our district volunteer policies and the other information, which is included in this handbook.

Please complete the attached Volunteer Registration/Emergency Form & return it to the school office.

VOLUNTEER GUIDELINES

SIGN IN PROCEDURES

Each volunteer **MUST** sign in and out in the school office.

For security reasons and in case of emergency, it is important for administrators to know who is on campus and why. In addition, the district must have a record showing the days and hours each volunteer works on campus for the purpose of liability insurance coverage.

Lastly, a record of each volunteer's hours enables the school to evaluate its volunteer program and recognize volunteers for their contribution of time.

VISITOR BADGES

Each volunteer should obtain a visitor badge from the main office. You will be immediately recognized as a person whose specific purpose is helping students and teachers. Without visitor badges, volunteers are sometimes mistaken for "strangers" as they move about campus. Your visitor badge will enable the staff and students to recognize you as a registered volunteer and an important part of the school's educational team.

SUPERVISION OF VOLUNTEERS

School volunteers always work under the direct supervision of the professional staff at each school and only with those teachers who have requested the services of a volunteer. We realize that some volunteer situations may require volunteers to be alone in a one-on-one situation with a child. If your volunteer situation is such, you will receive your assigned student meeting location from your direct supervisor, either the teacher or an administrator. The district is responsible for the education, safety and well-being of each student. For this reason, you can understand why the teacher or principal must dismiss any volunteer whose actions are not in the best interest of the school or students.

CONFIDENTIALITY

As you work with the staff and students, information of a confidential matter may be shared with you. The problems, abilities, relationships and confidences of students, their parents and the staff should never be discussed with anyone who does not have a professional right or need to know them.

Like teachers, volunteers are bound by a code of ethics to keep confidential matters within the school. **The staff and students need to know they can trust you.** Please do not discuss a child's school progress or difficulties with his/her parents. This is the teacher's responsibility.

Occasionally, a child might confide in you about family matters or personal problems. Keep this confidential, too. If you feel that it is vital for the school to have this information in order to help the student, discuss the child's conversation (in private) with the teacher or principal.

DISCIPLINE

Students rarely have behavior problems while working with volunteers. However, Manzanita has detailed discipline plans, and the responsibility for discipline rests with the professional staff. Volunteers may *not* discipline students. Please make the teacher aware of any discipline problem that might arise while you are working with a student.

RESTROOMS

Staff restrooms are available for volunteers. We ask that you do not use student restrooms.

CELL PHONES

Please refrain from talking or texting on personal cell phones while in classrooms. Please check with the teacher before photographing any child, other than your own.

DISMISSAL OF STUDENTS

Volunteers may never dismiss a student from school. Children who must leave school early for any reason must receive permission from the school office and sign out before leaving. Under no circumstances may a volunteer take a student off campus.

DRESS AND BEHAVIOR

Take your lead from the professional staff and dress appropriately for the job you are doing. It is best to neither overdress or underdress. Casual clothing is fine, but we ask that your attire be neat and conservative. Your appearance should attract no undue attention. Keep in mind that you are in a position to set an example for students. Your speech and behavior should serve as good models for them to follow.

HEALTH

If you are not feeling well, don't try to keep up your volunteer duties in spite of an illness. You'll accomplish more in the long run if you allow yourself time to recuperate. (Do call in advance to let the teacher know you won't be coming in at your scheduled time, however.)

Schools are particularly concerned about keeping students and staff healthy. This is another reason for staying away from school if you have a contagious illness.

SMOKING

The possession or use of tobacco products is prohibited in all school grounds, facilities, parking lots, playing fields, buses and off-campus school-sponsored events.

YOUR COMMITMENT

Before you agree to volunteer, carefully consider the commitment you are making. The work volunteers do is important. Whether they work in the classroom, school office, library media center, or health office, the staff and students quickly become dependent upon volunteer assistance. Don't promise to volunteer more time than you will be able to follow through with. It's better to start out with a few hours a week and gradually build up to more hours or days if you find you have the additional time.

DEPENDABILITY

Please be prompt and reliable! We know there will be times when you will be ill, on vacation or unable to volunteer for one reason or another. However, please let the staff know as far in advance as possible. Remember, the teacher will be expecting you on the days you are scheduled to volunteer and so will the children! If you fail to show up at your appointed time on your appointed day, everyone is disappointed. *Please, telephone the school office and leave a message for the teacher or staff member with whom you work to let them know in advance if you will be unable to volunteer.*

FIND OUT ABOUT SCHOOL RULES

Become familiar with the rules and policies of Manzanita by reading through our school's handbook.

FIRE DRILLS/EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Please follow the directions of your supervisor in the event of a fire drill or a school lockdown drill.

MANDATORY REPORTING LAW

Arizona law requires any school personnel who reasonably believes that a minor has been the victim of (1) child abuse, (2) a sexual offense--e.g., sexual abuse, sexual conduct, sexual assault, indecent exposure, sexual exploitation, furnishing pornography to a minor; (3) neglect or (4) physical injury that is non-accidental shall immediately report this to law enforcement by calling 911. Mandatory reporting laws require that anyone responsible for the care or treatment of a minor must immediately report or cause to report this information. When calling 911 you should state you are making a "mandatory report."

As a volunteer in the school, you are expected to immediately report any knowledge of the above to a school administrator and the child's teacher. You should make your report immediately and in person. You will be asked to complete a form, Reporting Child Abuse/Child Protection, documenting your report to law enforcement.

POLITICAL ACTIVITY

Volunteers may never use school district equipment, materials, buildings, or other resources for the purpose of influencing the outcomes of elections. They cannot wear political buttons, T-shirts, hats or other items displayed on their persons or apparel that

are designed to influence the outcome of an election in a classroom, in any other instructional setting, or at a school-sponsored extracurricular event at which they are supervising or assisting with the supervision or organization of the extracurricular event.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE STAFF

Volunteers are an important part of the educational team. The suggestions and opinions of volunteers are always welcome. It is the professional staff, however, that is held responsible by law for the decisions that are made regarding the instruction of students and the management of the school. For this reason, volunteers always work under the direct supervision of teachers and administrators.

Is there anything volunteers should not do?

Yes! The professional staff at your school is responsible for everything that goes on in your building including student instruction, safety, and discipline. Volunteers supplement and support the program, but may **NOT**:

- provide the curriculum or teaching plan
- discipline students
- take charge of the classroom for any length of time
- have access to materials in students' permanent record files (psychological records, grade cards, health histories, etc.)
- diagnose student needs
- evaluate achievement
- counsel students
- discuss student progress with parents
- use their volunteer status to encourage students to associate with them outside the school environment
- give students food
- give students advertisements or fund solicitations

A VOLUNTEER IS NEVER CONSIDERED A SUBSTITUTE FOR A MEMBER OF THE SCHOOL STAFF.

HELPFUL HINTS

Δ **Call students by name at each opportunity.**

A child's name is very important. Make every effort to pronounce and spell each child's name correctly.

Δ **Closely observe the techniques used by the teacher.**

Try to model these instructional methods when working with students.

Δ **Accept children as they are.**

Each child is unique. Some children may be very different from your own child(ren). Be ready to accept these differences in background, values, vocabulary, and aspirations.

Δ **Be firm with students, but also be warm and friendly.**

Let each child know that you care about him/her.

Δ **Encourage and praise students.**

Use positive comments that will make children feel good about themselves even when they are having difficulty. Avoid saying anything that will make students feel bad about themselves or their ability to learn. Be ready to praise children for even the smallest successes!

Δ **Remember that children never forget.**

If you promise them something, be prepared to keep the promise. Be careful not to make promises that you will be unable to keep.

Δ **Encourage students to do their own thinking.**

Try not to give students the answers before they have had an opportunity to solve questions on their own. Give children plenty of time to answer your questions. Silence often means that a child is thinking. Beware of the occasional students who may try to get you to do their work for them.

Δ **Follow the teacher's lead.**

Always be consistent with the teacher's rules for classroom behavior. Don't allow children to do things their teacher doesn't allow. Remember, the teacher is always available and ready to handle discipline problems. Make sure the children with whom you are working do not disturb the rest of the class.

Δ **Reinforce positive behavior.**

When children (especially younger students) are displaying appropriate behavior, always let them know how proud you are of them and how much you appreciate their effort. This will encourage them to try even harder. If possible, do not pay attention to a child who shows minor misbehavior problems, but do note things the child is doing well and praise him/her for it.

Δ **Remember it's okay if you don't know all the answers.**

Admit to the children that you don't know the answer or aren't sure what to do. Work the answers out together with the students or feel free to ask the teacher for assistance.

Δ **Keep students on task.**

You'll want the children to learn as much as possible during the short time they spend with you. Keep the lesson or activity moving. Try to avoid letting one or more students get you or the group off track for long periods of time by discussing topics that have nothing to do with the lesson.

Δ **Supervise students carefully.**

Under no circumstances should you leave a student or small group of students without supervision. Always be fully aware of what students are doing at all times.

Δ **Know when to give or not to give.**

Your positive words of encouragement will go a long way in helping students to become excited about learning. Younger children may also enjoy stars, stickers, stamps and especially little notes of praise from the volunteer. You and the teacher can discuss the use of these motivational materials.

***Thank you for volunteering at Manzanita!
Our staff and students appreciate your time
and contributions.***

Manzanita Elementary Volunteer Registration/Emergency Form

Name: _____
Phone: _____
Address: _____
Child's Name _____
Teacher: _____ Grade: _____

IN CASE OF AN ACCIDENT/EMERGENCY WHO SHOULD WE CONTACT:

Name: _____
Relationship _____ Phone# _____
2nd Contact _____
Relationship _____ Phone# _____
Your Doctor _____ Phone# _____
Hospital Preferred: _____ Phone# _____
Comments: _____

***I HAVE READ AND UNDERSTAND THE INFORMATION IN THE
VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK.***

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____