

# Volunteer Guidelines



## Volunteers are an important part of the education team

Volunteers in Albany's schools are enhancing the education of children every day. They help school staff enrich children's learning experiences. By giving of their time, volunteers allow schools to offer more services to children and families, and to better meet the individual needs of each child.

## How to be a good volunteer

- ▶ **Be punctual and reliable.** Volunteers are most helpful when they can be counted on. If you can't make it for your shift or will be late, please call the school office as far in advance as possible. Be fair and realistic with yourself about the times you can volunteer, and then stick with that schedule. Make it a priority.
- ▶ **Be a good ambassador.** As a volunteer, you represent the school and the district not just "on the job," but everywhere in the community. Help spread the word about the good things that your school is doing. Answer questions when you can, or urge people to call the school for more information. If you have concerns about anything happening in the school, speak to the principal.
- ▶ **Keep confidential information confidential.** As a volunteer, you may learn confidential information about Albany students. It is critical that you keep that information confidential, and not divulge it, even to friends or family. Students trust you to maintain their rights and privacy.
- ▶ **Set a good example for students and visitors by following school and district rules.** We expect our students to dress modestly and use respectful language. By wearing appropriate clothes and using respectful language when you volunteer at school, you can help set a good example for students that school is an important place that deserves our respect. Please do not wear revealing clothing. Also, references to alcohol, tobacco, drug, or violence and inappropriate language are not allowed on clothing. It's also important to remember that student discipline is the responsibility of the teacher and/or principal.

## Learn the basics

Your job will be easier if you learn the following:

- The classroom, school and district's rules
- Your way around your school or other volunteer site, including the location of restrooms, supply and workroom areas, staff lounge areas, and entrances and exits
- Where to sign in and out, and how to get a name tag
- What to do in an emergency (see following sections)
- Where to park
- Your school's calendar and schedule
- How to order lunch from the cafeteria

## Background checks

For the safety of our students, all Albany school district volunteers are required to pass a criminal background check, before volunteering and will need to re-apply **every two years**. You will be asked to complete an online *Criminal History Verification of Applicants* form located at [www.albany.k12.or.us/volunteer](http://www.albany.k12.or.us/volunteer). This form will be processed through the NWRESA. The information provided is kept confidential. ***It is the policy of the Albany School District that those who have been arrested and convicted of felony charges will not be able to work as volunteers in Albany schools but may continue to work with and support their own children in our schools.***

## **Report to the Principal**

Volunteers are responsible to the principal. If you have a question or need an explanation for something you do not understand, ask the teacher or principal.

## **Child abuse**

Volunteers are mandatory reporters and should report suspected incidents of child abuse. This can include physical abuse, sexual abuse or neglect. Any district/school employee or volunteer who has reasonable cause to believe that another district/school employee or volunteer has engaged in sexual conduct with a student must immediately notify his/her immediate supervisor.

## **Drug-Free/Tobacco policy**

The Albany School District has a drug-free workplace policy and prohibits the use of tobacco on district property. If you suspect someone is distributing, in possession of, or using a controlled substance report the information immediately to the principal or another district administrator. See School Board Policies for complete district policy.

## **Emergencies**

Each classroom and office should have a copy of the 8J Emergency Procedure Manual. The manual includes procedures for many emergency situations, including evacuations, lock downs, injuries, fires, electrical outages and child abuse reporting. Each district building has an evacuation map posted. Please study it and become familiar with the required evacuation routes and locations of exits and fire alarms. You should speak with your principal about how you can help in the event of an emergency. Success during emergencies relies on everyone following the same plan.

## **Harassment and discrimination**

Illegal harassment and discrimination are not permitted in the Albany School District. If you observe harassment or discrimination you should report the incident to the principal. See School Board Policies for complete district policy on sexual harassment.

## **Weapons policy**

The Albany School District has a “zero-tolerance” policy for weapons in district buildings. If you suspect that someone is carrying a weapon on school district property, please note the person’s appearance and location and report the information to the principal or another district administrator immediately. See School Board Policies for complete district policy and definitions of weapons in the schools.

## **Information resources**

- The Greater Albany Public School District’s website, [www.albany.k12.or.us](http://www.albany.k12.or.us), has information about the district and its programs, the school calendar, and individual school webpages.
- The Albany School District’s Board Policies and Administrative Rules are available for review at all schools, the district office and on the school district’s website.
- Student handbooks include important information about rights and rules for students. They are available at all schools.
- You may call the Albany School District Office for information at 541-967-4501.