



A Handbook Of Information For Volunteers

A Resource to Support
Parental Involvement in Schools



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Foreword

Volunteering is one of the many ways in which schools can be supported.

The research literature accumulated over the past two decades presents clear and compelling arguments that support the involvement of parents in their children's education. It has long been recognized that the closer linking of home and school benefits learners. Parental encouragement, support and participation have positive effects on children's achievements, attitudes and aspirations. Recognizing this, the Education Improvement Commission has recommended that schools explore parental involvement as a priority area for school improvement planning (The Road Ahead III, Role of School Councils).

Involvement in a range of school based activities is a powerful way in which parents can support the education of their children. A strong home-school partnership is a critical element in the process of continuous school improvement. Along with the parents of our students, involvement of grandparents and community members is also welcomed.

In order to ensure the most effective use of this valuable support, volunteers need to have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities. This package has been developed for interested school personnel who wish to improve and enhance the home-school partnership by establishing a common understanding of the volunteer role.

General Information for Volunteers

Welcome to our school and thank you for offering to be a volunteer. Your support is greatly valued as it adds to the development of student growth and school programming. As a volunteer, you will be working with students, staff, and other volunteers. It is essential that you, and the people you work with, establish a mutually satisfying relationship which will prove helpful to our students. This relationship should rest on trust, co-operation and a clear understanding of the volunteer role.

The following are a few points in defining your role as a volunteer, and in making your experience as a volunteer with us a success.

1. Confidentiality is of the highest priority. Volunteers may come to know sensitive information regarding a student's academic ability, relationships with others, behaviour etc. We ask that this information remain confidential, and not discussed with the community at any time.
2. Please remember that any evaluation of school personnel, students or programs is the responsibility of the teachers and/or the school administration only.
3. As a volunteer you may be involved in a variety of activities in our school. Please be aware that you are ultimately responsible to the school principal and will work at all times under the direction of a designated staff member. Remember also that the school principal and/or staff members are always there to respond to any questions or concerns that you may have.
4. Safety is always of paramount importance. Please be prepared for a staff member to ask you to identify yourself.
5. Finally, please note that every school has a Code of Behaviour. If you would like a copy of this, please speak to the principal. Furthermore, copies of Board policies and procedures that may be referenced on your information sheet, are available in the school office.

Once again, thank you for your support and understanding of student needs, and for supporting staff in accomplishing our Board's mission.

Handbook of Information for Volunteers

Volunteer Activities

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Information for Volunteers

Activity 1: Articulation Support

The process of working with students who require articulation support as determined by the Speech & Language Pathologist or the Special Education Resource Teacher (SERT).

What kinds of things could I be asked to do?

- Follow an established program of activities to help students who have articulation needs.
- You may be asked to work with individual students or a small group.
- You will be required to demonstrate and model correct sound production during these activities.
- Make sure you speak clearly and distinctly at all times.

To whom am I responsible?

- You are directly responsible to the Special Education Resource Teacher and ultimately to the school principal.

How can I prepare myself?

- Prior to working with the children, familiarize yourself with the materials provided through the training program.
- You may wish to practise these activities with your own children at home.

How can the school help me?

- The Special Education Resource Teacher and Speech & Language Pathologist will provide training for the specific need(s) of students.
- You will be provided you with materials, guidelines to assist in delivering a program.
- Lessons may be modeled.
- Student progress will be assessed periodically.
- The school will provide you with ongoing support and feedback.

Additional Information

- Children benefit greatly from the language experience offered through this approach. It enables them to make significant gains in correcting errors in their speaking skills.
- Have fun with these activities! Keep them short. They can be tedious and monotonous for young children.
- We are most grateful for your expertise and participation in helping our students.

Information for Volunteers

Activity 2: Computer Assistance

The process of assisting the classroom teacher and students with the technical aspects of computer operation.

What kinds of things could I be asked to do?

- You may be asked to support students in the library, computer lab or individual classrooms.
- This support may include:
 - helping a student to narrow a field of search
 - assisting a student with a specific program e.g. math or language
 - word processingother duties assigned by the classroom teacher

To whom am I responsible?

- You are directly responsible to the classroom teacher and ultimately to the school principal.

How can I prepare myself?

- Review the school's expectations for computer and internet use.
- Familiarize yourself with the computer hardware that is being used.
- Be sure that you are aware of the components of the system that must not be accessed by students.
- You may wish to preview specific programs that are to be used.

How can the school help me?

- The teacher can assist you with training on the computer and provide you with access to the software available in the school.
- Keep in mind that you are playing a valuable role in supporting and reinforcing the classroom program. If you have any questions or concerns, be sure to speak with the classroom teacher.
- Every school has a site administrator who provides technical support to staff. This teacher may be available to assist you.

Additional Information

- Children benefit greatly from this type of activity. It enables them to have hands-on experience with a knowledgeable tutor.
- We hope that you enjoy helping our students in this way. Thank you for your support.

Information for Volunteers

Activity 3: Conferencing

The process of discussing a specific piece of work with an individual or small group of children. This may include a written sample, a journal, an oral presentation, and practice with sharing a portfolio.

What kinds of things could I be asked to do?

- Position yourself where you and the student are comfortable and can discuss the piece of work without distracting other students.
- Listen as the student shares the piece of writing. You may ask questions to clarify information.
- As you listen, look for opportunities to encourage the child to elaborate or add details to enhance their presentation.

To whom am I responsible?

- You are directly responsible to the classroom teacher, and also to the students with whom you work.
- Ultimately, you are responsible to the school principal.

How can I prepare myself?

- Discuss the assignment with the classroom teacher in advance. Where possible, observe the teacher conferencing with a student.
- Conference with your own children. As well as showing an interest in your child's work, it will enable you to practise different strategies.

How can the school help me?

- The classroom teacher will suggest a location where you can work.
- The teacher will also prepare students with regard to their responsibility when conferencing.
- The desired outcome of the conferencing process will vary according to the age and development of the student(s). The classroom teacher will advise you of what to expect.

Additional Information

- Children benefit from 1:1 conferencing time. It allows them the opportunity to share their writing, strengthening, stretching or enhancing their piece with interesting details through guided questioning.
- Many resources are available on student conferencing. The school can assist you with obtaining them from the Board's professional library.

Information for Volunteers

Activity 4: Editing Student Work

The process of working with an individual student to edit a piece of their writing prior to the final draft. A Writers' Circle is formed when a small group works together on the editing process.

What kinds of things could I be asked to do?

- Listen to students read their work to you.
- Assist them with finding and correcting errors in spelling, punctuation, capitalization and with meaning.
- Make corrections according to the guidelines provided by the classroom teacher.

To whom am I responsible?

- You are directly responsible to the classroom teacher, and ultimately to the school principal.

How can I prepare myself?

- Discuss the assignment with the classroom teacher, and ensure that you understand the expectations.
- Where possible, observe the classroom teacher editing with a student.
- Edit the work of your own children; this will provide you with valuable practice.
- You may wish to see samples of edited work; please ask the teacher.

How can the school help me?

- The classroom teacher will suggest a location for you to work with the student.
- The teacher will also prepare the student(s) with regard to their responsibilities while editing.

Additional Information

- Children benefit from the language experience offered through this one-on-one approach to editing their writing. The praise and encouragement they receive allows them to enhance and strengthen their writing skills.
- Many resources are available on student conferencing. The school can assist you with obtaining them from the Board's professional library.
- We hope that you enjoyed helping our students. Thank you for your support.

Information for Volunteers

Activity 5: Field Trips

The process of supporting groups of students on field trips that provide specific learning experiences beyond the school setting. While students are often transported by bus, at times they may walk, take public transportation or be transported by car.

What kinds of things could I be asked to do?

- You may provide support by supervising a small group during the trip.

To whom am I responsible?

- The teacher is ultimately responsible for student safety and discipline.
- If there are questions or difficulties during the trip you should inform the teacher in charge.

How can I prepare myself?

- Dress comfortably for a busy day with active students, and be prepared for the weather (raincoat, sunscreen etc.)
- If it is a full day trip bring a lunch and adequate snacks.

How can the school help me?

- Be sure you know to ask the teacher:
 - the purpose of the trip (what are the learning expectations?)
 - the expectations for student behaviour
 - action to take if problems arise
 - the names of the students you are supervising (have a list)
 - important medical conditions, allergies etc. of students you are supervising
 - the school telephone number in case of an emergency

Additional Information

- The trip is a learning experience for the students and younger siblings can be a distraction as well as an additional challenge for you as a volunteer.
- If you are asked to drive students, it is imperative that you complete the necessary forms and provide insurance information PRIOR to the day of the trip.
- Teachers are not permitted to ask you to be a volunteer driver on the same day as the trip.
- We hope that you enjoy helping our students. Thank you for your support.

Information for Volunteers
Activity 6: Learning Resource Centre

The process of assisting the teacher librarian with tasks such as handling books, helping students find relevant material, and gathering resources.

What kinds of things could I be asked to do?

- You may be asked to:
 - using the automated library system if this is in place, or
 - assist with processing books by preparing sign-out cards, inserting pockets, stamping new books where the system is not automated
 - file and update catalogues, both manually and in the computer
 - oversee and track the return of overdue books
 - help students to access and select materials
 - cover books with protection paper
 - assist individuals or groups with conducting research

To whom am I responsible?

- You are directly responsible to the resource librarian, and ultimately to the school principal

How can I prepare myself?

- Become familiar with the location of materials and the routines of the school library.
- Get to know how to access materials using technology.
- Where possible, having library skills would be helpful.
- It is beneficial to have some typing or word processing skills.

How can the school help me?

- You may wish to ask the teacher librarian for a job list prior to coming in.
- The librarian can provide training, offer feedback and suggestions.

Additional Information

- Expectations for students using the library will vary according to each grade level.
- You can provide valuable support by guiding and directing students to new books or resources, and with assisting them to use the computer to do a subject search and then to find materials.
- Our ultimate goal is that they will learn to use the library independently. With your help, our students will become more confident and competent in this area.

Information for Volunteers

Activity 7: Math Practice

The process of supporting individuals or small groups with different aspects of the math program. The math program comprises five strands: number sense numeration, data management and probability, measurement, patterning and algebra, and geometry and spatial sense. Students are also required to apply problem solving strategies and to communicate understanding in a variety of ways.

What kinds of things could I be asked to do?

- You may be asked to help them to understand and apply abstract math concepts using a variety of concrete or pictorial materials. These hands-on activities, known as “manipulatives”, are often set up in learning centres in the classroom.
- You may also be asked to help children to practise different concepts using work sheets, quizzes, and games.
- When you help children with these activities it is important that you know what the teacher expects the children to learn.

To whom am I responsible?

- You are directly responsible to the classroom teacher, and ultimately to the school principal.

How can I prepare myself?

- Ask the teacher which strand you are working on and what the students are expected to learn.
- The Ontario Curriculum document is available should you require additional information about on what is expected.

How can the school help me?

- Remember that the math program is probably quite different to the way it was when you went to school. It is designed to ensure better understanding of concepts as opposed to rote learning. If in doubt, ask!
- Keep in mind that you are playing a valuable role in supporting and reinforcing the classroom program. If you have any questions or concerns, be sure to talk with the classroom teacher.

Additional Information

- Be sure to encourage interaction and cooperation if you are working with a group of children. While they may be noisy at first, this should dissipate as they focus on the task at hand. Thank you for helping our students.

Information for Volunteers

Activity 8: Outdoor Education

The process of supporting students with outdoor learning experiences which may take place on or near the school property. Students will be engaged in observing and exploring the natural environment, such as conducting a field or stream study, collecting soil samples or plant/insect specimens, or conducting experiments.

What kinds of things could I be asked to do?

- You can provide support by supervising a small group of students as they work on the specific activities that have been planned by the teacher.
- You can help guide student learning by encouraging discussion, helping them to record information or by redirecting those who wander from the assigned task.

To whom am I responsible?

- The teacher is responsible for supervision, discipline and instruction. You are directly responsible to the classroom teacher and ultimately to the school principal.

How can I prepare myself?

- You should enjoy being in the outdoors. Be sure to dress appropriately for the activity and the weather conditions.
- You are advised to bring and use a UV sunscreen.

How can the school help me?

- The teacher can provide you with a copy of any assignment sheet or activity that students are asked to complete.
- The teacher will outline behaviour expectations and the procedure to follow if there are any problems.
- Ask about important medical conditions, particularly those that may be caused by outdoor conditions such as allergies to stings and asthma
- A first aid kit should be available, and you should know where it is.

Additional Information

- Outdoor education is an important learning experience for students and younger siblings can be a distraction as well as an additional challenge for you as a volunteer.
- We hope that you enjoy helping our students. Thank you for your support.

Information for Volunteers

Activity 9: Public Speaking

The process of judging students who are competing in a Public Speaking Contest with their peers. The purpose of the public speaking is to improve and enhance the speaking and listening skills of junior and intermediate students. Students prepare their speeches with the support of the classroom teacher. They then present their speeches in class, and decisions are made as to who will proceed to the Public Speaking Contest.

What kinds of things could I be asked to do?

- You will be asked work as part of a team to judge speeches at the Public Speaking Contest. Students will take turns to speak in front of the judges, their teachers and their peers.
- As they speak, consider the criteria for judging their performance, which may include: clarity, interest to the listeners, knowledge of subject, articulation, eye contact with audience, pace and flow, volume, and overall presentation style.
- It is a good idea to make brief notes as you listen. This will assist you with remembering qualities of different presentations.
- Be prepared to discuss your feelings with the panel of judges following the presentations
- Remember that the students will be nervous, and will benefit from an encouraging smile.

To whom am I responsible?

- You are directly responsible to the teacher who is organizing the contest, and ultimately to the school principal.

How can I prepare myself?

- Final judgments will be made in consultation with the other judges. You may want to contact the school ahead of time to clarify the criteria for judging, and to establish the process for making the final decision.

How can the school help me?

- Your support and interest are valued. If you have any questions or concerns, be sure to talk with the teacher organizing the contest or the principal.

Additional Information

- Be prepared to provide brief feedback following the presentations should some students request this.
- Make sure that you know the date, time and school location for this event. Thank you for your support.

Information for Volunteers

Activity 10: Publishing House

The process of working alongside other volunteers to prepare the final copy of students' written work. Tasks will vary according to the interests and abilities of volunteer, and the needs of the classroom teacher.

What kinds of things could I be asked to do?

- You may be asked to hear the child read the story, and together make decisions regarding the format for the book (cover, title page, dedication page, size of book etc.)
- You may also be asked to :
 - make book covers
 - type the story using a word processor or typewriter
 - identify supplies that are needed
 - use the coil binding machine

To whom am I responsible?

- You are directly responsible to the classroom teacher or the individual who coordinates the Publishing House. You are ultimately to the school principal.

How can I prepare myself?

- Speak to other volunteers who have done this job before.
- Assist another volunteer who is working in the Publishing House.

How can the school help me?

- The school can provide a space and the materials that will be most conducive to your work.
- You may be partnered with an "experienced" volunteer to learn such tasks as coil binding or making book covers.
- Keep in mind that you are playing a valuable role in supporting and reinforcing the classroom program. If you have any questions or concerns, be sure to speak with the classroom teacher.

Additional Information

- Children benefit greatly from the language experience offered through this process. It rewards, endorses and encourages reading, writing, speaking and illustrating skills. It provides a cherished product for the student and their family.
- Please note that many parents choose to support the Publishing House by carrying out tasks at home
- We hope you enjoy working with our students. Thank you for your support.

Information for Volunteers

Activity 11: Reading Aloud

The process of reading aloud to a group of students or an individual student using a book selected by you, the student or the teacher.

What kinds of things could I be asked to do?

- Position yourself where you and the children are comfortable, and make sure that they can see the pictures.
- Make sure that your head is above the listeners, thus allowing your voice to carry.
- Discuss the book before you read it (title, cover, pictures), and ask questions that will encourage the child to think about the story.
- As you read the book, encourage conversation and predictions. Use plenty of expression; if you can, change your tone for the dialogue.
- When you have finished the story encourage discussion (what did you like best? what do you know now that you didn't know before?). Don't make it into a quiz.
- Give the book a chance, but don't continue if it is a poor choice.

To whom am I responsible?

- You are directly responsible to the classroom teacher, and ultimately to the school principal.

How can I prepare myself?

- Where possible pre-view the book beforehand. This will allow you to spot material that you may want to elaborate on, shorten or eliminate.
- Read aloud to your children or grandchildren. As well as giving pleasure to you all, it will enable you to practise this approach.

How can the school help me?

- The teacher and/or teacher-librarian can assist you with selecting a book that is in keeping with the intellectual, social and emotional development of the students.
- Keep in mind that you are playing a valuable role in supporting and reinforcing the classroom program. If you have any questions or concerns, be sure to talk with the classroom teacher.

Additional Information

- Children benefit greatly from the language experience offered through this approach. It awakens the curiosity, stretches the imagination, encourages discussion and strengthens reading, writing and speaking skills.
- We hope that you enjoyed helping our students. Thank you for your support.

Information for Volunteers

Activity 12: Reinforcing Spelling

The process of supporting students with their spelling. As children learn to spell, they progress through specific developmental stages, moving from scribble in the very early stages, to stages when consonants and vowels are used experimentally, to the stage when they rely on memory, and finally to the stage when they use standard spelling most of the time.

Spelling games are one way to provide opportunities for children to experiment with words, enhance their skills and have fun as they develop through these stages.

What kinds of things could I be asked to do?

- Play with commercial games, if they are available, such as Scrabble, Spill and Spell, Boggle, Lexicon and Wheel of Fortune, as well as computer games.
- If these games are not available, you can try making or inventing your own games, such as hangman, making as many short words from a long word (e.g. “adventure”), finding hidden words in signs and notices around the school, and playing “I Spy” with rhyming words.
- As you play these games, be sure to talk about the words, point out the unusual features, make comparisons with other words and discuss patterns.

To whom am I responsible?

- You are directly responsible to the classroom teacher, and ultimately to the school principal.

How can I prepare myself?

- Play some of these spelling games at home with your children or grandchildren, and try to determine their developmental stage.

How can the school help me ?

- The classroom teacher may also be able to provide you with suggested word lists appropriate to the grade level.
- Reading is also an important link to writing and learning about words.
- Talk with the teacher about ways to extend the spelling games into reading or writing activities.

Additional Information

- Spelling is an integral part of learning to write, and is especially important when the child is preparing writing for others.
- We hope that you enjoyed helping our students. Thank you for your support!

Information for Volunteers

Activity 13: Shared Reading

The process of supporting a child who wishes to read a challenging text. It can be done as a “duet” where you read together, or “solo” where the child reads alone.

What kinds of things could I be asked to do?

- **Reading in Duet:**
 - Read the text to the child and talk about what happens.
 - Read the text a second time, stopping frequently in places where the next word or words are highly predictable. Allow the child to “jump in” with the correct words.
 - Read the text a third time, and ask the child to read or verbalize it with you and point to the words.
 - Change the volume of your voice - read a little louder if the text is difficult, and more quietly if the child is comfortable with the text.

- **Reading in Solo**
 - Before starting,, agree upon a signal such as raising the hand or tapping.
 - Begin by reading the text together as described for duet reading. As soon as the child is ready, s/he gives the signal and proceeds alone.
 - If the child gets stuck, give the word and ask him/her to repeat it.
 - Begin to read together again, and return to solo reading when the child signals.

To whom am I responsible?

- You are directly responsible to the classroom teacher, and ultimately to the school principal.

How can I prepare myself?

- Where possible, preview the text prior to working with students.
- Try using these approaches at home with your children or grandchildren. As well as giving pleasure to you all, it will provide you with valuable experience.

How can the school help me?

- Keep in mind that you are playing a valuable role in supporting and reinforcing the classroom program. If you have any questions or concerns, be sure to talk with the classroom teacher.
- The classroom teacher may provide you with reading material ahead of time.

Additional Information

- This approach is also known as “Assisted Reading”. It allows the child to experience enjoyable reading of a challenging text without the burden of performing alone.
- Remember to give lavish praise - it builds confidence.
- We hope that you enjoyed helping our students. Thank you for your support.

Information for Volunteers
Activity 14: Sharing Special Talents or Skills

The process of sharing special interests, experiences, hobbies or talents with students. Opportunities to do this may be provided during career days, elective programs, extra-curricular activities or at any time your talent or skill supports the curriculum theme for a class.

What kinds of things could I be asked to do?

- You may be asked to:
 - speak to a large or small group of students about your hobby, interest or skill
 - teach students an actual skill or hobby
 - help with cooking or craft activities
 - show slides of a trip to a country the class is studying
 - describe you job and explain the educational requirements

To whom am I responsible?

- You are responsible to the teacher or person requesting your assistance and ultimately responsible to the principal.

How can I prepare myself?

- Have all your information and material ready before you begin the activity.
- Identify your audio-visual (AV). or material needs, and indicate whether there is a cost associated with your activity for materials that students would use.

How can the school help me ?

- The teacher can provide information about the students' ability levels and how to approach your activity with the specific age group.
- The teacher may be able to provide any AV materials you need (e.g. TV, slide projector paper, paint etc.)

Additional Information

- Make sure you know the date, time and location for this event.
- Thank you for your support.

Information for Volunteers

Activity 15: Clerical Work

The process of assisting the school secretaries and/or the classroom teacher with tasks that do not directly involve students.

What kinds of things could I be asked to do?

- You could be asked to do a range of tasks such as:
 - -photocopying, collating and counting materials for distribution
 - -assisting with attendance in a Safe Arrival Program
 - -counting and rolling money
 - -preparing materials for use by students, such as booklets, games, flashcards etc.

To whom am I responsible?

- You are responsible to the classroom teacher or office staff. You are ultimately responsible to the school principal.

How can I prepare myself?

- If you are helping with the Safe Arrival program, ensure that you arrive promptly.
- If you are unable to come when expected, please contact the office as early as you can.

How can the school help me?

- The classroom teacher or office staff will provide clear expectations of your duties.
- They will train you in the use of equipment necessary for you to complete your tasks, and provide support as needed.
- If you experience any difficulty with equipment, please notify the office or classroom teacher immediately.

Additional Information

- The time you spend assisting with these tasks enables the classroom teacher and secretaries to focus their attention on our students.
- Please remember that all interactions with students or their parents are confidential.
- We are most grateful for your expertise and participation on their behalf.

Information for Volunteers
Activity 16: Concerts and Special Celebrations

The process of supporting the school with special events such as cultural celebrations and customs, student successes and achievements and graduation ceremonies. Preparation for these events occurs during school hours as part of the instructional program. These events are held during school hours for the benefit of the students. They may also be held beyond school hours to enable parents and guardians to attend.

What kinds of things could I be asked to do?

- Depending upon the nature of the event, you may be asked to do a variety of tasks such as :
 - joining a planning committee
 - fundraising
 - preparing refreshments
 - assisting with decorating
 - taking pictures and/or videotaping
 - preparing invitations, programs, fliers, etc.

- **Staged events may also require tasks such as :**
 - accessing and/or making props and costumes
 - doing make-up
 - building and painting scenery

To whom am I responsible?

- You are directly responsible to the teacher organizing the event and ultimately to the school principal.

How can I prepare myself?

- Discuss responsibilities with the staff member in charge and indicate your interests, strengths and talents for the event.
- Speak with others who have experience in this activity.

How can the school help me?

- The staff members working on this project can provide you with clear expectations of your role, the materials that you will need, and a place to perform your task.

Additional Information

- The time you spend assisting with these tasks enables the staff to focus their attention on the students. We are most grateful for your expertise and participation on their behalf.

Information for Volunteers

Activity 17: Food for Learning Nutrition Programs

The process of supporting a school's nutrition program, known as Food for Learning. This nutrition program is unique in that it is designed to be self-sustaining through contributions of volunteers, in-kind donations and funds from our community.

What kinds of things could I be asked to do?

- Help set up and clean the breakfast /snack room.
- Sanitize the tables and all working surfaces.
- Please smile and welcome the children: get to know their names.
- Help to serve the food.
- Use a separate knife for jam, cream cheese, margarine, etc. as some of the children have allergies.
- Please feel free to sit down and eat with the children; get to know them.
- Gently encourage the children to use proper manners, to be polite and courteous to others.
- Anticipate any behavioral concerns and diffuse them before they develop by supervising the children and being involved with them; always be soft spoken.
- Regardless of your food preference try to be enthusiastic about all food served.
- Become aware of cultural differences. Children from different cultures respond differently to various forms of personal contact.
- Clean up the breakfast/snack room: make sure fridge and stove are clean, sweep floor, sanitize tables, get non-perishable foods ready for the next day.
- Please notify the Program Leader of your absence on a duty day. Please try to find a replacement volunteer; in order to ensure the smooth running of our program.

To whom am I responsible?

- You are directly responsible to the Program Leader and ultimately to the school principal.

How can I prepare myself?

- Wear comfortable, washable clothing.
- Consider wearing a nametag so the children can call you by name.
- Arrive a little early so that you can check the menu and make sure all the necessary implements and foods are available.
- The York Region Health Services Department requires that food handlers wash hands immediately before and in between tasks such as counting juice boxes and preparing food.

How can the school help me?

- The Food for Learning Program Leader will provide training.
- Additional training may be available through groups such as Health Services.

Additional Information

- Inadequate child nutrition has a tremendous impact on a child's ability to maximize learning potential. When children come to school hungry and inadequately nourished, they are less curious, more anxious, more irritable, more tired, less physically active, less attentive, more anxious and less responsive socially. These characteristics result in poor school performance.

Information for Volunteers

Activity 18: Fund Raising

The process of supporting the school's fund raising efforts. Many school fundraising events are on contract with external fund-raising businesses. The school may also engage in minor fund-raising events that provide a service to families and students, such special lunches and fun fairs. Minor fund-raising events for charitable organizations may also be considered. Funds raised are used to support those activities most closely related to the curriculum and to the best interests of the students as identified in the school improvement plan.

What kinds of things could I be asked to do?

- You may be asked to do a variety of tasks depending upon the nature of the fund-raising activity.
- Support for major fund-raising activities may include any of the following: arranging for presentations by suppliers, phoning other volunteers, writing letters, sorting, packaging, distributing purchases, counting and rolling money and so on.
- Similarly, support for minor fund-raising activities will vary, and may include some of the above, along with other tasks.

To whom am I responsible?

- You are directly responsible to the school principal.

How can I prepare myself?

- School fund-raising activities are governed by Board Policies 676.0 (Student Funds and Student Programs Involving Funds) and 635.0 (Environmental Policy). Please speak to the principal if you wish to read these through.

How can the school help me?

- Where needed and available, the school will find you space to work and store supplies.
- While the school staff appreciates the hard work done by volunteers, their primary task is the education of our students.
- Depending on the nature and timing of the activity, many staff members will assist where they can.

Additional Information

- Students are encouraged to assist with major fund-raising events. However, door to door canvassing by students is discouraged except where this is organized as a learning experience.
- Many fund raising events are organized by the School Council.
- Fund-raising activities should not interfere unduly with school routines.
- Thank you for your support. We do appreciate it.

Information for Volunteers

Activity 19: Head Lice Screening

The process of screening students in one class or a group of classes for head lice. Otherwise known as *pediculosis*, head lice are little flat bugs that live in people's hair, close to the scalp. Head lice lay eggs that are very tiny, and look a lot like dandruff. Lice cannot fly or jump; instead, they crawl from one person's head to another. Children in school are more likely to get them because they work and play close together.

What kinds of things could I be asked to do?

- You may be asked to work with a group of volunteers to check children's heads for lice or nits.
- Separate the hair with your fingers or lice sticks, and check the scalp in eight to ten different places, especially above the forehead.
- Look for any red spots or scratches on the scalp.
- Look for nits close to the scalp; remember that they stick to the hair, and that anything that can be flicked off is not a nit.

To whom am I responsible?

- You are directly responsible to the person who is organizing the screening process, and ultimately responsible to the school principal.

How can I prepare myself?

- A variety of resources are available to assist you with understanding and carrying out screening procedures. These include a video entitled "Advice on Lice" or "Head to Head with Lice", the Board procedure (NP657.0), and the York Region Health Services pamphlet "The Facts of Lice". In addition to this, the Health Department has a Train the Trainer program for volunteers.
- Please speak to the school principal if you wish to access any of these resources.

How can the school help me?

- The school will provide you with a location to work, along with gloves and lice sticks to separate the hair.
- Please speak to the principal if you have any questions or concerns.

Additional Information

- The Ministry of Health and the York Region Health Services consider head lice to be a nuisance and not a communicable disease.
- Head lice do not cause poor health or disease, nor does having head lice reflect a family's level of hygiene. However, they require immediate treatment by parents. Please be sensitive to the students who participate in the screening process.

Information for Volunteers

Activity 20: School Clubs

School clubs are extra-curricular activities that generally run before school, at lunchtime or after school. A variety of clubs may be offered throughout the school year, such as chess, computer, environmental, art, drama, calligraphy, reading, local history, astronomy, ceramics, dance and so on. School clubs are generally offered by teachers and volunteers who have an interest or expertise in a particular area.

What kinds of things could I be asked to do?

- You may be asked to lead the group or to assist a teacher with running the group each time the club meets. Alternatively, you may be asked to attend periodically to run a special session.
- You may be asked to do a variety of tasks depending on the nature of the activity, such as assisting with setting up ahead of time, gathering materials, obtaining audio-visual equipment, arranging furniture, supervising clean-up procedures, and so on.

To whom am I responsible?

- You are directly responsible to the teacher who is organizing the club, and ultimately to the school principal.
- While you may play a key role in running a club, it is expected that a teacher will work with you to assist with general organization and supervision.

How can I prepare myself?

- The health and safety of our students is our primary concern, and our schools are operated according to strict health and safety policies and procedures. Similarly, students are educated to be aware of environmental issues and practices.
- You may wish to read the appropriate Board policies (Health and Safety Policy and Procedure 540.0 and Environmental Policy 235.0) if you plan to use specialized materials, equipment and resources, or to engage students in physical activities.

How can the school help me?

- The school may assist you with accessing materials and resources, with advertising your club, and with organizing student attendance.
- Your support and interest are valued. If you have any questions or concerns, be sure to talk with the teacher organizing the club or the principal.

Additional Information

- Student participation in school clubs is entirely optional. However, once a student joins a club, regular attendance is expected.
- Thank you for sharing your knowledge and expertise with our students.

Information for Volunteers

Activity 21: Special Lunch Programs

The process of supporting lunch programs or special days where students can purchase food such as hot dogs or pizza. Some schools also have daily milk programs. Volunteer assistance could be as regular as daily or a few days a week (e.g. milk program), weekly monthly or a couple of times a year.

What kinds of things could I be asked to do?

- You could be involved in coordinating or helping with activities such as:
 - selling lunch or milk tickets
 - ordering or purchasing food
 - cooking, serving, sorting and distributing lunches
 - collecting and counting money.

To whom am I responsible?

- You are responsible to the staff member or parent coordinating the activity.
- You are ultimately responsible to the principal.

How can I prepare myself?

- Make sure you know the date and time of the volunteer activity.

How can the school help me?

- Volunteer coordinators or staff members will provide initial training with regard to the activity.

Additional Information

- If you cannot help when you are expected it is important to notify the person coordinating the activity in advance so that another person may be contacted to replace you.
- We hope that you enjoy helping our students. Thank you for your support.

Information for Volunteers

Activity 22: Translators

The process of helping schools with translating information for other parents. The diversity of the schools in York Region provides us with the opportunity to work with children and families of many cultures. Effective and ongoing communication is of utmost importance because it enables parents to understand and participate in the education of their children. Volunteers who are fluent in languages other than English can provide valuable support. For this reason we are always seeking volunteers to support us with translation.

What kinds of things could I be asked to do?

- You may be asked to:
 - translate for a group of parents at a school council or PTA meeting
 - translate school or class newsletters, meeting minutes,
 - greet new parents and students whose first language is not English, and assist with registration
 - attend an interview if requested by staff member or parent
 - act as a liaison for individual families

To whom am I responsible?

- You are responsible to the person who requested your support such as the classroom teacher, the secretary, the English as a Second Language (ESL) teacher or the principal of the school. You are ultimately responsible to the principal.

How can I prepare myself?

- Read and understand the confidentiality reference in the general introduction section of this handbook.
- As a translator you may have access to personal information such as telephone numbers, addresses etc. Please understand your responsibility to ensure the confidentiality of this information.

How can the school help me?

- The principal and ESL teacher can answer any questions or concerns you have.

Additional Information

- Thank you for your support. As a translator you may have access to personal information such as telephone numbers, addresses etc. Please understand your responsibility to ensure the confidentiality of this information.
- We appreciate the time involved in providing translation services for our school community. Thank you for your support.

Information for Volunteers

Activity 23: Volunteer Drivers

The process of driving students to and from school related activities during or after school hours. Activities may include sports events, field trips, or competitions such as public speaking, Think Bowl and student involved conferences.

What kinds of things could I be asked to do?

You may be asked to:

- supervise the students in the event
- transport equipment
- drive students home to and from the event when parental permission is obtained

To whom am I responsible?

- You are responsible to the teacher coordinating the activity and ultimately to the principal.

How can I prepare myself?

- Find out exactly where you are going, and where to meet the rest of the group.
- A cell phone is helpful in case of a problem but is not necessary.
- Volunteer drivers must have a valid driver's license.
- Be sure you know the names and identities of the students you are transporting.

How can the school help me?

- The school must ensure you complete the "Volunteer Driver" form prior to departure.
- The school will also provide you with information regarding the destination and directions to get there.

**Additional Information **

- You must have at least \$1,000,000.00 liability insurance.
- You should only transport the number of students for whom you have seat belts.
- We hope you enjoy driving our students. Thank you for your support.

Handbook of Information for Volunteers

What information is provided in the Handbook?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Handbook of Information for Volunteers provides general information about the volunteer role and responsibilities• It contains information about twenty three typical volunteer activities• It is divided into Instructional and Support Activities
Why has the Handbook been developed?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Volunteer involvement is a powerful way in which parents can support the education of their children• We are fortunate to have hundreds of volunteers working in schools throughout the system• When volunteers know and understand what is expected of them, their support is more meaningful and effective• We hope that the information in this Handbook will assist volunteers with better understanding their roles and responsibilities when helping in our schools• It may also assist busy teachers, administrators and secretaries who may not have time to explain expectations to volunteers
How is the Handbook designed to be used?	<p>While we expect that interested schools will adapt this resource to meet their own needs, we suggest the following process for using the Handbook :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Keep in mind that each sheet is designed to “stand alone”• Make multiple copies of sheets that are typical of the volunteer activities in your school• Store photocopies of the same activity together in a plastic sheet protector; do this for each activity• Place the plastic protectors into a binder which can be accessed easily• Where possible, provide volunteers with a sheet before they come in; this gives them time to read the information and to ask questions ahead of time• Ensure that adequate copies of the activities are available for ongoing use• Prepare additional sheets for different volunteer activities, and <u>share these descriptions</u> with us and with other schools• Keep additional volunteer information in the binder such as evaluation sheets, lists of volunteers, resources, etc.