

Volunteer Handbook

**Hopewell Valley
Regional School District**





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Welcome Message

Dear Volunteer:

We are very pleased that you have decided to participate in the Hopewell Valley Regional School District Volunteer Initiative. As parents, grandparents, neighbors, and community members, you have ideas, talents, and time to share with our students and our schools. It is our belief that volunteer programs are beneficial to everyone involved. These programs also help to foster stronger school/community relationships by creating a common ownership in the success of our schools. They also demonstrate the importance of community service to all involved in the program, especially students.

According to a report from the Office of Research and Policy Development, Corporation for National and Community Service, the studies "consistently demonstrate that there is a significant relationship between volunteering and good health; when individuals volunteer, they not only help their community but also experience better health in later years, whether in terms of greater longevity, higher functional ability, or lower rates of depression.

Please read through this handbook carefully. It is designed to give volunteers much of the information necessary to make your experience rewarding. If you have any questions, please direct them to the principal of your school.

Thank you for devoting your time to this worthy endeavor.

Sincerely,

Rosetta Treece, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools





Belief & Mission

Belief

- We believe in the worth and dignity of each person. We believe that all students are entitled to the opportunity to maximize their talents and abilities.
- We believe that students thrive in a learning environment that facilitates self-discovery, exploration, and intellectual risk-taking.
- We believe that a quality education is a life-long process that fosters academic and cultural understanding.
- We believe that an effective education is a shared responsibility by all persons, groups, and organizations within our community.
- We believe that we have the obligation to nurture a culture of respect that honors the uniqueness of the individual and fosters responsibility toward the community and the environment.
- We believe that an effective educational system anticipates, plans, and acts in response to a changing world.

Mission

The Hopewell Valley Regional School District strives to foster excellence in education by empowering our students to positively impact the global community through a commitment to responsibility, respect, and kindness.

Volunteers
needed

Why Volunteer

Committed volunteers benefit our students, staff, and community. Volunteering provides personal satisfaction from working with students, learning new skills, and gaining a deeper understanding of the Hopewell Valley School District.

In addition, our students benefit from the knowledge, personalization, and caring role models that volunteers provide. By providing positive interactions to help our students achieve and succeed, all members of the community flourish.

This packet contains summaries of various laws, Board of Education policies and labor agreements. This packet does not in any way restrict the right of the Board of Education or the Superintendent of Schools to interpret this document and the items referenced (laws, policies, labor agreements, etc.), as the Board of Education or the Superintendent deems appropriate.

This packet does not contain promises of any kind and is not an employment contract. An individual's volunteer status may be terminated by the district at any time, with or without cause, as long as there is no violation of Federal or State law or the appropriate negotiated agreements.

Please keep a copy of this packet for your records. You will be asked to complete a variety of activities in order to complete your volunteer application



Volunteer Opportunities



We have many opportunities for volunteering in HVRSD including helping in the media center, mentoring students, special projects for the district, volunteering in one of the school offices, etc.

Level I Volunteers

These volunteers may only work with students if a certified teacher is present. These volunteers are not required to complete a NJ Department of Education/Student Protection fingerprint background check. Some of the volunteer opportunities include:

- Community Expert- Comes in one to two times as a speaker, or program assistant (e.g. Science Fair Judge.)
- Liaison- Serves as a room parent or teacher helper during classroom parties, coordinating parent volunteers for field trips, etc.

Level II Volunteers

These volunteers come into the classroom or school building more than twice a month to help in the classroom, media center, or cafeteria. These volunteers are required to complete a NJ Dept of Education/Student Protection fingerprint background check. Some of these volunteer opportunities include:

- Weekly or Monthly Volunteer- Any parent that comes into the building more than twice a month to work in the school (e.g., media center assistant, garden assistant.)

Level III Volunteers

These volunteers work with students when a certified teacher may not always be present. These volunteers are required to have their NJ Substitute Certification, which includes a NJ Dept of Education/Student Protection fingerprint background check. Some of these volunteer opportunities include:

- Mentor/Coaches - Any parent who works with students unsupervised on special projects, activities, or sports.
- Chaperone - Any parent that chaperones an overnight trip and will be supervising students



Steps to become a Volunteer



- Complete the HVRSD Volunteer Application Form, located on page 9 of this packet.
- Level II and III Volunteers:
 - The **Criminal History Clearance** (NJ Dept of Education/Student Protection fingerprint background check) portion of the process does require (2) payments, one to the State and one to IdentoGo/Morpho Trust agency.

***If you have had fingerprinting done in the last 10 years in NJ, you will be eligible for the "Archived" process.*
 - Alert the designated secretary (Zoe Madamba -TMS, Susan Shin - HVCHS, Felicia Pan-Fea - Athletics, K-5 Main Office Secretary) to the fingerprinting appointment.

***Volunteers seeking reimbursement should keep receipts for their registration and fingerprinting fees. Reimbursement will only occur after copies have been shared with the main office secretary/media specialist.*
- Level III Volunteers:
 - For **Substitute Certification** through the State of NJ: Official college transcripts of 30 or more credits will need to be submitted with the substitute application on the NJ certification website. More information on the substitute certification process can be found on the next page.
- Volunteers should check two (2) weeks after the fingerprinting appointment with the State of New Jersey at this website to determine eligibility, following these steps:
 - i. Enter Social Security Number
 - ii. Enter Date of Birth
 - iii. Select 'Submit'
 - *The clearance certificate will appear once the correct information has been entered.*
- Both a printed copy of the clearance certificate and the volunteer form should be submitted to the Building Secretary/Media Center Specialist/Athletic Director.

***Volunteers working 20 hours or more per week require a Mantoux test. If required, please attach a copy of the results. Proof of screening and results on medical facility/physician's letterhead is acceptable.*
- Once the Board of Education has approved the volunteer, the volunteer may begin assisting in the building.

Fingerprinting and Certification Guidelines



Level II and Level III Volunteers:

Fingerprint Clearance Instructions

This is a comprehensive Criminal History/NJDOE Student Protection background check.

- [Here is a step-by-step guide](#) to navigating the State website.

Substitute Certification Instructions

In addition, Level III Volunteers will need to complete the **NJ Department of Education: Licensing & Credentials application.**

- [Here is a step-by-step guide](#) to applying for your substitute credentials

HVRSD

Board Policies



The complete Bylaws and Policies of the Hopewell Valley Regional School Board is available on the district website: www.hvrSD.org

Here are some of the selected policies to review:

- 8462 Reporting Potentially Missing or Abused Children
- 5751 Sexual Harassment
- 5512 Harassment, Intimidation, or Bullying
- 7434 Smoking on School Grounds
- 7436 Drug Free Workplace
- 7435 Alcoholic Beverages on School Premises
- 4321 Acceptable Use of Computer Network(s)
/Computers and Resources by Support Staff Members
- 9180 School Volunteers
- 9181 Volunteer Athletic Coaches



HVRSD Volunteer Form

Volunteer Contact Information:

Name: _____

Date: _____

Address: _____

Phone Number: _____

Email: _____

Alternate Contact Number: _____

Volunteer Availability & Interest:

Number of Hours/Week: _____

Specific Volunteer Assignment: _____

Applicant attestation that he/she/they have not been convicted of any disqualifying crime under the provisions of N.J.S.A. 18A:6-7.1 et seq., N.J.S.A. 18A:39-17 et seq., or N.J.S.A. 18A:6-4.13 et seq., as applicable, by signature below.

By signing below, I acknowledge that I have read through the Volunteer Handbook, including all Board Policies and HVRSD Procedures included within.

I also affirm that I have not been convicted nor do I have any charges pending for the following crimes or offenses: any crime of the first or second degree; any crime bearing upon or involving sexual offense or child molestation; an offense involving the possession, manufacture, transportation, sale, distribution, habitual use of a controlled dangerous substance or any violation involving drug paraphernalia, including hypodermic needles; any crime of possessing weapons; a third-degree crime as outlined in Chapter 20 of Title 2C (theft); recklessly endangering another person, terroristic threats, criminal restraint, luring or enticing a child into a motor vehicle or isolated structure; causing or risking widespread injury or damage; criminal mischief, burglary, usury, threats and other improper influence, perjury and false swearing, resisting arrest, escape; any conspiracy to commit or attempt to commit any of the crimes described in this act.

A printed copy of the clearance certificate and the volunteer form should be submitted to the Building Secretary/Media Center Specialist.

By signing below, I acknowledge that I have read the HVRSD Board Policies.

Signature of Applicant

Signature of Principal

Approved by BOE on: _____

Orientation Resources



School Hours

CHS/TMS: 7:30 am – 3:00 pm

Elementary: 8:20 am – 3:45 pm

Inclement weather: www.hvrdsd.org

To read the school hours for a 90-minute delayed opening and the early dismissal schedules, please review the times on the district website.

Important Expectations

When volunteering in a school, you will be in a position to learn about and observe students as well as other adults. Please refrain from allowing confidential information about students to become conversation topics outside the school. All adults working with children have ethical and moral obligations to them.

Volunteers provide valuable support and supplement the instructional program of the classroom teacher. The volunteer's role is to assist the teacher, not replace the teacher.

Volunteers must maintain student **confidentiality**. The U.S. Congress has addressed the privacy-related concerns of educators, parents, and students by enacting the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (known more commonly as "FERPA"). Each student has the right to expect that nothing that happens to or about him/her/them will be repeated to anyone other than authorized school district employees, as designated by the administrators at your school.

Orientation Resources



Parents, friends, or community members may in good faith ask you questions about a student's problems or progress. Again, you must refer all such questions to the authorized school employees. You may not share information about a student even with members of your own family.

Student information includes all academic, medical, and personal information. Volunteers cannot take photographs of students during their volunteer activities nor post them publicly or online without authorization from the school.

Volunteers must report any suspected act of harassment, intimidation, or bullying (HIB) to the teacher, staff member, or principal on the same day the incident is observed.

Guidelines for Working with Students

- Call the students by name at each opportunity.
- Accept the children as they are. Be ready to accept their differences in background, values, vocabulary and goals.
- Encourage and support the students.
- Use positive comments that will foster the student's self-esteem.
- Be caring, but firm.
- Be a good listener, but be careful not to give advice or to make promises that you may not be able to keep.
- Do not give students any materials, including food, without first discussing it with the teacher.
- Be friendly and enthusiastic.

Volunteer FAQ



Q: If I had my fingerprints completed because I previously volunteered, do I have to get reprinted?

A: If you were printed under the status of “Volunteer”, the answer is your prints are valid for (3) years per the direction of the Superintendent.

Q: I recently was fingerprinted by another government agency, do I have to get reprinted?

A: Yes, you must achieve Criminal History Clearance with the NJ Department of Education.

Q: When I applied with the NJDOE for my certification I selected the wrong credential. What do I do?

A: You will need to contact the State Customer Service to assist you.

Q: Do I need to apply for my background check prior to applying for my substitute certification?

A: Yes, the State requires your background check to be uploaded to their certification application.

Q: Can I be approved by the Board of Education before my certification has been issued, or the background check cleared?

A: No. You must present your certification and background check clearance before you can be Board-approved.



**Thank You
for joining us at HVRSD
as a Volunteer!**

Contact Information :

 609.737.4002

 www.hvrtd.org

 425 South Main Street, Pennington, NJ