

Volunteers mentoring

Many volunteers help in the schools by mentoring students. Generally, a mentor is a volunteer who is assigned to one student and meets with that student once a week for the entire school year on the school campus and only on the school campus. All of the mentoring programs run in the schools are school-based and contact outside of the normal school day or during a school activity is prohibited.

The Mentoring Process

The key ingredient in mentoring is the relationship between the mentor and the student. Like all friendships, there must be caring, trust, acceptance and respect. Friendships do not develop in one hour, so students will not be sharing private concerns for several weeks. Mentors need time to get to know their student. If this process is rushed, the trusting relationship will not develop.

Since consistency is the key to developing and maintaining the student and mentor relationship, mentors should develop a schedule and stick to it.

Goals For Mentoring

- Staying in school until graduation
- Finding solutions to problems
- Improving behaviors
- Drug-free and crime-free behavior
- Creating a willingness to trust and accept responsibility
- Increasing attendance
- Improving academics
- Promotion from the current grade
- Dropout retrieval

Understanding Diversity

Mentors should also be reminded that their value system might be different from their students and to be sensitive to diversity issues. Many mentor programs prefer to match students with mentors who come from a similar background (e.g., race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status). Often this is not possible and mentors are matched with young people who may look and act very differently from themselves and whose backgrounds and lifestyles may be dissimilar to theirs. These differences in lifestyle, ethnicity, or perspective are known as "culture". Culture, in this sense, is more than race or ethnicity; it encompasses values, lifestyle and social norms, including such things as different communication styles, mannerisms, ways of dressing, family structure, traditions, time orientation, response to authority and more.

Volunteer non-discrimination notice

It is the policy of the School Board of Brevard County to offer the opportunity to volunteers to participate in appropriate programs and activities without regard to race, color, religion, national origin, sex, handicap, marital status, or age, except as otherwise provided by Florida State Law. Sexual harassment is a form of employee misconduct which undermines the integrity of the volunteer relationship and is prohibited. The School Board of Brevard County, Florida, adheres to a policy of non-discrimination in educational programs/activities and employment and strives affirmatively to provide equal opportunity for all as required by law.



2700 Judge Fran Jamieson Way
Viera, FL 32940-6699
321-633-1000 ext. 500



Brevard Public Schools Guide to Volunteering



Thank you for your interest in becoming a volunteer with Brevard Public Schools. Our district's Volunteers In Public Schools program (VIPS) currently has more than 30,000 volunteers placed at every school. Last year, more than 903,000 hours with a value of more than \$15.8 million were given by our volunteers. Our goal for the 2005-2006 school year is 1.1 million hours.

Volunteers help out in many ways in our schools. Volunteers can be mentors, help in the front office or media center, act as chaperones and help out at sporting events. No matter what skills you have, we're sure to be able to find a place where you can truly make a difference.

Please take a few minutes to review the information in this guide. It will help you understand our district's mission and make your experience the best it can be.

Our Mission

Our mission is to serve every student with excellence as the standard.

Our Organizational Values

- We make decisions based on what is in the best interest of all **students**.
- We uphold **honesty** and **integrity** as our guiding principles.
- We treat one another with **respect**.
- We set **high expectations** and demand quality performance.
- We take **responsibility** for our actions and are **accountable** for the results.
- We foster a **safe**, accessible, and healthy environment.
- We value **diversity** and the strength of individual differences.
- We provide a positive, caring, and supportive **climate**.
- We work as a **team** to accomplish our mission.

Before you begin volunteering...

All volunteers must complete the volunteer application process and go through a background screening prior to starting any volunteer activity at a school. The VIPS volunteer application is available at any school using the VIPS computer in the school office. Potential volunteers are asked to provide the information necessary to perform a background check. You may not be on campus as a volunteer until your background check has been completed and you have been approved as a volunteer.

Types of school volunteers

There are two volunteer types in our schools - listed and registered. Before any background check can be done, your information must be in the VIPS database. All volunteers are required to show a valid driver's license or state-issued identification card when signing-up.

A **listed** volunteer is subject to visual or auditory supervisory contact by way of second adult supervision, peer supervision or school-based supervision at all times when involved with students. There is no cost involved with the background check for listed volunteers.

A **registered** volunteer may be left alone with students and may accompany students on overnight field trips. These volunteers must be fingerprinted electronically through the Office of District and School Security in Viera and pay the \$56 fingerprinting fee (check or money order payable to Brevard Public Schools, NO CASH). Hours for fingerprinting are 8:30 - 3:00 Monday through Thursday only.

Volunteer approval generally takes 10-15 business days. The VIPS sign-in computer will not allow you to sign in until you have been approved.

Volunteer responsibilities

As a school volunteer, you are responsible to:

- Sign in when you enter the school
- Sign out when you leave the school
- Wear the VIPS nametag provided at check-in
- Serve as a positive role model
- Wear appropriate clothing that conforms to the school's dress code
- Maintain confidentiality of any information about a student's academic progress, behavior or school-related incident
- Stay calm in emergencies
- Be warm, friendly and courteous at all times
- Make a commitment to the volunteer program

Safety, accident and emergency procedures

Safety in our schools is a top priority. As a volunteer, you must protect yourself and others from accidents and injuries. If you see a hazard, please report it to the appropriate school personnel. When you are volunteering, please become familiar with your surrounding area and make note of exits and safety equipment.

Drugs and alcohol are not permitted on any school campus.

Smoking is permitted in designated areas only.

Accidents of any kind must be reported to school personnel immediately. Volunteers are covered by worker's compensation for accidents and injuries received while performing volunteer duties.



Confidentiality and school volunteers

Volunteers must hold any information about a student's academic progress, behavior, or a school-related incident completely confidential and must restrict all communication about a student (other than their own child) to the teacher, the guidance counselor or the school's administration.

Please remember that information concerning other volunteers is also confidential.

Guidance Office

Volunteers may assist a school's guidance office by

- maintaining the files*,
- assisting students researching scholarship or career opportunities, and
- assisting with testing.

If you are assisting in the guidance office, you will receive special training from the guidance counselor in student confidentiality.

**Please note: No student records or information may be open to inspection or transferred, nor may copies be released or disclosed to any individual or institution, without prior written consent of the parent/guardian or eligible student, except when disclosed to other school officials within the school system who have been determined to have legitimate educational interest in such information.*

Volunteers in School Health Rooms

School volunteers may work in their school's health room but their responsibilities are limited to directing students to rest or to calling their parents to pick them up. Volunteers may not dispense medication or apply first aid.

Transportation of students by volunteers

Transportation of students whenever possible should be done using district school busses. However, when this is not possible private passenger vehicles may be used. A private passenger vehicle is a car - not a truck, van, utility or multi-purpose vehicle. We ask that volunteers who are transporting students in a private passenger vehicle do so only with a midsize or large passenger car. The use of compact vehicles is discouraged as the Highway Loss Data Institute has found that small compact cars have a higher likelihood for injury or death than midsize or large passenger cars.

Students may only be transported in designated seating positions and are required to use seat belts at all times.

If you are transporting students, you will be required to furnish a copy of your driver's license and insurance information and complete a school-supplied Statement of Insurance.

Any vehicle with a rollover warning label may **NOT** be used to transport students.

Jefferson Awards

Brevard Public Schools participates in the Jefferson Awards program. The Jefferson Awards honors the unrecognized citizens who enrich communities across Central Florida and the United States with their dedication to volunteer service. For more information on this program or to nominate an individual whose volunteer service benefits school in our community, go to www.wesh.com/jeffersonawards/index.html.

