

# Faith Community Volunteer Program

## Process and Procedures

The success of volunteers in Poudre School District depends upon making sure expectations are clearly identified and the best match is made between the volunteers' needs and identified school needs.

Following the decision to form a partnership between a school and a faith community:

Task	Who is responsible?	Date
Identify faith community coordinator to work with school coordinator, recruit and communicate with volunteers.		
Identify school coordinator specifically responsible for faith community program volunteers to work with faith community coordinator, communicate with staff.		
Meeting with two coordinators, Partnership and Volunteer Program representative, faith community pastor, and principal to complete partnership expectation sheet and begin to discuss needs.		
Faith community coordinator begins recruitment of volunteers from the congregation – make sure volunteer applications and application procedures available at faith community office. Provide school calendar of events and volunteer job descriptions to faith community coordinators.		
School coordinator begins identification of school volunteer needs Principal, school coordinator announce program and solicit specific volunteer requests		
Both coordinators conduct training session for volunteers including: a. distribute volunteer handbook b. meet key personnel c. build excitement and a group identity d. discuss expectations of volunteers (commitment, reliability, etc.) e. review logistics such as nametags, parking, school calendar, school information, culture, oath/agreement, etc.		

<p>f. conduct specialized training in literacy (20-minutes)</p> <p>g. begin making placements</p> <p>h. complete paperwork/computer registration <i>**remind volunteers they cannot begin until application is processed and CBI background check is cleared</i></p>		
<p>Faith community coordinator works with school coordinator to finalize volunteer placements.</p>		
<p>School coordinator schedules a time to meet new volunteers at the school or notifies front office staff of volunteer placements. Provide principal or office staff with a volunteer placement chart prior to the week all faith community volunteers begin.</p>		
<p>School coordinator notifies teachers of volunteer's name, phone number, email and short bio prior to the first day of volunteering.</p>		
<p>School coordinator arranges to have someone familiar with the school (coordinator, principal, office staff) meet volunteer at school prior to their first volunteer session to give a brief tour including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Location of bathrooms</li> <li>b. Check-in procedures/nametag location</li> <li>c. Classroom location</li> <li>d. Staff lounge</li> <li>e. Parking, etc.</li> </ul>		
<p>Volunteer works with teacher on specific 'job description' details of volunteer placement. Make sure teacher has email and phone number of volunteers. Ensure that volunteers know how to notify school or teacher (phone and/or email) if they are unable to volunteer on a given day.</p>		

*Keys to success:*

- Plan to start your first volunteers second semester – make sure planning is done prior to placing volunteers.
- Encourage principal or Partnership and Volunteer Program staff to visit church.
- Email – faith community coordinator and school coordinator should both have email as an integral part of the communications effort.
- Recognition – make sure faith community volunteers are part of the school’s recognition efforts. School coordinator or faith community coordinator should personally invite volunteers to any recognition event. Teachers write personal notes of thanks to volunteers or students do special volunteer recognition.
- Short (15-minute) presentation at staff meeting by both coordinators.
- Provide faith community volunteer coordinators a copy of the PSD curriculum to help match volunteer interest areas.
- Keep literacy coordinator in the communications loop – internal staff member as liaison is helpful.
- Focus on literacy at the beginning of the relationship – too overwhelming with too many volunteer options – add more options later as needs arise.
- Faith community and school coordinators should meet regularly with other coordinators (quarterly)  
Faith community coordinator, school coordinator, principal, and pastor meet at least twice a year.
- Separate co-coordinators at schools for faith community volunteers and regular parent volunteer program.
- Make faith community volunteers feel welcome and appreciated by identifying them as a special volunteer group within the school (i.e.: have a designated area for their name tags, have a ‘Welcome Faith community Volunteer’ sign in the office, etc.

*Other ideas for utilizing faith community volunteers:*

One-time guest speakers  
Survey members of the congregation to identify skills/talents  
Fingerprinting/child i.d. at school carnival  
Science mentors/science fair judges  
Odyssey of the Mind coaches  
Coaching before- or after-school sports  
School supplies for adopted school

*Quotables:*

“The children benefit, but the faith community volunteers benefit too.”  
“Faith community volunteers are so faithful, regular and dependable.”  
“We’re all seeing what a huge job education is – and now we’re part of it!”  
“Don’t take this faith community volunteer away from me!”