

VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK



June 2025

CONTENTS



Welcome



Vision and Mission



Procedures



Volunteer Opportunities



Our Team



Thank You

*We ♥ our
Volunteers*



Vision

100% Student Success

Mission

Educate and Prepare Each Student for College, Career and Life

Core Values



WELCOME

This handbook will help you make a smooth transition into volunteering with an overview of the district volunteer program and the variety of opportunities that are available.

This is the first step towards making a positive and significant impact on students through the excellent education programs offered in Pinellas County Schools. Volunteers provide opportunities to enhance the educational experience for students, while supporting teachers and staff. They also help build a strong foundation for students as they choose a career path and/or post-secondary education.


Through your support we can help students get excited about school and the future, while having a positive attitude that will help throughout life. By modeling the kind of expectations students need to succeed, you help them become productive citizens of the community. We urge you to become an advocate and share your positive volunteer experience with others, encouraging them to get involved!

There has never been a more exciting time to be part of Pinellas County Schools. Thank you for joining us.

Sincerely,
Office of Strategic Partnerships
Pinellas County Schools



PINELLAS COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD POLICY 9180- VOLUNTEERS



The purpose of this policy is to promote and encourage school volunteers in order to expand and enhance parental, community, and civic involvement within schools while maintaining an adequate level of school safety and security. This policy establishes the framework for volunteer service in schools through the Office of Strategic Partnerships.

Read the full Board Policy including the volunteer eligibility requirements [PCS Policy 9180](#)



VOLUNTEER PROCEDURES

Approval

Ready to get involved and make a difference in the lives of our students? Here's how to become an approved volunteer:

- All new volunteers must complete an online volunteer registration form www.pcsb.org/volunteerregistration and provide a copy of a government-issued photo ID (i.e., driver's license, Florida ID card, passport or military ID).
- Once your application has been processed, you will be notified via email about your approval status. This can take up to 3 weeks depending on the time of year.
- Returning volunteers only need to reactivate in the volunteer system on a yearly basis by logging into their profile and answering the screening questions. They do not need to fill out the volunteer registration form again.

Background Screening

- All volunteers must pass a Level I local/national criminal history background check before they can begin volunteering.
- A more stringent screening, called Level II, is required for all volunteers who are allowed unsupervised contact with students. Before a volunteer obtains a Level II screening, they must register, and receive, an approved Level I background check. Level II information can be found at www.pcsb.org/level2. All Level II volunteers will receive a photo ID badge that they must wear while volunteering.

Orientation

- Prior to being placed as volunteers, the Family & Community Liaisons or College & Career Coordinators at the school, will provide you with a brief orientation on school policy and procedures.

Sign In

- All volunteers must sign-in at the school front desk through the Ident-A-Kid system. The front office staff will assist. A gov't issued ID or your Level 2 badge is required. Your cooperation enables us to locate you in case of emergency and provides liability coverage if you are injured.

Student and Staff Volunteers

- PCS students who wish to volunteer must be registered before they can begin volunteering. We welcome students from 5th -12th grade to volunteer.
- PCS staff who volunteer outside of paid or flex hours are required to complete the online volunteer registration and log their hours in the volunteer system.

Confidentiality

- Volunteers are to maintain strict student, employee and volunteer confidentiality.
- Volunteers who will be in roles that expose them to confidential information are required to view the confidentiality video and sign the confidentiality form.

Responsibilities

- Volunteers will follow school guidelines for student dress code. Dress comfortably, but remember that you are a role model for our students.
- Volunteers will work under the direction and supervision of an assigned teacher or other PCSB staff member at all times.
- Level 1 volunteers must stay in the sight of a PCS employee or level 2 volunteer at all times.
- Volunteers must avoid physical contact beyond handshakes with students.
- Smoking, tobacco products, and alcohol are not permitted at any time on our school campuses.
- Volunteering is a privilege. If policies and procedures are not followed, the school-district has the right to revoke the services provided.

Changing Schools or No Longer Want to Volunteer?

- Contact the school Family & Community Liaison or College & Career Coordinator to update your associated schools or to have your profile removed from the system.

Children Not Registered at the School

- Volunteers are asked to not bring preschool aged children with them to any volunteer assignments. These children present a liability issue for the school and prevent the volunteer from giving undivided attention to the task at hand and to the students. This applies to volunteering at the school and on field trips.

Student Emergencies

- It is the responsibility of school staff to care for sick or injured students. Volunteers must not administer medication to students. Volunteers do not move injured students. In an emergency, contact school staff who will initiate proper procedures.

Schedule

- Because the students and teachers depend on you, please do your best to be prompt and dependable. If an illness or an emergency arises, please call the school office and ask that the teacher be notified that you are unable to volunteer on that day.
- Alternately, the school should advise volunteers ahead of time if volunteering will be interrupted by school breaks, testing or other reasons.

Logging Hours/Contact Information

- Volunteers will be given a login and password to be able to log their hours and keep their contact information up to date in the Volunteer System. Hours should be logged as Instructional (mentor/tutor) or Support depending on the type of volunteer work. Your volunteer hours are extremely important. Schools are eligible to receive various Department of Education awards based on their total number of volunteer hours for the school year. The Office of Strategic Partnerships also recognizes volunteers in various ways throughout the school year. If you need assistance logging your hours please see the school Family & Community Liaison or College & Career Coordinator.

Discipline

- Discipline of students is the responsibility of the school staff. Any problems should be reported to the teacher or an administrator.

Parking

- Please park in visitor/volunteer or unassigned parking spots at our schools.

Abuse Reporting Procedures

- Under Florida Statute 39.202, “any person who knows or has reasonable cause to suspect, that a child is abused...shall report...” . If you suspect abuse please see a School Administrator immediately. FLORIDA ABUSE HOTLINE 1-800-96A-BUSE (1-800-962-2873)

Injured While Volunteering?

- Volunteers should report any incidents involving injuries to the principal and school secretary (within 24 hours when possible). If the major contributing cause for the need for treatment is within the course and scope of your volunteer duties, you will be directed to an authorized Urgent Care Center under the PCS workers’ compensation provider network. Treatment for a serious or life-threatening emergency may be received from any emergency facility. You will be asked to complete a claim worksheet form prior to going for treatment. The school will provide you with a form that you can take to the Urgent Care Center for treatment.

Report Infractions

- All volunteers must self-report any arrest, conviction, finding of guilt, withholding of adjudication, commitment to a pre-trial diversion program, or entering of a plea of guilty or Nolo Contendere for any criminal offense other than a minor traffic violation within forty-eight (48) hours to the Office of Professional Standards and the Director of the Office of Strategic Partnerships.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Classroom Assistant

Volunteers work with teachers to assist students with instructional centers, tutoring in academic subjects, and various projects. Volunteers assist teachers with clerical work and are engaged in classroom activities.

Athletic Coach

Volunteers work with school sports teams under the direction of the paid coach.

Parent Teacher Associations (PTA/PTSA)

These organizations are a group of parents/ guardians who work as a team to assist the school with the academic performance of students. The PTA/PTSA represents the voice of parents' rights and responsibilities.

Mentor

Mentors are caring adults and older youth who are willing to provide the necessary ongoing support, guidance and friendship to our students. Mentors must undergo additional training.

Front Office

Volunteers assist greeting visitors, data entry, answering telephones, filing, and other assorted office duties.

Boosters

Many school sports teams, bands, and clubs have Booster organizations made up of volunteers to fundraise and provide additional support to the group. By School Board policy, all officers must be registered volunteers.

School Advisory Council (SAC)

Schools elect SAC members to represent a broad cross section of the school's student body. SAC functions as a resource to the principal. Members work as a team to accomplish school improvement goals.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Chaperones

Approved volunteers may be asked to accompany students on field trips. See more information in the Field Trips section of this handbook.

Media Center/Library

Volunteers in the school library/media center help fill teacher and student requests for services. They may also work at the circulation desk, catalogue and shelve books, use a computer, mend books and operate audio/visual equipment.

Gus A. Stavros Institute- Home to Enterprise Village and Finance Park

- Enterprise Village is the school system's "mini-mall" -- an economic education project for fifth-grade students. Volunteers help students as they learn about the free enterprise system through hands-on experiences in one of the mall businesses. Volunteers serve as shop supervisors, shop owners or consumers, as well as doing tasks such as pricing merchandise, advertising products, serving customers and managing a small business. Training is required.
- Finance Park is the hands-on simulation for eighth-grade students which enables them to build foundations for making intelligent, lifelong, personal and financial decisions. Volunteers assist students in developing their budgets and managing their finances, as well as answering questions and assisting in the distribution of materials. Training is required.

Pinellas County Schools does not accept individuals as school district volunteers who have been court ordered to do community service . We reserve the right to deny volunteer privileges to individuals and to re-check their criminal history as necessary.

FIELD TRIPS

Field trip sites become an extension of the school site. All policies and procedures governing volunteers at the school site extend to field trips.

- The ratio of chaperones to students is determined by the type of field trip but is most often 1:10.
- School administrators may limit the number of adults accompanying students on any given field trip.
- All chaperones must be 21 years of age.
- Chaperones must be registered and approved PCS volunteers.
- Chaperones must dress appropriately.
- No guest or pre-school aged children may accompany a chaperone on a field trip.
- Chaperones are responsible for the students the teacher has placed in their care. If chaperones must leave their group of students for any reason, they should make arrangements with the teacher. Chaperones must not neglect their obligation to students to visit with other adults.
- Chaperones are encouraged to get to know the students in their group in order to make the field trip a great experience for everyone.
- Follow the planned timeline and itinerary. Be sure the group is in the right place at the right time.
- Never permit students to leave the group.
- Smoking, tobacco products, and alcohol are not permitted at any time during the field trip.
- All non-School Board employees attending an overnight field trip or day fieldtrip as a chaperone/driver must be Level II approved. There are no exceptions.

FIELD TRIPS

Continued

- Occasionally volunteers will be used to transport students on a field trip. Drivers need to be active/approved level 2 volunteers and must have a Florida driver's license and a vehicle registered in Florida. There are additional requirements for the wheelbase of the vehicle and insurance limits which will be covered at the school prior to the field trip.
- Do not use profane or inappropriate language.
- Do not buy drinks, snacks, or souvenirs for the group unless it has been planned as part of the trip.
- Do not use cell phones except for emergency purposes.

OUR TEAM

Every school has a Family & Community Liaison or College & Career Coordinator who manages the volunteer program at the school level. They are your point of contact for all questions and volunteer arrangements. To find your school's contact please see

<https://www.pcsb.org/Page/23771>

Additionally in the Office of Strategic Partnerships there is a District Volunteer Coordinator and other staff that support volunteers. They may be reached at volunteer@pcsb.org or you may call 727-588-6405.



We ♥ our
Volunteers



THANK YOU

"Volunteers do not necessarily have the time; they just have the heart."

Elizabeth Andrew. American author



www.pcsb.org/getengaged