

VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK

RIVER EAST TRANSCONA SCHOOL DIVISION

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Developed by:



River East Community Schools Initiative Volunteer Handbook

This handbook offers volunteers general information regarding duties, roles, and responsibilities for volunteers in the River East Transcona School Division. This is a basic guide to help you feel comfortable in the role of volunteer for our division. The principal and staff of the school that you are volunteering in will be able to provide you with information more specific to your unique role.

Please use this booklet as a guide during your volunteering experience. If you should have questions that are not covered in this manual, speak to the principal of your school. You should also familiarize yourself with the River East Transcona School Division Code of Conduct.



School Information

School _____

Address _____

Phone Number _____

Fax Number _____

Principal _____

Contact Person _____

Volunteer Assignment (if any) _____

Days & Times _____

Goals

The goal of the volunteer programs in River East Transcona Community Schools is to facilitate connections between school and community in a way that is beneficial to our students and their families.

Volunteers assist staff in the following ways:

1. Helping students through activities which
 - ❑ Enhance their self concept
 - ❑ Provide successful learning experiences
 - ❑ Motivates them to learn

2. Helping teachers by enabling them to
 - ❑ Provide effective reinforcement activities
 - ❑ Enrich the curriculum
 - ❑ Perform other tasks

3. Participating on Parent Council
 - ❑ Input into decision making
 - ❑ Support for school programming

4. Strengthening school-community relations by
 - ❑ Increasing opportunities for communication
 - ❑ Learning more about school programs
 - ❑ Sharing time and talent with school

Who is a Volunteer?

A volunteer is a person who works in a school to support professional staff. They contribute their time and talent in a variety of ways. Volunteers are highly valued by the River East Transcona School Division for the crucial role they play in child development, education, and community connections.

Volunteers may be involved in a variety of activities such as:

- ❑ Working with children
- ❑ Working with other parents and the community
- ❑ Administrative assistance
- ❑ Classroom assistance

- ❑ Special event help
- ❑ Fundraising activities

It is important that when you begin volunteering at a school that you let them know your interests and skills so that they can find an activity that is suited to the type of experiences you would like to have.

You may want to consider the following questions:

1. Do you prefer working with other people or on your own?
2. Do you enjoy being in charge of something or do you prefer if someone else is in charge?
3. Would you like to work directly with children?
4. Do you like meeting new people?

These are just a few questions to get you thinking about the type of role you would like to play when volunteering in a school.

What to Expect

As a volunteer working in the school you can expect the following:

- ❑ You will feel welcomed and accepted
- ❑ You will have assistance getting acquainted with staff and school
- ❑ You will know what to expect from students and staff
- ❑ You will be informed of what is necessary to carry out your responsibilities
- ❑ You will be actively involved
- ❑ You will receive feedback on your work

In the Community

Volunteers are in the unique position to act as a liaison between the school and the community. You will be aware of a great deal of information regarding the school that the community may be unaware of. You can help the community understand the role of the school and the opportunities available there. Furthermore, you can also be a great source for new volunteers by speaking positively about your experiences in the school.

Tips for Working with Children

- ❑ Recognize and show enthusiasm for their accomplishments
- ❑ Listen with interest
- ❑ Be sensitive and responsive to their feelings
- ❑ Treat all children fairly and equally
- ❑ Allow each child to work at their own pace
- ❑ Encourage questions and respond to them

Orientation and Policies

At the beginning of the school year volunteers will be asked to attend an orientation session in their school, or to meet with a member of the school staff regarding volunteering. This will familiarize volunteers with the operation of the school and acquaint them with staff, as well as outlining expectations and policies.

Volunteers must adhere to the following guidelines:

1. Confidentiality of staff, students, and families
2. Volunteers do not discuss student progress with parents
3. Disclosure policy. If a child should disclose information regarding abuse volunteers are required by law to report this to authorities. The following steps should be followed:
 - a. The volunteer should reassure the child (let them know they will be notifying someone)
 - b. The volunteer should then inform the principal about the disclosure
4. Observe all rules and routines of the school
5. Be familiar with discipline policies but aware that discipline is the responsibility of the teachers, volunteers never touch or intervene physically with students
6. If your child is attending the school, do not use recesses etc. to conference with their teachers If a fire alarm sounds while a volunteer is working with a student away from their usual setting, take the student to the closest exit. Once outside take the child around the building to join others.
7. Sign in at the general office each day. Personal belongings should be kept with you or locked in a closet.
8. If unable to appear as scheduled, please inform the school.

9. When working with a small group or individual student, arrive early enough to receive instruction
10. Consult school calendars regarding monthly activities and closures
11. Volunteers are not responsible for providing materials and should ask instructors before doing so
12. In some schools food, gum, and drink are not allowed in classrooms outside of special circumstances
13. Buildings and vehicles are smoke free
14. For safety reasons when dealing with blood or bodily fluids, the following safety procedures are to be followed:
 - a. wear gloves
 - b. Send someone for a principal or teacher
 - c. Attend to injury or spill
 - d. Wash hands before and after removing gloves
15. If problems or difficulties arise, contact the school administrator

Procedures for Screening Volunteers

All new volunteers in River East Transcona School Division shall complete and sign:

- (a) A registration form to be kept in the volunteer's file.
- (b) A Child Abuse Registry Check forms. This form will be submitted to Provincial Child Abuse Registry and then returned to the school. The completed responses will be kept in the volunteer's file.

NOTE: Presence on the Child Abuse Registry will exclude the applicant from placement as a volunteer. In situations where documentation is pending, volunteers may begin on a probationary status.

All volunteers are expected to be familiar with the River East Transcona School Division Code of Conduct and be aware that disciplinary action for volunteers is the same as for paid staff.