

**Participation by the Public****CITIZEN PARTICIPATION--ENCOURAGEMENT**

Members of the community who are especially qualified because of training, experience, personal characteristics, or have an interest in serving, shall be encouraged to take an active part in school affairs. Such persons shall be invited to act as advisers individually and in groups as follows:

1. Clarifying the general ideas and attitudes held by residents regarding schools;
2. Developing broad policies under which the school system is to be managed;
3. Establishing administrative arrangements and regulations designed to implement the policies;
4. Determining the purposes of courses of study and special services to be provided for students;
5. Evaluating the extent to which these purposes are being achieved by present practices;
6. Giving active assistance to the professional staff in the actual operation of classes and services where the staff deems such aid valuable;
7. Solving a specific problem or set of closely related problems about which the Board must make a decision;
8. Operating school-related agencies.

The Board and the staff shall give substantial weight to the advice that they receive from individuals and community groups interested in the schools, especially those individuals and groups which they have invited or created to advise them regarding selected problems. However, the Board and staff shall use their own best judgment in arriving at decisions.

The Board encourages school volunteerism as a meaningful way for parents and citizens to contribute to public education. The contribution of time and resources is an invaluable asset to our schools. However, the safety and well being of our students is paramount in activities involving the public. Therefore, policies and guidelines have been set in place to ensure student and staff safety, as well as to provide an environment that maximizes the best use of our community and parent resources.

Miami-Dade County Public Schools' School Volunteer Program Policies and Guidelines are as follows:

1. All volunteers must complete, sign, and date a Miami-Dade County Public Schools' *School Volunteer Program Registration Form* before being placed in a school or beginning service as a school volunteer.
2. A driver's license or an appropriate photo identification card (ID) [passport, school ID, etc.,] must be provided at the time of registration.
3. Upon registration, volunteers must wait until they receive notice from the school or work site to begin service.
4. Any volunteer who registers must successfully complete the registration and background check process delineated in administrative policies annually approved by the Superintendent of Schools. If significant changes occur in the background check process, the School Board will be notified by the Office of Superintendent of Schools. **Volunteers must report any criminal proceedings, including those which may occur after a background check, to school authorities immediately.**
5. Once approved, all volunteers must sign in and out at a designated location in the school before proceeding to their volunteer site. This is required for the purposes of liability and to know the location of a volunteer in case of an emergency.
6. All volunteers must wear an identifying badge whenever volunteering.
7. Volunteers are to always serve as positive role models. A school volunteer **MUST ALWAYS:**
  - a. Use appropriate language;
  - b. Discuss age-appropriate topics;
  - c. Refrain from inappropriately touching students;
  - d. Refrain from disciplining students (behaviors needing discipline must be referred to the appropriate teacher or staff member);
  - e. Refrain from giving students gifts, rewards, or food items of any kind without the teacher's permission.
8. For liability reasons, volunteers must leave preschoolers or children not registered in the school, at home.
9. Volunteers may not be left alone to supervise students. The visual and auditory presence of a Miami-Dade County Public

Schools' employee must be maintained at all times.

10. Volunteers **MUST** keep confidential any information about a student or any school-related incident. If there is a safety concern or an emergency issue, it must immediately be communicated to someone in authority.
11. Volunteers should notify the front office if an illness or emergency prohibits them from attending a scheduled volunteer shift. Volunteers should be prompt and dependable.
12. The dress code for volunteers should be appropriate at all times.
13. Volunteers, under the supervision of the school volunteer liaison, should maintain a sign in sheet for volunteer activities and service. If service is provided after school or in the evenings, the beginning-ending time frame of the activity should be written. This record sheet should be submitted to the School Volunteer Liaison during the next visit to the work site.
14. Volunteers and staff members must adhere to School Board Rules 6Gx13- 4A-1.21, Responsibilities and Duties, and 6Gx13- 4-1.09, Employee Student Relationships.
15. Each school principal or work site supervisor may set additional policies with respect to volunteer involvement. A volunteer's service **may be terminated** at any time, either at the discretion of the principal, Miami-Dade County Public Schools, or the volunteer.

Specific Authority: 1001.41(1)(2); 1001.42(22); 1001.43(10) F.S.  
Law Implemented, Interpreted, or Made Specific: 1001.32 F.S.

**History:** THE SCHOOL BOARD OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA  
Repromulgated: 12-11-74  
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