

VOLUNTEER

Handbook



 **Clover
Park**
SCHOOL DISTRICT

Learning today. Leading tomorrow.

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THE STARFISH STORY

(adapted from *The Star Thrower* by Loren Eiseley. 1907-77)

Once upon a time, there was a wise man who used to go to the ocean to do his writing. He had a habit of walking on the beach before he began his work.

One day, as he was walking along the shore, he looked down the beach and saw a human figure moving like a dancer. He smiled to himself at the thought of someone who would dance to the day, and so, he walked faster to catch up.

As he got closer, he noticed that the figure was that of a young man, and that what he was doing was not dancing at all. The young man was reaching down to the shore, picking up small objects, and throwing them into the ocean.

He came closer still and called out "Good morning! May I ask what it is that you are doing?"

The young man paused, looked up, and replied "Throwing starfish into the ocean."

"I must ask, then, why are you throwing starfish into the ocean?" asked the somewhat startled wise man.

To this, the young man replied, "The sun is up and the tide is going out. If I don't throw them in, they'll die."

Upon hearing this, the wise man commented, "But, young man, do you not realize that there are miles and miles of beach and there are starfish all along every mile? You can't possibly make a difference!"

At this, the young man bent down, picked up yet another starfish, and threw it into the ocean. As it met the water, he said, "It made a difference for that one."

MESSAGE FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

Dear Volunteer,

On behalf of Clover Park School District, I want to welcome you to our schools and thank you for your commitment to our students.

Our mission is to teach all students what they need to know to succeed and to contribute to the community. We cannot achieve these goals without the support and involvement of the entire Clover Park community. Whether you choose to tutor a child one-on-one, prepare materials for a classroom teacher, or lead an afterschool activity, your service as a volunteer strengthens the family, school and community partnerships that are so crucial to students' academic achievement.

Once again, I thank you for sharing your time and energy with the students and staff of Clover Park School District. I look forward to seeing you in our schools.



Sincerely,

Deborah L. Le Beau

Debbie L. LeBeau
Superintendent, Clover Park School District

VOLUNTEER PROGRAM GOALS

Volunteer programs in Clover Park School District schools will:

- Provide a coordinated means of involvement that will help to raise student achievement;
- Enhance the learning experiences of students; and
- Create collaborative partnerships between schools and community members.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Please note that the opportunities listed here may not be available at all schools.

Weekly/Long-Term Support

LITERACY TUTORING

Work one-on-one or with small groups of students, providing them with individualized attention to help them strengthen their reading skills.

MATH TUTORING

Work one-on-one or with small groups of students, providing them with individualized attention to help them strengthen their math skills. Improving math performance is a high priority for schools throughout the district.

CLASSROOM SUPPORT

Support classroom teachers in a variety of tasks, including small group work with students, materials preparation and field trips.

LUNCH BUDDIES

Serve as a positive adult role model as you eat lunch with your assigned student or students every week.

AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAM SUPPORT

Serve as a tutor and support for the afterschool program. This program is organized and led by Communities in Schools of Lakewood. Interested volunteers will be referred to Communities in Schools for more information.

MENTORS

Meet weekly with a student who has been identified by school officials as in need of a supportive, adult role model. This program is organized and led by Communities in Schools of Lakewood. Interested volunteers will be referred to Communities in Schools for more information.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES CONTINUED

COACHING

Lead or support afterschool sports programs.

TRANSLATIONS/INTERPRETATIONS

Help schools communicate with non-English speaking families by translating documents and/or serving as an informal interpreter.

LIBRARY ASSISTANCE

Support the librarian with read-alouds, organization, and other library tasks.

OFFICE SUPPORT

Work outside of the classroom, supporting school staff and teachers with a range of office tasks, including copies, assembling materials for distribution, and preparing for school events.

SCHOOL AND DISTRICT ADVISORY COMMITTEES

Collaborate with school and district staff, parents and community members to support school and district initiatives.

One-Time/Short-Term Opportunities

CULMINATING PROJECT JUDGES

Serve on a panel with fellow community members, and judge high school students' culminating projects. These multi-disciplinary reflections on one's education are one component of graduation requirements for all students.

EVENT SUPPORT

Sample events include:

- Family Math/Reading/Science/ Fitness Nights
- School concerts and plays
- Book Fairs
- Cultural Days

JOB SHADOWING

Invite high school students to participate in a job shadow at your company, enabling the students to learn about professionalism and career options. The job shadow is one element of the Culminating Project, required of all Clover Park students to graduate.

PRESENTATIONS

Share your knowledge and skills with students during class presentations and assemblies, and help create connections between what students are learning in school and the wider world.

SCHOOL BEAUTIFICATION

Periodic workdays focusing on indoor and outdoor beautification projects.

VOLUNTEER RESPONSIBILITIES

Volunteers will:

- Attend recommended or required orientation and training sessions.
- Be prompt, dependable and reliable.
- Provide the volunteer coordinator with as much advanced notice as possible if unable to attend scheduled volunteer shift.
- Maintain confidentiality related to student behavior and work.
- Know and understand all regulations and procedures in assigned school (i.e., fire drills, accident reporting, student restroom privileges, inclement weather procedures, etc.).
- Understand and accept the students in terms of their own background and values.
- Serve as a positive role model in behavior, interactions and dress.
- Notify the volunteer coordinator if a student confides in the volunteer about an abusive situation. The appropriate staff person or people will manage the reporting and follow-up process.
- Discuss problems that arise with the appropriate teacher, staff person and/or volunteer coordinator.
- Communicate regularly with assigned teacher, staff person and/or volunteer coordinator via agreed-upon communication methods.
- Serve as an assistant rather than a replacement.

BUILDING A RELATIONSHIP WITH STUDENTS

Building a supportive relationship with students takes time. Consider these tips when volunteering with youth.

- Be patient when working with students. Give yourself time to find your niche.
- Names are important. Make sure you say and spell the student's name the way s/he wants it to be said and spelled. Likewise, make sure the student knows your name and can correctly pronounce it.
- Treat individuals with respect and courtesy, and expect the same in return.
- Show you are interested in the student as a person by listening carefully to what they say, and using caring words and actions.
- Encourage and support student success. Build self-confidence by praising the student honestly and frequently. Remember that attentiveness and effort can be as important as performance.
- Avoid making comparisons between students, between teachers and between schools.
- Be fair, consistent, trustworthy and honest in your approach, attitude and interactions with students.
- Students, staff and volunteers make mistakes. Reinforce for students that mistakes are a part of learning, and show that you are not afraid to make mistakes yourself.
- If you know in advance that you will be unable to attend your next session with a student, make sure to inform the student and the volunteer coordinator.



APPROPRIATE INTERACTIONS WITH STUDENTS

These guidelines are provided to volunteers in order to assist them in creating a safe working environment for themselves as well as for the students with whom they work.

LOCATION OF WORK WITH STUDENTS

The location where volunteers meet with students will vary depending on the task, the size of the student group and the needs of the staff member. However, in general, volunteers should attempt to meet in areas with limited distractions.

If a staff member asks you to work with a student or students in an empty room, leave the door open and sit in an area with the student(s) that is clearly visible to passers-by.

PHYSICAL CONTACT

It is natural for some students, particularly in the younger grades, to seek affection, attention and contact with volunteers. In contrast, culture, beliefs and personal history may cause other students to feel uncomfortable with physical contact and seek more physical space. All of these situations must be handled with respect and sensitivity.

Appropriate signs of affection (with approval from student)

- Praise focused on effort, performance, etc. (rather than appearance);
- High-fives; and
- Side hugs: if a student approaches you for a front hug, carefully put your arm around his/her shoulder and turn it into a side hug.

Inappropriate signs of affection (this is not a complete list)

- Front hugs;
- Allowing a student to sit on your lap;
- Touching or patting in areas other than the shoulders, upper back, arms or hands; and
- Any contact that causes a student to feel uncomfortable or unsafe.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Although volunteers are expected maintain confidentiality regarding student behavior and work, volunteers are required to notify a school staff member if the student reveals, or you suspect, that:

- The student plans to harm himself or others;
- The student is currently harming himself or others; and/or
- The student is being harmed by others.

If a student does confide in you regarding such a situation, please listen respectfully, but do not promise to keep this information confidential. Tell the student that in order to help, you must share this information with a staff member. When your session with the student is over, immediately contact the volunteer coordinator or appropriate staff person to report your conversation.

PROHIBITION OF HARASSMENT, INTIMIDATION AND BULLYING

Clover Park School District is committed to a safe and civil educational environment for all students, employees, parents/legal guardians, volunteers and patrons that is free from harassment, intimidation or bullying. These actions are forms of violence and may be direct or indirect.

Direct or identifiable actions may include:

- Tripping, shoving or physically harming another person;
- Verbal threats, name calling, racial slurs and insults; and/or
- Demanding money, property, or some service to be performed.

Indirect actions may be more difficult to detect and may include:

- Rejecting, excluding or isolating target(s);
- Humiliating target(s) in front of friends;
- Manipulating friends and relationships;
- Sending hurtful or threatening e-mails, text messages, instant messages or written notes;
- Blackmailing, terrorizing or posing dangerous dares; and/or
- Using the Internet to taunt or degrade a target and inviting others to join in posting humiliating notes or messages.

Any volunteer who observes, overhears or otherwise witnesses harassment, intimidation or bullying, or to whom such actions have been reported is urged to promptly make a report to any school staff member. Reports of harassment, intimidation and bullying may be made verbally or in writing.

For questions or more information about the district's harassment, intimidation and bullying policy, please contact the district compliance officer: 583-5154.

VOLUNTEER CHECKLIST

- ✓ Submit Washington State Patrol Criminal History Request to school
- ✓ Schedule Volunteer Orientation session with school's Volunteer Coordinator
- ✓ Attend Volunteer Orientation session
 - Tour school
 - Review Volunteer Handbook
 - Meet with teacher/staff member with whom you will be volunteering
 - Visit area of school in which you will be volunteering
 - Review responsibilities and expectations with teacher/staff member
 - Confirm date, time and location of volunteer session
- ✓ Sign in and out at the school's front desk in the volunteer hours log for every volunteer session.

VOLUNTEER RESOURCES

Assigned Volunteer Site: _____

Site Address: _____

Site Telephone: _____

Principal: _____

Site Secretary: _____

Site Volunteer Coordinator: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Teacher(s): _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

For emergency school closure information, please visit schoolreport.org

