

Ellsworth Community School District

Community Volunteer Program

2017-2018 Handbook

The Ellsworth Community School District does not discriminate on the basis of sex, race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, creed, pregnancy, marital or parental status, sexual orientation, or physical, mental, emotional or learning disability.

Superintendent's Message

Welcome to the Ellsworth Community School District's Community Volunteer Program! This program is a wonderful avenue for volunteers to become involved in the development of our children through their work in our schools or to use a skill to benefit the District or another non profit organization in the District. Through this involvement, volunteers can gain a rewarding experience that will have a lasting impact.

This handbook provides information about the Community Volunteer Program. I encourage any interested person to contact me at (715) 273-3900 about any other information that is needed and to join us in our efforts at the Ellsworth Community School District.

We look forward to working with you. Your time, experiences and skills are truly needed and will benefit our children for a lifetime!

Sincerely,

Barry Cain
Superintendent, Ellsworth Community School District

What is the Community Volunteer Program?

This program allows volunteers to directly participate in the education of our students or operation of our schools. It is a great opportunity to share their talents with our children and staff while increasing the resources available to our students, staff, the District as a whole, or another nonprofit organization. In exchange for work completed, volunteers will receive a specified payment up to a maximum of \$500 annually.

How are Participants Paid?

All participants in the Community Volunteer Program will be paid an hourly wage of \$7.25 per hour for approved projects or activities up to a maximum of \$500 annually. Income earned for work is taxable income.

How is this Program Financially Supported?

For the 2017-2018 school year, there has been a maximum allocation of \$20,000 to support this program. Hours paid for through the Community Volunteer Program will be limited to this dollar value and reviewed annually. The funds from this program come from the Community Service Fund (Fund 80) and are not part of the general budget of our school district. Therefore, these funds do not detract from other programs or operations currently supported through our general fund.

How Does a Person Join the Program?

Any volunteer interested in joining the Community Volunteer Program can call the school district office at (715) 273-3900 to get the necessary information and forms. The information and forms are also posted on our school district website at www.ellsworth.k12.wi.us. To join this program, a person must:

- Complete a Community Volunteer Program Application.
- Complete a Criminal Background Check Form and be approved by the Superintendent.
- Complete an interview with a school administrator to discuss areas of interest and possible roles in the school.
- Complete a physical paid for by the District where deemed necessary due to the nature of the activity.

How are Volunteers Placed in the Schools?

School district staff will identify possible areas of need in our schools. After completing the initial application process applicants will be interviewed by building administration. The purpose of this interview is to identify the strengths and interests of the applicant, the availability of the applicant, and to identify a good placement that will be enjoyable for the applicant and a good fit for our students and staff. The interview also allows for important discussions about topics such as confidentiality, student behavior, emergency procedures, school district policies, and what to expect in today's schools.

How are Volunteer Placements Evaluated?

All volunteers will periodically sit down with the building level administrator and cooperating staff member to discuss how the placement is working for the school and for the volunteer. These discussions will allow for valuable feedback for everyone that better allows for the placement to be a truly fulfilling experience for the volunteer and the students and staff. Feedback forms will also be completed by the volunteer and supervisor that provide valuable information for everyone involved.

It is vital that all adults working within our schools are positive role models for our students with their best interests in mind at all times. The time spent by our program volunteers must be focused on providing for the needs of our children in a positive manner.

Confidentiality:

A public school is considered a protective environment for children. All information about specific students is considered confidential and should not be shared with others. It is fine for a volunteer to tell friends or neighbors about what he or she is doing in our schools, but individual students must not be identified to anyone.

We also ask that if any worker has a question about something that is happening in our schools, or if you disagree with what you see, that you speak to school district personnel about it prior to discussing it outside of the school building. Often there is a logical explanation that can shed light on why something is done a certain way. This is essential in building positive relationships with our community while also providing our schools with feedback about topics that need further study.

Student Behavior:

We are confident that our volunteers will enjoy the relationships that they develop with our students and staff. Volunteers will find that most students are friendly and courteous. We have high standards for student behavior and our students are expected to be respectful at all times. In cases in which there are student discipline issues, friendly reminders usually correct small problems. If additional correction is needed, the cooperating school employee should be contacted. It is **not** the role of volunteers to discipline students.

As a school, we are also concerned about students who may be subject to physical or emotional abuse. This is a difficult reality that we must deal with in our schools. If a volunteer is told something by a student and the worker suspects something inappropriate has happened, the volunteer must refer the issue to the school employee for appropriate investigation. As a volunteer, please resist the temptation to investigate further as this can lead to larger issues or disrupt an appropriate investigation.

Reporting to Work:

All volunteers should report to the school office to check in and receive a guest badge for their time in the school building. They should also return to the office to check out before leaving school grounds. Time cards to record work completed will be kept in the offices of each building.

Volunteer Absences:

In the event that a volunteer cannot make a scheduled session, they should call the school building office to inform the cooperating staff member so that appropriate adjustments can be made.