



RECRUITING, PLACING, AND RETAINING VOLUNTEERS

RECRUITING SCHOOL VOLUNTEERS

Before you recruit:

1. Be aware of your school's volunteer needs.
2. Be able to describe the job.
3. Know who makes up your school's community.

Recruitment Basics:

- Always recruit volunteers to help students and teachers, not to give service to the school. People work for people, not organizations.
- Tell people what they will do, how long they will be expected to do it, and who will benefit.
- Be honest and up front with people when trying to recruit. Do not lie about the work or minimize the time needed.
- Never use guilt when trying to recruit.
- Avoid the “first-warm body through the door” method of recruitment. If you can't get the right person for the specific task, don't take anybody.
- Remember that you are trying to take away a person's reason for saying “NO”, not twisting their arms to volunteer.
- Peer recruitment works well. Parents recruit parents; retired persons recruit retired persons, etc.
- When trying to involve minorities as volunteers, find leaders in the community and recruit them to recruit their peers.
- Speak the language of the person you are trying to recruit or find someone who does.
- Involve everyone in the recruitment campaign – volunteers, teachers, students, community leaders, etc.
- For small programs, it is crucial that you concentrate on developing a corps of dedicated volunteers. They will be your best recruiters. Their enthusiasm and dedication can lead to wider acceptance of volunteers by the teachers and school staff. Remember, quality, not quantity, counts.

One-on-One Recruitment Methods:

- Calling on the phone or introducing yourself at meetings or other gatherings.
- Sharing your excitement about volunteering at parties, during school meetings, and at church or temple.
- Talking to the person behind you in the grocery line. More volunteers have probably been recruited in the grocery store than any other single place!

Group Recruitment:

Increase your audience by using promotional materials:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Flyers• Brochures• Bulletin boards	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• School newsletters/website• Training notices	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Posters• Newspaper publicity
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Ask you school’s art teacher, talented volunteer or artistic student to help you design attractive, easy-to-read promotional materials.

Hint: Make sure that several people proofread your information. Misspellings and incorrect information will not build confidence in your school or the system.

Suggestions for getting the word out to your school’s community:

- Ask students to send letters to grandparents, neighbors, and family members.
- Distribute bookmarks in school or public library.
- Hang student produced posters in offices, hallways, etc.
- Set up a parent involvement area and post volunteer needs.
- Display volunteer needs on bulletin boards.
- Recruit in the school calendar.
- Set up a recruitment table at school functions
- Send letters to parents of children entering your school for the first time.
- Recruit in programs for school events – plays, football games, etc.
- Post a recruitment message on the school marquee.

School based recruitment opportunities:

- Get recommendations from teachers, principal, school nurse, school psychologist, and community liaisons.
- Contact the work-experience or student volunteer coordinator at college or university.
- Request that students write personal essays about the value of volunteers. Send them home with a volunteer needs list and sign up form.
- Appoint a male chairperson to enlist male volunteers.
- Speak at local adult education classes.
- Visit local senior citizen groups and invite them to your school.
- Contact VIPS office at 855-5267 for special project needs.

Preparing a Recruitment Presentation

Remember whether you are writing for newsletters or speaking to a group:

- People enjoy learning about other people – what they do, when they volunteer and how they feel about it.
- Be specific – don't try to recruit for all volunteer jobs at one time.
- Break large volunteer jobs down into smaller parts, then recruit people for these less time-consuming jobs.
- Make the students come alive – without using real names. “Johnny, age 12 loves sports and dogs. He needs help in reading.”

Organizing and Group Recruitment:

- Get lists of other organizations in your area. Ask if they can help your recruitment effort by offering you time on their meeting agendas, handing out information to their membership, posting notices on bulletin boards, etc. Churches and temples are especially good at this.
- Help your audience feel comfortable and safe in your school. Make it come alive for them! Describe your school and invite them to come to visit. Better yet – take photos, slides, or videos of your school.
- When you are going to make a presentation to a large group, take several volunteers with you. They can talk about their own experiences and help you with interested applicants.
- Ask a volunteer who is a member of the club to speak to the group. Your credibility and success rate will multiply.
- Never walk away from a meeting where you have given a talk without getting the name and contact information of everyone interested. Get back to these people within one week.

Sample Recruitment Letter

Dear Parent/Citizen:

Our students are our most important resources. We share a common purpose- educating children. Many students need individualized attention. You have had varied experiences which can help them grow. YOU can help the teachers in ways that will allow them to provide more personal help to our students.

If you are interested in serving as a volunteer, we will be delighted to hear from you. We have attached a list of ways volunteers can help our students. If you have a special ability or interest that is not listed, please write it on the bottom to the sheet.

You are invited to a brief meeting to discuss the volunteer program in more detail. Please let us know if you can come.!

Sincerely yours,

Principal

Volunteer Coordinator

OR

You are invited to meet with the Volunteer Program leaders to discuss your participation as a volunteer.

Date: _____

Time: _____

Place: _____

If You Can...

1. Listen to children read.
2. Conduct flash card drills.
3. Reproduce materials.
4. Work in clinic or media center
5. Proctor students taking tests.
6. Make and play instructional games.
7. Assist with vision screenings.
8. Correct student worksheets.
9. Prepare bulletin boards.
10. Help with book fairs.
11. Demonstrate gardening skills.
12. Tell stories with puppets or drawings.
13. Assist with field trips.
14. Assist with lessons in dramatics, photography, knitting or square dancing.
15. Set up a 'pretend' grocery store to practice math skills
16. Practice vocabulary with non-English speaking students.
17. Discuss careers or hobbies.
18. Make puppets.
19. Set up science experiments.
20. Play a musical instrument.
21. Drill spelling words.
22. Help with handwriting practice.
23. Help with cooking projects.
24. Gather resource materials.
25. Help students with arts and crafts.
26. Help children learn to type.
27. Set up or run a school bookstore.
28. Help arrange assembly programs.
29. Share information about local history.
30. Help children learn a foreign language.
31. Help students practice walking on a balance beam, jumping rope or skipping.
32. Work with a physically challenged student.
33. Listen to a child – be a mentor.
34. Assist with sing-a-longs.

Please Help Our Students and Teachers.

Volunteer Opportunities

Looking for volunteer work to do in your free time? Below are volunteer positions available in Albuquerque Public Schools. Contact your child's school or call Volunteer Services at (505) 855-5267.

In the Classroom

Classroom Volunteers work with the classroom teacher.

Classroom Speakers discuss areas of expertise in a classroom setting.

Exceptional Education Volunteers work with students with special learning needs.

Assisting Support Staff

Clerical Volunteers assist with typing, photo copying, and other office clerical duties.

Health Room Volunteers provide comfort to students and help with student health screenings.

Special Activity Volunteers help with a specific project at a school or at a district office.

One-on-One

Listener Volunteers act as supportive friends to individual students identified by counselors.

Youth Mentors serve as role models to students needing motivation to stay in school.

Volunteer Tutors help middle and high school students with academic subjects.

If Only Someone...

If only someone could listen to Jimmy read today....
If only someone could help Mary with her number facts today....
If only someone could help Billy write his name today....

What a Special Someone That Would Be!

If only someone could help Tracy cut the lines today....
If only someone could help Tony work the computer today....
If only someone could show Kim how to tie her shoes today....

What a Special Someone That Would Be!

If only someone could hold a sick child's hand today....
If only someone could hug a sad child today....
If only someone could praise an unsure child today....

What a Special Someone That Would Be!

If only someone could help Jack make beautiful music today....
If only someone could help Lisa find that library book today....
If only someone could tell David that his picture is truly a work of art....

What a Special Someone That Would Be!

If only someone could file these thousands of papers....
If only someone could help check these math computations....
If only someone could sort and pile and staple and all the while keep their smile....

What a Special Someone That Would Be!

Is someone special, somewhere out there?
Is there a someone who really cares?
Please you and you and you --- be that someone special....

Be That Special Someone for a Long While!

Judy Hart
School volunteer Coordinator
Melrose Park Elementary
Columbia County Schools

Working Parents Can Help Too!

Most volunteer programs are organized around the “traditional” type of volunteer, those that are willing to give numerous hours each week for a complete school term. However, recent studies have shown that the average adult has only five hours of uncommitted time per week.

Since many of our volunteer resource involve working parents, design roles that can be filled in short periods of time or that are infrequently needed. Identify volunteer projects that can be done in a day to present to working parents.

These suggestions are only a beginning:

1. Serve on a weekend beautification project – painting, landscaping, etc.
2. Help build a playground in the evenings or on the weekend.
3. Help build a greenhouse for science projects in the evenings or on the weekend.
4. Serve on a telephone committee to get important messages out to parents.
5. Call stakeholders (parents, community members and business representatives) to remind them of School Advisory Council meetings.
6. Write thank-you notes to teachers and administrators during American Education Week.
7. Write articles for school newsletter using desktop publishing on a home computer.
8. Count grocery receipts or soup labels for additional school equipment.
9. Cut out items for a bulletin board, or class activities.
10. Serve on the School’s advisory committee.
11. Serve as a committee member for the school’s PTA, PTO or PTSA.
12. Help prepare school grounds for evening sports activities.
13. Identify days in advance for you to take off work to help at school, i.e. field trip days, book fair days.
14. Develop learning centers which teachers can use in the classrooms.
15. Clip news articles featuring students or staff and send to the person with a note.
16. Obtain prizes for student and staff recognition.
17. Total volunteer hours for school awards.
18. Correct worksheets.
19. Seek donations for school sponsored events.
20. Arrange for secondary students to learn about careers by shadowing at worksites.

21. Arrange for refreshments for evening functions at school.

**Thank You...
For Helping at Home**

Personal notes are a great way to share information, show your appreciation and assist with record keeping.

Dear:

I really appreciate you taking the time to do this work for me at home. Your willingness to help allows me more time to spend with the students in my classroom.

For your convenience, I have written instructions for this project below. If you have any questions, please feel free to telephone me during my planning period.

Please record the amount of time it took for you to complete this project so that our Volunteer Coordination can add the hours to your record. These records are important to us in many ways. First of all, we want to say thank you to all our wonderful volunteers; secondly, we have several opportunities to receive awards based upon our volunteer program.

Again, thank you for all that you contribute to our students!

Sincerely,

Special Instructions for this project: _____

Time it took to complete this project: _____ hours, and _____ minutes.

Your Comments: _____

Why Do People Volunteer?

1. Helping others
2. Improving the community.
3. Gaining work experience.
4. Utilizing untapped educational skills.
5. Learning new skills.
6. Getting out of the house.
7. Changing the status quo.
8. Staying active and involved.
9. Meeting new people.
10. Being needed.
11. Testing a new career.
12. Making professional contacts.
13. Gaining academic credit.
14. Experiencing different life-styles.
15. Doing satisfying work.
16. Putting a hobby to good purpose.
17. Sharing fun time with family and peers.
18. Learning responsibility
19. Fulfilling a tradition.
20. Being a winner.
21. Meeting new challenges.
22. Using natural gifts and talents.
23. Putting faith into action.
24. Helping a friend.
25. Preserving the past.
26. Influencing others.
27. Searching for a job.
28. Building self-confidence.
29. Empowering others.
30. Meeting others with like values.
31. Being a role model for children.
32. Showing that they care.
33. Gaining recognition.
34. Giving service back to the community.

PLACING VOLUNTEERS

Designing the Volunteer Job

Volunteers, just like compensated employee, require motivation, good morale, and job satisfaction. To provide these needs:

- ✓ Make sure the job is one the teacher or staff wants done and that will be valued and appreciated.
- ✓ Make sure the job is one the volunteer wants to do. Instead of trying to fit the volunteer to the job, build around the volunteer's skills and interests.
- ✓ Make sure the volunteer knows the purpose of the job, and how it will connect to the mission of the school and to student achievement.
- ✓ Make sure the volunteer feels ownership for the job. Volunteers should be able to feel that something is theirs, whether it is a specific task or an area of a classroom.
- ✓ Make sure the volunteer understands the result of the assigned task. Give them feedback!
- ✓ Make sure volunteers have the ability to make some decisions about the task. Ask for their suggestions. This will make the volunteer feel ownership and satisfaction about the task.

Matching Volunteers to Positions

Determine the correct role for a volunteer. It is important that each volunteer fit into the work situation for which they are being considered. This means that volunteers must be satisfied with the job offered and that they view the job as desirable and fulfilling work. Finally, consider the personalities of the volunteer and the person supervising the tasks. Will they be compatible in personality, style or work, etc.?

Since this component of managing volunteers may be difficult, stay in touch with the volunteer and the staff person involved. Ask how things are going. Are the volunteer and the staff person happy with the relationship and the performance of the job? In some cases it may be necessary to assign a volunteer to another job. This is preferable to losing the services of a volunteer, and in some cases, leaving a negative impression of the school or staff members.

Hints on Placing Volunteers

Placement Considerations:

- ✓ Sometimes, it is a good idea to make the first assignment for a short, specific length of time. This is especially important if you are not sure that the assignment is right for the person or that the volunteer will be able to keep a commitment.
- ✓ If possible, give the volunteer a choice of two or three assignments.
- ✓ Volunteers often shy away from jobs that are similar to their regular work. The assignment should be different, challenging, interesting, and require new skills. Volunteers should grow from the experience.

Suggested Methods of Placement:

- ✓ The Volunteer Coordinator can make placements by sorting volunteer registrations into job interests. Match jobs desired to teacher request.
- ✓ Allow volunteers to select their own assignment. Post a large wall chart or sign-up sheets listing all teachers' volunteer needs, days, and times. This can be done at an orientation meeting or by sending a form home to make sure all parents can sign-up.
- ✓ Make a master list of volunteers divided into job interests, talents, and times available. Teachers either individually or at grade level meetings, can select their volunteers.

Assign every volunteer to a job as soon as possible while their enthusiasm is high.

- ✓ Give volunteers their specific assignments and a starting date by phone, letter, or printed form. Make sure the teacher has the same information.
- ✓ Communicate with everyone who has offered to help. Otherwise the comment in the community could be “they must not want volunteers. I offered to help, but no one contacted me”. Even if someone wants to help with a project scheduled later in the year, contact him or her now. They will know the school needs them.
- ✓ See that the volunteer meets with the teacher before beginning work. This should be done outside of class time—before or after school. They need to discuss specific work to be done, also goals procedures.
- ✓ If possible, give the teacher a copy of the volunteer's registration form or a list of the volunteer's special interests, skills, or talents. This would broaden the area of use the teacher may find for the volunteer.

Retention of Your Volunteers

A quality volunteer program requires considerable time for planning, coordinating and supervising. Thus, you will want to create and maintain a climate where volunteers will wish to continue donating their time and talents. As a volunteer coordinator, you can help volunteers grow and develop in your program if you have followed the recommended steps in recruitment, orientation, job assignment and recognition. To retain your volunteers, ensure that each person feels that:

- ✓ Their task is important.
- ✓ Their special skills and talents are needed.
- ✓ They are valued as unique and worthwhile individuals.
- ✓ If they are absent they are missed! Nothing will affect the morale of your volunteers as much as being out sick and nobody at the school notices! Review the sign-in book and stay on top of the attendance of your volunteers. Request to be informed when a volunteer is scheduled to be there and isn't. Give the volunteer a call and let them know you are concerned.

Volunteer Retention Quick Facts

First 24 hours	<p>Most volunteers are lost during this period due to poor customer service skills. If the volunteer's telephone calls are not returned, or if they do not feel welcome when they enter the building they do not return.</p> <p>To assure the volunteers are trained during this critical period, include the front office staff in designing your volunteer program. Return telephone calls immediately, make all school staff familiar with the volunteer program, and create a sense of inclusion. Plan to welcome your volunteers warmly.</p>
First Month	<p>This is the initial learning period for the volunteer. They will need on the job training and assistance and materials. The Volunteer coordinator will need to keep in close touch with these new volunteers. Plan to have an interview with the volunteer during this period. Using proactive communication, discover how they feel about their role in the program and remediate if necessary.</p>
After six months	<p>The tasks performed by the volunteer must still fit their lifestyle, skills and social life. After six months, the volunteer should feel a sense of belonging, having made friends with other volunteers and staff. They may now wish to broaden their horizons by assignment to other tasks. Do not let them get bored with the situation.</p>
After the first School Year	<p>First of all celebrate the volunteer's term of service. Share the accomplishments they have made, provide symbols of belonging, a volunteer growth plan and commitment that you will need them next year.</p>