



**PIONEER SCHOOL DISTRICT**  
**VOLUNTEER INFORMATION GUIDE**

*With all our efforts, always remember, HOPE SOARS*



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## **Welcome Message from Superintendent**

Thank you for your interest in volunteering with Pioneer School District. We want to make sure our families and community members like you know that we appreciate all your help that you can offer. Our students' success is because of you. The staff at Pioneer School District appreciate all your help.

I encourage you to spend time in our school and take the time to get to know our students and their potential. I don't believe you will be disappointed.

## **Volunteer Expectation Agreement**

Thank you for your interest in being a volunteer at Pioneer School District. Below is discussed in detail of Pioneer's expectation for each volunteer. We want your time at our school to be a positive experience for all.

### **Relationships:**

For the protection of all, the relationship between you and any students must be kept appropriate at all times. Continuing your volunteer relationship through out-of-school contact, such as phone calls, home visits, or invitations to your home, social events, office, vehicle or activities, is not permitted. This prohibition, of course, would not restrict out-of-school contact with students who are family friends or known to you through other community contacts.

### **Appropriate Touching:**

Handshakes, "high fives," or an arm or hug around a shoulder are the only safe and friendly ways to touch a child when you are volunteering. For some children, or for some cultures, even these gestures may be unwelcome and make a student feel uncomfortable. If a child ever inappropriately touches you, please inform a staff member right away.

### **Communication:**

You are a role model. Your conversations with students and staff should be respectful and avoid language that may be perceived as discriminatory, profane, sexist, or offensive in any way. No student or staff member should ever be treated differently, spoken to disrespectfully or denied services on the basis of sex, race, religion, disability, age, creed, color, national origin, sexual orientation or marital status. In addition, school personnel or volunteers cannot encourage or promote religious beliefs by class activities, comments or invitations to their place of worship.

### **Confidentiality:**

As a volunteer, you must respect and maintain confidentiality in regards to personal information obtained regarding a child or their family with certain exceptions. Reasonable suspicion of abuse, neglect, sexual abuse, illegal or dangerous activities should be shared with staff. Be assured they will follow up on the information.

### **Discipline:**

Any discipline of a student should be left up to a staff member. Physical punishment is never permitted.

### **School Safety Plan:**

In the event of an emergency while you are on site (fire, earthquake etc.) you need to be familiar with the Safety Plan of the building in which you volunteer. Emergency Operations Plans for our schools are posted on the district website ([psd402.org](http://psd402.org))

### **Check In/Out:**

All visitors, including volunteers, are required to sign in and out at the main office in the school.

## Introduction & Volunteer FAQs

Do I need to wear a name tag?

Yes. While on campus, you are required to wear identification provided by the school. Each school has a kiosk that you will use to sign in when you arrive. You will also be asked to sign out when done for the day.

Can I bring my four-year-old grandchild with me occasionally?

No. Everyone's focus needs to be on the students who are enrolled in the school and involved in learning activities.

Do I need to check in somewhere before going to the classroom where I'll be working?

Yes. The visitor check-in kiosk is located in the office. Volunteers will have to check in and out each day and wear their ID badge.

How should I dress?

Wearing appropriate, practical and comfortable clothing when you volunteer is one way you can be a role model. If you have a question about appropriate dress, feel free to ask a staff member.

Where do I put my purse and coat while I am at school?

Please check with the office. They will tell you where the best place is for you to store your personal belongings while at school. It is advisable to leave expensive personal items at home.

What restroom do I use?

Staff will show you where the adult restrooms are located at each school.

What about phone use?

If you carry a cell phone, please turn it off or put it on mute while in school.

Can I receive phone calls while volunteering at school?

No, unless it is an emergency.

What is the procedure if I am going to be absent or late?

Please call the school as soon as you know you will be absent or late on a given day.

Is it okay to give a child a hug or let a child sit on my lap?

No. Handshakes, "high fives," or an arm around the shoulder are the only safe and friendly way to touch a child when you are volunteering. For some children, or for some cultures, even these gestures may be unwelcome.

What if I am uncomfortable with the way a child hugs me?

Often children will come running with outstretched arms to give you a hug. Turn your side to the child and gently guide them to your side with your hand placed around the child's shoulder. **REMEMBER:** Always remain in sight of staff when interacting with students.

## **Confidentiality is Crucial**

During your association with the school you may have access to confidential and sensitive information regarding a child, family or staff member. It is very important that this information not be shared with persons outside the school. A misspoken word could cause embarrassment and humiliation. This certainly does not mean you cannot share your own child's accomplishments.

It is important that you maintain confidentiality. Student information in our schools is governed by the *Family Educational Rights and Privacy (FERPA)* which prohibits information about students being shared without parental consent. Students have the right to privacy and they expect that they can entrust you with private information. As a school volunteer, you are required by law to respect and maintain confidentiality in regard to all personal information obtained regarding the child and their family.

### **Child Abuse, Neglect or Endangerment**

Physical or sexual abuse or child endangerment is a crime. Any volunteer who receives from any source or discovers information about abuse, neglect, sexual harassment, or illegal or dangerous activities should immediately report this information to the building principal or counselor.

If a child you work with shares anything of a suspicious nature that may indicate that they or another child is being abused or in danger, you must report the information to the principal or counselor immediately.

### **Suicide**

Any information that indicates a student is thinking about or has attempted suicide must be taken seriously. Confidentiality is not applicable when the student threatens themselves or others. If a child shares information with you that may indicate that they may be thinking of attempting suicide, the information must be reported immediately to the building principal. If the information the child shares with you, or any visual evidence indicates that suicide has been attempted, stay with the child. Such a child should never, in any circumstance, be left alone.

## A Legal Primer

Public schools are governed by state and federal law and district policies. When volunteers work with students and staff in our schools, they also must abide by these directives.

- **Nondiscrimination:** No student or staff person should ever be treated differently, spoken to disrespectfully or denied services on the basis of race, sex, sexual orientation, religion, disability, age, national origin or marital status. Each student and staff person is to be treated with respect and dignity.
- **Sexual Harassment:** No student or staff person should ever be subjected to inappropriate or unwelcome sexual overtures that interfere with the individual's education or work. Examples of prohibited conduct are unwanted name-calling, jokes, touching or compliments of a sexual nature.
- **Corporal Punishment:** Physical, pain-causing punishment is not allowed in our schools. The teacher is responsible for all classroom activities and disciplinary steps.
- **Child Abuse:** Physical or sexual abuse of a child is a crime. Knowledge that gives rise to suspicion of child abuse must be immediately reported to the counselor or principal.
- **Religious Activity:** Public schools must remain neutral in matters of religion. Promoting particular religious beliefs by comments, prayers, actions or invitations to your place of worship are unconstitutional in a public school. Likewise, being hostile toward particular religious beliefs or favoring either believers or non-believers is unconstitutional and prohibited.

It is required that volunteers be within hearing and sight of a district employee at all times when interacting with students.

## Drills: Fire/Earthquake/Bomb Threats/Lockdowns and Lockouts

All Schools are required to conduct drills for emergency preparedness.

### Fire/Bomb Threat

1. A fire alarm will sound.
2. All students, employees and volunteers will follow the emergency evacuation plan, walking students out of the classroom to the exits.
3. Everyone is to remain outside until notified to return to the building.

### Intruder Alert/Lockdown/Lockout

Pioneer School District will have the following protocol:

1. An announcement over the PA system will indicate an intruder alert, lockdown or lockout. (Note: Lockdowns or Lockouts can last an indeterminate amount of time. Once the doors are locked, no persons are allowed to enter or leave until the end of the lockdown or lockout).
2. All students, employees and volunteers will follow the lockdown/lockout plan, usher students into classrooms, make sure all doors and windows are locked, drop black window cover, and turn off lights.
3. No one, including volunteers, is to leave or enter the building until an "all clear" announcement is given.

### Earthquake

1. If an actual earthquake occurs, no announcement will be made.
2. When you feel the earth shaking, everyone is to "drop, cover and hold."
3. When the shaking has subsided, wait for the emergency instructions to leave the building using the regular evacuation route.



## In case of an Emergency

Volunteers are not allowed to perform any type of first aid, but occasionally, situations or unexpected medical emergencies happen while you are working with students. Below are a few universal precautions for dealing with illness and injuries at school.

### Bleeding & Body Fluids

Whenever possible, avoid contact with body fluids. For example, have the student hold a cloth and apply pressure to their bloody nose or minor cut. In case of a serious injury, if a student cannot care for themselves, place a barrier between you and the body fluids. Use disposable gloves any time your hands could come in direct contact with blood, body fluids or body wastes. Call the school nurse or office staff.

Always wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water immediately after helping an injured student.

### Fractures & Sprains

Keep the student warm and as comfortable as possible. Do not move them unless absolutely necessary. If it is necessary to move the student, give firm and gentle splinting support to the injured area. Call the school nurse or office staff.

### Back & Neck Injuries

Keep the student warm and quiet. **DO NOT MOVE THE STUDENT.** Call the school nurse or office staff.

## Methods for Success

### Learn Names

A student's name is your first contact point. Be sure that you pronounce and spell it correctly. Use correct pronunciation of students' names. If you are not sure of the pronunciation, say "Would you pronounce your name for me?" Avoid comments which label the name as "strange" or "funny." Don't shorten a student's name or give them a nickname. Make sure the student knows your name as well.

### Set the Climate

By being alert and listening, you will develop sensitivity to the needs of the students. By being friendly and caring, you will be approachable. Your working relationship with each individual student will be your best tutoring tool.

Begin each session with positive comments or questions about the student and or their activities. Use honest praise whenever possible. Always leave the student with a word or encouragement and praise.

### Allow the Students to Be Themselves

Every student is unique. Make each one feel that they are an important, special person. Avoid comparing students with others in the school or in their families.

### Allow Discovery

Allow students time to think about their answers. Guide them by asking questions that will lead to correct responses. Remind the student that everyone makes mistakes...even you. Making mistakes and learning how to correct them is an important part of learning.

### Follow the Teacher's Lead

Keep the students headed in the direction set by the teacher. Hold them to the same class standards of behavior and work. Talk openly and often with the teacher to determine the expectations of students and yourself as a volunteer.

Remember the teacher has the sole responsibility for all planning, activities and discipline that occurs in the classroom. Discuss specific student concerns with the teacher or principal only.

### Be a Positive Role Model

Keep your commitment. Children will expect you and look forward to you coming. If you know you will be gone, tell the school/teacher in advance. Keep all promises, and make none that you cannot keep. Children never forget! In case of an unavoidable absence, a call in advance will allow the teacher to make other plans and to reassure students.

## Students' Learning Styles

Every person has a tendency to acquire skills or learn in a certain way. Even within a family, one child might learn best by doing while another learns best by hearing. Tutors can be more effective if they are aware of a child's individual learning style. When a student does not understand a concept through one learning style, another can be used.

For example, if a student struggles to understand material written on the board or in a book, then oral presentation may be more effective. Development of many learning styles gives students a better chance to learn.

Research shows that approximately 30% of elementary school-age children learn best through seeing, 25% learn by hearing, and 15% learn best by touching and doing. The remaining 30% learn equally well by each method. It is estimated that 80% of material presented to school-age children is visual.

### Visual Learners

Visual learners learn best by seeing information. Directions and assignments should be written. Presenting material through graphs, charts, outlines and notes is most effective for these students. Any oral instructions should be presented in short, clear sentences. Recall for these students is strengthened through the practice of writing and outlining the subject material.

### Auditory Learners

Auditory learners learn best by hearing the information. Questions and directions should be given orally. Discussing material works best with these students. The more they hear the material, the more recall is possible. CD's and lectures greatly benefit auditory learners.

### Tactile Learners

Tactile Learners learn best through hands-on activities. Task cards, computers and math manipulatives provide effective methods.

### Kinesthetic Learners

Kinesthetic Learners learn best by experiencing information. Methods of presentation include acting, building, interviewing, role-playing and observing.

## Tips for Understanding Elementary-Age Students

Children entering elementary school have different levels of social and intellectual development. Students at the elementary level need adult approval and encouragement in all of their efforts. Because some students have had fewer opportunities to develop language skills and relationships with adults, their needs for conversation and interaction are significant. Social skills are still developing, and guidelines for appropriate behaviors are important skills they need to practice.

Adults working with children can be an important part of their learning simply by modeling appropriate behavior. Patience and reassurance are important qualities to display for our youngest learners.

### Five-Year-Olds

- Show increased willingness to cooperate and prefer cooperative play.
- Are increasingly social and talkative.
- Are developing a sense of fairness
- Are learning to respect the property of friends
- Usually have a strong desire to please parents and other adults
- Are eager to make friends and may pick a “best” friend

### Six-Year-Olds

- Are becoming more socially independent and choose their own friends
- Are egocentric but becoming interested in group activities
- May still have a hard time waiting and taking turns
- Tattle often to check sense of right and wrong
- Are full of energy and ready for new challenges
- Want all of everything, so making choices may be difficult

### Seven-Year-Olds

- Want and need approval of adults and peers
- Can be very conscientious and strive to please adults
- Can be sensitive and get feelings hurt by criticism
- Like to spend time alone or watching in the background
- May sometimes feel that everyone is against them

### Eight-Year-Olds

- Show spirit, are generally willing to try just about anything.
- May turn to tears and self-criticism upon failure but usually recover quickly.
- Usually get along well with others
- Choose companions of the same sex and age
- Want to look like and act like peers
- Choose a “best” friend, but may change friends often

- Enjoy group activities in organizations

### Nine-Year-Olds

- Worry and complain a lot
- Have definite likes and dislikes
- Begin a new drive for independence and resent being “bossed” by parents
- Know right from wrong. They will accept blame when necessary but may offer excuses.
- Show increased interest in friends and decreased interest in family
- Are interested in group activities and concerns

### Ten-Year-Olds

- Generally like people and are liked by others
- Like to accept responsibility and try to do things well
- Like to praise and offer encouragement
- Still have a strong group spirit, but it may start to diminish
- May begin to show more loyalty to a best friend than to a group; this is especially true of girls.
- May enjoy being part of a team

### “At Risk” students - Students Needing Additional Support

Research shows that many students who are going to have problems in school can be identified when they are in second, third, or fourth grade. They are generally behind the other students in math, reading or science. Many have trouble dealing with interpersonal relationships. Tutors can provide the one-to-one support and caring which is needed to help these students succeed.

## How to Impact Secondary Students

### Middle School Students

Children undergo more rapid and profound personal changes between ages 10 and 15 than any other time in their lives. These developmental processes often pose challenges for the adults responsible for guiding and educating the middle school youngster. However, we must be cautious not to make generalizations about all middle school students. No two develop socially, emotionally, intellectually or physically at the same rate. Physical growth becomes most evident during these years, but development in the other areas is dramatic as well, shifting from concrete thinking to abstract, increased emphasis on personal grooming, strong desire for peer acceptance and the search for personal identity. The adults in these children's lives must act as mentors who recognize each stage of development and help them make wise decisions.

### 11 - to 13-Year-Olds

- Are less self-centered
- May express great enthusiasm
- May show more tact, especially with friends
- Can be patient and friendly with smaller children
- May become moody or may show signs of emotional turmoil if puberty has begun.
- Have a strong desire to conform to peers' ways of dressing and behaving

## Words of Encouragement for Students of All Ages

1. I knew you could do it.
2. You've just about got it.
3. Be proud of your good work.
4. You did it that time.
5. I couldn't have done it better.
6. You're doing fine.
7. Good for you.
8. I'm very proud of you.
9. Much better.
10. You're learning fast.
11. That's the way.
12. You are one outstanding worker!
13. That's it!
14. Clever!
15. Keep trying.
16. You're working hard today.
17. Way to go!
18. You figured that out fast.
19. Tremendous!
20. It's a pleasure to teach you.
21. Perfect!
22. You did a lot of work.
23. Nice going.
24. I think you've got it.
25. Good work!
26. You are learning a lot.
27. I like that.
28. That's the way to do it.
29. Marvelous!
30. You make it look easy.
31. Good going.
32. That's better than ever.
33. Fine job.
34. Good remembering.
35. Keep it up.
36. You've been practicing.
37. Fantastic!
38. Now you've got it.
39. Very good!

## Working with Our Diverse Student Population

As a volunteer in the Pioneer School District, it is important to develop a respect and appreciation of the diverse cultures and backgrounds of students. Some strategies for making instruction responsive to the ethnic/cultural backgrounds of students include:

- Use correct pronunciation of students' names. If you are not sure of the pronunciation, say "would you pronounce your name for me?" Avoid comments which label the name as "strange" or "funny." Don't shorten a student's name or give them a nickname.
- Be aware that you may represent a different culture and authority, and that may be threatening to some students. Avoid judgments and let the students know that you value them.
- Be aware and respect that cultural differences may affect student behavior, attendance, health and acceptance of tutor assistance.
- Respect every student and speak respectfully of all racial, ethnic, cultural, gender and religious groups.
- Use correct ethnicity or racial identity. If you are not sure, ask "What is your heritage?" Do not guess or assume. We want to develop each student's pride in their ethnic heritage and promote acceptance and understanding of all.



## Students with Special Needs

### The English Learner

The English Language Learner is a student who is learning English in addition to their native language. Tutors of English Learners help students acquire English skills while studying specific areas.

When teaching the English language, you will be given materials developed for the appropriate level of the individual student. Remember that you are working in the student's second language. When helping the student in any subject matter, use the following guidelines:

- Speak clearly and naturally
- Avoid talking too quickly
- Focus on communication, not on grammar
- Use gestures, facial expressions, and a variety of visual aids
- Avoid the use of idioms and slang
- Be patient and help the student to be patient

### Special Education

Special education is a service or set of services, not a place. It is defined in the federal regulations as "specially designed instruction." This specially designed instruction must be provided in the environment which meets the individual needs of the student.

In order to receive special education services, students are referred to our Special Education Department. After an evaluation is completed the Director of Student Services determines whether the student should receive special education services.

Since the abilities of children vary considerably, special education students may spend as little as 30 minutes per week in specially-designed instruction or be referred to a more specialized program. The names and scope of work with special education students, as with all students you may work with, is confidential.

## Education Jargon Translated

“Educationese” seems to be a language all to its own, foreign to those who don’t speak it everyday. This list is intended to help you translate the jargon you’re likely to hear as you volunteer in our schools.

### Building Block of Reading

Research from the National Reading Report has identified five areas as a focus of reading instruction. These areas are Phonemic Awareness, Phonics, Fluency, Vocabulary and Comprehension.

### English Learner (EL)

A formal way of describing students whose primary home language is not English.

### Educational Service District (ESD)

One of nine regional offices of the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) that provide services to school districts. Our regional office is Capital Region ESD 113

### Highly Capable (HI-CAP)

Districts provide instruction, activities, and services that accelerate learning for young learners identified as Highly Capable.

### The Individual Education Program (IEP)

Required by federal law, is a written plan of instruction for each child receiving special education services.

### Learning Assistance Program (LAP)

A state-funded program to help students who need additional assistance in math and reading.

### Learning Standards

Learning standards define what all students need to know and be able to do by the end of the school year, at each grade level.

### Measures of Academic Progress (MAP)

A nationally norm-referenced assessment in areas of mathematics and reading given to all students in grades 4 through 9. This assessment is a good indicator of growth in learning over time.

### Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI)

Washington state’s Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, usually called the State Department of Education in other states. The state superintendent of schools (often called the SPI), a statewide elected position, oversees this state agency which administers laws, rules and regulations concerning K-12 public education. For more information on OSPI, see its website at [www.k12.wa.us](http://www.k12.wa.us)

### Personalized Learning

Focused instruction to meet student needs in individual, small group and whole group settings based on results of regular assessments for learning.

### Revised Code of Washington (RCW)

A compilation of all permanent laws which govern education.

### Schoolwide

When a school has at least 50 percent of children on free or reduced lunch, it is eligible for schoolwide Title 1 funding. Instead of Federal Title 1 money being earmarked only for children with demonstrated needs in reading or math, it can be used to serve all students in the identified school.

### Specially Designed Instruction (SDI)

As part of Washington's education reform efforts, schools are encouraged to create school improvement plans for raising student achievement. These improvement plans use assessment data to identify strengths and weaknesses, helping schools set goals and priorities. The plans are updated yearly by administrators and teachers.

### School Improvement Plan (SIP)

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### Title 1

A federal program that targets students who need additional assistance in reading or math.

### Title 111

A federal grant funding the program for English learners.

## Code of Conduct for Volunteers (From Your Application)

Thank you for your interest in volunteering in the Pioneer School District. This information is provided for your safety, as well as for the protection of the students with whom you will be working. Please review it carefully and ask any questions that may arise. We want the time you spend volunteering at Pioneer School District to be a positive experience for all.

**Relationships:** For the protection of all, the relationship between you and all students must be kept appropriate at all times. Continuing your volunteer relationship through out-of-school contact, such as phone calls, home visits or invitations to your home, social events, office, vehicle or activities is not permitted. This prohibition, of course, would not restrict out-of-school contact with students who are family friend or known to you through other community contacts (See professional boundaries policy on page 3)

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**Check In/Out:** All visitors, including volunteers, are required to sign in at the main office in the

school and wear an identification badge while on campus.

### Confidentiality Statement for Volunteers (From Your Application)

We are pleased you are interested in volunteering in the Pioneer School District. As you take on this very important role, we want to provide information to you related to confidentiality so that each person who works in our school will understand the importance of this issue and the privacy rights of our students and staff.

Volunteers observe students working at different levels and with different needs and challenges. Some students need extra support in academic areas, some will need help in solving problems, and others will need help making appropriate behavior choices. These areas of support might be observed while helping students with academic learning or while in the hall, cafeteria, on the playground or other common areas of the school. Anytime you notice conflicts or difficulties that are not resolved by the students, please make sure a staff member is informed promptly. Please make sure any conversations that take place with a staff member related to a specific student or group of student's needs are done privately (out of earshot of all students and other adults.) Please understand that teachers and staff are not free to discuss other students with you.

We appreciate it when volunteers report any such incidents or concerns to us and we also request that volunteers not speak of such incidents or concerns with anyone after having left the school. In this way, we can protect the privacy of all children at our schools. This is expected of all staff members within our schools and we must require it of all volunteers as well. There can be no tolerance for violations of confidentiality. Continued volunteering is contingent upon respecting this request.

If you do have questions related to confidentiality, please do not hesitate to ask an appropriate school staff member.