

*"We'll see," said Sasha, "it just happened one day and suddenly it felt like 'Yippee, I CAN READ,'" and he threw up his arms and laughed, "and it made me feel different inside my tummy. I felt kind of powerful."*

**V. Polakow**



**For more information about volunteering, contact:**

Community Partnerships  
Mesa County Valley School District 51  
2115 Grand Ave  
Grand Junction, CO 81501  
Phone: (970) 254-5114



**Community Partnership Program**  
**2115 Grand Ave**  
**Grand Junction, CO 81501**

**Welcome to Volunteering in Mesa County Valley School District 51 Schools**



*"Volunteers are the only beings on the face of the earth who reflect this nation's compassion, unselfish caring, patience, and just plain love for one another."*

**Erma Bombeck**

**Volunteer Handbook**

Welcome Volunteers—We appreciate you!

Greetings,

*It is with great enthusiasm that I welcome you to Mesa County Valley School District 51 and thank you for your interest in volunteering. Strong community partnerships are essential to helping students reach the highest level of achievement possible. The strength of these partnerships begins with people like you who volunteer their time and talents to support the education of our community's young people.*

*The District's main goal is the success of every student. Reaching this goal requires guiding students to reach high levels of achievement in the core curriculum, as well as in the fine arts, world language, vocational/technical classes, athletics, music and other activities. We value the many talents that students bring, and are committed to preparing them for life and work in this increasingly complex world. Volunteers play a vital role in supporting our efforts to fulfill the District 51 Promise, "Every student, every day, learning for life."*

*The following Volunteer Guide will provide information on effective ways to use your interests and strengths to maximize interactions with students, teachers, and District staff. You will also find information about working with children at all levels and how to meet their needs in a volunteer role. I invite you to make the most of this guide and the information within.*

*Thank you again for your admirable commitment to volunteer in support of our children and the District. I look forward to having you as a part of our team.*

Sincerely,

Steven D. Schultz  
Superintendent

**Our mission is to lead all students to reach their individual potential by rigorously pursuing and evaluating achievement of high academic and ethical standards in a disciplined, nurturing environment.**

- Our Goals***
- To build partnerships between schools and the community for the enhancement of learning for ALL children.
  - To extend and enrich educational programs by utilizing talents and resources of business persons, civic organization members, retirees, parents and friends.
  - To promote effective parent and community partnerships.

**A nine year old:**

Has increased independence.  
Has increased self-motivation.  
Resents interruptions.  
Likes secret codes and languages.  
Has strong sense of right and wrong.  
Is easily discouraged.  
Is competitive in work and play, and is afraid of failure.  
Cries only when emotions are overtaxed.  
Is anxious to please.  
Is a loyal and devoted friend.  
Is more interested in talking and listening.

**A ten year old:**

Is relaxed, casual and alert.  
Is one of the happiest ages.  
Has a strong sense of justice.  
Truly enjoys friends.  
Needs schedules.  
Loves the outdoors.  
Is a hero worshipper.  
Critical analysis of teacher begins.  
Wants teacher to be fair.

***"Encouragement is oxygen to the soul."***

**George M. Adams**

**Middle school—Pre-adolescents:**

Awkward, lazy and restless because of uneven growth.  
Very antagonistic and teasing toward the opposite sex.  
Often over-critical, rebellious and uncooperative.  
In need of warm affection and a sense of humor from adults.  
Turned off by nagging, condemnation and being talked down to.

**High school—Adolescents:**

Often going to extremes, emotional instability and know-it-alls.  
Very interested in philosophical, ethical and religious problems.  
Showing a step toward adulthood by asserting independence.  
Needs acceptance by peer group.  
Peer group oriented.  
Responds to appeal to help as partners.

**#5**

with Students

***Maintain a sense of humor.***

Tips for Working





# Characteristics of Children at Different Ages

**A five year old:**  
Helpful around the house.  
Mother is preferred parent.  
Needs some assistance with coats, etc.  
Is closed-mouthed at home about school activities.  
Has short bursts of energy.  
Changes from one activity to another with relative ease.  
Has vague concepts of time.  
Is not fearful.  
Ask many questions about how things work.  
Enjoys cutting and pasting.  
Loves to play dress-up.

**A six year old:**  
Handles and attempts to use tools and materials.  
Is self centered, domineering, stubborn, bossy and aggressive.  
Wants and needs to be first, to be loved best, to be praised most and to win.  
Is usually better behaved away from home.  
Does a good deal of tattling.  
Is interested in simple games.  
Carries on long conversations.  
Enjoys father.  
Is restless, overactive, exuberant.  
Usually likes his teacher.

**A seven year old:**  
Does not respond promptly.  
May forget easily.  
Fights with playmates.  
Plays in pairs or in groups.  
Is interested in magic, puzzles, collecting things.  
Girls like dress-up, paper dolls and jump rope.  
Is concerned about being good.  
Is easier to discipline, sensitive to praise.  
Complains and sulks.  
Teacher is really paramount in school.

#4 with Students

Tips for Working

Be warm and friendly and learn the student's names.

**An eight year old:**  
Enjoys jokes and riddles.  
Makes fewer complaints about teacher.  
Is expansive and speedy.  
Attention span is improving.  
Is alert, friendly and interested in people but sometimes careless, noisy and argumentative.  
Feelings easily hurt by careless remarks.  
Understanding time and money concepts.  
Likes team games.  
Is sensitive to criticism.



*“The secret of education is respecting the pupil.”*  
Ralph Waldo Emerson

## Volunteer Opportunities

**Classroom**—Performs clerical, tutorial and teacher reinforcement tasks under the direction of the classroom teacher, thus allowing teachers more professional time to spend in their classes and with individual students.

**Art Heritage** —The school district’s Art Heritage Program is a fun and informative way to get involved in an elementary classroom. This standards-based (Colorado Visual Arts Standards) program brings art education into elementary school classrooms once a month. Volunteers are provided training and supplies for the hands-on projects. Volunteers tell us that they feel they get as much out of the program as the students! Visit our website or contact the Visual Arts Coordinator, Connie Robbins-Brady for more information visit [www.artheritageprogram.org](http://www.artheritageprogram.org)

**Library/Media**—Works with the school librarian to assist in operating the library. Shelving, filing, clipping, circulation and book processing are some of the tasks the volunteer may perform. Prepares inventories and operates audio-visual aids/equipment under teacher’s direction.

**Project Assistance**—Works with art or classroom teachers to prepare materials and help students develop their creativity. The volunteer provides many opportunities for the students to discover and develop their abilities to the fullest.

**Tutor**—Works one-on-one with a student or with a small group of students who need remedial help in academic subjects to reinforce basic skills.

**Special Enrichment**—Participates with classes or groups on topics related to occupations, community interests, hobbies and other interests. May also assist in field trips.

**School Support Activities**—Performs important support as needed for a special project or fundraiser. This includes serving on PTA/PTO, School Advisory Councils or Booster Clubs; assisting with fine arts, career fairs, classroom parties, after-prom and/or other school-sponsored activities.

- Elementary Volunteer Opportunities:**
- Art Heritage
  - Listen to children read aloud.
  - Provide individual help.
  - Set up and assist in learning centers.
  - Practice vocabulary with non-English speaking students.
  - Play games at recess.
  - Help select library books.
  - Assist with field trips.
  - Gather resource materials.
  - Help children with computer skills.
  - Assist a child with a disability.
  - Reinforce learning of the alphabet.
  - Reinforce recognition of numerals and beginning math skills.
  - Demonstrate a special skill, play a musical instrument.
  - Discuss cultural differences; share an ethnic dish, or an activity.
  - Help with handwriting practice.
  - Drill spelling words.
  - Share information about local history.
  - Support school safety by assisting during lunchtime, before and after school activities.
- Middle and High School Opportunities:**
- World Languages
  - School to Career
  - Social Studies
  - Teacher Assistance
  - Students with special challenges
  - Science and Math Labs
  - Band, Orchestra and Visual Arts
  - Work Experience
  - Special Ed Programs
  - Sports

# Volunteer Guidelines

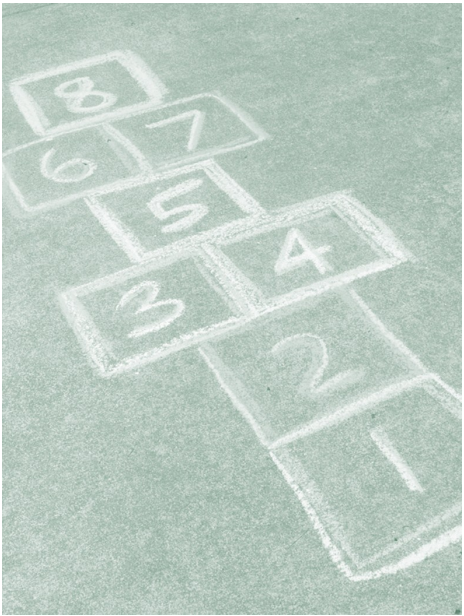
## Legal Regulations

Thank you for your interest in providing support for District 51 students and programs. Volunteer efforts allow increased experience and services for students. Please review the following information. It is important that you understand and accept the following conditions:

1. According to Mesa County Valley School District 51 Board of Education Policy (IJOC), "Each volunteer must be under the supervision of a certified staff person. If the volunteer is working with children, he/she must be within the sight and/or sound of a certified staff person." The principal has the discretion to screen the volunteers in his/her school. The screening may include background check and fingerprinting. The District may, under Section 22-32-109.7(1), C.R.S., inquire to determine if a volunteer has been convicted, pled no contest, or received a deferred sentence for unlawful behavior toward children.
2. Volunteers will receive no payment, salary, compensation or consideration of any kind from the District for services rendered, other than reimbursement of duly authorized actual expenses. Volunteers are not entitled to benefits under Worker's Compensation Laws.
3. Volunteers who donate their time in the schools are covered by the Volunteer Liability Act (1997), which covers volunteers who are acting within the scope of their responsibilities. The Act does not cover willful or criminal acts of negligence or omission, or harm caused while operating a motor vehicle.
4. Volunteers who are asked to transport students in a private vehicle must complete a District 51 Insurance and Driver Information Form. Forms are available through the District's Risk Management office.



In School District 51, each school has a **Volunteer Coordinator**. They are responsible for the recruitment, placement, training and scheduling of volunteers in schools. Volunteer Coordinators collaborate with building leadership to align volunteer efforts with school goals and promote good community relations among various community and school clientele. In addition to Volunteer Coordinators, many schools have a parent-teacher organization that assists with fundraising, hospitality and other school-wide activities.



## Volunteer expenses that are deductible per IRS regulations:

- You may deduct the cost of transportation (gas, oil and parking expenses) to and from home and the school.
- You may deduct supplies and materials that you personally purchase to use exclusively in your volunteer role.

*"Almost anything can become a learning experience if there is enough caring involved."*

*—Mary MacCracken*

## Dismissal of a Volunteer

Volunteers who do not adhere to the rules and procedures of the School District and who fail to perform their volunteer assignments are subject to dismissal. No volunteer will be terminated until the volunteer has had the opportunity to discuss the reasons for the possible dismissal with supervisory staff.

### Reasons for Dismissal

Possible grounds for dismissal may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Violating the confidentiality policy;
- Being under the influence of alcohol or drugs;
- Theft of property or misuse of School District equipment or materials;
- Abuse or mistreatment of students, staff or other volunteers;
- Failure to abide by Mesa County Valley School District 51's policies and procedures.

#3

with Students

Tips for Working

***Be consistent with the teacher's rules for behavior.***

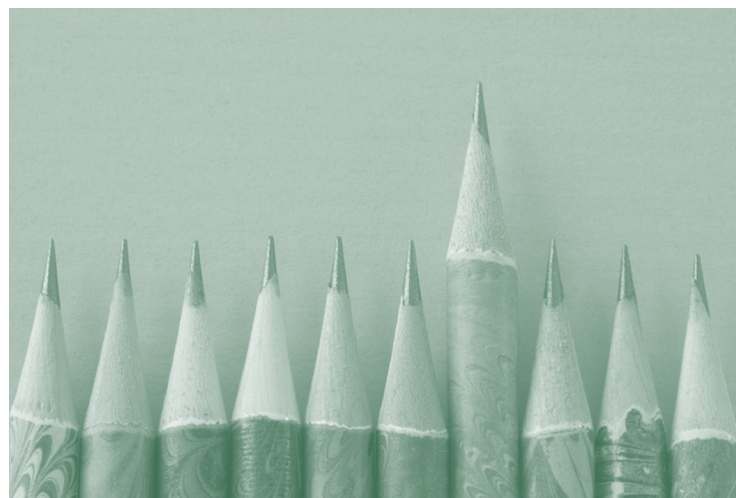


## Why Are You Asked to Record Your Volunteer Times?

Mesa County Valley School District 51 has tremendous community support from our businesses and non-profit organizations. However, this support is solely dependent on volunteers themselves reporting their time to the Volunteer Coordinator. Your school and the District use this information in the following ways:

- To demonstrate community support when applying for school or District grant monies.
- To acknowledge the contributions of volunteers to school staff, District Administration and the Board of Education.
- To document, recognize and celebrate individual volunteer service.
- To evaluate program effectiveness—i.e., are volunteer numbers up or down; is it time to evaluate our processes?

**Please help your Volunteer Coordinator by logging your time—whether it is done on-site or off-site, it all adds up!**



*"One hundred years from now, It will not matter what kind of car I drove, What kind of house I lived in, Or how much money I had in the bank, But the world may be a better place because I made a difference in a child's life"*

— Author Unknown

Tips for Working

#2

with Students

**Help students realize that making mistakes is part of learning.**

## School District 51 Volunteers

Volunteers are people in the community who share their time, their talents, their skills—and most all, themselves—with students of the Mesa County Valley Schools. They are men and women of all ages and from all walks of life who want to help the schools provide quality education for all children and who have time to donate to school services. No special background is required. Special skills and talents are not necessary. A genuine love for children, some free time, and a willingness to work under professional supervision are essential. Volunteers are asked to attend a volunteer orientation session and are encouraged to take advantage of the many training opportunities, which are provided to enhance their skills. School volunteers work under the immediate supervision of a certificated person. If working with children, a volunteer must be within the sight and/or sound of a certified staff person. Volunteers who are likely to be involved in one-to-one situations with children on a frequent basis will be asked to submit a set of fingerprints and a notarized form with information about felony or misdemeanor convictions as required by law, in accordance with regulations governing applicants for support staff positions.

## Code of Ethics for Volunteers

In order to promote volunteerism in our schools, it is essential for all school volunteers to adhere to a professional code of ethics. We ask that volunteers subscribe to the following:

- **Confidentiality**— You may have access to grades and records. You will know the children who are succeeding, and you will know the children who are struggling. Discuss concerns with the staff or the Volunteer Coordinator, **not** with other volunteers, with other parents, or in the community.
- **Dependability**— Be dependable. The teachers/staff have planned activities for you and the students. If something comes up, please be considerate of those depending on you and notify the office.
- **Communication**—Your volunteer work should be a learning experience for you. When you have concerns about policy and procedures, ask the appropriate person—the teacher, the principal, or the Volunteer Coordinator.
- **Support**—As a school volunteer, you will be in a support position. Your role is to support the classroom teacher and the principal of the building, since they are responsible for the education of the students at school.
- **Attitude**—Come to school with a positive attitude, one that will say to the students, "You are so special. I'm glad that I have an opportunity to work with you."

Tips for Working

#1

with Students

**Encourage children to do their own thinking.**

# Expectations

## What a Volunteer Can Expect

- To work at a position that is worthwhile and challenging, with freedom to use existing skills and develop new ones;
- To receive sufficient and on-going direction from your supervisor or Volunteer Coordinator;
- To feel you are an important part of the team by having your accomplishments recognized;
- To receive constructive feedback on your performance;
- To not be left in charge of an entire class. This does not preclude a volunteer working in a separate room with a child, following the teacher's direction.
- To have the ability to refuse an assignment that you feel you are not trained or qualified to perform;
- And, most, importantly, expect to have fun!

## What Is Expected of Volunteers

- **Complete the required registration** with the Volunteer Coordinator and participate in an orientation session.
- **Sign in upon arrival and sign out** and total time upon departure on the provided volunteer form. Greet teachers and staff and let them know you have arrived.
- **Wear your Volunteer Identification Tag**, in the building or at your volunteer activity.
- **Bring your smile** and willingness to work.
- **Be reliable.** Show up for the activity you have volunteered for, as well as the time you agreed to—it is very important. Volunteer only for the time you can realistically expect to fulfill. If you need to be absent, call the school or Volunteer Coordinator as soon as possible and ask that the teacher or staff you are assisting be notified of your impending absence.
- **Be honest** in your approach and attitude.
- **Be patient** when working with students. They may be having difficulties of which you are not aware. Your patience will work wonders.
- **Be flexible** in responding to the needs of students and staff.
- **Be a positive role model** for students in attitude, behavior, language and dress. Let your conversation demonstrate respect for others, and avoid language that may be perceived as discriminatory, sexist or offensive.
- **Notify a staff member** if a student confides about an abusive situation. Staff will do the necessary follow-up.
- **Ensure positive closure.** If you plan on ending your volunteer involvement before the end of the year, please notify the staff and the Volunteer Coordinator. It is especially important that the students be left with the clear message that you have enjoyed working with them.

# General Information

**Volunteer Hours**—Your Volunteer Coordinator must report the number of hours volunteered at your school to the Community Partnership office each month.

**Volunteer Hours Off-Site**—Those who perform volunteer work at home or outside of the school building should keep a written record of their hours of service and report the hours on a periodic basis to your Volunteer Coordinator.

**Emergencies**— In case of an emergency or when you have concerns for student safety, please report your concerns immediately to school personnel. Your school has specific procedural guidelines. In case of a life threatening emergency, call 911.

**Siblings and Preschoolers**—In order to give your full attention to your volunteer job, and because we do not have daycare available, we would ask you not to bring your younger children to the school while you volunteer.

## Tips for New Volunteers

- **Ask questions.** Know who to go to with questions. Determine what the school expects of you. Ask about common goals/beliefs.
- **Arrive early.**
- **Ask for a tour** to be familiar with the school and its environment.
- **Live up to your commitment.** Be available for your assigned shifts or make arrangements ahead of time if you can't be available.
- **Be an ambassador for your school.** Dress appropriately, and speak positively at all times.

## Site Specific information

Your school should review with you the location and /or procedures that will include the following information specific to your site:

- Restroom
- Parking
- Teacher's Lounge
- Lock-down procedures
- Telephones/Cell phones
- Copy/Workroom
- Lunchroom
- Who to call if you are absent