

The North East Independent School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, national origin, age or disability.

## NORTH EAST INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

### VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

# Volunteer/Mentor Guidelines



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MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN THE LIFE OF A CHILD

## Partners in Education

The Partners in Education (PIE) volunteer and mentor programs are an essential component in the efforts to educate and nurture students in the North East Independent School District. Volunteers and mentors work alongside staff to enhance and enrich the educational opportunities provided to our students.

During the past several years more than 30,000 parents, businesses and community members have given more than 700,000 hours to the district. Our volunteers and mentors are a valued member of the North East team. As members of our team, we ask that you follow guidelines similar to those practiced by professional staff. This contributes to the quality and

success of the PIE program. These guidelines also help to create a safe and positive environment for the students, parents, families, staff, community, volunteers, and mentors.

Questions regarding these guidelines should be directed to the PTA volunteer coordinator or the staff volunteer liaison at the campus. Additional information can also be obtained by contacting the District Volunteer Coordinator.

Thank you very much for your interest in the volunteer program and our students. We hope your experience is as rewarding to you as it is for our children.



There is no higher sacrifice than human service. To work for the common good is the greatest conviction.

# Volunteer/Mentor Guidelines

## Background Checks

To ensure the strength and integrity of our program, we require all volunteers to complete a Criminal History Record Check.

## Confidentiality

Always be sensitive to protect personal or academic information about students or classes. If a student shares information that causes you concern, contact the school volunteer liaison. Please do not share any identifying information about students to anyone other than NEISD staff.

State law may require that the school principal or other appropriate authorities be notified if a student shares information about physical, emotional or sexual abuse.

## Discipline

Discipline is the responsibility of the school staff. If you encounter any discipline problems with a student, please refer the problem to the school staff.

## Dress Code

Please follow the dress codes and practices established for staff and students. If you are attending a special event at the school, dress appropriately depending on the school activity or program.

## Funds

Volunteers are not authorized to use or commit the use of NEISD funds.

## Gift Giving

As a general rule, gift giving is strongly discouraged. Teachers have indicated that giving even small gifts can result in jealousy by other students or siblings and escalates their feelings of being left out. It also sets a standard that may make other volunteers uncomfortable. Also please do not lend or give money to students.

## Guests

Please do not bring guests or children to your volunteer assignment.

## Neglect or Abuse

Verbal or physical neglect or abuse of a student will not be tolerated. North East volunteers and mentors conduct themselves in a manner reflecting the utmost respect for all individuals with whom they come in contact within the district. Should you suspect or observe any negligent or abusive behavior, report it immediately to the school volunteer liaison, principal or District Volunteer Coordinator.

## Personal Beliefs

North East students come from a variety of backgrounds and volunteers demonstrate respect for their differences and individual rights. In that regard, volunteers and mentors do not propose religious beliefs or doctrines, nor promote political parties or candidates.

## Photographs and Recordings

Please do not take photographs, or make sound or video recordings of the students. The need to do so must be discussed with the principal. If agreement is reached regarding photographing, or sound or video recording, a parental permission release is required.

## Problem Resolution

Volunteering should be a positive and meaningful experience, but if you encounter problems related to a

student, class or school personnel, immediately contact the school volunteer liaison or District Volunteer Coordinator.

Please do not engage in criticism of any school faculty or staff member and always treat students and school personnel with respect.

## Recording Volunteer Hours

The district maintains a record of volunteer hours for the schools. Volunteers and mentors should sign in and out at the school's main office from our computer system, Raptor<sup>®</sup>.

## Removal

Removal of a volunteer or mentor from the program is rare. However, failure to uphold any guideline or standard may result in dismissal from the NEISD Partners in Education Program.

## School Rules

Any rules associated with your assigned school will be presented at an orientation session or in your volunteer packet. Please remember that you are a guest on the school campus and need to comply with its rules.

## Security

Because school staff must be able to quickly identify visitors or others authorized to be with students, all volunteers must sign in at the main office when they arrive on campus. You are also expected to wear a volunteer name badge or identification provided by the school each time you visit.

## Smoke-Free Environment

NEISD provides a smoke-free environment. Please do not smoke in the buildings or on the grounds of any NEISD property.

## Special Needs, Safety and Medication

Occasionally, a student will have special medical or physical restrictions. Please abide by these restrictions. Volunteers are not authorized to give medical treatment or prescriptions or non-prescription medication to any student. Allow school personnel to address any medical needs of the students.

## Student Contact

Programs involve spending time with students only in a supervised setting on the school campus during school hours. Any violation of these student contact guidelines could result in your assuming personal liability if a student is, or alleges to be, injured.

## Success

Success with your volunteer efforts requires consistently meeting the time commitment as defined by your program. As a volunteer, we ask you to take your commitment to your student, class, or school seriously. If you cannot meet your program commitment, contact the school.

## Training

Schools provide volunteers and mentors with training to prepare them for their duties. Should you have any questions related to your responsibilities, please meet with the PTA volunteer coordinator or the staff volunteer liaison.

## Transportation

Because transporting requires special permission, volunteers are not authorized to transport students, staff, or other volunteers.