



**Beechwood**  

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**INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS**

# **Volunteer Handbook**

Volunteers do not necessarily have the time; they just have the heart.

*~Elizabeth Andrew*

## BEECHWOOD INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS

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### VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK

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As required by law, the Board of Education does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, religion, sex, genetic information or disability in its programs and activities and provides equal access to its facilities to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups.

## **Volunteers Matter**

Parent and community volunteers matter in the lives of students. We are proud of the positive impact that a host of talented and devoted volunteers make upon our school system. Research shows that students with involved parents, regardless of income and background, are more likely to:

- Earn higher grades and test scores, and enroll in higher-level programs
- Be promoted, pass their classes, and earn credits
- Attend school regularly
- Have better social skills, show improved behavior, and adapt well to school
- Graduate and go on to post-secondary education

## **Volunteer Opportunities**

Volunteer opportunities vary by student age group, but they generally fall into these categories: Instructional, Special Event, and Organization.

### **Instructional**

Instructional volunteers provide direct services to students on a regular basis under the direct supervision of professional educators, administrators, and staff. Services can include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Tutoring one-on-one or in small group settings in any subject: reading, math, science, art, languages, special education, etc.
- Coaching
- Mentoring
- Reading to Students

### **Special Event**

Special event volunteers provide curriculum enrichment; and facilitate classroom and school wide special event programming throughout the year. Opportunities may include the following:

- Planning parties
- Chaperoning field trips
- Overseeing games and/or activities at field day, plays, dinners, open houses, award ceremonies, and fundraisers
- Discussing careers
- Providing food, decorations, or materials
- Soliciting funds and support from the community

## **Organization**

Independent parent and community organizations work on behalf of the schools to enrich the lives of students and their families. Though each volunteer organization generally has a specific purpose, some of the activities typical of these groups are special project planning, fundraising, and community outreach. Some of these organizations include the following:

- PTSA
- Band Boosters
- Athletic Boosters
- Beechwood Educational Foundation
- Beechwood Alumni Association

## **Volunteer Procedures**

### **Background Check**

State law requires that all school volunteers have a current background check on file with the district. A volunteer must complete the Youth Leader Form and return it to one of the school offices. Your name will be added to our Volunteer List once it comes back with no problems. The Youth Leader Form can be accessed through [www.beechwood.kyschools.us](http://www.beechwood.kyschools.us), under Parents, Volunteering, Youth Leader Form. You can either print it off and complete or type the information directly on the form and print it off.

### **Sign In/Sign Out**

All volunteers must sign in and sign out each time they volunteer. For the safety and security of students, staff, and volunteers; school officials need to know who is in the school building at all times.

### **Name Tags**

All volunteers, and visitors, are required to wear a Visitor tag while on site. Visitor tags are available in the elementary office and the high school office.

### **Volunteer Confidentiality**

We have a legal obligation to protect the privacy of students and staff.

## **What is confidentiality?**

Confidentiality means all school volunteers protecting all school records and personally identifiable information about a student.

## **What is personally identifiable information?**

- Student and family names and address
- Student social security or school identification number
- Descriptions about the student or situations in which the student has been involved
- Any information, including behavior, which is shared with others which makes it possible to identify a student

## **What are school records?**

- Student grades
- Health information
- Attendance reports
- Conduct reports
- Court records
- Test scores and results
- Application and status for state and federal assistance

## **Why must this type of information be kept confidential?**

Schools are required by the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and the Kentucky Family Education Rights and Privacy Act to keep student information confidential.

## **What can happen to school volunteers if they share confidential student information?**

A parent may file a formal complaint with the Office of Civil Rights (OCR). The OCR will investigate the matter and make a ruling that could include federal funds being withheld from the district. Also, parents may take legal action against the district, individual district employees, or volunteers.

## **How do I keep from violating the requirements of FERPA?**

Do not provide verbal, audio, video, or written information about students to other individuals unless they work directly with the student and have a legitimate

educational interest as defined in the Beechwood Independent Schools' policies and procedures for confidentiality. Copies of the Beechwood Independent Schools' policies and procedures may be obtained in the Board Office.

Please contact the Director of Special Education at (859) 331-1220, X 6806, if you have any questions.

### **Confidentiality Do's and Don'ts**

- If you overhear a conversation or witness an incident of any kind between students, staff, or administrators; do not repeat it to others. If possible, leave the area. Do not allow yourself to be put in a controversial situation.
- Volunteers should not read or browse through folders, papers, notebooks, backpacks, or bags of any kind left in the office, in any classroom, on any desk, or in any filing cabinet.
- Sometimes students discard confidential information: report cards, detention slips, misconduct reports, etc. If you find any of these documents on school grounds, report it to the school counselor or principal. Do not take care of the matter yourself.
- Respect the privacy of the students and their families, the school staff and administrators, and other volunteers. In doing so, you'll protect yourself from any unnecessary liability.

### **Volunteer Information**

Principals have the final authority over what happens in their schools, including the actions of volunteers. Please be respectful of school policies and procedures. If you have any questions, please contact the school office.

### **Etiquette**

Respect instructional time. Please refrain from the following activities:

- Chattering in the hallways and classrooms
- Answering or making phone calls in the hallways and classrooms
- Wandering in the hallways
- Peeking into doorways
- Interrupting teachers

### **Appearance**

Volunteers should dress appropriately for the conditions and performance of their duties. Please avoid the following:

- Clothing with offensive logos, language, or innuendo
- See-through, ripped, frayed, or overly casual clothing (Ex: ripped jeans, pajama pants, house shoes)
- Clothing that exposes your midriff, back, cleavage, or undergarments

When in doubt, please use the school's dress code as your guide.

## **Discipline**

Volunteers should intervene only if the safety of a student is in question, however, volunteers should not discipline students. Discipline is the responsibility of the professional staff. Report – Don't Enforce.

## **School Equipment**

Before you use a piece of office equipment for the first time, please ask the office personnel for training. If the equipment breaks down, report the problem to the office staff immediately.

## **Tobacco Products**

The use of any tobacco product is prohibited in the building or on school property including outdoor facilities.

## **Drugs/Alcohol**

Beechwood Independent School is a drug-free/alcohol-free school. Violations of the drug-free/alcohol-free policy may result in the notification of law enforcement officials.

## **Weapons**

Except for authorized law enforcement officials, the Beechwood Board of Education specifically prohibits the carrying of concealed weapons on school property. This policy applies to students, staff members, volunteers, and visitors to the school. Violations by volunteers and visitors will be reported to a law enforcement agency.

## **Weather Policy**

Unless contacted otherwise, all volunteer activities are cancelled when schools are closed for inclement weather. School closings are announced on the district website and on area radio and TV stations.

## Pre-schoolers/Siblings

Please do not bring pre-schoolers or siblings to the school when you volunteer. Exceptions may be made for classroom parties. Please check with the teacher.

## Emergency Procedures

Please familiarize yourself with the Universal Emergency Procedures listed in the next section, then review the site-specific instructions posted by the door at your volunteer location. If you have any questions, please ask the teacher or the office staff for more information.

### Universal Emergency Procedures<sup>1</sup>

A. <b>Evacuation</b> (For use when conditions outside are safer than inside) When announcement is made or alarm sounded:	B. <b>Reverse Evacuation</b> (For use when conditions inside are safer than outside) When the announcement is made:
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Take the closest and safest way out as posted (use secondary route if primary route is blocked or hazardous).</li> <li>• Assist those needing special assistance.</li> <li>• Do not stop for student/staff belongings.</li> <li>• Go to designated Assembly Area.</li> <li>• Check for injuries.</li> <li>• Take attendance; report according to Student Accounting and Release procedures.</li> <li>• Wait for further instructions.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Move students and staff inside as quickly as possible.</li> <li>• Assist those needing special assistance.</li> <li>• Report to classroom.</li> <li>• Check for injuries.</li> <li>• Take attendance; report according to Student Accounting and Release procedures.</li> <li>• Wait for further instructions.</li> </ul>
<p><b>C. <u>Severe Weather Safe Area</u></b> (For use in severe weather emergencies) When announcement is made or alarm sounded:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Take the closest, safest route to shelter in designated safe areas (use secondary route if primary route is blocked or dangerous).</li> <li>• Occupants of portable classrooms shall move to the main building to designated safe areas.</li> <li>• Take attendance; report according to Student Accounting and Release procedures.</li> <li>• Assist those needing special assistance.</li> <li>• Do not stop for student/staff belongings.</li> <li>• Close all doors.</li> <li>• Remain in safe area until the “all clear” is given.</li> <li>• Wait for further instructions.</li> </ul>	<p><b>D. <u>Shelter in Place</u></b> (For use in external gas or chemical release) When the announcement is made:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students are to be cleared from the halls immediately and to report to nearest available classroom or other designated location.</li> <li>• Assist those needing special assistance.</li> <li>• Close and tape all windows and doors and seal the gap between bottom of the door and the floor (external gas/chemical release).</li> <li>• Take attendance; report according to Student Accounting and Release procedures.</li> <li>• Do not allow anyone to leave the classroom.</li> <li>• Stay away from all doors and windows.</li> <li>• Wait for further instructions.</li> </ul>
<p><b>E. <u>Lockdown</u></b> (For use to protect building occupants from potential dangers in the building) When the announcement is made:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students are to be cleared from the halls immediately and to report to nearest available classroom.</li> <li>• Assist those needing special assistance.</li> <li>• Close and lock all windows and doors and do not leave for any reason.</li> <li>• Cover all room and door windows.</li> <li>• Stay away from all doors and windows and move students to interior walls and drop.</li> <li>• Shut off lights.</li> <li>• BE QUIET!</li> <li>• Wait for further instructions.</li> </ul>	<p><b>F. <u>Drop, Cover, and Hold</u></b> (for use in earthquake or other imminent danger to building or immediate surroundings) When the command “Drop” is made:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DROP – to the floor, take cover under a nearby desk or table and face away from the windows.</li> <li>• COVER – your eyes by learning your face against your arms.</li> <li>• HOLD – on to the table or desk legs, and maintain present location/position.</li> <li>• Assist those needing special assistance.</li> <li>• Wait for further instructions.</li> </ul>

<sup>1</sup>Kentucky Community Crisis Response Board (KCCRB). (2001). School-Centered Emergency Management and Recovery.

*For all that you do,  
We thank you!*

