



# 2011-2012 Volunteer Handbook

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## **RIDGE MEADOWS ELEMENTARY**

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**Rockwood School District**

Find more information at  
[www.rockwood.k12.mo.us/parent/Pages/ParentandFamilyInvolvement.aspx](http://www.rockwood.k12.mo.us/parent/Pages/ParentandFamilyInvolvement.aspx)



Dear School Volunteer:

The Rockwood School District understands that parent and community involvement is a significant factor in the quality of our schools and the success of our students. Every day, hundreds of dedicated volunteers give their time and talents to help students, teachers and staff in countless ways. Their contributions enhance students' learning experiences and strengthen the educational process.

Public schools are a great way to make a difference in your own community. School volunteers are important role models because they exhibit care, model the best in citizenship and create a climate that fosters learning and the love of education. Unique opportunities exist at the district's 30 schools, providing volunteers the flexibility to donate their time in many ways.

Please join us and our volunteer team in support of our students, teachers and staff. This is an exciting time to be a part of education. With your support, we can help students grow, learn and become responsible citizens of character.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Bruce Borchers".

Bruce Borchers, Ph.D.  
Rockwood Superintendent



# School Volunteer Handbook

## Table of Contents

### Welcome

What Does It Take to Volunteer? ..... 1  
Contact Names / Phone Numbers / Email....2

### Rockwood Policies/Guidelines

Safety and Security ..... 3  
Confidentiality ..... 4  
Reliability ..... 5  
Field Trips ..... 6

### Let's Get Started!

Building Family-School Partnerships..... 7  
Training for Volunteers ..... 9  
Top Five Tips for School Volunteers..... 10

# **What Does It Take to be a School Volunteer?**

Volunteers help schools deliver services to students and schools that go above and beyond what can be provided through district resources.

## **Have you considered volunteering in your child's school or classroom?**

- Would you like to work directly with students?
- What kinds of volunteer opportunities would you enjoy?
- What days and time work for you?
- Do you feel prepared for the volunteer experience?
- What are you looking for in your volunteer experience?

## **What do you need to be a volunteer?**

- A genuine interest in helping children
- A commitment to volunteering
- A positive attitude
- School volunteer training
- Regular attendance

## **What do school volunteers do?**

- Reinforce skills taught by teachers
- Give students individual attention
- Provide enrichment to the curriculum
- Assist teachers with classroom duties
- Provide services that support schools and programs

## **Who assists school volunteers?**

- Teachers can organize tutoring/mentoring opportunities in the classroom
- Schools can help volunteers find opportunities within programs, the office or the library.
- Parent-teacher organizations need volunteers for special PTO events, parent leadership roles and committee involvement.

***Find out more about school volunteers on the Rockwood Web site:  
[www.rockwood.k12.mo.us/parent/volunteer](http://www.rockwood.k12.mo.us/parent/volunteer)***

## 2011-12 PTO Officers

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# Safety and Security

## *Important information for School Volunteers*

Rockwood parents and patrons are encouraged to visit district schools. However all visitors who come to the school during a regular school days must follow established safety procedures.

At Rockwood elementary schools, visitors must be admitted into the building through a monitored locking system. Visitors during school hours will press the buzzer on the system, wait to be identified by a staff member, and then access the building once the door opens.

School volunteers can then proceed to the school office.

- All school volunteers must sign-in and sign-out at the school office each time they come to the school.
- Volunteers will be required to wear a name tag/badge identifying them while they are on a school campus.
- All volunteer activities take place under the supervision of school personnel.
- Volunteers will participate in safety drills while at school.
- Read more about school visitors to schools on Policy 1430 – School Visitors to Schools [www.rockwood.k12.mo.us/community/boe/policies/1000/p1430.html](http://www.rockwood.k12.mo.us/community/boe/policies/1000/p1430.html) .



# Confidentiality

## *Important information for School Volunteers*

Volunteers who work with students need to remember that some information is considered confidential. Please feel free to share school volunteer experiences with others, but it is very important not to use full names of students outside of school. Any information a student shares within the classroom is considered confidential, and must remain between you, the student and the teacher/staff member.

Read more about confidentiality on the following Board of Education regulations:

### **Student Information**

Policy 2400

All information contained in a student's educational record, except information designated as directory information by the District, shall be confidential. In addition, parents/guardians and students have a right to expect that student health information will be kept confidential. Student educational records shall be directly accessible only to school officials who demonstrate a legitimate educational interest in the student's records and to parents/guardians or eligible students. Read more about directory information related to students on the Web site:

<http://www.rockwood.k12.mo.us/community/boe/regulations/2000/r2400.html>

### **Discipline**

Policy 2605

Building principals are responsible for the development of rules and regulations regarding student conduct needed to maintain proper behavior in schools under their supervision. Teachers have the authority to make and enforce necessary rules for the internal governance in the classroom, subject to review by the building principal. School volunteers will remember that it is the principal's, teacher's and/or staff member's responsibility to discipline students. Read more about discipline on the Web site:

<http://www.rockwood.k12.mo.us/community/boe/regulations/2000/r2605.html>

### **Communication and Internet Use**

Policy 6320

The principal/designee shall oversee the maintenance of communication and information technologies for each school and may establish limits and guidelines on their use. Students and staff are authorized to use communication and information technologies in accordance with user obligations and responsibilities as found on the district Web site:

[www.rockwood.k12.mo.us/community/boe/regulations/6000/r6320.html](http://www.rockwood.k12.mo.us/community/boe/regulations/6000/r6320.html) .



# Reliability

## *Important information for School Volunteers*

- Teachers and staff plan for school volunteers. If you will be absent, call the school as soon as possible so arrangements can be made. It is important that we do not disappoint or disrupt our students' learning.
- Follow school guidelines for student dress code. Dress comfortably, but remember that you are a role model for our students.
- Parent or patron visits to the classroom must be approved in advance by the sponsor, teacher and/or principal.
- Volunteers will work within the guidelines established by the school administration and will work under the direction and supervision of teachers and staff members.
- Visitation by preschool children and children who are not registered in the school is discouraged. All children who are visiting the school must report to the principal and receive approval prior to attending classes.
- Volunteers may not be given a Rockwood staff member's and/or teacher's personal accounts and passwords in order to access a school Web site.
- Smoking, alcohol, drug use and firearms are prohibited on school district premises, including all buildings, grounds and property of the District.
- The Board of Education and administration will not tolerate any one who disturbs classes or school activities or hinders the instructional process. If such persons will not leave the school premises upon request, the building principal/designee may refer charges to the proper legal authorities.



# **Field Trips**

## ***Important information for School Volunteers***

Please be aware of the following Rockwood policies regarding field trips:

### **Field Trips/Excursions**

Policy 5660

A field trip is a planned visit outside the classroom taken by students under the supervision of a teacher or other school official for the purpose of extending the instructional activities of the classroom through first-hand experience and participation in functional situations that relate directly to what is being studied. School volunteers may assist by following the procedural guidelines found on the Web site:

<http://www.rockwood.k12.mo.us/community/boe/regulations/5000/r5660.html> .

### **International Field Trips**

Policy 5661

Prior to initiating any plans for field trips involving international travel, the sponsor should first review the district policies and regulations governing such travel. School volunteers participating in international field trips will be informed of the responsibilities, including supervision, code of conduct, alcohol consumption, insurance, and forms. Read the policy found on the Web site:

[www.rockwood.k12.mo.us/community/boe/regulations/5000/r5661.html](http://www.rockwood.k12.mo.us/community/boe/regulations/5000/r5661.html) .

### **Field Trips Involving Out-of-Town or Overnight Travel**

Policy 5662

School volunteers may assist in the supervision of students where needed and if appropriate. However, these volunteers will work under the supervision of district personnel. Read the procedures as identified on the Web site:

[www.rockwood.k12.mo.us/community/boe/regulations/5000/r5662.html](http://www.rockwood.k12.mo.us/community/boe/regulations/5000/r5662.html) .



# *Building* **FAMILY-SCHOOL Partnerships**

**The evidence is in: when schools and families work together to support learning, everyone benefits.**

- » Students do better in school and in life.
- » Parents become empowered.
- » Teacher morale improves.
- » Schools get better.
- » Communities grow stronger

## **Did you know?**

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Parents of high-achieving students set higher standards for their children's educational activities. They are active participants in schools and education.

- » **Who:** Most students at all levels—elementary, middle, and high school—want their families to take active roles in between home and school. When parents come to school regularly, it reinforces the view in the child's mind that school and home are connected and that school is an integral part of the whole family's life.
- » **When:** The earlier in a child's educational process parent involvement begins, the more powerful the effects. The most effective forms of involvement engage parents in working directly with their children on learning activities at home.
- » **Why:** Decades of research show that when parents are involved, students have the following:
  - » Higher grades, test scores, and graduation rates
  - » Better school attendance and self-esteem
  - » Increased motivation,
  - » Lower rates of suspension
  - » Decreased use of drugs and alcohol

Family participation in education was twice as predictive of students' academic success as family socioeconomic status. The more parents participate in schooling, in a sustained way, at every level—in advocacy, decision-making and oversight roles, as fund-raisers and boosters, as volunteers, and as home teachers—the better for student achievement. *(continued)*

» **How:** Rockwood supports the framework provided by the National Coalition for Parent Involvement in Education, which includes six types of parent involvement:

**1. PARENTING:** Families need to establish home environments that support children as students. With guidance and support, parents may become increasingly involved in home learning activities and find themselves with opportunities to teach, to be models for and to guide their children.

**2. COMMUNICATING:** Families become active participants in communication from a school-to-home and home-to-school perspective. Parents understand how to contact their children's teachers and principals, as well as access their school's Web site, newsletter and parent-teacher organization. They know how to use Infinite Campus, Rockwood's student information system, to learn about their children's progress.

**3. VOLUNTEERING:** Families can volunteer as tutors and classroom aides, as well as assist with field trips and in other support opportunities. Parents can organize school events, and assist with their children's extracurricular activities and athletics. Schools have many exciting volunteer opportunities for the community.

**4. LEARNING AT HOME:** Families can help their children develop good study habits, supervise their homework, monitor TV viewing, and supervise regular bedtimes and school attendance. Parents read to their children and provide stimulating experiences contribute to student achievement.

**5. DECISION MAKING:** Families can join parent-teacher organizations or long-range planning committees so they can advocate for good schools. They can help develop school improvement plans and provide parent representation and support. These groups can take the lead in assessing school needs, developing goals and monitoring for continuous improvement.

**6. COLLABORATING WITH COMMUNITY:** Families and schools help students by forming collaborative relationships with many public and private agencies that provide family support services. These partnerships create shared responsibility for the well being of children, families and schools by all members of the community.

*From the National Coalition for Parent Involvement in Education; Joyce L. Epstein, Ph.D. of the Center on School, Family and Community Partnerships at John Hopkins University; National PTA.*

**For more information, visit the Rockwood School District Web site at  
[www.rockwood.k12.mo.us/parent/involvement](http://www.rockwood.k12.mo.us/parent/involvement).**



# Training Opportunities

## *Prepare for your volunteer experience*

### **School Orientations:**

In our school, orientation sessions for new and returning volunteers are scheduled:

**Date:**

**Time:**

**Location**

If you are unable to attend this meeting, a personal orientation may be scheduled at another time. Please contact the school and set up an appointment.

### **Online Training:**

In addition, you can visit the Rockwood Web site

[www.rockwood.k12.mo.us/parents/schoolvolunteers](http://www.rockwood.k12.mo.us/parents/schoolvolunteers) .

- Review Rockwood policies and procedures.
- Watch a video that provides guidelines for school volunteers.
- Learn about district-wide volunteer opportunities.

### **More information:**

If you have questions about volunteering in your neighborhood school, or for the Rockwood School District, please contact us:

Rockwood Communications  
1955-A Shepard Road  
Wildwood, MO 63040  
Phone: (636) 733-1140  
E-mail: [ortacathy@rockwood.k12.mo.us](mailto:ortacathy@rockwood.k12.mo.us)



# TOP FIVE TIPS

## *For School Volunteers*

### 1) **Meet the principal and get to know your school.**

Rockwood has welcoming, safe and supportive schools. Share your contact information by filling out the school volunteer registration form. Be sure to get the school contact information as well.

### 2) **Create a checklist.**

You'll need some information to be a school volunteer. Your school will share with you the following details:

- \_\_\_ Days and times you're expected
- \_\_\_ Opportunities for volunteers
- \_\_\_ Procedures for volunteers
- \_\_\_ Building layout and parking facilities
- \_\_\_ What is expected of students
- \_\_\_ Fire drills and safety procedures

### 3) **Just ask**

Let the school know if you need more instructions in order to perform a task. Help establish good communication with the teacher and the school so you'll be comfortable with your volunteer assignment.

### 4) **Enjoy the students.**

Understand that their backgrounds, family values, manners and vocabulary may be different from yours. By sharing time and caring, you are making a difference for children.

### 5) **Always remember that you are appreciated!**

The teachers, staff members and students value your time and all you give to schools.