

# Regional School Unit No. 26

Asa C. Adams School - Orono Middle School - Orono High School

10 Goodridge Drive, Orono, Maine 04473

*Tel: (207) 866-7110*

*Fax: (207) 866-4217*

*www.rsu26.org*

Dear Parents and Guardians,

We would like to extend our thanks and a warm welcome to our volunteers. We value the help we receive from parents/vounteers and realize that we would be unable to provide such quality experiences for our children without your time and expertise. We want our school to be open and welcoming to all who would like to support the children and our academic programs.

Our goal is to facilitate the involvement of parents and community members in our schools in a variety of ways. However, our overriding concern is for the safety of the children in our care. We strive to ensure that our children benefit from the help and support volunteers provide and are also provided with the best possible security. This protocol sets out our school's expectations.

A visitor is defined as someone who has received permission to be in the school building for a special event, a pre-arranged classroom visit, a tour of the school, or another pre-approved short term visit. Short term is defined as duration of less than two hours.

A volunteer is designated as someone who has applied and been approved by the building principal as a person willing and interested in providing specific and pre-determined education or service in the classroom or school-wide setting.

All volunteers must be approved by the principal and shall serve under the direct supervision of the professional personnel of the school to which they are assigned or have offered their services. Volunteers may provide regularly scheduled service or a one-time service.

Sincerely,

Meredith Higgins  
Superintendent of Schools

*Cultivating a community of responsible, respectful, and passionate learners.*

## **Application Procedure for Volunteers**

1. Volunteers are required to complete an RSU #26 Volunteer application before beginning any volunteer activity. An applicant can request to work in a particular assignment or express a general interest in volunteering. Applications are available at the main office and on the school website.
2. Applications will be reviewed by the building principal and/or designee. The principal will check all references. When volunteer applications are approved, the applicant will be notified.
3. A general orientation for all approved volunteers will be conducted by the building principal or their designee three times annually. Volunteers must sign the RSU #26 volunteer code of conduct prior to volunteering. The school employee most closely involved with the assignment of the volunteer will generally provide additional job-specific orientation.
4. All RSU #26 employees, regardless of grade level or program are required to follow these procedures when utilizing the services of volunteers in any capacity.

## **What you should know about our Volunteer Program**

RSU #26 has a strong tradition of parental involvement. Because volunteers are such an integral part of our school, it is important to maintain high standards of security and professional behavior. All volunteers working with or overseeing children must do so in the presence of an RSU #26 staff member. Our schools are exciting and busy places, so it is extremely important for all volunteers to remember the following:

- ❖ Respect confidentiality. Students and staff have the right to privacy.
- ❖ Honor your commitments and be on time. Choose what is manageable and interesting to you.
- ❖ Be professional, prepared, responsible, and safe at all times.
- ❖ Communicate appropriately. Do not distract teachers while they are teaching. Use an appropriate tone of voice for the age of students. Be positive in discussions with students.
- ❖ Strive to give each child the best effort you can.
- ❖ Respect each child as an individual.

*Cultivating a community of responsible, respectful, and passionate learners.*

## Confidentiality

All school volunteers are expected to maintain confidentiality while working in the school. All things that are seen and heard at school about children and their families should be considered privileged information (including student work and student behavior.)

Some tips to maintain confidentiality:

- ❖ Do not make reference to children's abilities in front of other children.
- ❖ If a parent asks about their child's progress, suggest in a friendly way that they contact the teacher. Most parents will appreciate your position and are usually just expressing an interest in your work.
- ❖ Treat all student information as personal and confidential regardless of source.
- ❖ Communicate any relevant information about students to the respective classroom teacher and/or building principal.
- ❖ Seek clarification of unusual situations that occur in the school from the person(s) involved and avoid discussing such matters with non-school personnel.

A volunteer is expected to:

1. Never share personal information about a student or student's family with other people.
2. Never share specific information with a parent about their child based on the volunteer's classroom experience, whether positive or negative.
3. Never make comments harmful to the reputation of any pupil, professional or their volunteer.
4. Never share opinions about the behavior and/or academic program of students.

## Discipline

**Discipline of students is solely the responsibility of the teacher in charge.** Volunteers should in no way discipline students. If you are facilitating a group, using key control words (i.e. please sit down, please stop taking someone else's paper) can be the first step before notifying the teacher. If students continue to misbehave in your presence, you should report this immediately to the teacher in charge. The teacher will then determine the necessary course of action. Also note that we expect students to treat volunteers with the same level of respect given to other school personnel. If you feel that students are not being respectful towards you, do not hesitate to discuss the matter with the teacher or principal.

## RSU 26 Volunteer Guidelines

- ❖ All visitors and volunteers must sign in at the main office upon arrival and sign out before leaving the building.
- ❖ All volunteers and visitors must wear nametags while in the building.
- ❖ All volunteers must complete a volunteer application, reference check, and volunteer training before volunteering.
- ❖ All volunteers must sign the Volunteer Code of Conduct form before volunteering.
- ❖ All volunteers must accurately document time spent volunteering at RSU 26 in the Volunteer Log Book. (Applies to Asa Adams volunteers and this can be found in the main office.)
- ❖ Visits and volunteer times must be prearranged with school staff.
- ❖ Volunteer sessions must be cancelled in the event that the supervising teacher is out of school
- ❖ After signing in at the office, volunteers must report **directly** to the classroom where volunteering.
- ❖ Non-RSU 26 children are not allowed to accompany classroom visitors.
- ❖ Smoking or using any kind of tobacco product is prohibited on all RSU 26 property including athletic fields.
- ❖ Any volunteer who is injured at school should report to the office staff and administrators immediately.
- ❖ Personal calls while volunteering are discouraged. Cell phones should be turned off or on vibrate when volunteering. Only emergency telephone calls should be made.
- ❖ Volunteers and visitors should receive authorization from the teacher and/or principal before giving food, drinks, candy, and other rewards/incentives to students.
- ❖ Volunteers/Visitors may not have access to student records or the student information system. There shall be no exceptions to this rule.
- ❖ Volunteers, visitors, guest speakers, performance groups, etc. will be supervised at all times by the professional staff and will not be left alone with students.
- ❖ The principal or his/her designee has the authority to request that any person leave the building or school ground whose conduct disrupts the safe and orderly operations of the school. No person may remain on school grounds after being requested to leave by the principal, designee, person charged with the responsibility for the facility, school resource officer, or law enforcement officer. Anyone who refuses to leave is trespassing and is in violation of the law. The principal may require that such a person request and secure permission to be on school property in advance.