

Approved: August 8, 2023

Regional School Unit 83
Maine School Administrative District No. 13

Volunteer Handbook

Including School Board Policy IJOC and 2023-2024 Volunteer Application

The heart of a volunteer is not measured in size, but by the depth of the commitment to make a difference in the lives of others. DeAnn Hollis

We have assembled this handbook to orient you as a school volunteer and share some of our professional expectations. Our basic and most important expectation is that you, as an adult in the classroom, will help to provide a safe environment for all students to learn. We hope your time with our students will help them achieve the academic goals set by their teacher.

One of the most important things we can do for children is to allow them to see parents and teachers working together. This helps children realize that there is a bond between home, community, and school.

School Volunteers serve under the direction of school staff to meet the needs of students. There are many opportunities for you to become involved in RSU # 83 / MSAD #13. Volunteer applications are reviewed on an annual basis and must be resubmitted each school year.

In the classroom, parents have a different role; they are assisting the teacher. However, some children are unable to accept their parents in any role other than a parent. In these cases, it is better for the parent to volunteer in another area of the school.

Before arrival:

Please dress thoughtfully. Your attire sets the standard by which students and staff will perceive you and subsequently treat you. Please follow the school dress code which advises no beach wear or articles that would be considered inappropriate in professional settings. For example, no advertising of drugs, sex, alcohol, or lewd acts.

Upon arrival:

Please be on time. Being on time is respectful to the teacher and students. If you will be late or cannot make your scheduled appointment time, please call the secretary and let her know. She will relay the message to the teacher.

When you are volunteering, you are demonstrating your support for attention to the task at hand. For this reason, it is important that you do not bring any children with you when you volunteer, chaperone a field trip, or dance.

Cell Phones:

Cell phones need to be turned off in the classroom. Do not use cell phones while volunteering. If you need to be reached, let the office know you are expecting a call and the secretary will notify you.

Language and Behaviors:

Remember, we are all teachers and role models for the children around us. Children are always watching, listening, and learning what is appropriate from the adults around them.

Demonstrate acceptance; avoid bad language or comments that are cruel or hurtful. Keep all conversations positive, upbeat, and encouraging to students and staff.

Classroom Disruptions:

Conduct all private conversations outside of the classroom, to avoid distracting students, please remember students are curious about conversations in the hallway as well.

No Smoking/Electronic Smoking Devices:

All school properties are tobacco-free zones. No smoking or use of electronic smoking devices is permitted on school grounds or athletic playing fields; this also includes school parking lots. Field trips are considered extended classrooms and therefore, no smoking is permitted while on school field trips. Tobacco products include cigarettes, cigarette papers, cigars, smoking tobacco, smokeless tobacco products, electronic smoking (vaping) devices, and products.

Drugs and Alcohol:

All schools are a Drug-Free Zone. Use of drugs (including marijuana), possession of drugs, and sale or distribution of drugs are prohibited.

Discipline:

The volunteer works under the supervision and direction of the classroom teacher and assists the teacher. A volunteer should notify the teacher immediately of any safety or behavioral issue.

The consequences of a student's behavioral issue are the responsibility of the teacher, not the volunteer.

Mutual Respect:

If on any occasion, you are not treated with respect, notify the teacher. Children sometimes will do or say things without the proper respect that is due to an adult. This is an opportunity to guide the student on an appropriate way to interact with adults. Please ask students to address you using Mr., Mrs., or Ms. and not by your first name.

Confidentiality:

A school is a place where children grow, they will learn from their mistakes if we guide and encourage them while providing for their privacy. Please remember that your professional interactions with students and staff are confidential and should not be discussed with the general public. Names should never be used outside the school.

You are in a unique position when you volunteer in the classroom to witness student cognitive and emotional growth. Students you observe in the classroom or the school cannot be discussed with other parents, faculty, or staff. You may not discuss a child even with that child's parents. You must always refer any question regarding students at the school to the child's teacher or the building principal.

SCHOOL VOLUNTEERS

The Board recognizes that community members can provide valuable services to the schools by sharing their time, talents and experience. An effective volunteer program allows students to benefit from individual attention, provides enrichment opportunities that supplement the regular educational program, allows teachers to focus on teaching and learning by relieving them of non-teaching tasks, provides interested community members an opportunity to become directly involved with education, and strengthens the relationship between school and community.

The Board approves the use of volunteers to support the school system's instructional programs and extracurricular activities. The Board adopts this policy to provide direction for the school system's volunteer program.

For the purpose of this policy, a volunteer is a person who provides services, without compensation or benefits of any kind or amount, on an occasional or regular basis in the schools or in school activities.

All volunteers shall be at least 18 years of age unless their volunteer work is part of a class, is done to fulfill a service learning or community service requirement for graduation, or is done by a recognized student organization.

Volunteers may provide assistance by:

- A. Tutoring students on a one-to-one or small group basis under the direct supervision of the classroom teacher;
- B. Using their special musical, artistic or other talents to provide enrichment experiences and extend student learning;
- C. Reading to children;
- D. Playing instructional games;
- E. Providing services in libraries, lunchrooms and playgrounds;
- F. Accompanying students on field trips;
- G. Assisting teachers in assembling instructional materials; and
- H. Assisting in school plays, music programs and other extracurricular activities.

Volunteers serve under the direction and supervision of the building principal or designated staff. When volunteers work with children, their activities will be under the direct and immediate supervision of the classroom teacher, coach, activity advisor, or other designated employee.

Approval, assignment, continuation, or termination of volunteers shall be at the discretion of the building principal.

Staff must have their use of volunteers approved in advance by the building principal. Volunteers will only be assigned to staff who requests them.

Approved: August 8, 2023

Volunteers are expected to abide by all Board policies, procedures and school rules when performing their assigned responsibilities. The building principal shall make volunteers aware of applicable policies, procedures, and rules before they undertake their first assignment through a volunteer orientation, volunteer handbook, or other means.

Volunteers should perform only those tasks that have been assigned.

Volunteers will not have access to confidential information in student records except as allowed by federal or state law or regulations and will be responsible for maintaining confidentiality regarding information seen or heard while working as a volunteer.

Persons interested in volunteering time or services should contact the principal. Prospective volunteers will be required to complete a written application.

In the interest of protecting the safety of students and staff, the school unit will conduct sex offender registry checks and may conduct criminal background checks on all volunteers who will be working directly with or will have unsupervised access to students, including those chaperoning students on field trips or school-sponsored excursions.

Information collected during this screening process will be treated as confidential to the extent allowed by law.

RSU 83/M.S.A.D. #13 will not permit parents who are registered sex offenders to volunteer in the schools or to chaperone either school day or extended field trips, even when their own children are involved.

Volunteers may not transport students in private vehicles except as allowed by Board policy.

The school unit will provide liability insurance protection for volunteers while performing assigned services.

The Superintendent will be responsible for devising a method for evaluating the effectiveness of the volunteer program on an annual basis.

The Board will recognize volunteer service on an annual basis. The building principal will be responsible for appropriate school recognition of volunteers.

Legal Reference: 20-A M.R.S.A. §1002

Cross Reference: EEAG – Student Transportation in Private Vehicles
IJOA – Field Trips and Excursions

Adopted: 11/10/09

Revised: 12/10/13

Revised: 3/9/2023

Approved: August 8, 2023

RSU 83/MAINE SCHOOL ADMINISTRATIVE DISTRICT #13
RSU #83 / MSAD #13

VOLUNTEER APPLICATION 2023-2024

(RSU 83/SAD #13 reserves the right to perform background checks on all volunteer applicants)

First Name: _____ Middle Initial: _____ Last Name: _____

Maiden and Previous Married Last Name: _____ Gender: Female / Male

Date of Birth: ____ / ____ / ____
MM DD YYYY

Home Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____ Email: _____

Physical Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

In an Emergency School Personnel May Notify:

First Name: _____ Last Name: _____

Physical Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Telephone: _____

I _____ have read the Volunteer Information and RSU 83/SAD #13
Print Name

School Board Policy IJOC and agree to abide by all RSU 83/SAD #13 rules, policies, and procedures.

Volunteer's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Clearance Check: _____ Date: _____

Principal's Signature: _____ Date: _____