

Parent and Community Volunteer Handbook



Our mission is to provide opportunities for students to achieve their personal best, become responsible and productive citizens and embrace lifelong learning!

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Welcome From the Principal

Dear Champlain Parents/Guardians,

Thank you for considering the possibility of volunteering at Champlain. We believe volunteers are very important to helping our Champlain school community achieve our goal of building a school of excellence as stated in our mission statement: ***Our mission is to provide opportunities for students to achieve their personal best, become responsible and productive citizens and embrace lifelong learning!*** We care deeply about meeting the needs of our diverse student population and live by the motto of ***“We all belong!”*** We believe in an inclusive school community where we work together to create a robust school environment where everyone likes to come, a school with joint understandings of respect and expectations, and a school with a variety of activities for all within a welcoming atmosphere. **We invite you to work with us as we ensure all children, at every ability level, are valued, respected, and included.** We recognize that our school can benefit from volunteers in order to help each student find success.

When school and community members collaborate children are much more likely to reach their full potential. This handbook was prepared to provide volunteers with basic information regarding the various opportunities, events, keys to success, expectations, do's/don'ts, policies and procedures, and other information relevant to volunteering in a school setting. I encourage you to read this handbook and decide if you can commit your skills and time to our school. If you have any concerns, questions, or interests you wish to discuss with me or any member of the staff please do not hesitate to call on us. Thank you for your support as we strive to provide the best for Champlain students.

Sincerely,

Leslie Colomb, Principal

Thank you for reading this material prior to volunteering!

2. Introduction

On behalf of the entire school community, we would like to thank you for volunteering at Champlain Elementary. As a volunteer you don't just send the message to your student that "you are important to me" and that "what goes on in your school is important to me", but you also help other students, teachers and staff.

"Volunteer" not only means someone who comes to school during the day, but also anyone who supports school goals and children's learning and development in any way, at any place, and at any time. And because more than 20 years of research shows that parent involvement in students' education leads to improved student achievement, Champlain Elementary encourages and welcomes parent and family volunteers. We believe that volunteering strengthens the school wide community!

Only volunteers who have regular volunteer responsibilities or who will be with a student(s) without teacher supervision need to complete the Appendix A. Therefore, class parents, field trip chaperones, and volunteers at PTO sponsored events do not need to complete the Appendix A. If you are just coming in periodically to shelve books in the library for example, under the supervision of our librarian, you will not need to complete Appendix A. All volunteers will complete Appendix B.

3. Volunteer Opportunities

We understand that volunteer interests, skills and time commitments vary greatly and hope you will be able to find something that you'll enjoy doing.

Examples of current activities and events at Champlain:

A. Classroom specific volunteer opportunities *may include:

- Reading with individual students
- Parent "expert" to present on special theme
- Fieldtrip volunteers
- Special projects
- Reading Buddy
- Parent(s) help plan and organize classroom events
- Spanish speaking parents to assist Spanish teacher
- Art room volunteers
- Physical Education volunteers

If you are interested in getting involved in the classroom, please touch base with your classroom teacher at first. If there are no classroom specific opportunities at that point, you can still volunteer in other capacities. Please speak to either the principal, a PTO representative or attend PTO meetings for volunteer opportunities.

**Note: All Champlain classrooms vary and teachers have different curricula, class room set ups and support staff, so not every classroom can and will offer the same volunteer opportunities.*

B. School wide volunteer opportunities:

- Volunteers to assist the Afterschool program to organize and coordinate trips out in the community.
- Learning Center Volunteer (shelving books, processing books, helping with inventory)
- Class Parent
(Duties include contacting other parents about events and activities, organizing volunteers and checking in regularly with the classroom teacher. This is a great opportunity to get involved in your child's education and to build strong classroom communities that reach beyond school boundaries.)

- UNIFIED Sports Program

(UNIFIED is a program that offers sports opportunities and the chance to be part of a competitive sports team to children with disabilities and other students who may not have previously taken part in competitive sports)

- Spelling Bee Coach
- Lunchroom Helper
- Green up Day
- School Concerts
- Teacher appreciation lunch/events
- ELL Reading support

C. Volunteer opportunities for Champlain Family events and projects (PTO* sponsored):

- First Day of School Breakfast
- Applefest
- Multicultural Dinner
- Walk to School Day
- Teacher Appreciation Lunch
- Kindergarten Orientation
- Fun Run Way to Go/ Way To Read Week
- Curriculum Night
- Art Hop
- Family Community Garden
- Schoolyard Habitat Workdays

D. Coordinator Opportunities (PTO sponsored):

Parenting Workshop coordinator
Box Top coordinator
Book Fair coordinator
First Steps in Music coordinator
Pizza Sale coordinator
School Yard Habitat coordinator
Classparent coordinator
Applefest Coordinator
Multi Cultural Dinner coordinator
Coffee Sale coordinator

* PTO is the Parent Teacher Organization at Champlain.

The purpose of the P.T.O. is to enrich the school community by providing educational and financial benefits designed to promote constructive interaction between parents, teachers, students and the administration. The PTO sponsors activities, events, and programs by providing funds, volunteer support or other resources. Every Champlain family member is

automatically a PTO member and welcome and encouraged to attend the monthly PTO meetings. Meeting times will be announced in the weekly Blue Notes.

4. Ways Every Family Can Support Their Children's Education

A. Parenting - Doing your best to provide a safe and nurturing home for your children and supporting their developmental needs. Asking for help if you need it. Sharing information with your children's teachers (or appropriate school staff) about your family and children that will help the school support their education. Many of our schools host workshops throughout the year for families to learn more about children's growth and development.

B. Communicating - Staying informed about your children's learning goals and progress in school. Reading information that is sent home (check that backpack!) and talking to your children about their goals and what they are learning in school. Attending open house, curriculum nights and conferences. Reviewing report cards, assessments, and feedback from teachers. Reaching out to connect and respond to your children's teachers and letting them know if you (or your children) have questions or concerns. Review our School Handbook for more information.

C. Volunteering - Attending student performances and events. If you are available, considering helping out at school events and activities, chaperoning, or volunteering in the school. Review this volunteer handbook for opportunities. Getting involved with our PTO.

D. Supporting Learning at Home - Supporting your children with their homework. Connecting with your children about their skills and interests. Reading with your children. "Help" at home means how families encourage, listen, praise, guide, and discuss schoolwork with their children, not whether or how they "teach" school subjects.

E. Participating in Decision-Making - Reviewing and giving input on the school improvement plan (available on the school website). Consider participating in school or district advisory groups and sharing your suggestions with administrators or the school board. Getting involved with our PTO.

5. To Do Before Your First Volunteer Task

In order to create a safe and rewarding volunteer experience for the entire school community, there are just a few items you need to do and be aware of before your volunteer work begins:

TO DO:

- ◆ Fill out and return appropriate forms from the back of this handbook.
- ◆ Fill out and return Driver Information Form (Appendix C) if applicable.

READ CAREFULLY AND BE AWARE OF

- ◆ Parent Volunteer Expectations (Chapter 6)
- ◆ School Wide Procedures, Policies and Rules (Chapter 7)

6. Parent Volunteer Expectations

A. Confidentiality

In order to ensure that students, staff and families feel comfortable and safe at Champlain, we all need to respect each other's privacy. Speaking to your family and friends about your volunteer experience with regards to students and staff might seem harmless to you, but can be very hurtful to others, and could be a violation of federal law (for more info on the Family Educational Rights to Privacy Act (FERPA) see Chapter 7).

The following issue examples can help you determine what situations might involve confidential information:

“Wasn't it cute when John . . .” No matter how innocent, cute, funny or charming a classroom event may be, it is not okay to repeat stories about students. What happens in the classroom stays in the classroom.

When parents ask you questions . . . Many parents are tempted to ask you about how their children behave at school. This is especially likely if you are friends outside school. It is not okay to put volunteers in this awkward position. Don't ask! Don't tell!
If parents do have concerns, encourage them to talk to the class teacher.

When you see or overhear something . . . As a volunteer, you might see or hear things from staff or students which they would not want to have repeated outside the school. *What happens in the classroom (or the hall, or the gym) stays at school.* Examples of confidential information include test scores, discipline and classroom behavior, student's character traits and scholastic and health records.

If you have concerns about something you see or hear, please talk to the class teacher or Principal if appropriate.

When students tell you about their family, pet, vacation, etc. . . .

As students become comfortable working with you, they might decide to share something personal. You need to keep this information private, even if you know the child and their family outside of school.

When you have a concern . . . If a student tells you something that causes you concern, tell the classroom teacher. If you observe something that troubles you, tell the classroom teacher. The teacher is in the best position to deal with the issue appropriately.

Source: "Maria Hastings Elementary School Volunteer Handbook." <http://hastings.lexingtonma.org>. 2006. 15 may, 2010 <<http://hastings.lexingtonma.org/handbook/VolunteerHandbk.pdf>>

B. Volunteer Do's and Don'ts

(in part adapted from
"Mifflin County School District: Parent Volunteer Manual." www.mcsdk12.org, 2009.
10 May, 2010 < https://www.mcsdk12.org/pdf/parent_volunteer_manual.pdf>)

- DO** be on time, dependable and safe.
- DO** choose events and activities that are manageable and interesting to you.
- DO** keep all student information strictly confidential.
- DO** be willing and able to follow directions from teachers and staff.
- DO** ask for help when needed- you are not alone!
- DO** be adaptable and flexible when working with children.
- DO** have a cooperative attitude in working with school personnel.
- DO** be imaginative, creative and optimistic.
- DO** take a personal interest in helping and working with teachers, staff and students.
- DO** have a sense of humor as well as patience and understanding.
- DO** accept each child for who they are.
- DO** let the teacher be responsible for discipline.
- DO** share the benefits of volunteering with others and encourage new volunteers.
- DO** learn teachers and students names as quickly as possible.
- DO** handle school property in a careful and respectful manner with the utmost care.
- DO** report malfunctioning equipment.
- DO** wear appropriate clothes and footwear for working with physically active children.

Volunteer Do's and Don'ts continued...

DON'T forget to sign in and out of the office every time you're in the building.

DON'T scold when pointing out errors. Use a positive approach.

DON'T become annoyed when students don't understand something the first time.

DON'T distract teachers while they are teaching

DON'T be afraid to laugh at yourself.

DON'T lose your temper.

DON'T do a student's work for them.

DON'T discuss student's work with anyone but the teacher.

DON'T ask teachers or others for personal information about students.

DON'T intervene or contradict a teacher once a problem has been handled.

DON'T forget to contact the teacher or school if you can't fulfill your commitment.

DON'T forget to turn off your cell phone.

DON'T wear heavy perfume due to student's potential allergies or respiratory issues

DON'T wear inappropriate clothing while volunteering (e.g. low-cut or suggestive clothing,)

DON'T feel bad to say "No" to additional volunteer requests when you have reached your limit.

DON'T offer students your food due to potential allergies or sensitivities.

DON'T touch students.

DON'T bring siblings and/or pets on field trips.

Remember that warmth, authenticity and friendliness foster good volunteer – student - staff relationships!

7. Policies and Procedures To Be Aware Of

- A. Sign-In/Out Procedure
- B. School Rules
- C. School Wide Discipline Protocol
- D. Anti Harassment and Anti Bullying Expectations and Procedures
- E. Safety Procedure
- F. Liability Issues
- G. Family Educational Rights to Privacy Act (FERPA)
- H. Mandatory Reporting

A. Sign –In/Out Procedure

All visitors and volunteers are required to report to the office to sign in, take a visitor's/volunteer pass and to sign out at the end of the visit.

B. School Rules

At CES we have developed four basic rules that we expect everyone to follow

- ◆ Be respectful
- ◆ Be safe
- ◆ Do your best work
- ◆ Take care of school property

In addition, smoking or tobacco use, as well as use of alcoholic beverages and narcotics or being under the influence of either is strictly prohibited on school property.

C. School Wide Discipline Protocol

The School Wide Discipline protocol provides an operational framework that supports student learning as well as social, emotional and behavioral development.

For information please find a copy in our CES Family Handbook. We recommend that volunteers are aware of our Discipline policy, but that only trained school staff will be using the discipline support steps.

D. Anti Harassment and Anti Bullying Expectations and Procedures

For information please find a copy in our CES Family Handbook

If you observe an incident or have any concerns, please speak to either Karen Prouty, School Counselor or Leslie Colomb, Principal.

E. Safety Procedures

For information on Evacuation procedures, please review the CES Family Handbook)

F. Family Educational Rights to Privacy Act (FERPA)

The FERPA Act is to protect student privacy by restricting disclosure of information from student records. An Educational Record is any and all information, maintained by an educational agency, which is directly related to a student or former student. Generally information about a student can only be shared by a need to know basis. This means no discussion of information about a student should be casually shared with anyone who does not have a direct need to know. The teachers' lounge, local grocery store or

neighborhood is not the place to discuss an incident that occurred at school, using identifiable information about the students involved. We expect all volunteers as well as employees to strictly adhere to the FERPA laws and guidelines.

G. Mandatory Reporting

Burlington School District is a mandatory reporting agent. This means that all District employees and volunteers who suspect abuse or neglect of children or students are required by law to report those suspicions to state authorities and law enforcement. Reports should be brought to the attention of our Principal, School Counselor or School Nurse.

8. Roadmap To Creating Activities and Events at Champlain Elementary

Champlain Elementary welcomes ideas for school related activities and events from the school wide community. If you have an idea, we encourage you to contact the PTO presidents to add your idea to the next PTO meeting agenda, or contact the principal to discuss it. At PTO meetings you will always find the principal and/or teacher representatives who will report items from the PTO agenda back to the larger teacher staff for feedback and information. At the meeting you will have the chance to present your idea and receive feedback from the PTO members about feasibility, implementation and support for your idea.

The entire Champlain Community benefits from and appreciates your ideas and commitment for school wide collaborations, communications and community building!

9. School Resources For Volunteers

- Volunteers are welcome to use the teacher staff room between 8:00-9:00 am for school related project planning without prior reservation.
- The Art Room has some availability for community gatherings like Class Parent meetings, etc. Please check the signup on the Art Room door and/or check in with Art teacher Jenny Peck (jpeck@bsdvt.org) directly.
- PTO funds may be available for school related activities. Please check in with the PTO presidents and treasurer.

10. Important Numbers and Websites

Leslie Colomb, Principal: 864-8489 or lcolomb@bsdvt.org

Erin LaBonte, Administrative Assistant: 864-8477 or elabonte@bsdvt.org

PTO Co President: Leslyn Hall- leslyn.hall@gmail.com

PTO Co President: Rachel Stampul- rstampul@gmail.com

PTO Co President: Bridget Thomas- hayleysue23@comcast.net

School website: <http://champlain.bsdvt.org/>

Champlain PTO website: <http://www.champlainpto.org/>

Appendix A:

Only regular volunteers with any potential of unsupervised time with students need to complete this.

BURLINGTON SCHOOL DISTRICT - VOLUNTEER APPLICATION
Volunteer Background Information

Have you ever resigned from a prior position after a complaint had been received against you or your conduct was under investigation or review? Y N

Have you ever been disciplined, discharged, or asked to resign from a prior position? Y N

Have you ever been charged with, or are you currently being investigated for sexual abuse, misconduct or harassment of another person? Y N

Have you ever been convicted of a felony or misdemeanor (other than a minor traffic offense)? Y N

Have you ever entered a plea of guilty or “no contest” (nolo contendere) to any crime (other than a minor traffic violation)? Y N

Have you ever served time in prison? Y N

If you have answered “yes” to any question, please explain:

I certify that the information contained in this form and any attachments are true and correct to the best of my knowledge. I understand that false or incorrect information in this form is grounds for disqualification for further consideration, should I be granted a volunteer position.

The Burlington School District will consider all volunteer applications received in accordance with Burlington School District policy. It is the District’s policy not to discriminate on the basis of age, race, color, creed, sex, national origin, place of birth, ancestry, sexual orientation or handicap under the provisions of Titles VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) and Fair Employment Practices 21 VSA Chapter 5 & 6 and the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Confidentiality: I have reviewed the District’s policies and practices governing confidentiality of student records, information or files and agree to abide by those policies and practices and agree to be held accountable for ensuring compliance with those policies and practices.

Review of Records: I understand that the Burlington School District may conduct a review of existing state and federal criminal records of convictions for crimes and other records from Vermont protection agencies as allowed by law. I give permission to have my personal and professional references researched and hold the district and any individuals providing the district with information harmless. I agree to abide by the District’s Volunteer Code of Conduct.

Signature _____ Date _____

Witness: _____ Date _____
(Witness to verify applicant by photo Identification)

Every volunteer needs to fill this out.

**Appendix B: BURLINGTON SCHOOL DISTRICT
VOLUNTEER (NON-EMPLOYEE) SIGNATURE FORM**

VOLUNTEER NAME: NAME OF SCHOOL(S):

PARENT OF: DATE:

The continued safety of the students, faculty and staff of the Burlington School District (the “District”) is of utmost importance to the Board of School Commissioner (the “Board”) and the District. To insure that all persons working within the District are aware of and intend to comply with the policies of the Board, this signature form is required to be completed by all non-employees, interns, or volunteers working within the District.

It is expected that all persons working within the District will comply with, and when necessary, enforce the policies and procedures of the Board. This expectation includes, but is not limited to, all policies addressing harassment; discrimination; confidentiality; narcotics; alcohol; tobacco products; communicable diseases; and access to and use of electronic resources. All District policies are available in the main office of each education building as well as online at <http://bsdweb.bsdyt.org/Board/BoardPolicy.php>

It is expected that all person working within the District will comply with all Federal and State applicable laws and regulations.

I agree to comply with all policies, procedures, applicable laws and regulations. Failure to comply will result in the appropriate action necessary in keeping with the guaranteed safety and privacy of the students, faculty and staff of the District.

CONFIDENTIALITY SUMMARY FOR SCHOOL VOLUNTEERS

We feel it is important to inform all volunteers in the Burlington School District about the laws regarding confidentiality in the schools. Students and families are protected under the Family Educational Rights to Privacy Act (FERPA). Burlington School District maintains a policy to ensure this protection.

The FERPA Act is to protect student privacy by restricting disclosure of information from student records. An Educational Record is any and all information, maintained by an educational agency, which is directly related to a student or former student.

Generally information about a student can only be shared by a need to know basis. This means no discussion of information about a student should be casually shared with anyone who does not have a direct need to know. The teachers’ lounge, local grocery store or neighborhood is not the place to discuss an incident that occurred at school, using identifiable information about the students involved. **We expect all volunteers as well as employees to strictly adhere to the FERPA laws and guidelines.**

Signature _____ Date _____

Witness Signature _____ Date _____

Appendix C:



BURLINGTON SCHOOL DISTRICT

Building a Learning Community

DRIVER INFORMATION FORM

This form is to be completed for all persons who either drive BSD vehicles or their personal vehicle for BSD business.

NAME: _____ SSN: _____

CURRENT ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP CODE: _____

HOME PHONE NUMBER: _____

POSITION: _____ LOCATION: _____

DRIVER LICENSE:

NUMBER: _____ STATE: _____ EXPIRATION: _____

USE BSD VEHICLE? YES NO USE PERSONAL VEHICLE? YES NO

DRIVER INSURANCE POLICY INFORMATION:

INSURANCE COMPANY: _____

- A PHOTOCOPY OF THE DRIVERS LICENSE, VEHICLE REGISTRATION AND INSURANCE CARD MUST BE ATTACHED TO THIS FORM.

DRIVER SIGNATURE: _____ DATE: _____

DISTRICT REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE: _____ DATE: _____

PRINT SUPERVISOR SIGNATURE: _____

THIS INFORMATION WILL BE UPDATED ANNUALLY. PLEASE ADVISE IF ANY OF THE ABOVE INFORMATION CHANGES DURING THE COURSE OF A YEAR.

BURLINGTON SCHOOL DISTRICT, 150 COLCHESTER AVE, BURLINGTON VT 05401

IS REQUIRED INFORMATION ATTACHED TO THIS FORM: YES NO

Non-Employee forms will be maintained in the Building.

DRIVER#2:10.02