



CHAMISA ELEMENTARY

VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK

Dear Volunteer:

Thank you so much for your support of Los Alamos Public Schools. Without the assistance of people like you, our efforts to serve the students in this district would not be as effective. Your willingness to share your time and talents is greatly appreciated.

Certain policies and regulations affect your relationship with the students and staff of our district. They are enclosed in this handbook for your guidance. If you have any questions or concerns, please address them to the site administrator. A complete policy & regulation manual is available online at www.laschools.net.

Please read this handbook and sign the signature page provided to acknowledge your understanding and acceptance of the policies/guidelines noted. Please make sure you give the signature page to the clerk or site secretary where you plan to volunteer.

Thank you.

LOS ALAMOS PUBLIC SCHOOLS VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK

Welcome to the Los Alamos Public Schools Volunteer Program! Thank you for offering your time and expertise to our schools. We value the time you give and the enrichment you provide for our educational programs.

We want the experience of volunteering in our schools to be fun and rewarding for you and beneficial to our students. We hope this handbook will help volunteering to go smoothly for you, that it will answer your questions, and give you guidance throughout your volunteer experience.

Although a handbook is a ready reference, please remember that either the teacher or the principal – will be glad to answer your questions and provide any assistance you may need.

I. Volunteer Program

The Los Alamos Public Schools Volunteer Program is a district-wide program with volunteers in every school. The purpose is to:

1. Help teachers and other staff in ways that are specifically requested by them.
2. Provide opportunities for all community members to serve as volunteers in our schools in ways that are appropriate for them.
3. Provide enrichment of the learning experience for all students, K-12.
4. Use a system of placing volunteers that helps put each individual where they are most useful.
5. Serve as a communications network between the schools and community.

II. Guidelines

1. Volunteers, other than club sponsors and coaches, are expected to conduct their volunteer work in a supervised environment in the presence of school personnel.
2. A volunteer should be punctual and reliable in fulfilling any given assignment. If you are unable to come to school when you are expected, please call the school and let them know. Your thoughtfulness will be greatly appreciated.
3. If you find you cannot complete a task that you have agreed to do, please notify the principal or the teacher.
4. Please sign in when you come to volunteer. There is a notebook in the office for that purpose. It is important for us to know where our volunteers are in case of any personal or school emergency.
5. Become familiar with school and classroom policies and procedures. The school handbook is a good place to start, and the teacher for whom you work will also help. Please read the district policies that are included in this volunteer handbook.

6. It is important to respect teachers' and pupils' privacy and to maintain confidentiality. *As a volunteer, you are not to divulge to any one confidential information which you may find out at school.* If you have any questions or comments, please take them to the school staff or building principal.
7. Office equipment and audio-visual machine training is available through the school office. Please let the staff know if you need training to properly perform your volunteer tasks.
8. Retain your sense of humor.

III. How Can You Help?

There are many volunteer opportunities within the schools. You can volunteer as a:

- coach
- classroom instructional volunteer
- classroom clerical volunteer
- office clerical worker
- tutor
- library volunteer
- arts and crafts volunteer
- nurse's helper
- field trip chaperone
- special education assistant
- career speaker (What do you do for a living?)
- special topics speaker (What do you know a lot about?)
- story teller
- telephone caller
- special programs coordinator

Or you can simply offer to do an "odd job" occasionally? Whatever you want to do, please let us know.

IV. Working With Large Groups

When we speak of a "large group," we think of a classroom-size group of about 25 students. Occasionally it might be a larger group. Usually, a volunteer will only be working with a large group if he or she is making a special presentation, reading or telling stories or coaching. Some things to remember are:

- Plan in advance exactly what you wish to share with the students;
- Organize your presentation so that you have an introduction, a body or main part, and a conclusion;
- Bring hands-on activities for the students; and

- Make sure the teacher has any special equipment you might need ready ahead of time.

When you interact with a large group of students:

- Maintain eye contact with all students;
- Provide opportunities for interaction (questions, etc.);
- Keep on track, don't let the students get you off on a tangent; and
- Use simple vocabulary and a direct, conversational manner of speaking.

V. Working With Small Groups

When you work with a small group of students, you can get to know them quite quickly. This is rewarding in itself. The following suggestions will help you have things go smoothly:

- Learn each student's name and use it regularly;
- Be calm and consistent, use a low voice and the students will follow your lead;
- Use positive comments whenever possible and appropriate;
- Avoid letting any student take over, and be aware of very shy or quiet students, gradually involving them in the group's activities;
- Let all students do as much as possible independently and help them as they need it, but never do student's work for them;
- Keep instructions clear and simple, making sure all students understand;
- If you do not know an answer, say so; the students will appreciate your honesty; and
- Follow the teacher's rules and standards for behavior, let the teacher handle the discipline of students.

VI. Tutoring

If you like to work in a one-to-one situation with a student, tutoring may be a highly satisfying way to volunteer. Tutoring is simply working with a child in a specific academic area, providing either remediation, enrichment, or helping her make up something that was missed. If you do not feel you know enough about the topic to tutor in the area in which you are asked, please say so. But if you do accept a tutoring assignment, here are some pointers:

1. Be sure to get specific instructions and materials from the teacher.
2. Find a quiet place in or out of the room where you will not be disturbed and will not disturb others.
3. Establish a friendly relationship with the child by using their name, being sure to look at them when you are talking and showing interest in which he is doing.
4. Help the student, but do not do the work for him/her.
5. Direct the student's thinking by asking questions rather than simply stating the answer.

6. Use praise when appropriate, and always be encouraging.
7. make sure that the student has mastered each step before going on to the next.
8. It is important to be prompt, consistent, and dependable when you are tutoring. If you will not be there, inform the student ahead of time.
9. Establish a routine of reporting briefly to the teacher on the progress of the student or any problems you may be having.

VII. Discipline

Discipline is the responsibility of the teacher. Inappropriate behavior should be quietly corrected in a non-judgmental way by the volunteer, and referred to the teacher if it continues. By accepting each child as she is and by encouraging consistent, positive behavior, you will be on the right track and will encounter few difficulties.

VIII. Health and Safety

Please do not come to school if you are ill. Call the teacher or your students to let them know that you will not be coming due to illness.

Safety is largely common sense. Do not let a student do things that threaten their safety or a classmate's safety. Watch carefully if you are supervising the use of scissors, stoves, ovens, woodworking tools, sewing machines, and other potentially dangerous items.

IX. Self-Evaluation

Here are some questions for you to ask yourself to help you evaluate your performance as a volunteer. Reviewing them once or twice a year will give you an idea of what you are doing well and what you might improve.

1. Do I plan for what I do?
2. Do I observe closely so I can learn teacher's and children's likes, dislikes, routines, etc.?
3. Do I follow through with the teacher's techniques when I am working with a group?
4. Do I really listen?
5. Do I accept suggestions without becoming upset?
6. Do I give adequate notices of my absences?
7. Am I friendly to all my co-workers?
8. Do I emphasize the positive things that happen?
9. Am I professional in my respect of confidentiality?
10. Do I follow LAPS policies and regulations?

POLICIES AND REGULATIONS

These school district policies and regulations are very important.

Policies are typically followed by regulations that provide the rules associated with a District's policy.

Regulations contain an "R" in the number code. Please read them.

- Volunteers 1210
- Visits to the Schools – 1240
- Megan's Law – 1416
- Code of Ethical Responsibility – 4001
- Civil Conduct of Parents, Other Visitors, and District Employees 4002
- Tobacco Policy - 4028
- Drug Free Schools/Campuses/Workplaces - 4029
- Staff-Student Relations
- Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect – 4094
- Student Travel: Activity and Field Trips - 5139
- Trip Regulation - 5139R
- Sexual Harassment – 5152
- Offensive Conduct; Bullying, Cyber Bullying, Harassment, Hazing, Intimidation, And Violence - 5158

VOLUNTEERS

1210

The Los Alamos School Board expects administrators and staff members to encourage community involvement in school programs. The use of volunteers strengthens the instructional programs for the students and improves communication between the schools and the community.

Supervision of volunteers in the schools shall be the responsibility of the principals or delegated staff members. Principals and delegated staff members will provide clear and explicit directions concerning the assigned duties and extent of responsibilities to each volunteer.

Individuals who volunteer their services and are provided unsupervised access to students shall be subject to reference checks and background checks as provided by law and shall be subject to Los Alamos Public Schools District policies and regulations. All other volunteers will be supervised. Background checks, conducted by LAPS are to be paid for by the volunteer.

The Human Resource Department maintains a volunteer handbook, which is available on the LAPS website and hard copies will be provided to all volunteers upon request.