



*Volunteer  
Handbook*

PICKENS COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT

## Board of Education

Daniel Bell, Chair

Delane Lewis, Vice-Chair

Sue Finley

Byron Long

Katherine White



**Dr. Carlton Wilson**

Superintendent

**Tony Young**

Assistant Superintendent

---

Dear Volunteers,

Thank you for choosing to serve the students and teachers of Pickens County School District with your volunteer time. Our success not only depends on our staff and students, but our volunteers as well. Sharing your time, talents, and interests with our students offers them an invaluable lesson in community involvement and provides role models that will influence them through the rest of their lives.

This Volunteer Handbook is intended to help you, the staff, and the students have the best volunteer experience possible. The guidelines outlined in this handbook also provide protections for students and volunteers. Security and background checks of volunteers are required in some cases and provide an extra layer of confidence for student safety.

I wish you the best volunteer experience in the Pickens County School District. Please share your positive stories with friends and family who might consider volunteering. Feel free to share with me or the school administrators your concerns.

Volunteerism is an integrated part of our society that greatly benefits our students. Winston Churchill said, "We make a living by what we do, but we make a life by what we give." Thank you, again, for your efforts.

Sincerely,

Dr. Carlton Wilson

Superintendent

Pickens County School District

## School Contact Information

**Harmony Elementary**  
 550 Harmony School Rd  
 Jasper, GA 30143  
 Phone: (706) 253-1840  
 Fax: (706) 253-1845

**Hill City Elementary**  
 600 Hill Circle  
 Jasper, GA 30143  
 Phone: (706) 253-1880  
 Fax: (706) 253-1885

**Tate Elementary**  
 5630 Highway 53 East  
 Tate, GA 30143  
 Phone: (706) 253-1860  
 Fax: (706) 253-1865

**Jasper Middle**  
 158 Stegall Drive  
 Jasper, GA 30143  
 Phone: (706) 253-1730  
 Fax: (706) 253-1735

**Pickens Jr. High**  
 1802 Refuge Road  
 Jasper, GA 30143  
 Phone: (706) 253-1830  
 Fax: (706) 253-1835

**Pickens High**  
 500 Dragon Drive  
 Jasper, GA 30143  
 Phone: (706) 253-1800  
 Fax: (706) 253-1815

Pickens County School System 2018-19 Calendar



Board Approved: 12/21/2017

## **Mission Statement**

The mission of the Pickens County School District Volunteer Program is to involve our parents and community members in an effort to promote the value of education for our students, and to assist with all aspects of learning.

## **Definition of a Volunteer**

A volunteer is an individual who performs hours of service for a public agency for civic, charitable, or humanitarian reasons without promise, expectation or receipt of compensation for services rendered. Volunteers not under the direct supervision of certified PCSD employees must complete the volunteer paperwork as well as complete a satisfactory background check through the City of Jasper Police Department.

*Special note regarding Field Trip Chaperones:* Any individual who attends a field trip with the intention of helping to monitor students, and are not the parent or legal guardian of the students being monitored, will need to submit the volunteer paperwork and complete a satisfactory background check through the Jasper Police Department. If you are only monitoring your child that you are the legal guardian of, you do not need the background check to attend a fieldtrip.

## **Guidelines for Volunteer**

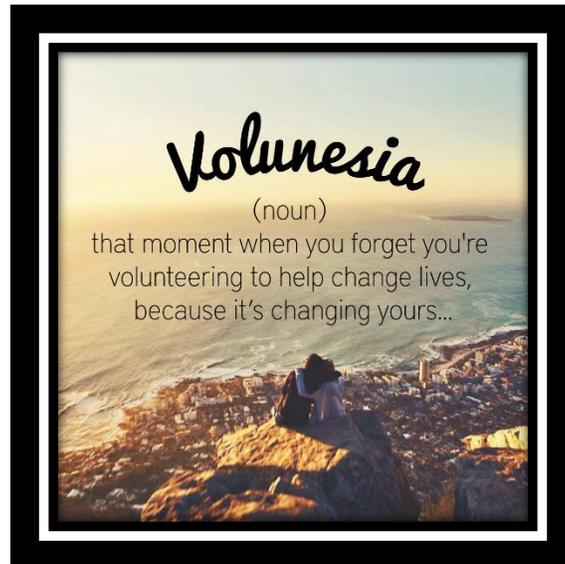
- **All** volunteers are non-district personnel who may potentially have direct interaction with students.
- **Note:** School visitors are not considered volunteers. Examples of visitors include individuals who come to the school for the following reasons: visiting during lunch, at parties, at field day (only watching activities), at spring fling type activities such as giving out or taking tickets, dropping off goodies for a party; attending parent/teacher conferences, 504/IEP meetings, school wide and classroom programs.

## Criminal Background Check Requirements

If you have a background check completed it is typically valid for 5 years.

Volunteers, depending on role, shall have a background check completed by the City of Jasper Police Department at a cost of \$55. Volunteers working under the direct supervision of certified PCSD employees are not required to complete a background check. There are some instances where a volunteer may not work under the direct supervision of a certified PCSD employee. For those volunteers, a criminal background check is required. Some examples include working 1-on-1 with students, chaperoning other children other than their own when on a field trip, serving as a chaperone for overnight field trips, and/or tutoring students.

School administrators shall have the discretion to pursue any additional screening methods including, but not limited to, personal interviews and reference checks. Individuals who complete the background check will be entered into our database. The list will be made available to volunteer coordinators at each school.



## **Supervision of Volunteers**

Most Volunteers work under the direct supervision of certified PCSD staff at each school and only with those teachers who have requested the services of a volunteer. It is the responsibility of the school administration, supervising teachers, or volunteer coordinator to dismiss any volunteer whose actions are not in the best interest of our students or the schools.

While volunteers are an important part of the educational team, the professional staff is responsible by law for decisions that are made regarding the instruction of students, the management of the school, and student safety and discipline. Therefore, volunteers will always work under the supervision of teachers and administrators. We welcome the suggestions and opinions of volunteers as you supplement and support our programs. There are, however, a few things that volunteers should NOT do:

- Discipline students
- Be used as a substitute teacher
- Use student restrooms
- Counsel students
- Diagnose student needs
- Revise the curriculum or teaching plan
- Grade student work or record grades
- Have access to student records or medical files
- Dismiss students from school
- Work with students without a teacher or staff member present
- Discuss student progress or student difficulties
- Give food or medication to students
- Evaluate achievement
- Distribute advertisements or solicitations or other non-approved literature

## **Confidentiality**

As a volunteer, you will meet many wonderful students. Please be aware that volunteers may not telephone students or visit them at their homes. Volunteers may not meet students off campus or invite students to the volunteer's home. Contacting or visiting students or any of their family members outside of school without parent permission is strictly prohibited and includes but is not exclusive to email, social media, telephoning, or texting. It is imperative that all matters pertaining to students remain confidential. Any information regarding problems, progress, grades, relationships, and confidences of students, their parents, and the staff should never be discussed with anyone who does not have the professional right or need to know

them. Student information is protected as confidential by federal law (Family Education Rights and Privacy Act – FERPA). Anything that a child may confide to you about family matters or personal problems should be kept confidential. Probing into student’s family life or private matters is not acceptable. If the information is vital for the school to have in order to help the student, please discuss the child’s conversation in provide with his or her teacher, school administration, or the volunteer coordinator at the school.

### **Child Abuse Reporting**

All school district personnel, including volunteers, are required to report any cases of suspected child abuse. District personnel includes anyone who has responsibility for the care or treatment of a minor. Failure to report is a crime. This applies to all employees and volunteers when acting in the scope of their work with Pickens County School District. If abuse is suspected, contact a school administrator or the school counselor immediately.

### **Behavior and Dress**

Please take your lead from the professional staff and dress appropriately for the job you are doing. We ask that you wear clothing in line with the school’s dress code, avoiding spaghetti straps, revealing clothing, tube tops, short-shorts, or showing a bare midriff. T-shirt messages should be of a positive nature. Keep in mind that you are in a position to set an example for students, therefore your dress, speech, and behavior should serve as good models for them to follow.

Volunteers may not engage in any behavior or activity that may cause harm to themselves or others. In addition, physical contact is not encouraged and should be limited to a brief encouraging behavior such as a “high five.”

### **School Rules**

You should become familiar with the rules, policies and procedures of the school where you will be volunteering. This can be done through reading the Student-Parent Handbook located on each school’s website.

## **Dependability**

We realize there may be times you may be ill, on vacation, or otherwise unable to volunteer. Please notify the school office and leave a message for the teacher or staff member with whom you work and give advance notice when you are unable to volunteer, as the teacher and children are expecting you. Also remember that it is important to be prompt and consistent when working with students.

## **Working with Students**

The staff appreciates your willingness to be a part of the educational team. Following are some tips for working effectively with the staff.

- Let the staff know what you enjoy doing and what your special skills are so that they can fully utilize your talents.
- Feel free to ask questions to clarify anything you may need information about to ensure a job well done. We want you to enjoy volunteering and have a rewarding experience.
- Call students by name. A child's name is very important, so please make every effort to pronounce and spell each child's name correctly.
- Be consistent with the teacher's rules for classroom behavior. The teacher is always available and ready to handle discipline issues.
- Encourage and affirm the students. Your positive words of encouragement will go a long way in helping students feel good about themselves and the work they are doing.
- Be caring but firm. Patiently allow students to think for themselves and form their own answers. We want learners to have the opportunity to solve problems on their own. Keep them on task to maximize your learning time together.
- Be a good listener; get down on the student's level. Be careful not to give advice.
- Under no circumstances should students be left unsupervised. Be aware of what they are doing at all times.
- Never accompany students into the restroom.
- Be friendly and enthusiastic! Keep your sense of humor and smile. It's contagious! You can make a difference!

## **Commitment**

Volunteering is a scheduled, pre-arranged activity. Volunteers and chaperones may not bring other children while volunteering in schools or on field trips. Volunteers and chaperones are representatives of the District. Therefore, the District appreciates your positive attitude as you share your volunteering experiences with others. The District thanks you for your commitment to volunteering with Pickens County School District and serving the needs of our students. Your work is important to the District, the teachers, and especially the students. They look forward to your arrival and appreciate the work you do. Thank you for volunteering in Pickens schools!

## Statement of Confidentiality for School Volunteers

I understand, in the course of my association with Pickens County School District, I share the responsibility of maintaining the confidentiality of any employee or student information I may have available to me. I understand it is my responsibility to ensure rights and confidentiality of information both written and verbal.

As a volunteer, I promise to take my work seriously and be open minded, willing to be trained, and maintain interest and commitment.

I understand in the performance of my duties, I am not to discuss academic or other confidential information regarding students or employees with anyone. Any breach of confidentiality will be carefully reviewed and if substantiated, could result in termination of my volunteer involvement with the Pickens County School District, and may result in legal action.

I understand if I am assigned to work with a student or students, I will be under the **direct** supervision of a **certified** staff member. I further understand I should not make contact with the student or the student's parents/guardians outside of school.

I acknowledge I have read and understand this statement of confidentiality. I am aware that working at any school in Pickens County as a volunteer can be terminated at any time at the discretion of the Superintendent or his designee.

Volunteer Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Volunteer Agreement for School Volunteers

To provide the safest learning environment possible and to facilitate the use of volunteers suitable for substantial contact with children, it is the requirement of Pickens County School District to obtain the information on the Volunteer Agreement form. An applicant's failure to answer any question will result in the applicant being unable to volunteer in any capacity. Volunteers who will work without the direct supervision of a certified PCSD employee are required to have the criminal history background check. To obtain this, you will need to contact the Jasper Police Department and pay the required fee of \$55.

First Name \_\_\_\_\_ Last Name \_\_\_\_\_

Other Names you've used: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Have you been convicted of a felony? YES NO**

**Have you been convicted of a drug-related offense? YES NO**

**Have you been convicted of a sex-related offense? YES NO**

**As a Pickens County School District Volunteer, I agree to:**

- ~ Respect the confidentiality of all information made known to me directly or indirectly regarding students and staff
- ~ Notify the appropriate person at school as soon as possible when circumstances necessitate my absence
- ~ Abide by all school and Pickens County School District policies and procedures
- ~ Follow dress and behavior codes as established by the school and district

Volunteer Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Application Form – Pickens County School District Volunteer**  
**2018-19**

**School Availability:**

- Harmony Elementary (K-4)
- Hill City Elementary (Pre-K – 4)
  - Tate Elementary (K-4)
- Jasper Middle School (5-6)
- Pickens Junior High (7-8)
- Pickens High School (9-12)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

I am the parent/guardian/grandparent of:

Child's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

Child's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

**I would be willing to perform the following tasks:**

\_\_\_ Making copies    \_\_\_ Laminating/Cutting out items    \_\_\_ Putting bulletin boards together

\_\_\_ Guest Reader    \_\_\_ Helping with special events    \_\_\_ Read to/with a small group

\_\_\_ Organizing storage areas, etc.    \_\_\_

\_\_\_ Share information on a special interest: \_\_\_\_\_

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**Days Available:** \_\_\_ Mon \_\_\_ Tue \_\_\_ Wed \_\_\_ Thur \_\_\_ Fri \_\_\_ Just call me

**Times Available:** \_\_\_ Morning \_\_\_ Mid-day/Afternoon \_\_\_ Flexible