

Gator Run Elementary

2012 - 2013



Volunteer Handbook

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Our Vision

The vision for Gator Run Elementary is to develop a team approach to education: a team composed of teachers, parents, and members of the community working together in support of a program of excellence for all of the young people entrusted to our care. Our school will become a place, which through involvement and commitment will develop in the students a sense of belonging, a spirit of community, and a desire for excellence. The positive learning environment at Gator Run will become a model for what all schools should aspire to be.

Welcome to Gator Run

We are very pleased that you have decided to participate in Gator Run's volunteer program. As parents, grandparents, neighbors, and community members you have talents, knowledge and compassion that can truly impact our educational program this year. It is our belief that volunteer programs are beneficial to everyone involved. These partnerships help foster a stronger school/community relationship as well as demonstrating the importance of community service to all involved in the program, especially our students.

As a volunteer you will perform an invaluable service for Gator Run Elementary without compensation. Successful school volunteer programs are organized and structured to provide maximum benefits to the students in a safe and healthy environment. We have developed a set of guidelines which parents and community volunteers are required to follow. We hope that the information provided will help you make the most of your volunteer experience. Feel free to contact the school with any questions you may have. Please read the guidelines thoroughly and sign and return the Volunteer Agreement.

Thank you for devoting your time to this worthy endeavor!

Volunteer Policies and Guidelines

Confidentiality

A volunteer operates in a position of trust. Personal information pertaining to students must be kept confidential. Children's actions, responses, progress or problems at school are not to be shared in the community. Volunteers who do not respect this policy will be removed from the volunteer program. Please be aware that failure to respect confidentiality can have legal ramifications.

Security

Volunteers must complete a Broward County Volunteer Application online at www.getinvolvedineducation.com and wait for county approval. Approval usually takes within 10 school days and volunteers must bring a picture I.D. to the front office to confirm your approval. Each time a volunteer arrives on campus, they are required to check-in at the front office and receive their volunteer badge. The computer-generated badge must be worn and visible at all times while on the school campus and must be turned into the office upon leaving.

Communication

Parents of children you work with may consult you regarding their progress. Always direct parent concerns and inquiries to the classroom teacher. Voluntaryism in the school must not be used as an opportunity for parent-teacher conferences. By contract, teachers must receive planning times and lunch breaks. Please schedule conferences for appropriate times.

Working with Students

Children learn from watching you. Please practice patience and understanding towards children. Volunteers deserve to be treated with respect by staff and students. If student behavior or language is inappropriate and a request for change is ignored, please seek the assistance of a teacher or administrator. Discipline at school is the teacher's responsibility.

While volunteering at school, please respect your child's independence. Your role in the school is to assist all students as requested, student expectations apply to every child, even your own.

Children and Siblings

Parents may not bring infants, pre-school children or any child not registered in the school when they are volunteering at Gator Run.

Cell Phones

Cell phones should be silenced at all times when on the school campus. No texting or calls are permitted in the classroom or in the presence of students. Pictures should only be taken for yearbook and/or class use and should not be posted on social media sites such as Facebook or Instagram.

Commitment

The school relies on the support of our parents and volunteers. Please be prompt and dependable. We appreciate our volunteers and understand that situations arise. If a volunteer cannot report to an assignment, they should contact the teacher or designee as soon as possible.

Dress

Volunteers are role models for students. Clothing that is too short, revealing or that advertises alcohol, drugs, profanity or violence is not appropriate for volunteer work. Administration may request a volunteer to alter their dress or leave campus if they feel it disrupts the education environment in any way.

Assignments

The classroom teacher or supervising faculty member will explain responsibilities and procedures for volunteer activities. Teachers maintain responsibility for curriculum decisions, instruction, safety and discipline in the classroom.

As a mentor and helper, volunteers share their talents and interests. Let the teacher know about areas in which you are skilled (story telling, singing, musical instruments, crafts, computer use, photography, etc.)

Self-esteem is crucial to student success. Find ways to provide specific praise to students and make them feel good about themselves.

Help students tackle their work, but do not complete it for them. Ask leading questions instead of providing answers.

Additional Guidelines for Volunteers

- Volunteers are not permitted to be alone with students at any time. This includes escorting students to restrooms or the front office.
- Volunteers are not permitted to give any kind of medication to students.
- Volunteers should not disagree with teachers in front of students.
- Volunteers do not diagnose student strengths or weaknesses, prescribe learning activities or evaluate student progress.
- Do not distribute food or snacks of any kind without teacher permission.

What Do Gator Run Volunteers Do?

- Work with students in classroom
- Read to students
- Chaperone field trips
- Prep materials for teachers
- Assist with art projects
- Bulletin Boards
- Special events
- Guest speakers
- Assist in Media Center, Art Room and/or Science Lab
- School beautification
- Cafeteria monitors
- Arrival/Dismissal volunteers
- Fundraisers
- Donate supplies

Parking

Volunteers may park in the front lot in designated parking spaces. For the safety of our students and staff, parking in fire lanes or bus lanes are not permitted at anytime. Cars in these areas will be towed if needed.

Personal Beliefs

Gator Run students come from a variety of backgrounds, and volunteers must demonstrate respect for their differences and individual rights. In that regard, volunteers should not propose religious beliefs or doctrines nor promote political parties or candidates.

More Tips for Volunteers

Be yourself and have fun!

Accept students' individuality and special needs.

Be consistent with rules and procedures maintained by the teacher/school

Read the Student Code of Conduct to understand expectations.

Do not let friendships or neighborly relations interfere with your role as a volunteer.

Make every child feel special and let them know you care.

Celebrate creativity!

Gator Run Elementary
Volunteer Confidentiality Agreement
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For our children's safety, please remember to always enter the school through the front door, and to sign in at the office. All other doors will be locked and should not be opened to anyone without a badge. Volunteer badges are to be worn and visible at all times when on the school campus and must be turned into the office upon leaving.

Gator Run volunteers are considered valuable assets and are utilized before, during and after school hours under the direction and supervision of certified personnel. Tasks may involve services in the library, classrooms, office, and extra curricular activities. Volunteers will not teach, but may reinforce skills taught by the professional staff. I do hereby give the Gator Run Elementary assurance that I will comply with guidelines and policies included in the Volunteer Handbook.

I understand that in my capacity as a volunteer for Gator Run Elementary, I will acquire information and knowledge which is either legally protected as confidential, or information and knowledge which is of a personal and private nature.

I understand and agree that I shall not disclose to any other person or organization, any information acquired during my work as a volunteer without express and written consent of that person or from the school's administration. My signature below constitutes my acceptance of the terms of this confidentiality agreement as well as my agreement to comply with the guidelines as stated in the Volunteer Handbook.

Names of Children	Grade	Teacher
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Volunteer's Legal Name _____

Volunteer Signature _____

Date _____