

PELLA COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT



VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK

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Pella Community School District Volunteer Handbook



Welcome, Volunteers!

The staff and administration wish to express their appreciation to you for assuming an active role in our schools and in our students' lives. Your interests, time, and energies will enhance the services our schools can provide for the students in Pella. In your work as a volunteer, it is important to know that our students look to you as role models. We have established a volunteer handbook that better explains the important role you play as a volunteer. There has never been a more exciting time to be part of the educational community in Pella Schools.

Thank you for giving your time and talents to support our mission of
Preparing Everyone to Learn, Lead and Achieve!

Purpose of Pella Schools' Volunteer Program

Pella Schools' mission of Preparing Everyone to Learn, Lead and Achieve does not stop with our certified and non-certified staff. Through our volunteer program, Pella Schools seeks to unite the community through collaborative work between community members of all ages and stages of life.

Volunteer Objectives

As a volunteer program, we seek for volunteers to...

1. Promote and support a collaborative culture inside and outside the school
2. Provide support to school staff and students
3. Build relationships with school staff and students that can extend beyond the schools

Volunteer Descriptions

At Pella Schools, there are a variety of opportunities to volunteer and be involved in our schools. We understand that not all schedules allow for routine volunteering opportunities. However, students thrive with routine and in certain positions, routine is expected more than others. Below is a list of volunteer options, a short description and an expected time commitment for each volunteer option.

Academic (Classroom Focused)		Non-Academic (Outside of Classroom)	
Title of Volunteer Opportunity	Description	Title of Volunteer Opportunity	Description
Library Assistant	<p>Volunteers in the school library can assist students with checking out books to students, shelving returned books, and handling various other library tasks. Their help ensures that the library remains an organized and welcoming space where students can explore and enjoy reading.</p> <p>Expected Time Commitment: 1 hour</p>	Recess Supervision	<p>Volunteers play a crucial role at recess by supervising and engaging with students to ensure a safe and enjoyable playground. They join in games and activities, promoting fun while reinforcing the importance of rules and fair play. Volunteers help create a positive atmosphere where every student can have fun and feel included.</p> <p>Expected Time Commitment: 30 minutes to 1 hour</p>
Clerical Work	If you prefer a clerical role, there are plenty of opportunities to	Bus Line Assistance	Volunteers assist with the bus line and dismissal process after

Academic (Classroom Focused)		Non-Academic (Outside of Classroom)	
	<p>assist teachers with tasks like cutting, laminating, printing, crafting, and assembling packets. Your help with these office-type jobs can greatly support the teachers and free up their time for direct student interaction. If you enjoy organization and office work, this could be the perfect volunteer niche for you.</p> <p>Expected Time Commitment: 1 hour</p>		<p>school, ensuring a smooth and efficient transition home. They help organize children, manage the parent pick-up lines, and keep the students occupied while they wait. Their support ensures that dismissal runs safely and orderly, making the end of the school day a positive experience for all.</p> <p>Expected Time Commitment: 30 minutes to 1 hour</p>
Student Interaction	<p>We need volunteers to engage with students in various social activities, such as playing board games, doing puzzles, building with Legos, or even taking a walk. These interactions not only help students develop social and cognitive skills but also foster meaningful relationships. Your involvement can provide valuable support and companionship.</p> <p>Expected Time Commitment: 1 hour</p>	Lunch Supervision	<p>One of our greatest needs is help during lunchtime. Responsibilities include helping students go through the lunch line, engaging them in conversation while they eat, and helping with tasks like opening their milk. Your presence and assistance will make lunchtime smoother and more enjoyable for both the teachers and students.</p> <p>Expected Time Commitment: 30 minutes to 1 hour</p>
Reading Support	<p>Volunteers who are willing to read with children needing extra support are invaluable. These dedicated individuals offer one-on-one or small group reading sessions, providing attention and encouragement that some students might not receive at home. By fostering a love of reading, volunteers help to build confidence and improve literacy skills, making a lasting impact on each child's educational journey.</p>		

Academic (Classroom Focused)		Non-Academic (Outside of Classroom)	
	Expected Time Commitment: 1 hour		

Volunteer Code of Ethics and Guidelines

Volunteers must adhere to all state regulated guidelines. Volunteers will work within guidelines established by the school administration and under the direction and supervision of teachers and school staff members.

School Rules: Volunteers may not bring children who are not registered in the school district when volunteering. All PCSD grounds and buildings are non-smoking, drug-free and weapon-free zones.

Background Check: As part of our commitment to student safety, all volunteers are required to complete a background check. Please complete this step as soon as possible, as you will be unable to volunteer until the background check is processed and approved.

Attendance and Punctuality: Volunteers agree to maintain consistent attendance and notify the school of any scheduling changes or absences as early as possible. Punctuality is essential to minimize disruptions to the school day.

Dress Code: Volunteers are expected to follow a professional dress code. Dress comfortably, but remember, you are a role model for our students.

Confidentiality: Volunteers must keep information regarding students between yourself and the assigned supervisor. A misplaced comment can be devastating to a student, a family and the school volunteer program.

Gifts: No monetary gifts or in-kind gifts should be given to students.

Volunteer/Student Relationship: For the protection of all, relationships between volunteers and students must be kept appropriate at all times. Continuing a relationship with students outside of school activities is not permitted. Volunteers should not give money, gifts, or medication of any kind to students.

Appropriate Touch: Touching such as handshakes, high fives, an arm or hug around a shoulder are the only safe and friendly ways to touch a child. For some children, or for some cultures, even these gestures may be unwelcome. No child should be subject to unwelcome touching, no matter how well intended. If a child ever inappropriately touches you, please inform a staff member right away. Volunteers are role models for students. Conversations with students and staff should demonstrate respect for others and avoid language that may be perceived as discriminatory, profane, sexist, or offensive.

Non-Discrimination: No student or staff person should ever be treated differently, spoken to disrespectfully, or denied services on the basis of sex, race, religion, disability, age, creed, color, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity or marital status. In addition, volunteers cannot encourage or promote religious beliefs by class activities, comments, or invitations to their place of worship.

Suspected Abuse or Neglect: Reasonable suspicion of abuse, neglect, sexual abuse, or illegal and/or dangerous activities should be immediately disclosed to staff.

Bullying Information: Bullying behavior should be reported to the classroom teacher immediately.

Photography: Photographing students is prohibited at all times.

Discipline: Any discipline of a student should be left to a staff member. Never touch a child in anger or grab or chase students. Physical punishment is never permitted. If a child becomes unmanageable, find

the nearest staff member or building administrator.

Liability: The District cannot provide any type of health insurance while serving as a volunteer, nor is the person eligible for workers' compensation.

PCSD Volunteers SHOULD NOT:

- Be alone with a student in a closed room.
- Take a student off school grounds for any reason.
- Promote any political candidate or parties to a student.
- Solicit students or parents to a particular brand, product, or business.
- Give personal contact information to a student or connect to a student on social media.

If you have questions or concerns, talk with the person responsible for your volunteer activities.

Volunteers who breach confidentiality will be dismissed.

School District Procedure

Volunteers who do not meet requirements for volunteers working with students, as established by state law and Pella Community Schools procedures, will not be allowed to volunteer.

Volunteers are counted upon by staff and students. We appreciate any and all help volunteers can provide and understand that there are unforeseen circumstances that inhibit a volunteer from being on time or attending their allotted position. In the event that one of these unforeseen circumstances arises, please contact the volunteer coordinator as soon as possible. Failure to communicate with the volunteer coordinator in the event of absence will impact our school, staff and students and will likely lead towards stepping away from the volunteer program. If, at any time, a volunteer wishes to discontinue their volunteering status at Pella Schools, we ask that that is clearly communicated by way of conversation with the volunteer coordinator or building administrator. If a volunteer does not conform to the guidelines, or otherwise is not serving the school and its students in an acceptable manner, the administrator or volunteer coordinator may suggest alternative actions or assignments. The administrator and volunteer coordinator have the option to terminate the volunteer's placement.

Safety

At Pella Schools, we provide a safe environment for our students and staff. To ensure that volunteers assist in providing this safe environment, we encourage all volunteers to look over and familiarize themselves with their school's safety plan.

When safety drills are being conducted, volunteers are expected to cooperate and participate in drills in order to familiarize themselves with the school space in case of emergency.

Volunteer Portal (Better Impact)

Located on our Pella Schools website, Better Impact is an online scheduling platform used by both volunteers and the Volunteer Coordinator. It is a useful tool for managing volunteer applications, profiles, schedules, and tracking hours. This platform helps streamline communication and ensures

efficient organization of volunteer activities.

Volunteer Trainings

Anyone looking to participate in the volunteer program will be subject to a background check. Along with the background check, volunteers must complete the volunteer confidentiality form found at the bottom of this document.

Volunteers are expected to have completed all training associated with their volunteer position. This includes, but is not limited to all volunteer training videos.

If you need help...

We realize that there are plenty of situations that may not have been addressed in this handbook and we invite these opportunities with an open mind. It is vital to keep the lines of communication open, if you have questions regarding your volunteering experience at all please do not hesitate to reach out to the volunteer coordinator.

All volunteers will report to the volunteer coordinator.

FAQs

Below is a list of answers to frequently asked questions:

Question - If I am a volunteer, do I have to volunteer every day?

Answer - No, volunteer when you are able and when it works best for you! However, students thrive with routine and in certain positions, routine is expected more than others.

Question - Do I need to volunteer in the same position every day?

Answer - No, but by being in the same position it allows for relationships to form easier and more naturally.

Volunteer Confidentiality Form

The Pella Community School staff understand the importance of using volunteers to work closely with them in support of student learning opportunities.

Adults often volunteer their help in classrooms and assist with student activities. Volunteer services significantly benefit the school. In the course of their work, volunteers sometimes become aware of information that should be treated confidentially. It is very important that these matters not be discussed outside of the school. In order to ensure the rights of our students, persons who visit or volunteer at Pella Community Schools are asked to read and follow these guidelines of confidentiality.

Do not discuss anything that you yourself would not like discussed publicly about your child including, but not limited to grades, progress, counseling, behaviors, discipline, social needs, and/or financial needs. If you are uncertain whether or not something is potentially sensitive, please refrain from discussing it until you can get authorization to do so. We look forward to working with you and making our school the best it can be. We respectfully request adults who volunteer sign the form below in which they agree to keep sensitive information confidential.

I have read these guidelines in its entirety and hereby understand and agree to abide by this school policy of confidentiality.

Yes

No

Name _____ Phone number: _____
First Middle Last

Volunteer's Signature _____ Printed Name _____ Date _____