



# Wildomar Elementary School Volunteer Handbook

## Mission Statement

The Mission and purpose of Wildomar Elementary volunteers is to support in providing a caring environment that is rich in learning. It requires a servant's heart. As a volunteer, you inherit an important role in supporting teachers with a variety of tasks that will help them to be more efficient: modeling proper behavior, attitude, dress, and conduct for our students, and sharing/supporting the school's intended vision, both while on campus and in the community.

Dear Volunteer,

I am overjoyed that we are able to provide a Parent Volunteer Center on our campus. This room is created to give parents a way to become involved with our school while having an opportunity to connect with other parents as well. This room will allow teachers to have support with clerical tasks, such as making copies, creating bulletin boards, and laminating. It also provides administration another way to share some of the wonderful programs, trainings, and information with our parents. **It is important to keep one idea at the center of everything we do, and that is that we are here for the children of Wildomar Elementary.** If our actions and efforts do not align with this idea, we need to redirect our efforts. I hope you will join us in providing a great elementary experience for our children.

Thank You,

Michael Hoffman

Principal

Wildomar Elementary School

## Who is a School Volunteer?

A school volunteer is a person willing to take time to share wisdom and experience with those on the threshold of the future. A school volunteer helps to expand and enrich the students' learning experiences by working **under the direction of teachers and school staff.**

## Qualifications -

*You should have:* a genuine interest in students, a professional commitment to your volunteer activity, regular attendance, a cooperative attitude, flexibility, good health, and a willingness to attend training sessions, as needed.

## Roles and Responsibilities-

The first responsibility of a volunteer in our Parent Volunteer Center is to follow the instructions of our volunteer coordinator. The volunteer coordinator is a valuable resource to the parent volunteer, as she will:

- Work with teachers to gather clerical classroom support tasks for our volunteers.
- Assist volunteers in acquiring volunteer badges.
- Match interested volunteers with other volunteers on campus, as appropriate, to the volunteer's abilities and the site's needs.
- Provide information related to school events, projects, and other news.
- Provide trainings for parents.
- Work to recruit additional parents to give time to volunteer at or for Wildomar Elementary.

Other responsibilities of parent volunteers include:

- Modeling elementary-aged appropriate dress and conduct while on or around our campus.
- Maintaining a safe and orderly volunteer center.

- Possessing a heart that is wanting to work to serve our students and school. Remember that every task you perform, large or small, will have a positive effect for our school.

## Health regulations-

***Please stay at home if you are ill.*** This includes a cold, sore throat, or cough. You may think you are leaving the teacher or parent liaison shorthanded, and you may want to volunteer even though you are not well, but doing so is not good for you, the children, or the teacher. Please call the school and leave a message for our parent liaison when you have an unforeseen absence. Children learn by example, and we ask that you, as a role model, use good health habits when you are at school.

## Appearance and Manner-

Volunteers should be well-groomed and dress professionally. Hats, short skirts and shorts, exposed midriffs, low cut blouses, and inappropriate graphics/language on t-shirts are not allowable for students, let alone volunteers. If you are not sure how you should dress, please ask the parent liaison. Volunteers should also set a good example to students by maintaining professional conduct and language.

## Confidentiality-

Volunteers must maintain strict confidentiality concerning information they learn about students or faculty. Keep information about students between yourself and the teacher and/or parent liaison. A misplaced comment can be devastating to a student, the family, and the volunteer program. If you have questions or concerns, talk with the teacher, parent liaison, or the principal.

## Sign in/Out-

When volunteering, always:

- 1) Report to the school office or volunteer center in room 2 and sign in.
- 2) Always return to the sign in sheet in order to sign out when you leave.
- 3) Wear your ID badge (If you do not possess a badge, you must get a visitor sticker. A sticker will limit your access to room 2, and if you become a regular volunteer in our volunteer center, you will be required to acquire a volunteer badge). Signing in and out is important, particularly if we have an emergency and are called to account for the safety of the adults on our campus.

Other benefits of this process include:

- Safeguarding our students and maintaining campus security is of the utmost importance.
- Verified volunteer service can be used as work experience for future employment.
- Individual volunteers may be recognized for their dedication and service to our schools. The record of volunteer attendance is one basis for consideration of these awards.
- It provides documentation related to our school and district's LCAP goals.

## Orientation-

Orientations may be provided early in the school year for new and returning volunteers, or on an 'as needed' basis by our parent liaison. Volunteer opportunities will be reviewed, and school policies and procedures will be explained.

## Volunteer Hours-

Our Parent Volunteer Center in room 2 will be open during the work hours of our parent liaison. Currently, our parent liaison works from 8:00am-11:00am. These hours may differ or be changed as needed to meet the needs of our staff and students.

## Non-enrolled students on campus-

We understand that some parents desire to volunteer, but are limited due to having a preschool aged child. While children who are not enrolled at Wildomar Elementary are not allowed on campus without administrative consent during school hours, at the discretion of our parent liaison and administration, parents may bring non-enrolled children to our volunteer

center in room 2. It is that parent's responsibility to provide adequate supervision for any non-enrolled child who has been cleared to come. The ability to bring a non-enrolled child is a privilege and may be cancelled if adequate supervision is not provided. It will be at the discretion of our parent liaison or administration if a parent may bring a non-enrolled child or if that privilege is cancelled.

## Making the right Match-

From preparing materials for a lab experiment, to cleaning lunch tables, or mentoring/tutoring a student one-on-one, there is a volunteer job to suit every person's background and interest. Following is an overview of possible volunteer opportunities available at Wildomar Elementary. Our school reserves the right to recruit volunteers for job positions of need at our school. To help with the placement process, please consider the following:

- Would you like to work directly with students?
- Would you like to be a tutor or a classroom assistant, an office worker, motivator/mentor, or to work with exceptional students?
- Do you have special talents and/or skills that would benefit music, art, drama, physical education, or an extracurricular program?
- How much time can you commit to volunteering?
- What days or hours do you prefer?
- Can you make a weekly commitment, or are you only available occasionally? • What experience do you have that would prepare you for your volunteer job?
- What is your motivation for volunteering?

Even if you are unsure whether you would like to volunteer, you are welcome to visit room 2 to learn more about how you can partner with us to create a great place for our students to work and grow.

## Important Volunteer Guidelines-

### The do's

- **VOLUNTEERS MUST MAINTAIN STRICT CONFIDENTIALITY** concerning information they see and hear about students and staff, *including students' grades, records, and abilities.*
- **Volunteers must always be supervised when working with students.** They may not supervise a classroom or give permission for a student to leave a classroom. These are the teachers' responsibilities.
- **Volunteers must turn cell phones off while on campus. You may have them on while in room 2.**
- Volunteers' discussions with teachers should not interrupt class time.
- Volunteers should set a good example for students by their **manner, appearance, and behavior.** They should be well-groomed, appropriately dressed, and maintain professional conduct/language.
- Volunteers should be in good physical and mental health.
- Volunteers should contact **ONLY** school staff members with any concerns regarding students.
- Volunteers are assigned only to staff members who request their services.
- All volunteers must sign in/out and wear a badge or an identifying name tag while on a school campus.

### The Don'ts

- **Volunteers DO NOT discipline students.** Parents may provide helpful, positive "instruction" to students regarding better ways to act. Report any discipline problems to the teacher or liaison.
- **Volunteers do not diagnose student weaknesses and strengths, prescribe activities for students, or evaluate student progress.**
- Volunteers may not take photographs of students, unless permitted by a school administrator for a school project. **Never** post any student photographs or student information on social networks.
- Volunteers may not conduct personal business at school.
- Volunteers may not hold informal parent/teacher conferences or leisure conversations with staff members or other volunteers during volunteer time.
- **Comparing and criticizing teachers and students is not acceptable volunteer behavior.**
- **Volunteers are not to bring preschool children into the classroom during instruction time. This presents a liability issue, and is disruptive to the classroom.**

- Volunteers should never touch students in any way that is aggressive, disciplinary, or sexual in nature.
- Volunteers may not give any medication to students.

## Communicating with students-

Should you be placed in a volunteer role where you will be interacting with students, the following suggestions are provided to help you communicate with students to get positive results.

- Be sure the students understand what you're saying. We sometimes use words they do not comprehend.
- Keep your voice as low as possible. The students will get louder as your voice increases in volume.
- Instruct students as though you expect them to comply. Give sufficient warnings and time. Example: "*Jason, in five minutes you'll need to stop painting and put your apron away.*"
- If students gain your attention and praise only when they behave, they will soon learn that you expect proper conduct. Avoid words that criticize a student.
- Positive statements greatly influence students' attitudes about themselves and contribute to their success-building experiences.

Some expressions to support our students include:

- "I like the way you're working."
- "That's right! Good for you."
- "That's quite an improvement."
- "Good thinking."
- "I'm very proud of the way you worked today."
- "It looks like you put a lot of thinking into this."
- "That's respectful behavior. Thank you!"

## Bill of Rights for a Tigercub Volunteer-

A dedicated school volunteer has:

- *The right to be treated as a co-worker*, not just as free help or as a once-in-a-while convenience.
- *The right to a suitable assignment*, with consideration for personal preference, temperament, life experience, education, and employment background.
- *The right to know as much about the organization as possible*: its policies, its people, its programs.
- *The right to training for the job*, thoughtfully planned and effectively presented.
- *The right to sound guidance and direction* through pre-service orientation and in-service training.
- *The right to continued exposure to information* about new developments.
- *The right to a convenient place to work*, conducive to work, and worthy of the job to be done.
- *The right to a variety of experiences*, the periodic transfer from one activity to another, and the opportunity to perform special assignments.
- *The right to be heard*, to have a part in planning, to feel free to make suggestions, and to ask questions and get answers.
- *The right to recognition* in the form of awards and through day-by-day expressions of appreciation.

## Becoming a 'Badged' volunteer with the Lake Elsinore Unified School District-

While a single approved visit to observe in a class or a similar visit to our parent volunteer center does not require a badge, if you plan to be a regular volunteer to our parent volunteer center, are invited to volunteer beyond room 2, or wish to attend a field trip, class party, or event, you will need to apply and receive a district volunteer badge. Our office staff, administration and parent liaison encourage you to apply and can assist you in this process. Included at the end of this packet is the information related to the volunteer badge process.

## Answers to Questions you may have-

### **I do not have teaching experience. Can I still volunteer?**

Yes! A teaching background is not required since volunteers work under the direction of the professional staff.

**Qualifications for a school volunteer are:** a personal desire to help, sincere interest in students, ability to follow

school procedures and policies, and a willingness to make a definite time commitment. Any necessary training will be provided by the parent liaison, a teacher, or at a special workshop.

**How do I find out which volunteer services are needed?**

Our parent liaison will assist you in matching your desire to help with a task suited to your interest, availability, and abilities. The first need will generally be classroom clerical work, such as making copies, cutting materials, and delivering copies to classes.

**I'd like to volunteer, but I can't offer my services on a regular basis. Can I still volunteer?**

Yes! You may volunteer on special school projects or with PTA/PTSA. The time commitment will depend on the specific project. Another possibility is to arrange to take volunteer work home to execute at your convenience.

**I would like to volunteer, but I have a preschool child. Can I bring my child with me?**

At the discretion of administration and our parent liaison, parents may be able to bring a preschool aged child to the parent volunteer center in room 2. Non-enrolled students are not allowed beyond room 2. Non-enrolled students are not allowed to access the playground under any circumstances.

**May I choose the teacher with whom I want to work?**

Volunteers are placed only in classrooms where teachers have specifically requested assistance.

**Suppose I don't feel qualified to perform the assignment I have agreed to undertake?**

Feel free to say so. Remember, there are many different jobs. Talk to your teacher/supervisor or volunteer liaison for possible reassignment. You may also call the district office for placement at a different school.

**What do I do about discipline?**

Disciplinary action is the responsibility of the teachers and school staff. *Volunteers do not enforce discipline.* Think instruction instead of discipline. Request students to work according to the rules in the classroom. Immediately notify the teacher if there is a discipline problem.

**My friends and neighbors will ask me about school. What may I say?**

We want you to talk about your school and your involvement, but you may have access to "privileged" information, which must be treated as confidential. Privileged information is important school business and must never be discussed outside of the school. Also, remember that criticizing school personnel and school practices are not acceptable. While at our school, you are a professional working with other professionals. It is particularly important to remember this when you participate in social media. The words we speak can have profound consequences, but are limited in time and space. Words we post can be permanent, and the consequences equally permanent.

**If you choose to Volunteer at Wildomar Elementary, not only are you appreciated, but you become an active member of the Tigercub Family. Thank you!**