

PERU ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK

2017-2018



Peru Elementary School
116 Pleasant Street
Peru, NY 12972
518.643.6200

Mrs. Michelle Rawson, Principal K-2
Mr. Matthew Slattery, Principal 3-6

A Letter from our Principals

Dear Elementary School Volunteers:

On behalf of the students and staff of Peru Elementary School, we extend to you 'welcome' and 'thank you' for sharing your time and talents with us through volunteerism. Volunteers play an important role in our school program by providing additional help in our classrooms, library, cafeteria, and throughout the school. Everyone benefits from the work that you do.

Along with the privilege of volunteering come certain responsibilities and expectations. This **Volunteer Handbook** was developed by the Elementary School's **Parent Involvement Committee** to provide you with an overview of a volunteer's responsibilities at our school, as well as helpful hints to keep in mind. Please review this handbook carefully before you begin to volunteer.

We will try to match you in a role that best meets your needs and those of the school. As a volunteer, you will be obligated to uphold the **high level of confidentiality** that is associated with working in a school setting. This is explained further in the handbook.

We look forward to working with you this year. Our goal at Peru Elementary School is to enable our students to be successful learners. We appreciate the support that you provide in helping us reach this goal.

Sincerely,

Michelle Rawson, Principal K-2
Matthew Slattery, Principal 3-6

CONFIDENTIALITY

When a volunteer is working with a student or group of students at Peru Elementary School, the basic right to privacy for each child and family **must be respected and upheld** at all times.

Confidential information includes **any personal identifiable data**, information, observation, or records pertaining to a student or family. Volunteers must treat all such information as confidential and should discuss it only with the teacher or assigned supervisor.

The information should not be discussed with other volunteers, other teachers or staff, or with anyone outside the school.

*The one exception to this rule is in the **case of suspected child abuse or neglect**. Any volunteer who has reason to believe that a child has been subjected to abuse or maltreatment must report it immediately to the principal or other school official.

Volunteers who do not follow this code of confidentiality will no longer be permitted to participate in school volunteer activities.

Prior to your volunteering experience, you'll need to review the Volunteerism Declaration at the end of this handbook, sign the declaration, and submit to the Principal – doing so acknowledges your understanding of the importance of confidentiality, and the consequences for not doing so.



WHO CAN VOLUNTEER?

Almost anyone!

Age, background and educational experience vary considerably among community members helping to serve our children in the schools.

All good volunteers share the following traits in common:

Sincere in their desire to help children.

Sensitive to the policies and procedures of Peru Elementary School.

Responsible to the commitment they make.

Reassuring to the students they work with by helping them see themselves as likable, valuable persons capable of achieving great things.

Respectful of the confidences of others.

Patient in their dealings with others, realizing that progress seldom comes quickly and may not always be readily apparent.

Capable of seizing every opportunity to help students feel good about themselves. Give abundant, sincere, deserved praise.

Cooperative and willing to respect individual differences as well as the strengths and weaknesses in students. Be sensitive to their self-doubts and to their fragile days.

GUIDELINES & RESPONSIBILITIES

- Sign in/out at the Office to receive/return your volunteer tag. Wear your name tag at all times while volunteering in school.
- Be a positive role model – set a good example of appearance and behavior for students.
- Dress appropriately while in the classroom.
- Respect and maintain the confidentiality of all students.
- Take your directions from the teacher and/or Principal. Be able to adjust to each teacher's individual style.
- Remain with your task, and do not venture to other parts of the building.
- Be punctual and reliable. Please notify the school if there is a change in plans.
- Enter the classroom with as little disruption as possible. It is important to respect the students, the teacher, and the classroom working environment.
- Follow universal first-aid precautions.
- Become familiar with school/classroom policies, practices, and procedures.
- Know what to do in a Fire Drill.

HOW VOLUNTEERING BENEFITS THE SCHOOL

- ❖ Children get more individual attention.
- ❖ The curriculum is enriched.
- ❖ Community appreciation of the school and the educational process is increased.
- ❖ Parenting knowledge is increased.
- ❖ Discipline problems are reduced.
- ❖ Children can relate more to adults.
- ❖ Motivation of children is increased.
- ❖ Children's respect for adults is increased.
- ❖ Teachers have more time to teach and plan.



How VOLUNTEERING BENEFITS YOU

- ❖ Provides involvement and information about Peru Elementary School.
- ❖ Increases your understanding of the educational process.
- ❖ Allows you to understand and contribute to the learning process in your child's school.
- ❖ Helps you meet other members of the learning community.
- ❖ Gives you the opportunity to get to know the teachers and other school staff members better.



WHAT A VOLUNTEER SHOULD EXPECT

As a volunteer, you are a ray of sunshine to the students at Peru Elementary School! As a valuable member of an educational team, you *should* expect a few things from the school.

- An Introduction to class rules and routines by the classroom teacher.
- Specific Guidance and clear instructions on assignments.
- Meaningful Tasks which promote student learning and put to use your interests and talents.
- A Reasonable Workspace suitable for the job to be done.
- Discipline problems handled by the teacher or Principal.
- Recognition for all you do to help kids.



HELPFUL HINTS FOR THE CLASSROOM



- ✓ Be cheerful, friendly and relaxed. Don't worry about making mistakes.
- ✓ Start off by learning the classroom rules and procedures. If you are unsure of the right course of action, check with the teacher.
- ✓ Give your full attention to the children and the tasks at hand - avoid using your classroom time to socialize with the teacher or other volunteers.
- ✓ Try not to gravitate to your child. Explain to your child ahead of time that you are coming in to help all students.
- ✓ Have fun. Laugh and talk with the students. Use a calm, friendly voice and use simple, pleasant words.
- ✓ Learn the children's names and try to use them as often as possible.
- ✓ Tell them your name.
- ✓ Encourage the children to try. Allow them time to experiment and find things out for themselves.
- ✓ Always remember that you are appreciated! Sometimes staff members get caught up in the task of the day and may forget to say "Thanks!" The time you give to the school is invaluable.

POTENTIAL VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES

Individual teachers will have specific directions to go along with given tasks. Volunteers may be asked to participate in some of the following or similar activities:

- **Materials Preparation**- cut paper, copy papers, take down bulletin boards.
- **Reading Practice**- read with students one-on-one or in a small group.
- **Writer's Workshop**- assist the teacher with student conferences and guide them through the writing process.
- **Individual review**- work one-on-one or in small groups with students to review skills already taught by the classroom teacher.
- **Sight word vocabulary program**- monitor student's progress with sight words or other vocabulary words.
- **Book Order**- tally and prepare book club orders.
- **Centers**- monitor a specific activity with small groups.
- **"Secret Reader"** - sign up to be a surprise reader for a class.
- **Party prep and clean-up**- assist in organizing classroom parties.
- **Special projects**- assist teachers with special projects in the classroom.
- **Media Center/Library Assistant** - assist the librarian in gathering teacher and student requests. This may also include cataloguing and shelving books



GENERAL INFORMATION



Bathrooms:

There are three adult-only bathrooms: One in the Office space across from the Crackerbox gym, one across from the upstairs library, and one in the faculty room across from the library near K-2 cafeteria.

Coats/Purses:

Don't bring anything of value to school. Coats, purses, umbrellas, etc. may be kept in the classroom where you are working.

Parking:

The parking spaces in the front of Peru Elementary are for volunteers and visitors. Please feel free to park there.

Siblings:

Please do not bring siblings to school when you volunteer or when you chaperone field trips.

Smoking:

There is NO smoking anywhere in the building or on school grounds under state law.



Photo ID:

Per building procedure, please be prepared to present and leave a valid form of photo identification at the main office in order to sign-in. When you return your ID badge, you'll receive your photo ID.

The faculty, staff, and administration of Peru Elementary School would like to thank everyone who took time out of their busy day to help make this school a wonderful place for children to learn.

“We make a living by what we do, but we make a life by what we give.”

-Sir Winston Churchill

PERU ELEMENTARY VOLUNTEER DECLARATION

Thank you for volunteering! You enrich and extend the teaching at Peru Elementary School.

Before volunteering, please review, sign, and submit this Declaration. This document must be on file in the Main Office prior to any volunteer entering the building.

I, _____, (print name), agree that when talking with others, I will only discuss the activities the children and I engage in. I will respect their rights to privacy and not make evaluative comments about their abilities or skills. If I am concerned about a child's performance, I will not hesitate to talk to the teacher.

I have read and understand the guidelines and confidentiality policy for volunteers outlined in this handbook and agree to abide by them.

Please sign your name and return to the Main Office.

(your signature)

(teacher's name)