

School District of Prairie Farm Volunteer Program



Prairie Farm Schools offer a wide variety of volunteer opportunities for parents, grandparents, and members of our community. Volunteers are an important asset to our school district.

Purpose of Volunteer Program

- Enrich and enhance students' learning.
- Enable teachers to offer more individual attention to their students.
- Provide individuals an opportunity to participate in a variety of activities within the school.
- Promote and strengthen the partnership between families, community and the school.

Why Volunteer

- Volunteering is an opportunity for you to show your children . . .
- Your interest in their school life.
- Your commitment to the community.
- Your belief that education is a partnership between family and school.
- Your belief that learning is a lifelong process.

Personal Benefits of Volunteering

- Experience the satisfaction of helping people.
- Develop new skills.
- Meet new and interesting people, develop new friendships.
- Share your time and talent.

Student Benefits

- Students will see a clear relationship between families, community and school.
- Students will develop a feeling that school is important because they see their parents and community showing an interest and becoming involved.
- Students' self-confidence improves when they notice the interest and involvement their families and community have in their school activities.
- Students are able to demonstrate firsthand their activities to their families and community.
- Statistics prove that students' achievements are higher when their families are involved in their school activities.

PROCEDURES WHEN VOLUNTEERING

Volunteer Application Form

Complete and return your Volunteer Application Form and Criminal Record History Release Form to the school office before starting your volunteer assignment.

Sign-In

Stop in the office immediately upon entering school. Volunteers are asked to sign-in each time they work at the school. The sign-in book is located in the office. For security reasons, and in case of an emergency, it is important for the principal to know who is in the school and why.

Please be sure to record the time you volunteered before you leave. If you do volunteer work at home keep track of the time and be sure these hours are recorded. The hours you volunteer are calculated and sent to the district office, so it's important that we have all your time recorded. In addition, a record of our volunteer hours enables the school to evaluate its volunteer program and recognize volunteers for their contribution of time. The hours spent volunteering are an example of the commitment to quality education at our school.

Name Badges

Pick-up a name badge when you sign-in. By wearing a name badge designated for volunteers, you will immediately be recognized as a person whose specific purpose is to help the students and staff.

If You Must Cancel

Call the school as soon as possible if you are unable to come when expected.

Summary of Volunteer Responsibilities

1. Complete and return your Volunteer Application Form and Criminal Record History Release Form before starting your volunteer assignment.
2. Sign-in when you enter school.
3. Wear your name badge.
4. Ask questions.
5. If you have constructive criticism...tell us! We welcome your comments.
6. If you are unhappy with the assignments tell us.
7. Please let us know what kind of assignments you enjoy.

GUIDELINES FOR VOLUNTEERING

Accept Direction

Accept direction and supervision. While recognizing that you are an important leader, you do not take the place of a staff member, but are a supplementary person who offers assistance and enrichment with your personal skill and competence.

Appearance

As representatives of Prairie Farm School District, volunteers, like staff, are responsible for presenting a good image to students and to the community. Volunteers shall dress appropriately for the conditions and performance of their duties.

Assignment

If the assignment does not prove to be what you expected, please notify the supervising staff person. If you feel hesitant to discuss it with the staff person, please contact the school principal.

Be Dependable

Come when promised and on time. Students, staff and other volunteers count on you. If you are unable to keep a commitment, call the office and leave a message for the appropriate teacher, chairperson or volunteer services coordinator as far in advance as possible.

Communications

Keep good communications with staff, building volunteer services coordinator and other volunteers. Any question is a good question - be sure to ask! Make every effort to arrange a time to talk with the teacher when there are problems or questions.

Confidentiality

Information regarding our students is confidential. Prairie Farm School District is regulated by state confidential rules and regulations.

1. No information can be shared regarding a student, without the written and witnessed signed consent of the adult student or underage student's parent or guardian.

2. Discussing personal information regarding an adult student or underage student will be cause for disciplinary action and/or lead to termination of the volunteer.

Confidentiality is important to the integrity of our program. It is important to respect the privacy of all students, staff and other volunteers. Never repeat anything you have heard or seen about individuals while volunteering.

Cultural Differences

Our Prairie Farm community is diverse in certain areas. It is important that we work with one another positively and consider cultural, moral, and value differences.

Discipline

Volunteers may not discipline students beyond maintaining order in their group or activity. Please report any problems with students' behavior to the supervising staff person. The professional staff of the school is always responsible for discipline.

Job Duties

It is important that all volunteers stay within the parameter of the assignment that the teacher or supervisor has directed. Consult with the teacher or supervisor if you have any question regarding your assignment.

Mandatory Reporting

Volunteers are considered "mandated reporters." That means, you must report when you have knowledge or reason to believe that a child is being or has been neglected or physically or sexually abused. Report any incident or suspicion immediately to a staff person.

Record Keeping

Keeping accurate records is an important part of the volunteer program. Accurate records allow us to assist volunteers who might request records for use on job applications, they allow us to track how, when, and where volunteers are utilized in the district and they serve in future program planning. Accurate records enable us to recognize the contributions of all volunteers.

Religious, Racial or Sexual Harassment

Religious, racial or sexual harassment is a violation of federal and state law and of Prairie Farm School District policy. Copies of Personnel Policy, Policy Against

Sexual Harassment and other school district policies may be obtained at the district office or viewed on the district website: (www.prairiefarm.k12.wi.us) Volunteers are required to observe all school policies.

Staff Responsibilities

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 school management. For this reason, volunteers always work under the direct supervision of the professional staff. The professional staff is responsible for everything that goes on in the building including student instruction, safety and discipline.

Student Contact

As a volunteer you will meet many students and will enjoy working with them! However, volunteers should not telephone students, visit them at their homes or meet students off school grounds without permission from the parents and/or school principal. In addition, when working with students, whether individually or in small groups, we recommend you work in a highly visible area. This is not only for the protection of students but volunteers as well.

Tax Deductions

Some of your out-of-pocket expenses connected with volunteering may be deductible when you file your income tax. Consult with your tax advisor concerning your personal tax situation.

Use of Controlled Substances

It is important that we are in compliance with the Regulations of the state of Wisconsin which prohibits the manufacture, distribution, possession or use of controlled substances in the workplace.

Value in Dollars and Sense

Volunteers are a valuable asset to our school. They dedicate many hours of their time to give teachers more time to teach and to provide opportunities for students to learn and enjoy school. Volunteers represent a great gift to the district and to the children who attend its schools!

What I Shouldn't Do as a Volunteer

Volunteers supplement and support the program, but may not:

- have access to student permanent record files
- diagnose student needs
- make final evaluations on student achievement
- counsel students
- discuss student progress with parents

TIPS FOR WORKING WITH STUDENTS

- Call students by name; be friendly and caring.
- Be enthusiastic, patient and kind.
- Praise success.
- Be honest with students. It's OK to say, "I don't know."
- Be comfortable with silence. Allow student time to think and form answers.
- Do not give any student materials on your own without first discussing it with the teacher.
- Accept students as they are. Be sensitive to differences in background, culture, religion, values, vocabulary and aspirations.
- Never make a promise you can't fulfill.
- Do not eat candy, snacks or gum when working with students unless it is part of programming.
- Be dependable and prompt.
- Keep calm in an emergency.
- Maintain your sense of humor!
- And by all means, enjoy yourself! You have the opportunity to make a positive difference in someone's life! How wonderful is that!

NOTES

General Information

Parents are their children's most important educators throughout their learning years! That's what the Prairie Farm School District is all about supporting parents and other family members as involved educators of their children and supporting school staff in working with parents as partners.

For information about...

Volunteer Program Information

Prairie Farm School District
630 South River Avenue
Prairie Farm, WI 54762

Elementary Office-715.455.1615
MS/HS Office-715.455.1861
www.prairiefarm.k12.wi.us

UNITY

*I dreamed I stood in a studio
and watched two sculptors there.
The clay they used was a young child's mind
and they fashioned it with care.
One was a teacher;
the tools he used were books and music and art.
One a parent with a guiding heart.
Day after day the teacher toiled
with touch that was deft and sure,
while the parent labored by his side
and polished and smoothed it o'er.
And when the task was done,
they were proud of what they had wrought,
For the things they had molded into the child
could neither be sold nor bought.
And each agreed he would have failed
if he had worked alone,
For behind the parent stood the school
and behind the teacher the home.
- Author Unknown*

This document will be provided in alternate formats upon a 72 hour request to accommodate people with disabilities. Please call Elementary Office-715.455.1615
MS/HS Office-715.455.1861

EDUCATING FOR CHARACTER

Prairie Farm's Core Values

- to show consideration for self, others and property.
- to carry out obligations in a dependable manner; to acknowledge the consequences and rewards of one's choices; to contribute to society.
- to show empathy, generosity, kindness, patience and sensitivity.
- to display honesty, perseverance, confidence and pride, trustworthiness, and the courage of one's convictions.
- to recognize and honor the dignity of each individual; to celebrate differences among culture, gender, ability; to work cooperatively with others and to resolve conflicts.



