

Library Media Center Volunteers

The media specialists of Broward County encourage volunteers to work in the media centers because the school volunteer working in the library media center enables the media specialist to be more responsive to the individual needs of the students and teachers. Parents, college students, and senior citizens can all serve as volunteers in the library media center. Volunteers can be tremendous assets to the library media program.

Planning for volunteers

Determine what jobs or tasks are needed in your library media center. Here are some possible suggestions for effectively utilizing volunteers:

- ❑ Arranging displays
- ❑ Assisting during a book fair
- ❑ Assisting with inventory
- ❑ Assisting with technologies
- ❑ Checking in magazines
- ❑ Checking out materials and equipment
- ❑ Cleaning and straightening
- ❑ Creating bulletin boards
- ❑ Filing catalogs
- ❑ Helping maintain a consideration file
- ❑ Helping to locate materials
- ❑ Laminating and copying materials
- ❑ Listening to children read
- ❑ Mending books
- ❑ Operating the circulation desk
- ❑ Organizing materials
- ❑ Photocopying materials
- ❑ Reading shelves
- ❑ Reading to children
- ❑ Shelving materials

- Working with overdues
- Working with students on computer

Recruitment of Volunteers

Library media specialists should actively recruit library media center volunteers. Here are some strategies that may be helpful:

- Speak at the first PTA/PTO meeting or Parent's Night on the opportunities and rewards of volunteering in the media center.
- Ask the principal if you can have volunteer recruitment forms available in the school office to be given to parents as they register their children.
- Send recruitment forms or a brochure home to all parents with their children.
- Ask other volunteers, teachers, secretaries, and guidance counselors for help in obtaining volunteers.
- Ask parent volunteers to recruit among their families, friends, and neighbors.
- Contact your school's business partner requesting help in finding volunteers.
- Request volunteers through the Parent Newsletter.

Orientation and Training of Volunteers

Volunteers are required to fill out a "School Volunteer Application" and to sign in and out on a "Volunteer Sign-In" form each time they are in the school. Have an orientation meeting for all volunteers. Use the outline below as a guide:

1. Welcome and Introduction of Library Media Center Staff
2. School Policies
 - Dress and conduct
 - Parking
 - Teacher's lounge
 - Discipline

- Releasing students to adults
 - Visitors
 - Students visiting/leaving library media center
 - Lost and found
 - Use of telephone
3. Responsibilities
- Acceptance of school board policies
 - Dependability
 - Confidentiality: Staff, child, school records
 - Absences
 - Signing In and Out Procedures/Location
4. School Facility
- Fire Drill Procedures
 - Restroom locations
 - Work Rooms
 - Eating Facilities
5. Library Media Center Arrangement
- Circulation Desk
 - Resources: Print and Nonprint
 - Equipment

Retaining Volunteers

Listed below are some suggestions for retaining volunteers:

- Remember volunteers cannot be thanked too many times. .0 0
- Include volunteers in planning. It is a good idea to work with the volunteers, encouraging suggestions instead of requiring tasks.
- Check often with the volunteers to let them know you are interest and that they are needed.
- Show a genuine interest in the volunteers and their children.
- Be flexible, remembering they are volunteers.
- Be patient as volunteers are learning new tasks.
- Assign the volunteers tasks that will keep them busy and interested.

- ❑ Change the assignment of task if volunteers appear bored.
- ❑ Give awards and recognition to stress the volunteer's importance and to show appreciation.
- ❑ Remember that volunteers can be the best advocates for the library media program if they have a positive experience.