

Big Lake Schools

Volunteer Handbook

High Expectations, Exceptional Results



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1. Welcome

We are so pleased that you are interested in volunteering some of your valuable time within our schools! Our volunteers play an instrumental part in each of our buildings by helping to create a safe, creative and educational environment for our students to learn and grow in.

This handbook contains important information about Big Lake Schools and the policies and procedures we have created for volunteers. Please read through the handbook in its entirety, then complete the agreement electronically by [clicking here](#).

2. Purpose of Volunteer Program

The purpose and/or goal of our volunteer program is to assist schools in providing the best possible educational experience for each individual student. The activities performed by volunteers should help to accomplish the following items:

- Supplement non-instructional work of classroom teachers, upon their request and under their supervision
- Provide individual attention to students through tutoring and/or small group projects
- Provide enrichment experiences to supplement teaching curriculum
- Provide assistance in extension areas, including athletics, activities, events, field trips, etc.
- Enhance and promote school-community connections for a quality education

3. Visitors vs. Volunteers

Not everyone who enters our schools is considered a volunteer—they could just be a visitor. Your frequency of visits and reason for visits are two deciding factors for what you are considered when you enter our buildings. Please view a definition of our most common visitor types below.

A. Visitor

A visitor is someone who visits a school sporadically for generally short amounts of time. They could be a parent, community member, or business partner coming to meet with a teacher or staff member, or a parent picking up or dropping off a student. Please note that these are examples only and this list does not include all possibilities.

B. Volunteer

A volunteer is someone who performs unpaid services for our schools during scheduled times. A volunteer may perform services for multiple days, weeks, months or throughout an entire school year. **Volunteers must agree to and are required to have a background check on file.**

*Please note that both **Visitors and Volunteers** are required to sign-in with a picture ID through the Raptor system in the front office and receive a school issued badge before continuing to their destination every time they visit. The school issued badge must be worn and visible at all times.

4. Volunteer Opportunities

Big Lake Schools offers a wide array of volunteer opportunities that include working directly with students and working indirectly. Opportunities change frequently; but consistent volunteer opportunities include the following:

A. Classroom Volunteer

This type of volunteer works directly with students individually or in small groups. Tasks could include reading with students, tutoring, or assisting with classroom activities.

B. Clerical Volunteer

This volunteer performs tasks such as putting together bulletin board content, photocopying, or sorting mail.

C. Media Center Volunteer

This volunteer could potentially help students working on computers, organize items, or help check in and out equipment.

D. Athletics/Activities Volunteer

This volunteer position supports the efforts of Big Lake Schools' coaches and activities coordinator. Responsibilities could include running scoreboards, assisting with coaching activities or organizing equipment.

5. Volunteer Guidelines

A. Supervision

Volunteers work under the direction of district staff, building principals, coaches, and classroom teachers—specifically, they work under the direction of those who have requested a volunteer. Big Lake Schools is responsible for the safety, health and education of its students; thus, volunteers should acknowledge and understand that they are working under the direction of a Big Lake staff member at all times, and should only complete tasks asked of them.

B. Confidentiality

Big Lake Schools has a very strict policy and code of ethics dealing with confidentiality of its students, parents, and staff. Additionally, it follows all federal and state laws regarding the privacy of student information, including FERPA laws. It is expected that volunteers abide by all district confidentiality policies, along with any state and federal guidelines. Specifically, volunteers should abide by these guidelines:

- Do not discuss individual children outside of the school district
- Do not compare students within the district
- Never publicly share information or images of parents, children, staff members, or other volunteers. Refer to building administration for additional guidance.
- Never copy, save on personal devices or verbally repeat information obtained in confidential records. Do not access confidential records without explicit permission.

C. Limitations of Volunteers

At no time should a volunteer discipline a student, interrogate or investigate student problems, administer medications, clean up bodily fluids, dismiss students for the day, access material on a student pertaining to grades, health or psychological records, diagnose student needs, drive district vehicles, give out advertisements or solicitations. **Additionally, volunteers should only be on school grounds during designated volunteer times – you cannot just “hang out”.**

D. Dress and Behavior

Volunteers should dress comfortably and appropriately for the tasks they are performing. Clothing should not contain images or words related to drugs, alcohol, sexual content, violence, or anything that has the potential to create a hostile or intimidating environment.

As volunteers, it is expected that you model the Hornet Way in terms of behavior. The Hornet Way consists of being respectful, honest, kind, responsible and fair. As volunteers you are role models in the eyes of students.

E. Commitment and Dependability

Big Lake Schools values our volunteers.

We often plan activities with your help in mind. We understand that things do come up and people get sick—if this occurs, we ask that you notify the person supervising your work as soon as possible.

F. Insurance

Big Lake Schools does not carry medical insurance for volunteers; however, volunteers are included in the school's liability insurance. This coverage does not include personal items that are stolen, lost or damaged.

G. Child Abuse

Big Lake Schools' staff and administration are required to report cases of suspected child abuse to the designated organizations. If you suspect a child is being abused, report it immediately to your direct supervisor, which is who you are volunteering for.

H. Disclaimer

At any time, if a building principal feels that a volunteer is not fulfilling his or her volunteer duties, could potentially be a risk to the health or safety of students, is disrupting the learning environment, or if a volunteer is not needed anymore, the principal can dissolve the agreement between the district and the volunteer.

6. Volunteer Procedure

A. Read Volunteer Handbook and Submit Volunteer Agreement

Before a community member or parent starts volunteering in any of our buildings they must fully read the volunteer handbook, submit a volunteer [application](#) and be accepted as a volunteer. The volunteer handbook and application are available on our Big Lake Schools website at <https://www.biglakeschools.org/domain/53>

B. Clear Background Check

Potential volunteers need to complete a background check before starting their volunteer duties. This background check is free to the volunteer (paid by the district) and is available by having the volunteer complete a request for background check at this [link](#). The Administrative Assistant for the building will send this link to the volunteer to complete the background check.

C. Assign to Building, Classroom/Department, and Task

Once a volunteer has been cleared for duties they can be assigned a building, classroom/department and task assignment. The principal, secretary and/or PTO will also assign a direct supervisor for the volunteer.

D. First Time Check-In

The lead school secretary will ensure the person reporting for volunteer work is listed on the volunteer spreadsheet and is cleared for duties. They will also ensure the volunteer checks in and out of the main office every time they visit, and provide a volunteer ID badge to the volunteer when checking in.