



**Calgary Board
of Education**

**Dr. E.W. Coffin
School**

5615 Barrett Drive NW

Calgary, Alberta

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Ph: (403) 777-6190

Principal: Cathy Polski

Website: www.cbe.ab.ca/b214



VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK

Volunteers are an integral part of our school. You add so much to the educational experiences that our children have at Dr. E.W. Coffin and we appreciate you very much. With your help our focus as a community will be to improve student achievement, citizenship, personal development, and character building for all learners. We must ensure a positive learning environment that teaches children how to be respectful and responsible citizens, as well as thinkers, inquirers, and discoverers.

Everyone at Dr. E.W. Coffin School is very much enriched by the incredible involvement of you, our volunteers. Your participation in individual classrooms, grade levels, and school-wide activities makes us stand out. As well, the school benefits from your fundraising and financial support. We welcome your involvement and encourage you to help us provide an even greater educational experience for all of our children.

This handbook was written as a guide for the volunteers of Dr. E. W. Coffin School. It is our hope that you reap personal rewards of satisfaction and joy from volunteering at our school.

*“Volunteers are not paid,
not because they are worthless,
but because they are PRICELESS.”
-Anonymous*

VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR'S MESSAGE

Dear Volunteers,

We are looking forward to another great year of volunteering at Dr. E.W. Coffin School. Welcome to all new volunteers and returning volunteers who generously give their time each year. Your assistance helps to enrich the school's program for our children. Thank you. Please contact me with any questions at 403-695-4795 or joannebigelow06@gmail.com.

Sincerely,

Joanne Bigelow

STAFF BELIEFS REGARDING VOLUNTEERISM

The staff at Dr. E. W. Coffin School are grateful for our volunteers and believe:

- volunteer contributions to a school are valued and will be celebrated;
- volunteers must be positive and supportive resources who work cooperatively with the school staff and principal;
- volunteers are partners in the school community;
- volunteers are an integral component of an effective elementary school program;
- volunteers enable teachers to enhance the teaching and learning process;
- volunteers require direction and guidance to effectively complete their tasks;
- volunteers are expected to work cooperatively under the direction of the classroom teacher;
- volunteers must respect the ethics of confidentiality when working in the school with children and staff and refrain from engaging in harmful and hurtful conversations (gossip) about students, staff, and parents.

CALGARY BOARD OF EDUCATION POLICY 3,085 – VOLUNTEERS

The Calgary Board of Education recognizes the value and encourages the use of volunteers in the schools.

Volunteers may be engaged as resource people or in supportive services.

- a. Resource volunteers are volunteers who have a relevant area of experience and expertise and who are involved on a short-term basis to enhance the education program. Their visits are planned, supervised, and evaluated by a certified teacher.
- b. Support service volunteers are volunteers who directly or indirectly assist teachers or groups of teachers in achieving educational objectives by providing non-instructional services.
 - Volunteer will be considered agents of the Board under the School Insurance Act while engaged in their volunteer tasks.
 - The principal must approve all volunteer positions in a school in accordance with Policy 3,085.
 - All volunteers must complete an annual Volunteer Registration form and have a valid security clearance through the Calgary Police Service. This clearance is valid for five years.
 - Volunteers who are volunteering to 'drive children in their automobile' must also complete the Application for Automobile Driver Authorization Form.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Who is a school volunteer?

A school volunteer is someone who likes children and who is willing to give their time, talent, and service to the school.

Who can become a school volunteer?

Parents, grandparents, business professionals, care givers, and retirees can be volunteers. All volunteers must complete a Volunteer Registration Form and successfully complete the online Police Security Clearance. This police security clearance must be approved before volunteering in the school.

What are the rewards for volunteering?

Your rewards for volunteering in the school are numerous: you will make new friends, learn new skills, enjoy helping others, and you will gain an opportunity to learn more about your school and community and see the happiness that your volunteering brings to the children.

Will the school provide training?

Yes, you will receive training depending on your volunteer tasks. The school will be offering opportunities for you to become acquainted with the school and the use of equipment. If you are unsure of something, please feel free to ask.

To whom is a volunteer responsible?

Although the principal ultimately has the responsibility for the total volunteer program, volunteers are responsible to the teacher or school personnel to whom they are working with.

What does a volunteer do when they arrive at Dr. E. W. Coffin School?

All volunteers are required to sign in and to wear a nametag. The Sign-In binder and nametags are located in the Office. Please wear your nametag for easy identification by staff and students. Your coat may be kept on the coat rack in the Staff Room. Volunteers are encouraged to keep their purses with them at all times as we do not have a lock-up area to secure personal items. The school cannot be responsible for lost or stolen items. When you leave the school, please remember to return your nametag to the main office.

What if I am unable to volunteer as planned?

As you are very important to the students and staff and they depend on seeing you at your appointed time, if you discover you are unable to volunteer for a scheduled event, please notify the school office as soon as possible and we will relay the message to the appropriate teacher.

Where do I park?

We have two parking stalls designated for visitors in front of the school. If these two spots are filled upon your arrival, then parking is available along Brenner Close NW and both sides of Barrett Drive NW. The remaining stalls in the staff parking lot at the front of the school are reserved for staff members who have paid for a designated parking stall.

Can I bring my young children with me when I volunteer?

No. The CBE policy states that volunteers must not bring their other children to the school during the time that they are volunteering or on field trips.

What happens if the teacher's schedule has changed?

Every attempt will be made to notify you if your services are not required at your scheduled time.

Will I be able to work with my own child?

In most cases you will be working with many different children, depending on the volunteer role you are filling. However, on occasion you may work with your child.

Who is responsible for discipline?

The teacher is responsible for maintaining classroom control even when volunteers are working with children in the room.

With whom do you discuss your concerns?

If you have concerns you should talk directly to the school personnel with whom you are working or the Principal.

What do I do during recess?

During the recess break, volunteers are welcome to join the staff in the staff room.

What do I do during a fire drill or a lockdown?

Volunteers who are in the school during a Fire Drill or a Lock Down must participate. Please familiarize yourself with the emergency procedures that are in place. These procedures will be explained at the volunteer orientation.

What makes a valued volunteer?

- being prompt, consistent and reliable,
- being positive,
- being patient and kind, and
- remembering the importance of confidentiality.

What else should I know?

All Calgary Board of Education buildings are smoke-free as indicated in Policy 4,024.

If you have any questions, concerns or suggestions, please contact the Principal, Cathy Polski at 403-777-6190.

VOLUNTEER CODE OF ETHICS

The following statements are taken from the Calgary Board of Education Volunteer Registration Form:

- Confidentiality is of the utmost importance in the school setting in order to ensure that the dignity and worth of students, parents, volunteers and school staff is honoured.
- Any information collected, used, generated, and stored by the Calgary Board of Education including student, instructional, financial, or administrative information is strictly confidential and is to be used only in the performance of volunteer duties.
- You may not disclose, communicate, publish, remove, alter, copy, interfere with, or destroy any information unless you are specifically authorized to do so by the teacher or the principal.
- Gossip is a negative, harmful and unacceptable form of communication that is not condoned by the school administration or the CBE. Failure of a volunteer to follow the policies of CBE and/or the school can result in termination of a volunteer's position.
- You must notify the principal of any new criminal charges at the time the charge is made.
- The teaching staff and principal are responsible for student learning and discipline.
- As a volunteer, you can assist greatly in enhancing student learning by working positively and co-operatively with the school team.
- Volunteers are encouraged to discuss any concerns that may arise with the classroom teacher or the Principal.
- Volunteers should ask for clarification of any instructions or procedures they are unclear about.
- Volunteers should refer students who misbehave to the teacher in charge.
- Volunteer time should not be used to discuss your child's behaviour or progress. Appointments can be made with the teacher regarding these matters.

HELPFUL HINTS

- You are a very important person to our students and staff. They really count on seeing you at your appointed time. If you must be absent, please notify the school as far in advance as possible.
- Please understand and accept the students in terms of their own backgrounds, values, manners, vocabulary and aspirations. They may be very different from you or your children.
- Refrain from asking leading questions that will probe into a child's and/or staff member's personal or family life. Everyone has a right to privacy.
- Children appreciate a cheerful smile from their volunteer. A smile to a child means warmth and acceptance.
- Learn to be comfortable with silence. Children appreciate a good listener rather than a talker.
- Remember that gossip is a negative, harmful and unacceptable form of conversation that is not condoned by CBE or the school administration.
- Don't try to handle difficult situations yourself. Refer the matter immediately to the supervising teacher and/or the principal.



Volunteers

V	aluable is the work you do.
O	utstanding is how you always come through.
L	oyal, sincere and full of good cheer,
U	ntiring in your efforts throughout the year.
N	otable are the contributions you make.
T	rustworthy in every project you take.
E	ager to reach your every goal.
E	ffective in the way you fulfill your role.
R	eady with a smile like a shining star,
S	pecial and wonderful—that's what you are.
--unknown	