

Lee County Schools
2410 Society Hill Road
Opelika, Alabama 36804



“Bridging the Gap between Our Community and Schools”

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A Tradition of Excellence – A Vision for Tomorrow

Dear Community Volunteer:

On behalf of Lee County Schools, I would like to extend our appreciation for your dedication in improving the academic achievement of our students. Volunteers play an important and valuable role in our district. Students, teachers, staff, parents and the community benefit from the work of individuals like you who freely share their talents and resources.

This handbook is directed to anyone wishing to devote a portion of his or her time to one of the most important resources in this community – our schools. We want you to get the most out of your volunteer experience, therefore we want to make sure you are an informed volunteer. Whether you commit one hour a week, one day a week, or commit to the entire school year, your efforts make a difference for our students.

Volunteers help in many different ways such as: tutoring, classroom assistants, playground supervision, library assistants, office assistants, field trip chaperones, team sports, and special projects. On behalf of the teachers, staff, and students, we appreciate all that you give to improve the quality of education for our students.

If you should have any questions or concerns, please contact us at (334) 705-6000.

Sincerely,

Dr. James “Mac” McCoy
Superintendent

Volunteer Program Overview

Lee County Schools believe that volunteers contribute of their time unselfishly on behalf of the students and staff. The majority of volunteer efforts are done quietly, behind the scenes, and without great fanfare. Principals oversee volunteers at their schools; however, they may elect to designate another administrator or faculty members to assist them in operating a volunteer program.

Role of School Level Volunteer Coordinator

The principal is in charge of the volunteer program. If necessary, the principal may choose another staff member to administer the day to day operations of a volunteer program. The school level volunteer coordinator is responsible for recruiting, record keeping, orientation and training of staff and volunteers, recognition, public relations, and program evaluation.

If the principal chooses to delegate the responsibility of the volunteer program to another faculty member, the designee is responsible for the following:

- Conferring with the school principal to determine the school policies, procedures, and goals for the utilizing school volunteers.
- Conducting a faculty orientation on utilizing school volunteers.
- Determining teacher and staff volunteer/resource needs.
- Recruiting volunteers to meet the identified needs.
- Interviewing volunteers in order to determine placement.
- Verifying a security clearance with Central Office.
- Offering orientation sessions to new volunteers.
- Maintaining volunteer records and hours.
- Organizing and providing volunteer appreciation events.
- Maintaining community involvement through constant communication with volunteers, and school staff.
- Evaluating the success of the volunteer program and complete any end of year reports.

Definition of Volunteer

Volunteers are individuals who donate their time, without financial compensation. Volunteers may offer their service in a classroom setting during the school day or outside the school setting as part of an extracurricular activity. A person who comes to the school for a one-time special event, such as a guest speaker, presenter or visitor is considered a guest and is not required to complete a volunteer

application. School board policy prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, creed, marital status, sex, religion, age, or disability.

Areas of an Effective Volunteer Opportunities include:

- Tutoring
- Mentoring
- Athletics
- Classroom Assistance
- School/classroom events
- Organize careers fairs
- Chaperone field trips
- Before/after-school programs
- Non-classroom (main office, library/media center) assistance
- Panelist for senior exhibitions and/or student portfolios
- School community organizations and committees

Volunteer Qualifications

In order to qualify as a “volunteer” under 29 U.S.C. § 203(e)(4)(A); 29 C.F.R. § 553.106(a), an individual:

1. May not receive compensation for their time, but may receive a nominal fee, money for expenses, or reasonable benefits.
2. May not receive any increase to their nominal fee based on the success or failure of the sports program or the amount of hours worked as a volunteer for the program.
3. May not receive a nominal fee which is in excess of 20% of what the school system would pay an individual if hired as a coach or an adviser for the same sport.
4. May not receive a nominal fee as a substitute for compensation.
5. Should partake to volunteer, at least in part, for civic, charitable, or humanitarian reasons. *See* 29 C.F.R. §§ 553.101; 553.106.
6. Should volunteer freely without pressure or coercion, direct or implied, from the employer. *See* 29 C.F.R. §§ 553.101; 553.106.
7. Should be able to freely start and stop the volunteer process.

8. Should not fear any potential adverse employment action based on the success or failure of an extra-curricular sports program or his decision to end his volunteer duties.
9. Should not be employed by the same school or school system to perform the same type of services as those for which the individual proposes to volunteer. See 29 C.F.R. §§ 553.101; 553.106.

Volunteer Requirements

All volunteers are required to complete a volunteer application form and are subject to criminal history, sex offender, and in some cases, fingerprinting. No volunteer shall be assigned to provide supervision or instruction to students alone.

Acceptance of a volunteer is based on factors:

- No record of felony conviction or requirement to register as a sex offender under Alabama law.
- A completed volunteer application form on file.
- Positive attitude
- Interest in and enthusiasm for working with children.
- Ability to work cooperatively with school personnel.
- Good communication skills, health and personal hygiene, moral character, dependability, and be well groomed.

School Volunteer Procedure/Checklist

Procedures for volunteers are as follows:

- ✓ Complete a District Volunteer Application Form
- ✓ Provide a Valid State Issued Driver's License/ID Card or Social Security Card
- ✓ Read and Sign Volunteer Agreement Form
- ✓ Read and Sign Volunteer Confidentiality Agreement
- ✓ Submit to a National Criminal History and Sex Offender Background Check.
- ✓ Participate in a Volunteer Orientation

All volunteer work is done under the direction and supervision of an assigned teacher, site volunteer coordinator, or principal/assistant principal. All volunteers must receive approval of the principal to serve in the school. Volunteers must comply with the sign-in procedures at the school site.

Volunteer Application/Profile

Name of School/Site(s) to Volunteer _____

Name _____

Residence Address _____

Home Telephone _____ Work Telephone _____

Cell Phone _____ Email _____

Services to provide:

Relationship to any students at school:

Student Name _____ Relationship _____

Student Name _____ Relationship _____

Student Name _____ Relationship _____

Relationship to any staff members at school:

Staff Name _____ Relationship _____

Staff Name _____ Relationship _____

Reason(s) for Volunteering:

IN CASE OF AN EMERGENCY

Emergency Contact Person: _____

Emergency Contact Number: _____

Application/Profile is maintained at the local school.

Volunteer Information Needed for Online Background Check

The criminal and sex offender background checks will be conducted by Background Investigation Bureau (BIB), LLC, 9710 Northcross Center Court, Huntersville, North Carolina 28078. Background Investigation Bureau may be contacted at 704.439.3900 or at <https://bib.com/SECUREVOLUNTEER/LEE-COUNTY-SCHOOLS/>. The background check process is to be completed online. Payment for the background checks is made by the volunteer online. You may access the online portal through the Lee County Schools website at www.lee.k12.al.us; look for the icon “BIB” and click it. The Background Investigation Bureau portal should open up for you. If there are any problems in accessing Background Investigation Bureau Website or completing the volunteer background check online, please call 1-704.439.3900. By completing the application online, the information provided electronically can be **safely** and **securely** transmitted to our background check vendor instantly. The enhanced process can remove days of waiting from the overall process. The following information is required for the online background check:

- Last Name
- First Name
- Middle Name
- Present Address, City, State, Zip Code, County
- Date of Birth
- Social Security Number
- Previous Names
- Any and All Previous Addresses, City, State, Zip Code, County
- Indicate if you would like to have a copy of the report sent by email or fax.
- Where (what schools) will you want to volunteer?
- Reason for volunteering
- Relationship to persons in schools you would like to volunteer
- Name on credit card
- Billing address of credit card
- Credit card number
- Expiration date
- Security code
- Address to send volunteer ID badge

Method of Payment

Volunteers will submit payment for the background checks online using Visa, MasterCard, American Express or Discover. The estimated cost for the National Criminal and Sex Offender Background Checks is \$16.95. All fees are paid to Background Investigation Bureau.

Volunteer Guideline Agreement

1. Volunteers will not be compensated for time and services.
2. All volunteers must sign in at the Main Office or the designated sign-in station upon arrival.
3. Volunteers will follow all policies, procedures and other rules established in the district.
4. Volunteers must wear the district approved identification badge and will provide other identification whenever required.
5. Volunteers must follow the appropriate dress code applicable to staff.
6. It is unlawful for volunteers to smoke, drink alcoholic beverages, or possess illegal drugs and weapon on any Lee County School ground.
7. Volunteers cannot loan money to students or staff and/or not bring gifts to students unless authorized by the school principal.
8. Volunteers cannot transport students in personal vehicles.
9. Volunteers cannot have access to student educational records. All volunteers will sign a confidentiality agreement.
10. Volunteers cannot photograph or videotape students.
11. Volunteers cannot dress, change diapers, provide personal hygiene assistance, or supply medication to students.
12. Volunteers cannot exchange telephone numbers, home addresses, e-mail addresses or any other home directory information with students for any purpose.
13. Volunteers will use universal precautions to avoid contact with body fluids.
14. Volunteers will use adult designated restrooms.
15. Volunteers can monitor student behavior; however, if a situation is serious, the volunteer should seek immediate assistance from school personnel.
16. Volunteers cannot discriminate against or harass any person(s) and will report all harassment or discrimination observed, in accordance with district policy.
17. Volunteers cannot search students or student property.
18. Lee County Schools reserve the right to immediately revoke the volunteer status of individuals.

I wish to volunteer for this position to provide civic, charitable or humanitarian service. I acknowledge that I have read and understand the guidelines of volunteering in Lee County Schools.

Signature of Volunteer

Date

Printed Name of Volunteer

Volunteer Confidentiality Agreement

All student information should be kept confidentially. Sharing student information with others may be a violation of the law. Do not make a promise to a student that you will keep confidential any information that pertains to the welfare of the student and to protect you from violating the law. Although the student is free to share confidential information with you, there are certain things that you are required by law to tell the administration. Any personal information learned from a student, should be held in strictest confidence **except:**

1. If a student confides that he or she is the victim of sexual, emotional, chemical or physical abuse.
2. If a student confides that he or she is involved in any illegal activity.
3. If a student confides that he or she is considering homicide or suicide.

Should one of these exceptions arise, you are required by law to immediately notify the school administration. Please make a note on your calendar when this information was reported and to whom it was given. If you have questions, please ask an administrator.

I understand that in the course of my volunteer time with the Lee County School System, I may become aware of confidential information about specific student(s). This information may include such information as students' academic performance, behavior, disabilities and related manners. I understand and agree that I will not disclose such confidential information except to school employees.

Volunteer Signature: _____ Date: _____

Procedures for Returning Volunteers

All returning volunteers must complete a new application annually and will need to submit to a national criminal background and sex offender check.