

MCCOMB SCHOOL DISTRICT

VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK

The McComb School District (MSD) is thankful that you have chosen to volunteer your time to assist our scholars. Your support greatly increases the opportunity to meet the individual needs of each scholar. We realize your time and skills are very valuable and encourage parents/guardians and other members of the community to share their time, knowledge and abilities with our scholars. Community volunteers in our schools enrich the educational programs and strengthen our schools' relationships with families, businesses, public agencies and private institutions.

Again, thank you for making a difference in the lives of scholars in the MSD.

If you are interested in helping a scholar succeed, you can register to volunteer by calling (601) 684-4661.

MSD encourages volunteerism in the schools for the following reasons:

- ❖ Volunteers, parents or other adults in the community provide scholars with enriched or additional learning experiences through their special skills and interests
- ❖ Volunteers, in many instances, relieve teachers of certain routine duties, freeing them to devote more time to their professional duties
- ❖ Volunteers serve the district's need for community input in planning efforts by serving on committees, councils, and study groups. These efforts also build a support base for the needs of schools in the community
- ❖ Use of volunteers can increase the educational program's flexibility as well as opportunities for personal attention and assistance to individual scholars

GUIDELINES

A. Definitions

1. A "volunteer" is a person or group who has successfully completed the MSD volunteer training process, including background check and child abuse authorization, in order to provide services of his/her own free will to MSD. A volunteer receives no financial payment for such services.

2. A “volunteer hour” is one for which the school or school district pays no monetary remuneration

B. Goals

1. Strengthen the involvement of parents in the education of children
2. Increase participation of business and industry in schools
3. Broaden community engagement in schools
4. Establish mutually beneficial partnerships with business and industry, community organizations, and local churches
5. Establish awards and recognition for individuals, businesses, and organizations that contribute to effective partnerships

C. Considerations

1. All volunteers should be under the direct supervision of certified personnel, except in the case of office help; administrative assistants may supervise those volunteers.
2. Volunteers should never have access to scholar records. Volunteers may request to view their own child’s records under the **Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA)** by contacting the school guidance counselor.
3. Volunteers who tutor a specific child must always respect the child’s privacy.
4. Volunteers are helpers only. The direction of scholars, particularly in the classroom or teaching area, is the teacher’s responsibility and cannot be delegated to a volunteer. A volunteer supports the teacher’s instructional objectives.
5. In addition to occurring during school hours, volunteer hours may also serve the school and scholars away from the school building. Examples may include making calls from phone lists, constructing school materials at home, or serving as chaperones for after-school activities.

D. Recruitment

1. Principals, school staff, and parents can recruit volunteers to serve MSD scholars. Volunteers will be recruited from all cultural and socioeconomic areas of the community.

E. Areas of Use

1. Following are some examples of ways volunteers may assist. For specific examples, please visit MSD website and select a specific school.

- ❖ Laminating
 - ❖ Photocopying
 - ❖ Folding/preparing newsletters, brochures, etc.
 - ❖ Helping during book and/or science fairs
 - ❖ Reading with scholars
 - ❖ Assisting in library/media center
 - ❖ Tutoring
 - ❖ Checking homework assignments
 - ❖ Checking scholar materials
 - ❖ Organizing materials
 - ❖ Assisting in the computer lab
 - ❖ Taking classes to lunch or recess
 - ❖ Assisting in preparation for special events
 - ❖ Assisting with bus duty
 - ❖ Serving as guest speaker for career awareness
 - ❖ Maintaining science and math kits
 - ❖ Helping with Field Day
2. Volunteers will supplement and enrich programs and services in MSD, but will not substitute for employee activities and functions.

F. Rules & Regulations

1. Volunteers must adhere to the stipulations detailed in **the Application and Approval Process**.
2. Volunteers, including those who serve the school on boards, committees and other planning groups, should record volunteer hours by signing the volunteer log in the main office. These volunteers include PTA members, booster club members, and members of committees.
3. At all times while performing service, a volunteer will be required to wear and clearly display the school-issued volunteer nametag on his/her person. The nametag must be picked up from the school's/building's main office each time the volunteer volunteers. This tag cannot be used to gain admission to district-sponsored events.
4. Volunteers will provide an appropriate adult role model, by offering support and encouragement, while displaying a positive attitude.
5. If a volunteer applicant is unwilling to agree to the requirements in the MSD Volunteer Application, the principal will inform the applicant that he/she may not perform volunteer services in the MSD.
6. All volunteers who coach for an athletic team are subject to the rules and guidelines for volunteer coaches as presented in the *Mississippi High Schools Activities Association* and in the *McComb School District Athletic Handbook*.

G. Application and Approval Process

Volunteers who will have direct contact with scholars must do the following:

1. Complete a MSD volunteer application and successfully complete the MSD volunteer training process, including a criminal background check and child abuse authorization.
 - a. A volunteer applicant who will not authorize a criminal background check will automatically be ineligible to serve.
 - b. A volunteer applicant who is found to have falsified information on the application will be ineligible to serve.
2. Receive initial volunteer training from the district representative. Initial volunteer training will address bloodborne pathogens, sexual harassment, and procedures in schools.
 - a. Volunteers who have had initial volunteer training in past years will be required to renew their eligibility by updating their MSD volunteer application and participating in refresher training to address bloodborne pathogens, sexual harassment, and procedures in schools.
 - b. Volunteers who are employees of MSD receive annual refresher training to address bloodborne pathogens and sexual harassment and, therefore, should just be given a copy of the *McComb School District Volunteer Handbook*. No additional training is required.
3. District Responsibilities:
 - ❖ Sign and date the MSD volunteer application
 - ❖ Send the application to the designated school via district courier and email
 - ❖ Notify principals when volunteers have met the training requirements

H. Training and Orientation

1. Each school will thoroughly orient volunteers to the duties to be performed.
2. Volunteers must be acquainted with the overall operation of the school, including what is expected of all employees.
3. Volunteers are to be cautioned about discussing confidential school matters.
4. Training at local schools must not be held simultaneously with school-sponsored functions. Volunteers must not have to choose between attending a school function and a volunteer training. It is appropriate to hold trainings prior to or immediately following a school-sponsored event.

5. All volunteers will be informed of the following:
 - ❖ Volunteer guidelines, policies, and procedures
 - ❖ Expectations for creating positive school climate
 - ❖ Safety and security issues
 - ❖ Confidentiality – All communications are to be kept strictly confidential. Information about a scholar may be shared only with the teacher practitioner, principal, or guidance counselor of the school.
 - ❖ Transportation
 - ❖ Dress Code
 - ❖ Sexual harassment
 - ❖ Bloodborne pathogens
6. The district will provide multiple training sessions at various locations at various times of the day.
7. High school volunteer coordinators are encouraged to “take the training” to the first meeting of booster, athletic, and academic support groups each fall.
8. Volunteers serving as test monitors are not required to participate in volunteer training since they will not have direct contact with scholars, but they are required to complete a MSD volunteer application, and sign in and sign out in the school’s volunteer log.

I. Supervision

1. Volunteers working in schools will be under the direct supervision of an accountable member of the school’s staff. Periodic assessments should be made to ensure that volunteers are working productively with scholars. Volunteers are helpers; the planning of scholar programs, particularly in the instructional area, is the responsibility of the teacher practitioner.
2. When arriving at school during regular school hours, volunteers will sign in and sign out using the volunteer log in the school office.
3. Volunteers who jeopardize the security or safety of a facility or office or those who are inappropriately dressed may be denied access to the school.
4. If a volunteer is injured while on school premises or while providing volunteer services, he/she is to report the injury to the principal or building administrator.
5. The final decision to accept or reject a volunteer applicant rests exclusively with the principal or building administrator.

J. Relationship between Schools and Volunteers

1. School staff will be courteous to volunteers and show respect for their contributions. Likewise, volunteers will be expected to extend courtesy and respect to school staff.
2. Any issues that may arise will be referred to the school principal or building administrator.

K. Departure and Dismissal

Although MSD is not limited to the reasons below, a volunteer can be terminated for the following:

- ❖ Breach of confidentiality concerning scholars or other privileged information
- ❖ Unlawful conduct or breach of MSD rules or regulations or school site rules
- ❖ Physical or emotional stress which incapacitates the volunteer
- ❖ Inability to cooperate and work effectively with site staff and scholars
- ❖ Activities that threaten the order or security of the site or the safety of the volunteer
- ❖ Erratic or unreliable attendance or behavior
- ❖ Unsatisfactory service
- ❖ Sexual misconduct
- ❖ Providing falsified information on the application
- ❖ Establishing inappropriate relationships with scholars
- ❖ Criminal charges or conviction of a crime

L. Recognition

Volunteer recognition will be planned by schools in cooperation with the district Community Engagement Department.

M. Role of the District

MSD will provide:

- ❖ A handbook for volunteers, assistant principals, principals, and building administrators
- ❖ Training for volunteers
- ❖ Publicity for recruiting volunteers
- ❖ A method for evaluating the program
- ❖ Volunteer recognitions at the end of each school year
- ❖ Criminal background checks on all volunteers
- ❖ Child abuse authorization checks on volunteers

P. Volunteer Insurance Coverage

1. Volunteers are strongly urged to carry personal accident and injury coverage through a personal insurance policy as MSD is not permitted, by law, to provide personal injury or workers compensation insurance coverage to volunteers.
2. Therefore, if anyone is hurt while volunteering on or off campus for any facility in MSD, the district is not held responsible. Volunteers must report all injuries that occur while volunteering to the principal, assistant principal or building administrator.

Elementary Level Volunteer Opportunity Suggestions

The suggestions listed below are inclusive but not exhaustive. Think of other ways that volunteers can help.

1. Tell stories to scholars
2. Listen to scholars read
3. Conduct flash card drills
4. Provide individual help
5. Assist in learning centers
6. Set up learning centers
7. Reproduce materials
8. Work in media center
9. Practice vocabulary with non-English speaking scholars
10. Make instructional games
11. Play instructional games
12. Prepare visual materials
13. Develop programmed materials
14. Prepare bulletin boards
15. Help with book fairs
16. Help underachievers

17. Reinforce reading fluency
18. Help select library books
19. Assist with field trips
20. Make props for plays
21. Set-up or run bookstore or book exchange
22. Gather resource materials
23. Help scholars with arts and crafts
24. Check-out books from the school/public library
25. Set-up experiments
26. Make list of library resources
27. Prepare teaching materials
28. Proctor test-taking sessions
29. Discuss careers or hobbies
30. Reinforce learning the alphabet
31. Reinforce recognition of numbers
32. Drill recognition of color words
33. Talk to scholars. Be a friend
34. Help scholars with motor skill problems
35. Make puppets
36. Dramatize a story
37. Set up “grocery store” to practice math skills
38. Drill spelling words
39. Tell stories
 - a. - with puppets
 - b. - with flannel board
40. Assist with sing-a-longs
41. Discuss care and training of pets

42. Demonstrate different artistic abilities
43. Discuss the importance of understanding others
44. Discuss attitudes, feelings and emotions
45. Share ethnic backgrounds and experiences
46. Discuss farm life and farm animals
47. Demonstrate gardening skills
48. Help prepare assembly programs
49. Discuss holidays and special occasions
50. Discuss aspects of safety
51. Share information about local history
52. Demonstrate pioneer crafts
 1. - weaving
 2. - candle making
 3. - soap making
 4. - musical instruments
 5. - toys and dolls

Secondary Level Volunteer Opportunities

Fewer volunteers are used in secondary schools than at the elementary level. However, there are many ways in which they can help in middle and high schools. Below is a list of ways that secondary level schools can utilize volunteers:

1. Sign up as a special speaker about career-related topics and experiences, etc.
2. Help scholars find answers to questions about careers
3. Help scholars on special projects
4. Help scholars with resource materials in the library
5. Read textbooks to scholars with reading programs
6. Assist in science labs
7. Assist in vocational classes
8. Assist in developing school publications

9. Assist in putting on scholar performances
10. Assist in organizing a college fair
11. Assist teachers in gathering resources for units of study
12. Serve as tutors
13. Serve as a listener for scholars
14. Assist in arranging and supervising special school events

McComb School District is committed to the principle of equal opportunity. It is the policy of the district not to discriminate on the basis of race, religion, sex, color, age, national origin, immigrant status, English-speaking status, familial status, or disability with regard to its scholars, employees, or applicants for admission or employment.