

School Volunteers Make A Difference

- ◆ What are the benefits of being involved at school?
- ◆ How can you become a volunteer?
- ◆ How can you find the right opportunity?



*Volunteers are not paid:
not because they are worthless,
but because they are priceless!*

The benefits of volunteering.

As a volunteer, not only do you help improve student achievement, you'll gain a first-hand understanding of your child's daily activities and gain some insight into the trends and fads of school life. Both will help you communicate with your child as he or she grows and changes, all without intruding on your

child's privacy or personal space.

Volunteering is a great way to show your child that you take an interest in their educa-

tion and it sends a positive message that you consider school a worthwhile cause. Whether your child is just starting kindergarten or in his or her final year

*It's not how much you volunteer,
it's that you DO volunteer!*

How to become a volunteer.

1) Choose a volunteer opportunity that will fit your lifestyle and the amount of time you have available. How much time do you have to volunteer? Once a week? Once a month? Once a year?

2) Contact your school. A good place to start is at open house or registration, which are usually scheduled early in the school year. Use the event to approach your child's teacher, the PTA or PTO, music, performing arts and athletic booster groups, your school's parent liaison, or the principal about volunteer opportunities. At the School District level, call 425-356-1215.

3) All volunteers must complete a Washington State Patrol background form.

4) When you are at the school, you will need to sign in and out through the school office and wear an identification badge.

of high school, there are many good reasons and opportunities for you to volunteer at school.

The research shows that students with involved parents are most likely to:

- ◆ Earn higher grades and test scores.
- ◆ Pass their classes, earn credits and be promoted to the next grade level.
- ◆ Attend school more regularly and be more likely to complete their homework.
- ◆ Have better social skills, a more positive attitude, show good behavior and adapt well to school.
- ◆ Graduate and enroll in education beyond high school.

Volunteering is still important when your child gets older.

The benefits of being involved in your child's education are not

just confined to early childhood or elementary school.

When your child becomes a pre-teen, many suddenly become “too cool” for their parents. Most parents find it difficult to strike a balance between “letting go” and “being there” for their child.

The middle school and high school years are difficult for teens because there is increased peer pressure, there are physical changes, and there is the need for more independence. Nevertheless, although parent involvement typically declines during these years, be assured that your child will still benefit from your commitment to their education.

Parent involvement continues to have a strong effect on academic performance, even throughout high school. It's never too late to become a volunteer.

It's important to be involved at home, too.

Research evidence clearly shows that when families work together with schools to support learning, children of all abilities and backgrounds tend to succeed--not just in school, but throughout life.

Achievement in school can be predicted not by income or social status, but by the extent to which a student's

Finding the right opportunity.

Don't underestimate students. You may feel that what you have to offer might not interest students or will be above their heads. You will be pleasantly surprised! You will be helping to build skills, confidence, and self-esteem that will last beyond a student's school days.

Here are some ideas on how you might be able to volunteer:

COMMON OPPORTUNITIES:

Field trip chaperones, fundraising, staff appreciation, site councils, book fairs, Operation School Bell, PTA or PTO, tutoring, volunteer in the office or library, hearing and vision screening.

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL:

Lunch Buddies, room parent, carnivals, help in the classroom, and school pictures.

MIDDLE SCHOOL:

Behind-the-scenes projects for teachers, student store, classroom speaker, after-school clubs, drama productions, music booster, organize or chaperone school events, and Career Day.

HIGH SCHOOL:

Classroom speaker, music booster, athletic booster, performing arts booster, community service projects, after-school clubs, and concession stand sales.

AFTER-HOURS:

Collect material for class projects, collect soup labels and box tops, enlist businesses to donate to a school fundraiser, special projects, tape record a book, assist at school events in the evening, donate food for various events, and put together newsletters or the first-day packets.



family is able to:

- ◆ Create a home environment that encourages learning.
- ◆ Express realistic expectations for their child's achievements and future career.
- ◆ Become involved in their child's education.

All families can have a positive influence on the learning of their children. Talk with your child about school, encourage open family discussions, help your children plan for higher education, and keep them focused on learning and homework.



Mukilteo School District
*"Creating a Community
of Educational Excellence"*

Mukilteo School District is an equal
opportunity employer and
educational agency

Qualities of a good volunteer.

APPEARANCE:

You should dress according to the school dress code. Always remember you are setting an example for the students.

CONFIDENTIALITY:

Do not discuss matters of information concerning students with anyone outside of the classroom or with anyone other than designated school staff.

DEPENDABILITY:

You should be responsible for your scheduled times and should notify the school staff if you are unable to meet your commitment.

IMPARTIALITY:

Do not give your child special treatment or extra attention when you are volunteering at school. Follow your child's cues about how much interaction he or she feels comfortable with. If your child is not comfortable with your presence at school, consider a behind-the-scenes role.

RESPECT FOR AUTHORITY:

Please show respect for the authority of school staff members and school administrators.

DISCIPLINE:

Seek a staff member if you witness actions that should be addressed. Do not take it upon yourself to correct a student.