



Volunteer Handbook

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PURPOSE

This handbook is intended to provide our volunteers and staff with practical information and with important forms that are need to be completed and filed. This information will assist in volunteer placement and will help to identify the role that volunteers will play in our schools. Information regarding the expectations and responsibilities associated with being a volunteer in our district is also included. Additionally, information regarding the kinds of activities that our volunteers are typically called upon to assist with and a general timeline for these activities, where applicable, will be referenced as well.

WELCOME

The Central Falls School District, Board of Trustees and Superintendent encourages parents/guardians and other members of the community to share their time, knowledge and abilities with our students. Volunteers enrich the educational program and strengthen our schools' relationships with homes, businesses, public agencies, and private institutions.

It takes an entire community to educate our youth. Caring members of our community bring new energies and resources into our schools. Schools draw support from their community through the work you do in our schools. Your commitment to volunteer and work in our schools is greatly appreciated.

It is our goal to support your volunteer work so that the time you spend with our students and staff is worthwhile for you and for our school community.

QUESTIONS/COMMENTS

Central Falls High School Volunteers please contact Patricia Martinez, Executive Director for Family & Student Support for High School at (401) 727-7710 or email at martinezp@cfschools.net.

Volunteers in Elementary and Middle Schools please contact Denise DeBarros, Coordinator for Family, Community and School Partnerships at (401) 727-6177 or email at debarrosd@cfschools.net.

Community Mentor Volunteers for Central Falls High School please contact Elizabeth Ochs, Coordinator for Expanded Learning Opportunities at (401) 727-7710 or email at ochse@cfschools.net.

Thank you and congratulations for opting to make a difference in the lives of our students!

LETTER FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

Dear Volunteer,

First, I would like to thank you for your commitment to helping Central Falls Public School students. Your presence here is invaluable and extremely important. Your decision to volunteer shows a commitment to high-quality education for all of the students in the City of Central Falls. Research shows that your presence and hard work will not only inevitably help increase the quality of education for all students, but it will help in making sure that all students feel safer, and more connected to their school, community and homes.

It is my commitment to you to continue to promote communications and collaborations between our schools and our community. Your presence is an important first step toward making our relationship a productive and open one. I want to hear your feedback about your volunteer experience. At the end of your volunteer time, and every time you return to volunteer, please fill out the survey found in the back of your packet and return it to your volunteer coordinator so that we can make our program more successful for you and for our students.

Each time you come back to the school, please try out a new volunteer opportunity! Expand your boundaries; grow with our school, and with our children. If you are coming in to volunteer in one of our cafeterias, that is fantastic and extremely important but next time maybe try something else like helping in a classroom with students' learning. Call other families and community members to tell them what is going on in our schools. Always remember that each time you come to our schools you make an enormous difference in the lives and education of the students.

Again, on behalf of the students, teachers, and administration, thank you for your time and help.

Sincerely,



Dr. Frances Gallo
Superintendent of Central Falls Schools

BECOMING A VOLUNTEER

1. Volunteers are required to complete a **Volunteer Application** each year prior to being allowed to participate as a volunteer.
2. Volunteers must complete a **Volunteer Code of Conduct** prior to being allowed to volunteer.
3. Volunteers, by law, will need to obtain a LobbyGuard clearance each year before being allowed to volunteer. The principal or department administrator shall complete a declaration that he/she has done the LobbyGuard clearance.
4. All volunteers must be directly supervised by a certificated staff member if they are working directly with students or in a classroom and must not be left alone with students. All other volunteers, who are not in the school or working with children, must be directly supervised by their district designated staff member.
5. Volunteers must be a minimum of 18 years of age.
6. Volunteer shall at all times indemnify and hold harmless the Central Falls Public Schools and its officers, agents and employees from any and all claims, damages and expenses arising out of injuries to persons or damage to property which resulted from any omissions or negligent acts of the volunteer.

Note: It is the responsibility of each school/department to maintain the following records:

- Volunteer Applications
- Volunteer Code of Conduct
- LobbyGuard System Screening
- Volunteer attendance sheets

Safety & Security:

Megan's Law, signed in 1996 by President Clinton, allows states discretion in establishing criteria for disclosure, but compels them to make private and personal information on registered sex offenders available to the public.

Upon initial application, all volunteers **must be screened** by our **LobbyGuard®** system. LobbyGuard performs instant background checks on all school visitors and volunteers against national sexual offender databases. Based on this screening, you may be required to obtain a Rhode Island BCI. All out-of-state volunteers, or volunteer applicants who have not resided in Rhode Island for a period of one year, shall be required to obtain a National Fingerprint BCI. The cost of the background check, if any, is the responsibility of the applicant.

If there is any disqualifying information concerning a potential volunteer, it will be noted by the Attorney General's office. It is the responsibility of the Superintendent or his/her designee to meet with that person and explain that he/she will not be able to participate due to the information contained in the report(s). "Disqualifying information" means those offenses listed in R.I.G.L. §§ 23-17-37, 11-37-8.1 (First degree child molestation) and 11-37-8.3 (Second degree child molestation).

VOLUNTEER ROLES

What do school volunteers do?

- Reinforce skills taught by teachers.
- Help teachers give students more individual attention.
- Provide added enrichment to the curriculum and to the school's climate and culture.
- Assist with career awareness, exploration, and preparation.
- Help students develop a more positive attitude about themselves, school and academic achievement.
- Help prepare students to be productive citizens and lifelong learners.
- Provide many support services to schools and school programs.

The Central Falls School District has a number of opportunities that include but are not limited to the following:

- Working in classrooms
- Tutoring individual students
- Mentor Programs
- Literacy Programs
- Playground Assistance
- Clerical Support
- Provide a field trip destination
- Serving on a district or school committee
- Chaperoning school functions
- Classroom presentations
- Serving on PTSO
- Cafeteria Support
- School/District projects
- Sports/Extra-curricular activities

Choose the way you want to volunteer. Choose what is right for you.

- Volunteering does not mean you have to come everyday.
- Volunteering does not mean you have to stay at school all day long.
- Volunteering does not mean you have to volunteer all year.
- Volunteering does mean you care.
- Volunteering does mean you want to be involved in your child's school experience.
- Volunteering does mean you are committed to doing your part to make our school and community a better place to live and grow.

Note: Schools determine their volunteer needs and recruit and place volunteers accordingly.

VOLUNTEER EXPECTATIONS & RESPONSIBILITIES

Volunteers are expected to represent the Central Falls School District positively.

- As a volunteer in a school in the Central Falls School District, you must follow all the policies and procedures that apply.
- Each school has policies that are individual to their school, and these must be respected and adhered to.
- You promise to follow directives from the principal of the school or anyone assigned by the principal to direct you.
- You promise to maintain proper and respectful demeanor at all times while on school property.
- If you are scheduled at a school and cannot attend, please call the volunteer leader and / or office to let them know that you will be unable to volunteer so we are not short-handed.
- Wear identification at all times. (Name badge will be provided.)
- Present a clean, pleasant, and courteous appearance. You are a role model for the students and should dress and act appropriately. Keep in mind that some students may have allergies to scented lotion or perfumes so try to refrain from using them while in the school
- Do not take pictures of students with your cell phone/camera or show students pictures or videos on your phone unless it has been cleared by school administrators.
- Refrain from engaging our students on any social media sites, emails or texts.
- Address all staff and faculty by Ms., Mr., or Mrs. unless otherwise noted or requested.
- Refrain from giving advice or making personal comments relative to student issues.
- You must read and sign the Acknowledgement of Confidentiality Policy. Work with students is always confidential. We don't mind you sharing your experiences with others, but it is very important not to use full names of students, especially outside of the school environment. Disclosure of student information by a volunteer is a violation of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA) and may subject the volunteer and the district to civil liability. It is very important that you keep information about students confidential. It is important that you do not discuss students or their progress with others—even their parents. Do not make references to student's abilities in front of other students. A misplaced comment can be devastating to a student, a family and the volunteer program.
- Direct comments or concerns about anything that you see at the school that may concern you to the designated Volunteer Leader or Denise DeBarros at (401) 727-6177.

BENEFITS OF VOLUNTEERING

Everyone who has a genuine interest in children and education is a potential volunteer. Prior teaching experience is not necessary.

Volunteers can be:

- ✓ Parents
- ✓ Grandparents
- ✓ College Students
- ✓ Community Members
- ✓ Retired Folks

Central Falls School District volunteers are very special people. Although they represent many different ages, backgrounds and interests, they all want to enhance our students' education.

By sharing your time with our students and staff you will:

- ✓ Be given the opportunity to use your skills and talents.
- ✓ Gain a better understanding of how children learn.
- ✓ Have a chance to meet and work with teachers and other volunteers.
- ✓ Know that the work you are doing directly affects the quality of education for children of our community.
- ✓ Make a difference in the life of a child.
- ✓ Have a great chance to learn valuable new skills that you might use in future endeavors.

VOLUNTEER SELF-EVALUATION

Do I:

- ✓ Plan for the activity to which I have been assigned?
- ✓ Make myself helpful by offering assistance to the teacher and/or staff member?
- ✓ Observe closely so as to know the students' likes, dislikes, preferences, aversions, etc.?
- ✓ Find opportunities for giving students choices or do I tell them what to do?
- ✓ Really listen to what students have to say?
- ✓ Accept criticisms and suggestions without becoming emotionally upset?
- ✓ Follow directions of the teacher and/or staff member?
- ✓ Try to develop a friendly attitude with all personnel?
- ✓ Give adequate notice of absences by reporting them to the office before the day begins?
- ✓ Realize that my purpose for being in the classroom is to assist the teacher in order that the students might progress more rapidly?
- ✓ Give students time to think and refrain from giving them too much help?
- ✓ Refrain from interfering between another teacher and student unless called upon for assistance?
- ✓ Avoid criticism of the student, teacher, and the school?
- ✓ Follow the district rules regarding confidentiality?
- ✓ Evaluate myself at regular intervals?

COMMUNITY MENTOR

The Expanded Learning Opportunities (ELO) Initiative at Central Falls High School provides an opportunity for students to get academic credit for learning that is student-centered, hands-on, and rigorous. Students that participate in ELOs work closely with teachers who are highly-qualified in the subject that the ELO is targeting. Additionally, community members provide students with the chance to apply their learning in a real-world setting.

Community mentors are volunteers from business, industry, community organizations and environment groups. Throughout the year, trainings will be available for new community mentors. Any new mentors will meet one-on-one with the ELO Coordinator to review the ELO handbook, the ELO planning process, and discuss policies and procedures. Mentors are invited to participate in the ELO Advisory Board which meets every month.

Specific duties related to being an ELO Community Mentor are as follows:

I agree to:

- Support and coach the student I am working with in his/her ELO experience
- Provide the student with timely, detailed feedback to develop skills, knowledge, problem solving ability, creativity, and complex thinking, while reflecting on their learning
- Serves as a source of knowledge and experience in the project area
- Fills out monthly progress reports
- Stay in contact with ELO Coordinator regarding student progress
- Attend Final Presentation of learning and turn in final grade to guidance
- Keep personal information regarding ELO students, and advisors strictly confidential and adhere to all FERPA regulations.

SIGN-IN PROCEDURES

The following sign-in procedures are to be followed by every school with respect to **visitors, guests** and **volunteers** on school campuses.

1. Guests, visitors, and volunteers are required to sign-in at the school office each time they are on campus.
2. The sign-in registry should include a place for first and last name, date, location person is visiting, and the time they reported.
3. All guests, visitors and volunteers will be required to wear some form of identification badge issued by the school district or school office.

Definition of Visitor, Guest and Volunteer

1. A visitor is defined as an individual who, with school district authorization, attends a student performance, special event, festival, open hours, back-to-school event, etc. A visitor may either be accompanied or unaccompanied by school district staff. Designated school district administrative personnel are to make this determination. A visitor must sign-in at the school office whenever possible (excepting large, school-wide events). School site administration determines the conditions.
2. A guest is defined as an individual who, with school district approval, assists students, schools and teachers on a non-regular basis or who individually observes a classroom or activity. A guest may also assist with educational programs or with special events on an occasional or infrequent basis. A guest is required to report his or her presence at the school office and sign in.
 - Examples of a guest include: individuals who participate in school-related programs, class parties, class projects, individuals observing a classroom, reporter, etc.
3. A volunteer is defined as an individual who, with school district authorization, voluntarily assists schools, educational programs, or students on a regular and ongoing basis. A volunteer is required to complete a Volunteer Application, Code of Conduct, and LobbyGuard Screening.

SCHOOL VOLUNTEER APPLICATION

Information provided on this form is confidential and will be used only for school Volunteer Program purposes.

DATE _____ SCHOOL _____

FULL NAME _____
(First) (Middle) (Last)

ADDRESS _____
(Street) (City) (State) (Zip)

DATE OF BIRTH _____ HOME PHONE _____ WORK PHONE _____
Mo/Day/Yr If Applicable

VALID FORM OF IDENTIFICATION (Please Check One)

VALID DRIVERS LICENSE STATE ID SCHOOL ID OTHER PICTURE ID

(ATTACH COPY OF CURRENT PHOTO IDENTIFICATION)

DO YOU HAVE ANY CHILDREN OR GRANDCHILDREN IN OUR SCHOOLS? () YES () NO

IF YES, WHICH SCHOOL _____

DO YOU HAVE VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE () YES () NO

IF YES, LIST YOUR EXPERIENCE _____

INDIVIDUALS TO CONTACT IN CASE OF AN EMERGENCY:

1. _____
(Name) (Address) (Phone #)

2. _____
(Name) (Address) (Phone #)

Do you have any criminal charges pending against you? () YES () NO

Have you ever been convicted of a felony? () YES () NO

Have you ever been convicted of a sex or drug-related offense or crime of violence? () YES () NO

Are you required to register as a sex offender under Penal Code 290.95? () YES () NO

Are there any custody agreements or court orders that would limit or prevent you from access to any student at this school site? If yes, please write an explanation on the back of this paper. () YES () NO

"I understand that the Central Falls School District may research my personal background. I give my permission to have my personal references researched and hold the district and any individuals providing the district with information harmless. I also understand that I may have a criminal history check run by law enforcement if I serve as a volunteer. It is possible that as a volunteer I may have more than occasional or infrequent contact with students. Under Penal Code 290.95 I am required to disclose to school officials if I am a registered sex offender. My failure to disclose this fact could result in my arrest, prosecution, and likely fine and imprisonment. By placing my name below, I declare under penalty of perjury, that I am not required, pursuant to Penal Code 290.95 to disclose to school officials that I am a registered sex offender, and that I have not suffered convictions for sex or drug related offenses or for crimes of violence, and there are no criminal charges pending against me. I agree to abide by the district's safety and health rules and regulations."

SIGNATURE _____ DATE _____

VOLUNTEER CODE OF CONDUCT

As a volunteer, I agree to abide by the following code of volunteer conduct:

1. Immediately upon arrival, I will sign-in at the office or the designated sign-in station.
2. I will wear or show a volunteer identification whenever required by the school to do so.
3. I will use only adult bathroom facilities.
4. I agree to never be alone with individual students without the authorization of teachers and/or school authorities.
5. I will not solicit outside contact with students.
6. I will exchange home directory information only with parental and administrative approval and only if it is required as part my role as a volunteer. I agree not to exchange telephone numbers, home address, e-mail addresses or other home directory information with students for any other purpose.
7. I will maintain confidentiality outside of school and will share any concerns that I may have with teachers and school administrators.
8. I agree to not transport students without the written permission of parents or guardians or without the expressed permission of the school or district.
9. I will not disclose, use, or disseminate student photographs or personal information about students, self, or others.
10. I agree not to post, transmit, publish, or display harmful or inappropriate matter that is threatening, obscene, disruptive or sexually explicit or that could be construed as any form of harassment.
11. I agree only to do what is in the best personal and educational interest of every child with whom I come into contact.

I agree to follow the Central Falls School District Volunteer Code of Conduct at all times or cease volunteering immediately.

Signature of School District Volunteer

Date

LOBBYGUARD SCREENING

LobbyGuard performs instant background checks on all school visitors and volunteers against national sexual offender databases.

School Name: _____ Date: _____

Volunteer's Name: _____

Volunteer's Address: _____

Volunteer's Phone Number: _____

Results of LobbyGuard System Check

The LobbyGuard Check for this applicant was completed by the principal/designee on:

(Date)

_____ The applicant was cleared by the LobbyGuard system.

_____ The applicant did not get cleared by the LobbyGuard system and will be required to obtain a Rhode Island BCI. Payment of the BCI is the applicant's responsibility.

Principal/designee's signature below indicates that the applicant was cleared by the LobbyGuard system.

Name (Print)

Signature

Date

5.1.17.1 CONFIDENTIALITY AND RELEASE OF RECORDS

Please note that this is not the policy in its entirety but rather an excerpt that does not include the release of records portion since it is not applicable.

The Central Falls School District maintains appropriate records of attendance, evaluation, suspension or withdrawal for each student. These records are kept in a protected location and treated in a confidential manner. The parent is informed by typewritten notice in his or her spoken language, unless it is clearly not feasible to do so, of all policies, procedures and rights afforded him or her under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) of 1975 regarding the collection, maintenance, use or destruction of any personally identifiable information related to his or her student.

SAFEGUARD:

The school district protects the confidentiality of personally identifiable information at collection, storage, disclosure, and destruction stages; designates one (1) official who assumes responsibility for ensuring the confidentiality of any personally identifiable information; provides training and instruction regarding Federal and State regulations, procedures, policies and rules of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) of 1975 to all persons collecting or using personally identifiable information. The school district maintains, for public inspection, a current listing of the names and positions of those employees within the school district who may have access to personally identifiable information.

Federal law and regulation (Section 438 (b) of the General Provisions Act and Part 99 of Title 45 of the Code of Federal Regulations) permit Rhode Island Department of Elementary and Secondary Education authorities to have access to student or other records which may be necessary in connection with the audit and evaluation of Federally supported education programs or in connection with the enforcement of the Federal legal requirements which relate to such program. In these instances, it is not necessary that written consent be obtained from parents.

STUDENT'S RIGHTS:

Students who attain the chronological age of eighteen (18) are afforded the rights of privacy similar to those afforded to parents, taking into consideration of the age of the student and the type or severity of disability.

Acknowledgement of Policy: Confidentiality

I have read and understand the intent of the information contained in Central Falls Schools' Policy on Confidentiality. I will comply with the policy on confidentiality of student information and records.

Volunteer Signature

Printed Name

Date

VOLUNTEER AGREEMENT FORM

Thank you for volunteering for Central Falls School District, your presence here is very important to the school to keep a strong connection with the community and its families. In order to assure that the school maintains a successful and healthy community, we ask that all volunteers respect the following guidelines:

- Follow the instructions provided to you by school administration and /or your coordinator.
- Respect and follow the instructions of all other adults in the school, if there are any questions or concerns about these instructions, please see the administrator or school volunteer coordinator, this may be a Home School Liaison.
- Be respectful to the students; do not touch them in any way, even if you see a fight. If you have any questions or concerns regarding the students' behavior to you, please contact your administrator and/or volunteer coordinator
- Addressing ALL individuals by Ms., Mrs., Mr., or Sir unless otherwise requested is appropriate.
- Wear your identification at all times (a badge will be provided)
- Please wear appropriate clothing: pants, belt, shirt and close toed shoes are desirable, skirts, shorts, and blouses that are not provocative in any way are permitted.
- If you have any formal complaint or question as to how any adult in the building has acted, please contact your coordinator, or fill out a confidential complaint form and bring that to the complaint box in the parent engagement room across from the main office, or contact Patricia Martinez, Executive Director for Family & Student Supports at the Central Falls High School or call Denise DeBarros, the Central Falls District Family & Community Engagement Coordinator at 727-6177.

I the undersigned have read and agreed to abide by the above guidelines. I will keep one copy for myself and return one copy for the school's records.

_____ DATE: _____
Volunteer Signature

_____ DATE: _____
District Family & Community Engagement Coordinator

_____ DATE: _____
Executive Director for Family Supports & Student Development

COMMUNITY MENTOR INTEREST FORM

Return to: Elizabeth Ochs, Coordinator for Expanded Learning Opportunities
Central Falls High School
24 Summer Street
Central Falls, RI 02863

Name: _____ Date: _____

Phone: _____ (home) _____ (cell)

Email: _____

Why are you interested in serving as an ELO Mentor at Central Falls High School?

When are you available to volunteer (days, times)?

Do you have a child in the Central Falls School District? If so, what is his/her name and grade?

Please describe your skills, talents, certifications, educational background, or other professional and life experiences that would be relevant to your volunteer work as a Community Mentor.

IMPORTANT CONTACT INFORMATION

Contact	Title	Phone Number	Email
Dr. Frances Gallo	Superintendent	(401) 727-7700	gallof@cfschools.net
Victor F. Capellan	Deputy Superintendent for High School Transformation	(401) 727-7710	capellanv@cfschools.net
Patricia Martinez	Executive Director of Student & Family Supports for High School	(401) 727-7710	martinezp@cfschools.net
Denise DeBarros	District Coordinator for Family, Community & School Partnerships	(401) 727-6177	debarrosd@cfschools.net
Elizabeth Ochs	Coordinator for Expanded Learning Opportunities	(401) 727-7710	ochse@cfschools.net
Yaviri Grosso-Escalera	Coordinator for District Communications	(401) 727-7710	grossoy@cfschools.net