

Fowler Middle School

Volunteer Guidelines

You give but little when you give of your possessions. It is when you give of yourself that you truly give.

~ Kahil Gibran, 1883-1931 Lebanese Poet & Artist

Introduction

Volunteers have an important and valuable role at Fowler Middle School, whether volunteering for the school or for the PTA. It does not matter if you volunteer for one hour or one hundred hours over the course of the school year; any help you give is essential in enhancing the education of our students. Some volunteers may assist the teachers with instructional or clerical tasks. Others may help shelve books in the library or work in helping the PTA. Besides supporting the school, your volunteer efforts teach our children the obligation we all have to give some of our precious time to worthwhile causes. We hope you find your volunteer experience to be a rewarding one.

To get the most from your volunteer experience, it is important to be informed. This handbook contains important information about your work at Fowler Middle School; please take time to read through it.

How to Be a Successful Volunteer

No matter what kind of volunteer work you do, or for whom you do it, there are some common qualities that will help you be a successful volunteer at Fowler.

Have an interest in our students

- ✓ Believe that each child can learn and succeed.
- ✓ Accept children of all ages, abilities, backgrounds and personality.

Support the staff

- ✓ Be respectful of the teachers.
- ✓ Do not publicly question or criticize the teacher or the methods used.
- ✓ Ensure that your interpretation of rules and expectations matches that of the school or classroom.
- ✓ Involve appropriate school personnel when students disobey school or classroom rules; don't take corrective measures into your own hands.

Be committed and dependable

- ✓ Make sure you have the time to serve.
- ✓ Be prompt and reliable; people are counting on you to be there!
- ✓ Set an example for the students by dressing appropriately and demonstrating good citizenship.
- ✓ Let people know if schedule changes prevent you from keeping a commitment.

Maintain confidentiality

- ✓ Ensure that children's work and behavior are held in confidence.
- ✓ Discuss matters relating to a student's behavior and performance only with appropriate school staff members.

Communicate

- ✓ Ask if you are unsure about how equipment works or how your job is supposed to be completed – there are no dumb questions!
- ✓ Don't let small problems turn into big ones.
- ✓ Provide feedback to the appropriate person about volunteer experiences.

PAT and CATHERINE FOWLER MIDDLE SCHOOL VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK (in alphabetical order)

Attendance/Absences

If you are unable to volunteer at your assigned time, please let your contact person know.

Background Check

Each school year, all adult volunteers must complete DPS background checks through FISD and be approved before being allowed to volunteer or attend study trips. Forms are available at <https://volunteer.friscoisd.org>.

Confidential Information

Information learned about students while volunteering is considered confidential and is not to be shared. Volunteers who have a concern about a student should talk with the teachers, principal, assistant principal, or counselor.

Copying Procedures

All copying tasks will be picked up, completed, and left at the time and location designated by the teacher and the volunteer.

- An organizational system (crate, file, tray, etc.) will be set up in the volunteer area.
- Teachers will leave all materials to be completed in the area assigned to each grade level.
- Specific instructions will be provided with each task.
- Staff requested copies should be made in the main teacher workroom (duplicator or copier).
- Volunteers will need to know the teacher's code to use the Xerox machine, and the code will be provided by the teacher. This code is only to be used for copies made for the classroom or teacher.

- Volunteers will collect materials from the volunteer room, make copies, and return completed copies to the volunteer room.
- Teachers will pick up completed copies from the volunteer room.

Deliveries for Students or Teachers

All items brought to school for students or teachers will be left with the Receptionist in the school office. The Receptionist will contact the teachers by phone or email to let them know about deliveries for students. Teachers will determine an appropriate time for the students to come to the office to retrieve their items. Items for teachers will be given to the Receptionist and she will place the items in the teachers' mailboxes.

Dress Code for Volunteers and Adult Visitors

Middle school students are very impressionable. It is important for all adults in the school setting to serve as positive role models by following school rules including the dress code. Please be mindful of appropriate dress while in the school environment.

Laminating

The laminator is reserved for staff use only.

Study Trips

Students who participate in school-sponsored trips shall be required to ride in transportation provided by the school to and from the event. Exceptions may be made only if the student's parent or guardian personally requests that the student be allowed to ride with the parent or presents a written request to the principal the day before the scheduled trip that the student is allowed to ride with an adult designated by the parent. The District shall not be liable for any injuries that occur to students riding in vehicles that are not provided by the school. *FISD Policy FMG (Local)*

If a parent or guardian is attending the study trip as a chaperone and is assigned the duty of supervision of students, he or she may not bring siblings. If the parent or guardian is attending the trip as a parent and not acting in the role of chaperone, then siblings are allowed to attend if the study trip is age-appropriate and if the presence of the sibling does not interfere with the study trip's safety and activities. Parents will be responsible for paying personal entry fees and the fees of any attending siblings. No parent is permitted to ride the school bus. *FISD Student Handbook*

All parents in caravan with the buses are requested to follow after the last bus. It is dangerous for the convoying buses to have cars traveling between them. *FISD Department of Transportation Guidelines for Field Trips*

Relationships with Teachers and Staff

- Please be sure the teacher knows when you are coming. It takes time to plan for volunteers and in order to ensure that volunteer time is not wasted; the teachers request that you not visit the classroom unannounced.
- Please do not interrupt classroom instruction. It is easy to lose instructional momentum when students are distracted or are waiting during adult conversations.
- Please do not use your volunteer time to speak to teachers or any other staff members about any student. Scheduling an appointment with either your child's teachers or any school staff member allows for a more appropriate opportunity to address any questions or concerns related to your child or to the school.
- Please respect the confidentiality of all information and activities related to school staff, faculty, students, and their families. Stay enthusiastic and positive!
- The work accomplished during your volunteer time at Fowler is very important to students and teachers. Should you be concerned with any issue that you feel needs to be addressed while you are visiting our campus, you are encouraged to schedule an appointment with the appropriate staff member in order that the issue may be discussed. Discussing the issue with other volunteers while on campus and not addressing the issue with campus staff, creates confusion and misunderstanding for all involved. Appropriate communication to answer any and all volunteer or parent questions is highly encouraged.

Sign-In Procedures

All visitors to the school must sign in and out at the front office and either wear a visitor or volunteer badge while on campus. Visits to observe individual classrooms during instructional time are permitted only with approval of the Principal, Assistant Principal, or Counselor and the teachers. Such visits are not permitted if their duration and/or frequency interfere with the delivery of instruction or disrupt the normal school environment.