

# ***Spooner Area School District***

## **VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK**



### ***Mission***

*In partnership with our community, the Spooner Area School District will provide a stimulating learning environment that prepares and encourages each student to*  
***Dream, Believe, Achieve and Excel***  
*with integrity and responsibility to become a contributing citizen.*

Updated September 2007

# *Volunteer Pledge*

## *Information*

*We will share with you as much as possible about our school, our policies, our people, and our programs.*

## *Training*

*We will provide you with the training you will need to do the job you volunteered for.*

## *Direction*

*We will answer your questions thoughtfully. You will receive guidance from people who are experienced and well informed.*

## *Respect*

*We will consider your personal preferences, life experiences, education, and employment background in any volunteer assignment. Your ideas, suggestions and opinions will be valued.*

## *Recognition*

*We will remind you daily of our appreciation for your valuable assistance.*

# WELCOME!

Thank you for your interest in volunteering with Spooner Area School District. We hope that your experience will be rewarding and satisfying. Your contribution to the educational environment here in Spooner is very important to students and staff.

This handbook offers volunteers specific information related to the duties and responsibilities of volunteers within the Spooner Area School District. Materials within this handbook will also provide volunteers with a basic understanding of developmentally appropriate practices for working with school age children.

If you have questions or need additional information on training or resources, please contact your site's volunteer coordinator.

Thank you for your time, interest, and involvement in our area's greatest resource – Spooner students!

Dr. Don Haack  
District Administrator



## VOLUNTEER ETTIQUETTE

### PRIVACY

- ❖ **Be confidential.** A child's work and behavior is to be held in confidence. Discuss problems with staff or the Volunteer Coordinator, not with other volunteers, parents, or in the community. Please understand that each time you go into school, only fragments of a whole year of learning and growing are observed. Communication between you and the teacher is the key to providing a good learning atmosphere for everyone.
- ❖ **Protect privacy.** Do not ask for a child's address or phone number. Do not share your address or phone number with the children. When asked about a particular student or circumstance, please respond, "*That information is confidential. Sorry I can't discuss it with you.*" or "*Please check with the child's teacher.*"

### SAFETY

- ❖ **Always think "safety first"** when dealing with children. Always keep children in your line of vision. It is important to continually scan all children for safety when in a large group setting. When in a small group setting, it is best that you keep doors open and have another adult present.
- ❖ **Notify a staff member** in the case of a serious problem such as a discipline problem, discrimination, an accident involving blood or if a child confides about an abusive situation. Staff will do the necessary follow up.
- ❖ **Follow "safe touch" suggestions.** Volunteers do not *initiate* touching a child (hand holding, hugs, lap-sitting), but may respond to child's initiation of an appropriate touch. Please know that hugs are not appropriate in school. Respecting a child's right to say "no", volunteers may ask a child if he/she would like a hand shake or a "high five."
- ❖ **Leave student transportation to school staff and to parents.** Volunteers should not transport students in private vehicles. If parents or the parent-designated driver is late to pick up a child, try to make telephone contact with the parents. If parents are unavailable, attempt to contact others listed on the child's information sheet. In the event that no one from the child's family is available, contact your volunteer or site supervisor. The supervisor will make arrangements for the child's transportation.
- ❖ **Gifts for individual students are inappropriate.** Don't bring gifts or food treats for *individual* students. With staff approval, volunteers may bring snacks for the entire classroom (for the staff to distribute when appropriate) or they may make a donation for the classroom.

## VOLUNTEER IDENTIFICATION

- ❖ **Sign in and out at the office** upon arrival and departure. Greet office staff and the teacher or supervisor with whom you are working.
- ❖ **Wear your name badge** for identification. You will need to have your photo taken prior to your first day so that your badge will be ready for your first volunteer assignment.

## RESPECT

- ❖ **Be respectful of children's diversity** of culture, religion, and background. Don't assume the child celebrates the same holidays (Christmas, Easter, Halloween, or even birthdays). Also don't assume the make-up of a child's "family" (size, race, gender, or blend) or the family's economic status. Practice correct pronunciation of the children's names if they are unfamiliar. Show interest in the children's cultures and learn more about them.
- ❖ **Show respect by using formal names.** As a matter of school policy, students will refer to you with a Mr., Ms., Mrs., or Miss in front of your last name. In the presence of students, staff will also refer to you this way. Please refer to all of the adults this way as well in order to be consistent for the children's sake.
- ❖ **Be courteous of instructional time** that staff members have set aside to update you on project-specific needs. We are very pleased that you are donating your time to our children and enjoy having you as a part of our program. However, please save the conversational part of the visit for a more appropriate time as teachers need to adhere to a fairly rigid schedule. Your understanding of this matter will be greatly appreciated.

## COMMUNICATION

- ❖ **Complete** the required paperwork and attend orientation and training sessions as needed.
- ❖ **Communicate.** Ask questions, share ideas, get to know the staff and other volunteers. Don't hesitate to call, leave a note, or ask for a meeting with the Volunteer Coordinator to discuss any problems or concerns that may arise. Every problem can be solved with respect and honest communication.
- ❖ **Be prompt and dependable.** If possible, please call at least one day in advance to let staff know you will not be there at your scheduled time.
- ❖ **Ensure positive closure.** If you plan on ending your volunteer involvement before the end of the year, please notify the staff and the Volunteer Coordinator. It is especially important that the children be left with a clear message that you have enjoyed working with them.

## ATTITUDE

- ❖ **Bring a smile**, lots of praise, positive feedback and your willingness to work. Friendliness can be contagious and is an important part of your contribution to our school.
- ❖ **Be honest** in your approach and attitude.
- ❖ **Be patient** when working with students. They may be having difficulties of which you are not aware. Your patience will work wonders.
- ❖ **Be flexible** in responding to the needs of children and staff.
- ❖ **Be a positive role model** for children in attitude, behavior, language, and dress. Let your conversations demonstrate respect for others, and avoid using language that may be perceived as discriminatory, sexist, or offensive.

*Everyone can be great because anyone can serve.  
You only need a heart full of grace  
and a soul generated by love.*

~Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

## Questions You Might Ask At Your Site:

- Is there a safe place for my coat/belongings?
  - Hooks will be made available in the front hallway corner at the elementary school. You may leave your belongings in the Prep Room in the middle school.
  - Loss and/or damage to personal belongings is not the responsibility of the school.
- Where is the adult bathroom?

Please use the staff bathrooms in or near the Prep Room at each site.
- What should I do if a child is disruptive or uncooperative?

Talk to your cooperating teacher or the Volunteer Supervisor for your site about the disciplinary role you are to play before you begin. If you are involved in the after school program, your role may be more involved than other positions. Be sure that you are comfortable with whatever is decided. All volunteers are expected to follow the district's discipline policy.
- Is there a telephone I can use?

The phones have been installed in the classrooms for school business; i.e. calling the office, other staff members, or parents. They are not for personal use. In the case of an emergency please use the phone in the Prep Room or a classroom phone may be used in an after school program.
- How do I know if school has been closed due to bad weather?

Notice of school closings will be given over Shell Lake, Rice Lake, and Hayward radio stations.



**SPOONER AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT  
VOLUNTEER JOB DESCRIPTION**

**POSITION TITLE:** Spooner Area School District Volunteer

**SITE:** Spooner Elementary School/Spooner Middle School/Spooner High School

**OBJECTIVE:**

- To provide support for the education of our community's children
- To assist school age children in developing their potential beginning with a focus on math and language arts skills.
- To enhance children's self-esteem and confidence through patience and encouragement.
- To participate in a district wide initiative to promote community and family involvement that improves communication, volunteerism, and school/community interaction.

**RESPONSIBILITIES:**

- Sign in on the Volunteer Log at the beginning and out at the end of each session.
- Complete a volunteer log at the beginning and end of each session.
- Let the Volunteer Coordinator know your strengths, talents, and abilities as well as the duties you prefer. This helps assure that you are matched with duties that you will enjoy.
- Direct any questions or concerns to the Volunteer Coordinator at your site.
- Notify the classroom teacher or Volunteer Coordinator in advance if you are expecting to be absent. In the event of an unexpected absence, call the Volunteer Coordinator as soon as possible so that a replacement volunteer may be found or the child(ren) can be prepared.

**QUALIFICATIONS:**

- Interest in and comfort working with school-age children.
- Willing to be flexible and patient.

**OPERATION AND TRAINING:**

- The Volunteer Coordinator will be willing to discuss and address any concerns.
- District wide volunteer trainings will be held each fall.

**BENEFITS:**

- Volunteers will receive immeasurable appreciation for their time and efforts.
- Volunteers will receive training and materials specific to the volunteer duties.
- Volunteers will be supported by a Volunteer Coordinator, who acts as a volunteer advocate.
- Volunteers can express their creativity and innovation while facilitating learning, especially in the after school program (i.e. via a puppet show, craft, game, play, etc.).

**SPOONER AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT  
VOLUNTEER AGREEMENTS**

**CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT**

I understand that during my time as a volunteer within Spooner Area School District, I may learn confidential information regarding students, parents, and district personnel. Sharing this information with anyone other than the Volunteer Supervisor and school administrators is considered a breach of trust.

I agree that I will hold all such information in the highest confidentiality, and that failure to do so may result in my dismissal from the Volunteer Program.

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Volunteer Signature**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

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**CONFIRMATION OF VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK RECEIPT**

I acknowledge that I have received a copy of the Spooner Area School District's Volunteer Handbook. I agree to follow the policies therein.

I understand that receipt of the Volunteer Handbook does not constitute a contract between Spooner Area School District and myself, nor does my participation in Volunteer Orientation and Training guarantee my assignment to a volunteer position within Spooner Area School District or my acceptance of any volunteer duties offered to me by Spooner Area School District staff or Volunteer Coordinators. I will contact school personnel if anything changes in my criminal history record.

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Volunteer Signature**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

*You are invited! As a volunteer, you*  
Your gift of time, talent, and experience will you provide tutoring support, after school clerical assistance. No matter what your our school!



*can help children learn!*  
benefit Spooner students, whether activities, teacher assistance, or interest, we can match you with a place in



On the form below, please indicate how you are willing to help. We have provided a list to give you some ideas, but you may have others as well. We welcome your suggestions. This form may be returned in person or by mail to the school office. We will contact you regarding future involvement.

Volunteer Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Check opportunities that are of interest to you:

**After School Program: (3-5 PM/M-TH)**

- Assist in a Club
- Distribute Snacks
- Tutor/Mentor Students in math/reading
  
- Lead a 4-H Group
- Supervise Recreation Time

**Time with Students:**

- Small Group or one-on-one Tutoring
- Manage a special interest team
- Help in the Lunch Room
- Assist/lead service learning projects
- Chaperone Field Trips
- Help during Book Fairs
- Help reshell books and help students pick out books
- Help in Computer Lab
- Speak to Students about your career, hobby, or culture
- Assist at a curriculum night ( i.e. Family math night...)
- Help Teacher in Class
- Help with Sewing or Art Projects
- Assist with Literature Circles
- Help with Classroom Plays
- Be a Special Friend to a student during special events
- Help the School Nurse (Distribute Fluoride, Weigh and measure students, etc.)
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

**Time supporting students:**

- Spooner Middle School PTA
- Help with Bulletin Boards
- Facilitate a parent training session on a topic of knowledge to you
  
- Help Teacher Prepare Classroom Activities from Home (projects, crafts, etc.)
- Clerical Work
- School Garden
- Farm to School

\*New opportunities arise often-check the school website for updates\*

Please list any volunteer jobs you are currently doing at Spooner Schools:

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Please list background information and experience that would make you a good choice for one of our volunteer opportunities: \_\_\_\_\_

Please list any hobbies, talents, or occupations you would like to share with students/staff:

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## IMPORTANT TELEPHONE NUMBERS

Volunteer Coordinator	635-0243
Spooner Elementary School	635-2174
Spooner Middle School	635-2173
Spooner High School	635-2172
Spooner Area School District Office	635-2171



*Volunteers play an important role  
in the education and development of children.  
We all benefit from the work of people like you  
who generously give their time, talents, and energy.  
Although you may not always see it,  
you ARE making a difference  
in the lives of the children  
with whom you work.*