

Volunteer Manual



The possibilities for volunteering are practically limitless. Students learn from adults who are good role models and who bring different perspectives and experiences into their lives.



Everett Public Schools
3900 Broadway, Everett, WA 98201
425-385-4000 • www.everettsd.org

Letter from Superintendent

Thank you for volunteering!

Each person who helps a child learn is someone who makes a difference in that child's life. Schools are safe, nurturing places for students to grow and learn, and the work you do makes that environment even more rich and meaningful.

This manual is designed as a partnership tool. It includes basic information and tips for working with students. It also includes some very important legal information that all school staff and volunteers must understand and abide by to ensure that students and adults in our schools are safe.

Be sure to say "hi" and introduce yourself when we meet in a school or office; I'd like to thank you personally for your gift of time. You are modeling generosity and involved citizenship for our students – qualities we know are important for their futures as they become citizen leaders in their communities.

Sincerely,



Dr. Gary Cohn, Superintendent

*Our students will lead
and shape the future.*

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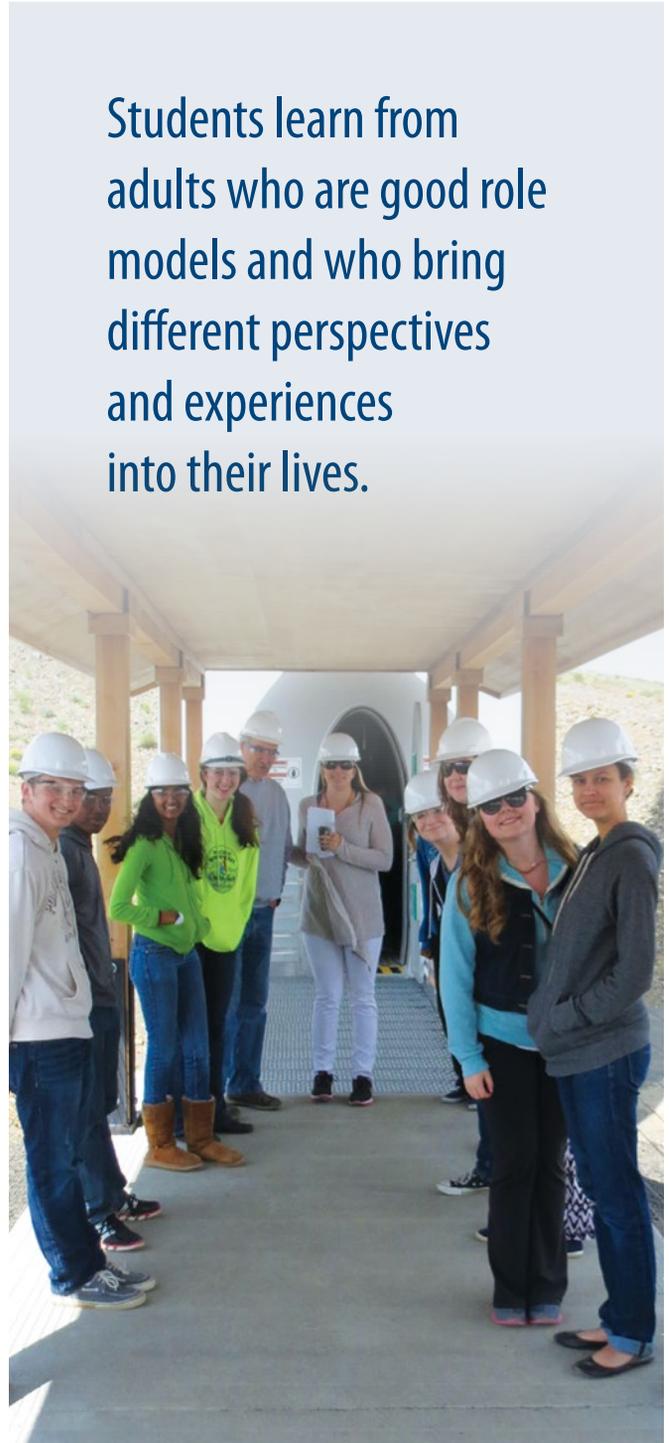
Volunteer opportunities –

there are so many ways you can make a difference

The possibilities for volunteering are practically limitless. Students learn from adults who are good role models and who bring different perspectives and experiences into their lives. Use the list below to spark a volunteer idea that matches your interests – or share it with someone you know whose talents and enthusiasm would be great assets in a school.

- Help in classrooms, library, office, food service, nurse's office or on the playground
- Work with small groups – for example, in reading, writing, math or spelling
- Set up or take down projects for science, history, art or writing displays
- Help with field trips, parties or special events
- Chaperone school dances
- Share your talents and experiences, interests or career in a classroom presentation or career fair or with a robotics club
- Help with all-school events (vision screening, science fair, art display, track meets, field days)
- Help the Science Resource Center compile science kits for classrooms
- Join the school PTA, booster club or special committees
- Become an art docent or science docent
- Become a Big Brother or Big Sister for a student
- Help with the Everett Public Schools Foundation

Students learn from adults who are good role models and who bring different perspectives and experiences into their lives.



The benefits of volunteering – *everyone gains from your giving*

Who knows the difference we can make by giving some time and talent to help others? The act of volunteering in schools helps students, schools and the community.

Benefits to students

- Increases learning and academic success
- Shows and tells students that adults consider them important
- Sets a good example for students about volunteering
- Adds more eyes and ears to focus on students
- Generates more advocates for students, schools and education

Benefits to school and school staff

- Promotes positive partnerships
- Expands understanding of instruction and learning
- Builds outside support for schools and education
- Increases communication and trust with school and families
- Frees up teacher time for working with students
- Increase time students are on task

Benefits to community and businesses

- Increases positive community visibility
- Generates wider understanding of schools and education
- Fosters understanding of school accomplishments and challenges

- Inspires support and resource possibilities for schools
- Helps strengthen the community by nurturing future citizen leaders

Benefits to those who volunteer

- Sparks insights into how schools work
- Engenders understanding of students
- Builds trust with school staff
- Lessens communications barriers between home and school
- Creates sense of making a difference
- Increases self-confidence and builds job skills

The act of volunteering
in schools helps students,
schools and the community.



Required training for volunteers

All volunteers are required to review the Volunteer Manual each year.



Volunteer overnight chaperones, club advisors, activity/program boosters and volunteer athletic coaches are required to complete a one-time online training.

Volunteer overnight field trip chaperones will receive overnight field trip volunteer training annually by the school, department or program ([2320P](#))

Volunteer athletic coaches must also meet Washington Interscholastic Activities Association (WIAA) training requirements, including first aid, and head injury and concussion management training ([3424P](#) and [2151P](#))

Before becoming a volunteer, you will receive specialized training.



Required orientation for volunteers

Someone where you are volunteering will orient you to the school and your volunteer opportunities and responsibilities. Use this checklist to keep track of information.

My volunteer checklist



- Staff contacts for this assignment, phone numbers & emails (who can answer questions; who to contact if you will be absent or late)

- School or office hours (you might also find it helpful to have a map or school calendar)

- I understand the school's rules for adults and students.
- I understand the school's evacuation drills and safety procedures.
- I understand where and how to sign in and out and that doing so is a requirement.
- I understand wearing a volunteer badge is a requirement.

Questions to ask:

- Are there special needs or circumstances I should know about the students or people with whom I am working?
- What should I do if I have an urgent question and the teacher is teaching or the people I need are in the middle of a meeting?
- What supplies are okay for me to use, and where will I be working on projects?
- Is it okay for me to use equipment or to be in the staff lunchroom? (Sometimes this is the only location for staff to go when discussing confidential issues.)
- What are the school or office expectations for how I should dress?
- Who should I contact if there is a discipline issue? (Volunteers are not responsible for discipline.)
- Can I take photos of students? (Always ask this question before taking photos.)
- What do I do if I am injured while volunteering? (Full details about this are in the section entitled *Your safety – Two things to do if you are injured.*)
- With whom can I speak if I have questions about legal requirements for volunteers? (See the specifics about state and federal laws volunteers and staff are obligated to follow in the sections entitled *Legal requirements for volunteers and staff.*)

Tips for sparking curiosity and learning

Samples of words of encouragement

- *I can tell you worked really hard on that!*
- *You are getting so much better each time!*
- *I appreciate what you did*
- *You did a great job of handling that situation*
- *I see that you...*
- *Tell me more*
- *How about that?*
- *You are working*
- *Good thinking. Very creative. How impressive!*
- *Now you've got the hang of it!*
- *That's a great observation*



Encouraging students with words and gestures can help them explore and understand. Let them know you hear, accept and respect what they have to say. Encourage them to say more.



Characteristics of successful volunteers



Enjoy students and have patience with young people and adults



Take pride in volunteering



Exhibit great sense of humor – at appropriate level for students and at appropriate times



Show enthusiasm and optimism



Follow through and show initiative



Respect others and the wide array of school roles and responsibilities others have

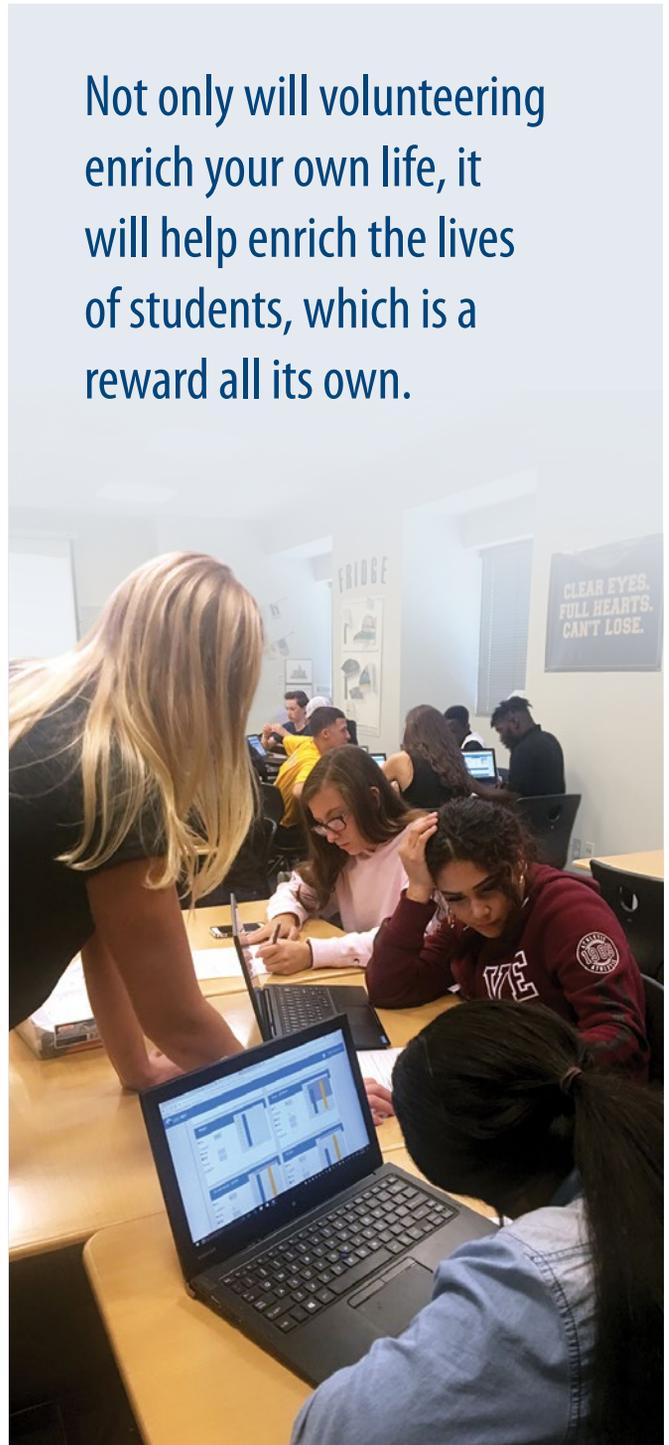


Learn from others and are open to new ideas and suggestions



Understand the importance of being a part of a team

Not only will volunteering enrich your own life, it will help enrich the lives of students, which is a reward all its own.



Guidelines for safe interactions with students

Protecting persons under 18 years old from abuse and sexual harassment is a critical aspect of court action and case law today. Professional and personal boundaries and relationships among students and adults are legally defined ([5253P](#)).

These guidelines for Everett Public Schools volunteers emphasize an abundance of caution. If you have questions about a situation or circumstance during your volunteer time, it is important you share those questions or concerns with a school principal, teacher or office manager.

Playing it safe

Touching children carries a risk. A volunteer can be accused of impropriety, unnecessary physical contact or sexual harassment. Being alone with a student can prompt an allegation of inappropriate behavior.



Volunteers must work with students in proximity to and within sight of other adults.

A finding of sexual harassment is just cause for losing volunteer privileges or even legal action.

Exercising good judgment

School volunteers and staff must use good judgment when interacting with students.

Consider students ages:

- **Grades K-3** While you can work to avoid touching students, it is virtually impossible to avoid all contact with students of this age. Use caution and limit your touches of students to arms, backs and shoulders.
- **Grades 4-9** Students this age are very conscious of their sexuality. Safeguard students' personal boundaries by not patting knees, putting arms around shoulders, hands or waist. Girls this age may be very sensitive about being touched on the back over their bras.
- **Grades 10-12** Very little touching is acceptable with this group. It is inappropriate and not your role as a volunteer to counsel students of this age, especially about sexual, personal or romantic matters.

Keep in mind:

- Males should consider and monitor their behavior very carefully, as the majority of accusations of inappropriate behavior are against men.
- Some individuals and people from some cultures are uncomfortable with touch of any kind. If a student indicates discomfort in any way, you should avoid physical contact, except in cases where touching is necessary for the student's safety.

Some areas of caution

Some actions, even without improper motive, can create problems. **Do not:**



- Ask a single student to come early to set up for a class or activity.
- Give a gift at school to a student.
- Sign a yearbook with personal inscriptions or nickname.
- Make a request such as, “Give me a hug,” or “Come sit on my lap.”
- Touch in a lingering way, such as shoulder or neck massages.
- Touch one gender differently than another.
- Comment on a student’s dress or appearance.
- Be alone with a student behind closed doors or other area that is not visible to passersby.
- Spend an overly long time with individual students or groups of students.
- Allow a student to develop a personal interest in you.
- Invite students for social activities outside of school.
- Make sexist or sexual comments or innuendos or jokes with double meaning.

Confidentiality is a legal requirement

Any information you learn at school about students or adults is confidential ([3600P](#)).

A good rule of thumb is treat information about others at school in the same way you would want them to handle that information if it were about you or your family.

Report breaches of confidentiality to a school administrator or teacher.

Student photos – check first before taking photos

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act ([FERPA](#)) allows every public school parent the right to prevent photographs at school and school sponsored activities being taken of students in that family. School staff and volunteers are obligated to abide by the federal law. Please get permission before taking any student photos.

Using personal electronic communication devices



Volunteers may use personal wireless/ Wi-Fi electronic communication devices, as long as those devices do not pose a threat to academic integrity, disrupt the learning or work environment or violate the privacy rights of others ([5225P](#)). Electronic communication devices shall not be used to violate the confidentiality or privacy rights of another individual. This includes taking photographs or audio or video recordings of others without their permission or sharing, posting, or publishing photographs, videos or recordings of others without their permission.

Keeping schools drug and alcohol free

The district prohibits reporting to the workplace under the influence of alcohol, illegal drugs and/ or controlled substances including marijuana ([5150](#)) or using tobacco and tobacco-like products on school district property ([4205](#))

Your safety

Two things to do if you are injured:



1. Seek immediate first aid help and/or call 911. This might be your own action or the response of other adults or students with you.
2. Report the incident to a staff member as soon as possible. Your report should go either to the staff supervising your volunteer time or to a staff in charge of the school or program where you are volunteering.

If you are injured while volunteering, district staff will:

- Give you immediate assistance, and may call 911 as a precaution.
- Fill out a district injury report form. Staff will get your signature and forward it to the district risk management staff.

You should know:

- We value your volunteer time and experience and the difference you make for students.
- The district does not have specific insurance coverage for volunteers should you be injured while supporting student activities or programs.
- Therefore, before you volunteer, please review your health care policy and/or homeowner's policy to determine what coverage is available if you are injured while volunteering.

The district's safety program helps ensure students, staff, visitors and volunteers are as safe as possible when in schools or in school-related activities, as well as at and in transit to off-campus activities.



Legal requirements for volunteers and staff

School employees and volunteers help ensure student safety. When everyone is familiar with and abiding by legal requirements, the student safety net is stronger. District policies and procedures are in line with state and federal laws that protect students and adults.

Policies and procedures are summarized here and can be read in full by following the hyperlinks to online documents.

As a volunteer, you are a **mandatory reporter**. This means, **if you see something, say something**.

If you see something, say something.

You must report child abuse or neglect ([3421P](#))



- If you are concerned a student may be the victim of physical or sexual abuse, share your concerns with a school or district administrator.
- If you become aware of possible adult-student, student-adult or student-student abuse or neglect, **you are legally obligated to report it**.

You must act to prevent harassment, intimidation and bullying ([3204P](#))

Harassment, intimidation and bullying (HIB) means any intentional electronic, written, verbal or physical act such as act is motivated by race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender,

sexual orientation, including gender expression or identity, mental, sensory, or physical disability or other distinguishing characteristics, when the act:

- physically harms a student or damages the student's property; or
- has the effect of substantially interfering with a student's education;
- is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it creates an intimidating, embarrassing or threatening educational environment; or
- has the effect of substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school.

This can take many forms such as, slurs, rumors, name-calling, jokes, innuendoes, demeaning comments, drawings, cartoons, pranks, gestures and hazing.

You must act to prevent sexual harassment ([3204P](#) and [3205P](#))

Sexual harassment is unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when submission to such conduct is either an explicit or implicit term of:

- an individual's employment or volunteer service;
- is a basis for decisions affecting a person; or
- has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment.

You must act to keep schools safe places to learn and grow

To safeguard that environment, school staff and volunteers are asked to be alert to and to report any activities that threaten the safety or well-being of others.

Reporting

If you believe you or a student have experienced harassment of any kind, immediately:

- Contact a school or district administrator
- Call 855-637-2095
- Email 1350@alert1.us
- Report online <http://1350.alert1.us>
- and complete an Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying Incident Reporting Form located at (<http://docushare.everett.k12.wa.us/docushare/dsweb/Get/Document-35840/HIBIncidentReportingForm.pdf>)

Thank you!

Your time as a volunteer is valued by our district's students, teachers and staff! If you have ideas to share or questions about our volunteer program, please visit the district's volunteer website: www.everettsd.org/volunteer

or contact Sue Perry:



volunteer@everettsd.org



425-385-4085





Nondiscrimination statement

The district shall provide equal educational opportunity and treatment for all students in all aspects of the academic and activities program without regard to race, color, national origin, creed, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender expression, gender identity, veteran or military status, the presence of any physical, sensory or mental disability or the use of a trained dog guide or service animal by a student with a disability.

Designated to handle inquiries about nondiscrimination policies are:

Affirmative Action Office – Randi Seaberg, rseaberg@everettsd.org, 425-385-4104

Title IX Officer – Mary O'Brien, MO'Brien@everettsd.org, 425-385-4106

504 Coordinator – Becky Ballbach, rballbach@everettsd.org, 425-385-4063

ADA Coordinator – Becky Clifford, rclifford@everettsd.org, 425-385-5250

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