

Hillsborough County Public Schools Volunteer and Community Partner Policies and Procedures

Hillsborough County Public Schools does not allow court-ordered community service hours to be served as volunteer time. Individuals who are required to complete court-ordered community service are directed to contact other non-school agencies.

School volunteers must abide by the School Board Policies, District Volunteer Guidelines, Policies and Procedures, and School Protocols while on duty as a volunteer

1. Complete an online HCPS Volunteer Application for each academic school year (July 1-June 30).
2. Attend a HCPS volunteer orientation session (offered by school site).
3. Attend any additional training/registration as required by district.
4. Remain in verbal/visual distance of staff or administration. Volunteers should never be left alone with students.
5. Report suspected child abuse per Florida Statute (F.S.) 39.201. School volunteers are included as mandatory reporters and must abide by School Board Policy 8462. *Please note: When a student mentions abuse, bullying, suicide or any other very serious situation you are required to immediately report this to administration or other school official.*
6. Maintain confidentiality (School Board Policy 8330).
7. Maintain “hands-off” non-discipline or assistance with disciplinary actions policy per Florida Statute (F.S.) 1003.32. Allow school personnel to handle any and all student discrepancies.
8. School volunteers must abide by School Board Policy 8442 – Reporting Accidents/Incidents.
9. Volunteers should not bring preschoolers or children not registered in school when volunteering at the school. An option may be to seek out opportunities to volunteer from home if the volunteer is unable to find alternative childcare for their own children not enrolled in our schools.
10. School volunteers should dress neatly and professionally. Clothing and shoes should be comfortable and safe. As with student dress code, garments and/or jewelry that display or suggest sexual, vulgar, drug, gang, weapons, or alcohol-related wording or graphics, or that provoke or may tend to provoke violence or disruption in the school, shall not be worn. School Administrators have the authority to enforce the dress code as needed.
11. School volunteers should be reminded that all conversations with students should remain neutral and secular in language. Volunteers should not initiate or encourage prayer with students, families and/or staff, preach about faith, or prohibit a student from speaking about religion while participating in volunteer activity.
12. School volunteers should use neutral and secular language when endorsing/promoting an event or program.
13. Partners who wish to mentor HCPS students or want to visit HCPS campuses to provide donations must agree to guidelines and assurances before engaging with HCPS schools.
14. Collection of student information is prohibited (School Board Policy 8330). The confidentiality of student data/information is protected under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20 U.S.C. 1232g) and §1002.221, Florida Statutes (F.S.). Adhere to FERPA and School Records Policy (8330), which prohibits the collection of student information. Interest surveys, sweepstakes, scholarship drawings/raffles, or other assessments which involve students and include collection of student information are prohibited.

15. Any and all materials for distribution must be reviewed by school site administrator and/or instructional personnel. Leave all materials with the school site administrator for district approval. Distribution of materials must follow district guidelines and should not be distributed directly to students. Passive distribution of materials, which allows for students to have the option to pick up materials if they wish, is acceptable upon approval by the school site administrator.
16. Become familiar with the policies and procedures specific to each site. School procedures may vary, however, those listed below are common to all:
 - Park in the designated “visitors” parking, enter through the main office and sign in.
 - Secure and wear a name badge at all times while on campus.
 - Locate the adult bathrooms. Adults should not use bathrooms designated for children/students.
 - Familiarize yourself with emergency exits as well as emergency procedures.
 - Smoking is prohibited.
 - Check on a regular basis with school regarding upcoming school events to see if activities have been scheduled that will conflict with your volunteer time.
 - Contact the school if you are not able to make your commitment.