



Volunteer Services

On-Site Mentoring Guidelines, Policies/Procedures and Assurances

A mentor is a caring individual, a helper, a role model, a friend, an advocate, a liaison, a resource, and a good listener. A mentor is a committed, older, more experienced individual who seeks to further the development of character and competence in a younger person.

The most effective mentors offer support, patience, and enthusiasm while they guide others to new levels of achievement. Mentors:

1. Reinforce achievement of students by providing support and helping students become their best by encouraging development in areas of expressed need.
2. Help students to enjoy learning, thereby improving their academic skills.
3. Increase self-esteem by enabling students to become successful learners.

A school volunteer or community organization is any non-paid individual who gives time to a school or school staff member while performing assigned duties (School Board Policy 2430.01). *School volunteering is a privilege, not a right, and a school may determine that a volunteer is not appropriate for their student population. Ultimately, the school will have supervisory responsibility for all volunteers at their school, even if they are recruited or trained by another group. In all cases, it is understood that the school has the right to deny a volunteer at their school.*

On-Site Volunteer Screening Guidelines:

All volunteers must complete an online Hillsborough County Public School Volunteer Application. Volunteers fall into one of two categories:

Level 1 (National/FDLE SOP, HCSO, DOC): ALL volunteers and community partners must be under District employee supervision (sight or hearing). *Group exposure, general, office workers, teacher assistants, community speakers, media center assistance, one-on-one supervised interaction with students, tutors/on-site mentors, daytime field trip chaperones.* *Exceptions: GATI and African American Teach-In*

Level 2 (Fingerprinting): Any volunteer that has one-on-one unsupervised interaction with students. *Overnight Chaperones and any other occasion where the volunteer has limited supervision including some mentoring programs (call for additional guidance).* Fingerprinting is required for all Level 2 Volunteers; allow at least two weeks for fingerprinting processing.

Hillsborough County Public Schools Volunteer and Community Partner Policies and Procedures:

Hillsborough County Public Schools does not allow court-ordered community service hours to be served as volunteer time. Individuals who are required to complete court-ordered community service are directed to contact other non-school agencies.

1. Complete an online HCPS Volunteer Application for each academic school year (July 1-June 30).
2. Attend a HCPS volunteer orientation session.
3. Remain in verbal/visual distance of staff or administration. Volunteers should never be left alone with students.
4. Maintain confidentiality (District Policy 8330).
5. Report suspected child abuse per Florida Statute (F.S.) 39.201. *Please note: when a student mentions abuse, bullying, suicide or any other very serious situation you are required to report this to the teacher and/or administration.*
6. Maintain “hands-off” non-discipline or assistance with disciplinary actions policy per Florida Statute (F.S.) 1003.32. Allow school personnel to handle any and all student discrepancies.
7. Volunteers should not bring preschoolers or children not registered in school when volunteering at the school. An option may be to seek out opportunities to volunteer from home if the volunteer is unable to find alternative childcare for their own children not enrolled in our schools.
8. School volunteers should dress neatly and professionally. Clothing and shoes should be comfortable and safe. As with student dress code, garments and/or jewelry that display or suggest sexual, vulgar, drug, gang, weapons, or alcohol-related wording or graphics, or that provoke or may tend to provoke violence or disruption in the school, shall not be worn. School Administrators have the authority to enforce the dress code as needed.
9. School volunteers should be reminded that all conversations with students should remain neutral and secular in language. Volunteers should not initiate or encourage prayer with students, families and/or staff, preach about faith, or prohibit a student from speaking about religion while participating in volunteer activity.
10. School volunteers should use neutral and secular language when endorsing/promoting an event or program.
11. Partners who wish to mentor HCPS students or want to visit HCPS campuses to provide donations must agree to guidelines and assurances before engaging with HCPS schools.
12. Collection of student information is prohibited (School Board Policy 8330). The confidentiality of student data/information is protected under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20 U.S.C. 1232g) and §1002.221, Florida Statutes (F.S.). Adhere to FERPA and School Records Policy (8330), which prohibits the collection of student information. Interest surveys, sweepstakes, scholarship drawings/raffles, or other assessments which involve students and include collection of student information are prohibited.
13. Any and all materials for distribution must be reviewed by school site administrator and/or instructional personnel. Leave all materials with the school site administrator for district approval. Distribution of materials must follow district guidelines and should not be distributed directly to students. Passive distribution of materials, which allows for students to have the option to pick up materials if they wish, is acceptable upon approval by the school site administrator.

14. Become familiar with the policies and procedures specific to each site. School procedures may vary, however, those listed below are common to all:
- Park in the designated “visitors” parking, enter through the main office and sign in.
 - Secure and wear a name badge at all times while on campus.
 - Locate the adult bathrooms. Adults should not use bathrooms designated for children/students.
 - Familiarize yourself with emergency exits as well as emergency procedures.
 - Smoking is prohibited.
 - Check on a regular basis with school regarding upcoming school events to see if activities have been scheduled that will conflict with your volunteer time.
 - Contact the school if you are not able to make your commitment.

On-Site Volunteer Mentor Assurances:

1. Thoroughly read and agree to *On-Site Mentoring Guidelines, Policies/Procedures and Assurances*.
2. Attend a training and/or orientation session.
3. Meet the specific day/time/length commitment to mentoring.
4. Be on time for scheduled mentoring sessions.
5. Notify the site contact if unable to continue mentoring commitment.
6. Engage in the relationship with an open mind, with content of services being secular, neutral and non-ideological.
7. Keep discussions with students confidential, unless the child’s safety or well-being is at risk or child abuse is suspected.
8. Notify the program site contact and/or Volunteer Services of any significant change in mentee.
9. Accept assistance from mentee’s teacher and/or school support staff.
10. Ask program site contact or volunteer services designee when assistance or clarification is needed, especially if having difficulty with the mentoring relationship.
11. Refrain from contacting or seeing mentee outside of the established parameters and supervised sites where the program takes place.
12. Violation of signed agreement can result in temporary and/or permanent disqualification by school/district personnel.

By signing the online volunteer application, I certify that I have read, understand, and agree to meet the conditions of an **on-site Mentor**. I understand that the On-Site Mentor Guidelines, Policies/Procedures and Assurances **must be renewed and agreed to annually**.

*Thank you for your interest in our students. Your signature on the online application will act as verification of your permission and operating parameters as you move forward with your arrangements for the **current** academic school year.*