

2019-2020

Volunteer Handbook

Bethany
Community
School

44 Peck Road
Bethany, CT
(203) 393-3350
www.bethany-ed.org

Introduction

The Board of Education recognizes that volunteers can make many valuable contributions to the school. Volunteers can enhance collaboration between the school and community, broaden the school's educational environment and ultimately enrich students' school experience. In recognition of the benefit of having volunteers and other such non-employees providing services within the schools, the Board supports the involvement of these individuals in accordance with suitable regulations and safeguards to be developed by the Superintendent.

Volunteers and other non-employees working within the school ("volunteers") must work under the supervision of the Bethany Public School District staff. Volunteers are held to the same standards of conduct as school staff and must observe all Board of Education policies, including applicable policies on the confidentiality of student information.

Volunteers may be required to submit to state and federal criminal record checks and a record check of the Department of Children and Families ("DCF") Child Abuse and Neglect Registry. No person who is required to register as a sex offender under state or federal law, or whose name is currently listed on the DCF registry, may volunteer in the Bethany Public School District.

Refer to [Policy 1212](#) and [Administrative Regulation 1212](#) for complete content.

Thank you for your interest in volunteering with the Bethany Public School District. In an effort to make your experience as beneficial as possible, we ask that you take a few moments to review the information in this packet and complete the Volunteer Interest Form.

Volunteer Opportunities

There are numerous opportunities for volunteers within the Bethany school community. Some functions require specific training in the operation of equipment or instructional strategies; others require only a brief orientation to the activities of the day. Some volunteer assignments require ongoing commitments for purposes of continuity and consistency, others require less frequent time commitments for specific occasions or onetime special activities. Volunteers work under the direct supervision of school staff.

Additionally, the PTO needs volunteers to work on various committees and to help with programs, memberships, fundraising, hospitality, special projects, publicity, decorating and other essential tasks. Send an email to bethanypto@gmail.com for more information.

Our commitment to you

We believe that our schools are responsible for creating and maintaining a student centered learning environment that fosters for everyone in the school: young people, staff, parents and volunteers. Especially since our schools have such a need for and commitment to our volunteers, we promise to:

- Treat our volunteers with care and respect.
- Make every effort to assign volunteers to positions that match what they like to do and know how to do best.
- Provide volunteers with the information they need about our schools, policies, people and programs.
- Offer support throughout the volunteer experience.
- Make sure volunteers understand how and to whom to talk about any concerns.
- Give volunteers the opportunity to share comments and suggestions about their volunteer experience.
- Celebrate the contributions our volunteers make to the quality and culture of our students with recognition, a smile, and frequent thanks!

Your commitment to us

As a school volunteer, you make a world of difference to our staff and students. Volunteers:

- Enrich the school program by sharing your experiences and talents with students and staff.
- Stimulate community interest, concern and support for education through sharing your experiences.
- Enhance the district's school-community partnerships through your positive and constructive participation as a member of our school community.
- Make a difference in the quality of the school experience for our students through your honest feedback about our strengths and challenges.
- Support strong student self-concepts by showing them that they are important to you, by taking the time to listen to them and by helping them have an even more joyous learning experience.
- Become a better community member as you learn about the many skills, talents and contributions of the faculty, staff and other volunteers who contribute to the school.
- Increase your own sensitivity to the challenge of today's young people and strengthen your resolve to help them.
- Model the importance of giving back to the community so that our children will do the same in their generation.

Mission Statement

To challenge and inspire every student to become a lifelong learner and a resilient, independent, literate, caring, creative, responsible world citizen.

Our Beliefs and Commitments

We believe that...

- Educating children is our first priority.
- Education is a community-wide responsibility and requires the active engagement of all stakeholders.
- The individual worth of each child must be celebrated.
- Every student can learn and deserves an equal opportunity to learn.
- Every student has special gifts and talents to be discovered and nurtured.
- Positive attitude and effort lead to accomplishment.
- Physical activity, the arts, and play are essential elements of a comprehensive education.
- Education must focus on active learning, using critical thinking, and problem solving skills.

We are committed to...

- Empowering students to become resourceful learners who can apply their knowledge.
- Challenging each student to reach his/her full potential.
- Respecting individual and community values.
- Integrating twenty-first century technology throughout our school.
- Investing in our professional staff to enhance instruction.
- Developing and retaining exemplary teachers.
- Providing a safe, secure and positive environment.
- Managing our financial resources efficiently and effectively.
- Advancing the Bethany School District together as a community.

Volunteer Code of Conduct

1. **Confidentiality** is an essential part of the operations of any school and is protected by federal and state law. Each student has specific legal rights with regard to the confidentiality of their performance, behavior, achievement, records and personal information within the school. Volunteers in the school are expected to adhere to the same standards of confidentiality as govern the professional staff and all employees. Volunteers who have concerns regarding anyone or anything within the school should bring them to the attention of a teacher, administrator or staff member.
2. **Communication** between the teacher/staff and volunteer is vital to a successful volunteering experience. As a volunteer, it is important to know what to do upon arrival in the classroom, library or volunteer location.
3. **Supervision of Students.** Volunteers who are working with children under the general supervision of a teacher or staff member should be sure that any child for whom they are responsible is regularly supervised and avoid any potential danger to that child. As a school volunteer, you have made a commitment to work with all the children in a group or class. Be sure you do not focus your attention on your own child. Volunteers should never be left alone with children without direct supervision by a faculty or staff member.
4. **Positive Attitude.** Schools are exciting places, full of caring people; children, volunteers and staff members. A school can also be a stressful place with tight schedules and over five hundred people interacting with one another. It is important to remember we are all human with good days and bad days. Treat each child as you would your best friend's (with realistic expectation, patience and love). A warm greeting, a smile, and gracious understanding will help us all.
5. **Timeliness.** Classrooms run on tight schedules. It is important that volunteers be prompt in their arrival and departure times. Unless there is a specific reason for you to remain at school, it is expected that you leave upon completion of your volunteer duties so that all persons in the school are accounted for. If you are unable to keep a scheduled time to volunteer, please inform the teacher, staff member or office staff as soon as possible.
6. **Siblings.** Due to the distractions which may be created by young children in the classroom, volunteers are asked to kindly refrain from bringing young children or siblings to school when volunteering.
7. **Safety and Security.** Visitors and volunteers are required to sign in at the main office and obtain a name tag before entering the school. If you should observe an unsafe condition or anyone (other than school personnel) in the school without a name tag or visitor's badge, be sure to notify a staff member. Visitors and volunteers are required to sign out when they leave the school.

8. **Incident Response Procedures** are in place to deal with emergency situations. An EVACUATION Procedure is activated when the school building needs to be emptied due to an emergency situation (i.e. fire). A LOCKDOWN Procedure is initiated when there is a known danger or threat inside any part of the school building(s) (i.e. intruder). A SHELTER IN PLACE procedure is initiated when there is a known danger or threat outside of the school building (i.e. severe weather). In any of these situations, volunteers must follow teacher and administrator direction.
9. **Medical Emergency.** In the event of a medical emergency, accident or injury, call the main office immediately and obtain the assistance of a faculty member.
10. **Your Health.** Please do not come to school if you are ill. This includes a cold, sore throat, or cough. You may think you are leaving the teacher shorthanded, and you may want to volunteer even though you are not well, but doing so is not good for you, the children, or the teacher. Please contact the teacher or school and leave a message that you are ill. Children learn by example, and we ask that you, as a role model, use good health habits when you are at school.
11. **Appearance and Manner.** Volunteers should be well groomed and dress appropriately. Hats, short skirts and shorts, exposed midriffs, low cut blouses, and inappropriate graphics/ language on t-shirts are not allowable for students, let alone volunteers. If you are not sure how you should dress, please ask. Volunteers should also set a good example to students by maintaining professional conduct and language.
12. **Student Behavior Management.** Student behavior management is implemented in many ways depending upon individual needs and special circumstances surrounding each student. Volunteers are not allowed to discipline students. Volunteers who observe a situation that requires behavioral intervention and/or discipline should refer the problem to a staff member.
13. **Policies and Regulations.** Volunteers are subject to abide by the Bethany Board of Education Policies and Regulations. Board policies and regulations can be found on www.bethany-ed.org, Board of Education, Policies & Regulations.

Sign Me Up!

Complete the Volunteer Interest Form at the end of this packet. You will be contacted and provided with more information. Thank you for making a difference!



School Day, Hours of Operation

	Start Time	End Time
Regular School Day	8:40 a.m.	3:10 p.m.
Early Dismissal	8:40 a.m.	1:10 p.m.
Delayed Opening	10:40 a.m.	3:10 p.m.

School Directory (203) 393-3350

Fax (203) 393-3849

Name	Title	E-Mail	Extension
Tom Reed-Swale	BCS Principal	treed-swale@bethany-ed.org	605
Kai Byrd	Director of Special Services, Curriculum & Instruction	kbyrd@bethany-ed.org	604
Linda Saffran	Volunteer Coordinator	lsaffran@bethany-ed.org	125
Main Office			600 or 601

Superintendent's Office (203) 393-1170

Fax (203) 393-0239

Name	Title	E-Mail	Extension
Colleen M. Murray	Superintendent of Schools	cmurray@bethany-ed.org	800
Susan Carpenter	BOE Executive Assistant	scarpenter@bethany-ed.org	800
Brandy Spargo	Business Manager	bspargo@bethany-ed.org	801
Donna Ricciardi	BOE Office Assistant	dricciardi@bethany-ed.org	802

Equal Opportunity

In compliance with Title VI, Title IX, Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Bethany Public School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, age, disability, pregnancy, gender identity or expression, or any other basis prohibited by state or federal law, whether by students, board employees, or third parties subject to the control of the board. The board's prohibition of discrimination or harassment expressly extends to its services, equal opportunity employment, educational programs, academic, nonacademic and extracurricular activities, including athletics. Inquiries regarding the Bethany Public School District's nondiscrimination policies should contact the Superintendent of Schools, 44 Peck Road, Bethany, CT, 06524, (203) 393-1170. Refer to [Policy 0521](#), [Policy 5145.4](#), [Administrative Regulation 5145.4](#), and [Policy 6121](#) for complete content.

Notice of Video Monitoring

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In accordance with Connecticut General Statutes, notice is hereby given to all employees, parents and students that the Bethany Public School District conducts electronic monitoring in all school buildings. Video cameras are set up throughout the school and are monitored regularly. Refer to [Policy 5131.111](#) for complete content.



BETHANY PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT 2019-2020 VOLUNTEER INTEREST FORM

Please print

Volunteer Name:	
Home Address:	
Home Phone:	
Cell Phone:	
Email:	

- Guest Speaker Opportunity:** I would be interested in sharing information on my culture, travels, talents, skills, crafts, or professional experience with my child's class and possibly other classes. Topics which I would like to share might be:

Please indicate your interest level for the following activities. You will be contacted and provided with more detailed information.

Other Volunteer Activities	Very Interested	Interested	Not Interested
Class Parent for: _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Classroom Helper	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Prepare Classroom Materials for Teacher	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reading to Children	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Community Garden	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
At Home Work for Classroom	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Library/Media Center	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Night of the Arts	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Picture Day	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other: _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

VOLUNTEER AGREEMENT

I have agreed to work as a volunteer for the Bethany Public School District and do so of my own free will. As a volunteer, I am not an employee or agent of the Bethany Public School District. I understand this role does not include compensation or payment of any kind. Furthermore, I acknowledge that the Bethany Public School District does not offer health insurance, workers' compensation insurance, or any such employee benefit to volunteers. As a volunteer, I agree to maintain my own health insurance during my time as a volunteer for the Bethany Public School District.

RISK AGREEMENT

I fully recognize and accept that volunteering has risks and unforeseen dangers (such risks could be, but are not limited to physical injury). I understand that I have the right to review each activity prior to my participation and choose to participate of my own free will. I have read and understand the Bethany Public School District's Mission Statement and Volunteer Code of Conduct. I pledge to act and perform within those expectations.

WAIVER, RELEASE, HOLD HARMLESS, AND INDEMNIFICATION AGREEMENT

I acknowledge that the Bethany Public School District does not guarantee safety. I voluntarily waive, release, and hold harmless the Bethany Public School District, its board, employees, agents, and other volunteers from all claims, accidents, injuries, or death that result from actions related to my volunteer activities. I understand that this document disqualifies me from recovering damages against the Bethany Public School District should I be injured in the course of my duties. I shall defend, hold harmless, and indemnify the Bethany Public School District, its board, employees, agents, and other volunteers from and against all claims, accusations, notices, judgments, rulings, liabilities, expenses, etc. that may exist as a result of my actions, inactions, errors, acts, or omissions.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND SIGNATURES

I have read and fully understand the above waiver. I understand that by signing this document I am giving up certain rights and accepting certain duties.

Signature

Date

Return the completed form to Linda Saffran, Bethany Community School. Thank you!