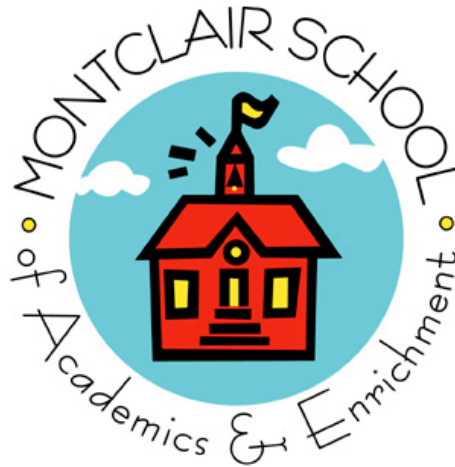


MONTCLAIR SCHOOL OF ACADEMICS & ENRICHMENT



VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK

1151 Newport Street • Denver, CO 80220 • 303.333.5497

Welcome from the Principal

September 2, 2009

Dear Montclair Volunteer:

Please allow me to begin by thanking you for volunteering your time at Montclair Elementary. Your efforts are appreciated by the teachers and students and you make such a positive contribution to our neighborhood school.

In order to have a successful year, there are some important things to keep in mind when you are at the school. This volunteer handbook is designed to provide you with information and guidelines that will help you perform your volunteer services as effectively as possible. Please take some time to review the information and feel free to speak with me should you have any questions or concerns.

Everyone at Montclair is extremely appreciative of the time you spend with us at school. We hope that you find your volunteer experience to be a rewarding one. Please know that we are honored that you have chosen to share your precious time with us.

We look forward to a successful school year!

Sincerely,








Shannon Hagerman
Principal

Introduction

The Montclair School P.E.A.K. Partnership has written this handbook to welcome you and help you make the most of your volunteer experience. We value and appreciate the time you have dedicated to becoming a part of this school community. There are so many different ways to participate at Montclair, we hope this handbook will help guide you.

As a parent and a volunteer, you are a vital part of the Montclair School community. When you become a volunteer, your work takes on special significance --though you are not part of the staff, you share their responsibilities while working with students.

When you volunteer at Montclair, you help . . .

-  your child
-  other children
-  teachers
-  administrators
-  the community.

Building a Strong Volunteer Community

It is important for all volunteers to remember the following:

- Be responsible and safe --always put children first.
- Respect confidentiality. Students and staff have a right to privacy.
- Be professional.
- Choose activities that are manageable and interesting to you.
- Be prepared. Communicate with teachers and coordinators ahead of time.
- Be on time. If you can't make it, let someone know. If necessary, try to find a substitute.
- Ask for help --don't suffer in silence!
- Share your experience with others and encourage new volunteers.
- Try to replace yourself when you move on and help train the new person.

Getting Started

Before beginning your volunteer time, we ask that everyone please be aware of the following general information.

Absence

If you cannot come for an assigned activity, please let your committee chair or appropriate staff member know. We do come to rely on you as you are an important part of the working of the school; however, we realize that things happen. With proper notice we can make other arrangements.

Background Check

Complete your CORI form and bring to the office. CORI stands for Criminal Offense Records Investigation. DPS requires all adults who work with children to submit a completed form. The form is very simple to fill out and the information received is kept confidential and is stored in a secure location. Forms are available from the school office and when completed need to be returned to the office.

Cell Phones

As a courtesy to others, please silence cell phones while in the school building.

Dress

Please dress appropriately when coming to school to volunteer. Children look up to adults as mentors; therefore, we want to be excellent role models for them.

Emergency Drills / Safety

Always follow the correct safety procedures while volunteering at school:

- | there is no talking during emergency drills;
- | when in a classroom, follow the teacher out of the building and stay with the class;
- | when not in a classroom, quietly exit the building and remain at a safe distance until notified that it is safe to return.

Funding

If you need P.E.A.K. funds for an activity, please contact the appropriate board member for approval before you make any purchases. P.E.A.K. will be able to supply you with a reimbursement form for all *approved* spending.

Parking

Parking spaces are available along the streets surrounding the school. Please be mindful of street sweeping signs and bus/passenger loading zones.

Siblings

Younger siblings or other visitors should not be present during a regularly scheduled volunteer time in the classroom. This creates a liability issue for the district as these individuals are not DPS students or employees and they can often divert attention away from the important work we need to do.

Signing In and Out

Always sign in and out at the school office in the Volunteer binder. It is important for staff to know that you are in the building and it makes it easier to locate you in an emergency. Be sure to wear a Visitor/Volunteer nametag at all times as well.

Space

Montclair has wonderful spaces for volunteers to share. These include the gym, the stage, the library, and the dining room. However, these spaces are at a premium, so if you want to use any of them for events or meetings, please contact the School Secretary in advance to request your space.

Valuables

Secure any valuables you bring with you in a concealed area of the classroom.

Volunteer Credit

An additional benefit to volunteering at school is earning a credit towards your property tax after accumulating 100 hours of volunteer time. The annual credit is for \$250, and appropriate paperwork is available from the office staff.

Student Behavior and Character Education

At Montclair, we use a model of Positive Behavior Support (P.B.S.) to teach children appropriate ways to behave at school. By creating an environment with very clear expectations supported by all school personnel, we seek to have the best possible setting for children to learn how to control their own behavior, and to work together to support one another as a community of learners.

Our school motto is, "Happy Cougars R.O.A.R.!" R.O.A.R. outlines our expectations for each and every student.

Respect – showing respect for self and others;

Outstanding Effort – always trying your hardest and doing your very best;

Achievement – doing work that is productive

Responsibility - accepting responsibility for one's actions and learning;

Students can earn "Cougar Coins" when staff members recognize them fulfilling these expectations. The coins are then collected and used for a school-wide celebration.

Here are some ways that you might help to reinforce these expectations in your role as a volunteer at school:

Positive reinforcement: Find someone using good behavior and be really interested in what they are doing. Notice the specific way the child chose to do the appropriate thing. For example, "You started working right away on your project and stayed focused on it."

Redirection: Gently remind a child of the expected behavior when needed. For example, "We all sit quietly in the meeting area."

Active listening: Reflect back to a child what you heard them saying, to let them know that you accept and understand his or her feelings. For example, "I understand that you felt lonely when you fell down outside and none of the other children asked you if you were okay."

Consistency: Be specific in your expectations and follow through.

Choices: Offer children some reasonable control over the situation they are in to help encourage cooperation. Appropriate choices still get the objective accomplished, but give the child some options in how to go about it. For example, "Would you like to read together at your desk or out in the hall?"

Consequences: Children learn well when their actions lead to specific outcomes. Reminding them of the natural consequences of their actions can help them to make better choices. For example, "If you don't come to snack now, all the apples will be gone and you won't get any." Similarly, "If you waste your reading time, it will use up your game time and you won't have as much time to play."

Humor: Used effectively, humor can defuse a tense situation, making it more manageable for everyone.

If you witness a situation requiring discipline, speak with the teacher right away so that he or she can handle it appropriately.

Classroom Involvement

Teachers may like to have volunteers help in their classroom or on field trips. Room parents coordinate each teacher's volunteer opportunities on an ongoing basis. If you are interested in getting involved in this way, contact your class' room parent. Your time and energy helps make Montclair School a great place to learn!

Approach

We believe that all people, adults and children, deserve love and respect. We create a positive atmosphere in our classrooms by encouraging and supporting our students and one another.

- Strive to give each child the best you can and know that other volunteers do the same when working with your child.
- Respect each child as an individual.
- Respect your co-workers and all school employees.
- If working in your child's classroom, try not to single them out for attention as this may make them uncomfortable.
- Don't distract teachers while they are teaching. If you have questions wait until there is an appropriate moment.
- Honor your commitments and be on time.
- Find ways to be positive and notice things that are working well
- Try to make any criticism constructive.
- Never use violence or verbal abuse at any time.

Confidentiality

To ensure that students, staff and families feel comfortable, we all need to respect each other's privacy. Volunteers must be especially careful to honor confidentiality. Breaching confidentiality can be hurtful to children, their families and the staff.

To help, here are some sample issues that can arise:

"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 that they would not want to have repeated outside the school. What happens at school stays at school. 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.

Specific Classroom Strategies

Reading assistance: If you are asked to read with children who are reading independently, here are some questions you might ask to delve deeper into the book they are reading:

Who is this story about?

What is happening in this story?

Where is the story taking place?

What do you think will happen next?

What does the author want you to understand?

Has anything like this happened to you?

What do you think is the most important part of what you just read?

Did you learn any new information from what you just read?

Math games: Math can be a fun and busy time as children work in small groups to solve problems. You may be asked to work with one or two children to practice basic skills such as time, money, number patterns, number facts and Everyday Math games. When working through problems, here are some questions you can ask the children as they discover the answers:

How did you get to that answer?

Was there another way that you might have done this problem?

It is important not to give them the answers, but to support their own process of problem-solving.

Additional Opportunities for Involvement

We understand that volunteer skills, interests and time commitments vary. Outside of working in the classroom or directly with students, there are many additional ways to get involved at Montclair. We look forward to helping you find something that you will enjoy doing.

Community Opportunities: Montclair School P.E.A.K. Partnership plans events year-round for parents, staff and children. If meeting and working with other adult members of the Montclair community appeals to you, consider volunteering to help with events like the Mingle for Montclair, Winter Festival, or International Night.

School-wide Opportunities: Montclair prides itself on its programs geared at enriching student experience outside the classroom. Volunteers might help with Clusters, after-school programs, or give a Brown Bag Lunch presentation.

Support Opportunities: Would you like to help but are not available during school hours? Consider the Parent Pitch-In or helping with projects that can be taken home, such as sharpening pencils or assembling artwork for display. Be sure to check out the range of opportunities below to find the perfect match for you!

Time Commitment

Quick Trips - *short time commitments or special one time events*

Examples: distribute appreciation gifts to teachers; help at a booth at the Fun Fair; help children select books for RIF, chaperone a field trip.

Ongoing - *programs rely on regular and/or moderate time commitments*

Examples: lead a Junior Great Books group, help with Fancy 1st Friday luncheons, volunteer regularly in a classroom.

Projects - *larger time commitments that may span several days or weeks.*

Examples: help plan the Winter Festival or International Night, become a Destination Imagination Team Manager.

Activities Key:



REQUIRES DAYTIME AVAILABILITY



REQUIRES AFTER SCHOOL/EVENING AVAILABILITY



SOME OR ALL CAN BE DONE FROM HOME



SOME OR ALL CAN BE DONE WITH YOUNG CHILDREN



FOR STAFF MEMBERS ONLY

QT QUICK TRIPS

OG ONGOING

PJ PROJECTS

Classroom / Staff Support

Provide support for staff in and out of the classroom.

Room Parents/Grade Level Coordinators: Communicate with the teachers to determine needs and assist and help provide support in the classroom.

What: Compile class rosters, provide field trip support, coordinate classroom helpers, book orders, Valentine's party, and Fall Celebration party, facilitate classroom communications via email and/or classroom newsletter.




When: All year

Time: **OG**   

Staff Appreciation: Program to show teachers how much they are appreciated for all that they do.

What: Plan and distribute monthly staff appreciation.

When: Monthly

Time: **QT / OG**   

Staff Birthday's: Recognize staff birthdays with card and small token.

What: Coordinate, purchase and distribute card/gift for staff their birthday.

When: All year

Time: **OG**   

Communications

Facilitate open, two-way communication throughout the school and community.

Bulletin Boards: Communicate via boards in the main hallway of the school.

What: Update, coordinate, and design bulletin boards.

When: All year

Time: **OG** 

Directory/Handbook: School-wide directory of students to facilitate communication and handbook with pertinent school information.

What: Update, coordinate and input information, as well as layout directory and handbook.

When: August/September

Time: **PJ**  

Marquee: Communicate via the outdoor Marquee.

What: Coordinate and update info on the Marquee as needed.

When: All year

Time: **OG**  

Montclair Minder: Weekly newsletter that provides updates and important upcoming dates.

What: Coordinate info for flyer for Thursday Folders.

When: Weekly

Time: **OG**  

Newsletter: 'Montclair Minutes' color newsletter that highlights events and activities happening at the school.

What: Coordinate and write articles, layout and print newsletter.

When: Oct., Jan., April

Time: **OG**  

Translations: Provide verbal and written translation services as needed to help facilitate communication.

What: Translate for printed materials, and translate at meetings.

When: All year

Time: OG 🏠 ❤️

Website / Email: Maintain and update website information.

What: Provide web support and updates, and coordinate sending school wide emails as needed.

When: All year

Time: OG 🏠 ❤️

Community Care

Provide support and promote service for our school and surrounding community.

Backpack Program: Program that provides food for families in need.

What: Obtain donations and coordinate distribution.

When: All year

Time: PJ 🏠 ❤️

Canned Food Drive: Collection of food for families in need.

What: Promote and coordinate the collection and distribution food donations.

When: November

Time: QT 🏠 ❤️

Corporate and Community Involvement: Encourage volunteerism and support from surrounding businesses, corporations, and community members.

What: Solicit and coordinate businesses, corporations, and community members.

When: All Year

Time: PJ 🌅 🏠

Giving Tree: Help families in need during the holiday season.

What: Coordinate and organize collection of items and set-up tree for the hallway.

When: December

Time: QT 🌅 🏠 ❤️

Green Initiative: School wide initiative to promote eco-consciousness at Montclair.

What: Plan and promote reducing waste, reusing, and recycling on Earth Day and year-round.

When: All year

Time: OG 🏠 ❤️

Red Apple Recycling: Red School House collection bin for used clothing and also earns money for the school.

What: Promote Red School House and clothing recycling at the school.

When: All year

Time: OG 🏠 ❤️

School Safety: Provide safety for students outside the building after school.

What: Be a crossing guard during afternoon pick up and help with traffic congestion.

When: All year

Time: OG 🌅

Enrichment

Events and activities that provide additional enrichment for students and families.

After School Enrichment: Enrichment activities for students after school.

What: Research and coordinate additional enrichment activities after school.

When: All year

Time: **OG**   

Birthday Book Club: Books donated to the school library for student birthdays.

What: Promote and coordinate book donations throughout the year.


When: All year

Time: **OG**  

Book Fairs: Scholastic books available for purchase by students and families.

What: Coordinate book delivery and volunteers, and set up, sell, and break down Book Fair.

When: April

Time: **QT** 

Clusters: Small groups of students sharing in common interests.

What: Provide assistance or share experiences.

When: Weekly, Oct-Dec, and March-May

Time: **PJ** 

Cougar Chronicle: Student created newsletter.

What: Help students write, layout and produce newsletter.

When: TBD

Time: **OG** 

Destination Imagination: Program that enhances student creativity, problem-solving, and team-building skills.

What: Attend DI training and coach a team of same grade level students.

When: November through April

Time: **PJ** 

Jr. Great Books:

What: Reading book club program that gives students the opportunity to engage in discussions about stories they read.

When: All year

Time: **OG** 

Parent Enrichment: Program that provides parents with educational opportunities.

What: Plan and coordinate educational enrichment events for parents.

When: November, February, April

Time: **OG**   

RIE: Program that provides a free book for each student.

What: Help students choose books at designated times.

When: November, January, March

Time: **QT** 

Finance

Manage and maintain P.E.A.K. Partnership finances.

Reimbursements: Provide reimbursement of approved expenditures for parents and staff.

What: Oversee and distribute reimbursements.

When: All year

Time: OG 🏠 ❤️

Teacher Gift Cards: Program that provides a choice of gift cards for teachers to purchase classroom needs.

What: Coordinate, purchase and distribute gift cards.

When: August

Time: QT 🌅 ❤️

Fundraising

Raise money needed to fund student activities and enrichment, and support the school community via events and programs.

Box Tops for Education: Loyalty program that pays money back to the school.

What: Promote and collect Box Tops and send in for reimbursement.

When: All year

Time: OG 🏠 ❤️

Grants: Seek grants whose mission is in line with those of Montclair school.

What: Research and apply for grants.

When: All year

Time: OG 🏠 ❤️

Mingle for Montclair: First of two fundraising events that includes an auction and brings parents, school staff, and community together for a fun evening.

What: Help plan and promote event, collect auction items, and help on day/night of event.

When: November

Time: PJ / QT 🌙 🏠

Plant Sale & Fun Fair: Second of two fundraising events that includes a sale of plants and a day of fun, games and food that brings the school and community together.

What: Help plan and promote event, coordinate Advance Plant Sale, and help on day of event.

When: May

Time: PJ / QT 🌅 🏠 ❤️

Outreach/Hospitality

Provide support and refreshments for events and socials and help foster community.

Back to School Night: Program for parents to learn about what to expect in the coming year.

What: Provide refreshments for event.

When: August

Time: QT 🌙

Countdown to Kindergarten: Program for new kinder families to see the school and meet other families and kids.

What: Promote and coordinate information for event, and provide refreshments.

When: April

Time: QT 🌅 ❤️

First Day Welcome Back Coffee: .Welcome parents to a new school year on first day of school.
What: Coordinate coffee and snacks for new and returning parents.
When: August
Time: QT 🌅❤️

Ice Cream Social: Event prior to school starting for where students and families meet the teacher.
What: Coordinate welcome table and provide ice cream.
When: August
Time: QT 🌙❤️

Open House: Tours for prospective families to see the school in action.
What: Provide refreshments and help give tours.
When: November
Time: QT 🌅

Parent Coffees: Program that provides morning refreshments for parents to gather and socialize.
What:
When: October, December, February, April
Time: QT / OG 🌅❤️

Parent Socials: Casual events for parents to encourage and build community among parents.
What: Coordinate and promote events.
When: All year
Time: QT / OG 🌙🏠

Staff Socials: Casual events for staff to encourage and build community among staff.
What: Coordinate and promote events.
When: All year
Time: QT / OG 🍷

Parent and Family Activities

Build community by providing fun events for parents and families.

Family Nights: Fun and educational evening for families that promote literacy, math and science.
What: Coordinate with Community Resources to host three family nights.
When: October, January, and March
Time: QT 🌙

International Night: Celebration of the diverse cultures at Montclair with performances and food from around the world.
What: Plan, organize and coordinate performances and food.
When: April
Time: PJ / QT 🌙

Movie Night: Family-friendly movies shown in the school auditorium.
What: Pick and promote movie; set up, sell, and clean up popcorn concessions.
When: TBD
Time: QT 🌙❤️

Winter Festival & Art Show: A celebration of winter and the arts.
What: Plan, organize and coordinate events and activities.
When: December
Time: PJ 🌙

School Aesthetics

Provide support to help keep our school looking great, inside and out.

Gardens & Grounds: Keep the outside of Montclair looking great.

What: Plan and coordinate upkeep of outdoor areas.

When: All year

Time: **OG** 

Indoor Projects: Keep the inside of Montclair School looking great.

What: Plan and coordinate upkeep of indoor areas.

When: All year

Time: **OG** 

Parent Pitch-In: Perform special projects and general school clean-up.

What: Coordinate projects and volunteers.

When: October

Time: **QT** 


School Spirit

Promote Montclair School spirit and provide student support.

5th Grade Continuation: End of year event for 5th graders moving on to Middle School.

What: Organize event and coordinate refreshments.






When: May

Time: **QT**  

CSAP Support: Support for students taking the CSAP tests to ease nerves during testing.

What: Provide snacks for students each morning during testing and help organize 'buddy classes' to support students taking the test.






When: February (2 days) and March (2 weeks)

Time: **QT**     

CSAP Dance: Celebratory dance for students who have completed CSAP testing.

What: Coordinate event and refreshments.

When: March

Time: **QT**     

Dia de Los Ninos: Celebration of children and childhood, promotes the importance of literacy, and honors the Mexican tradition of celebrating this day.

What: Organize and distribute gift to the students.

When: April 30

Time: **QT**     

Fancy Friday Lunch: Students eat lunch in the dining room decorated with tablecloths and flowers, and practice proper manners.

What: Make posters for manners and decorate, set up and clean up the dining room.

When: Monthly

Time: **OG** 

Practically Perfect Attendance: Recognition for students who have good attendance.

What: Provide monthly awards and help organize end of the year assembly.

When: Monthly

Time: **QT** 

ROAR / Cougar Coins: School wide program to encourage good behavior and promote Positive Behavior Support.

What: Coordinate school wide celebrations each time the treasure box is filled.

When: All year

Time: QT   

Spirit Week: Week of fun activities like Crazy Hair Day, Backwards Day, Pajama Day, etc., for students to show their school spirit.

What: Plan and promote activities for the week.

When: May

Time: QT   

Student Appreciation Day/Count Day: Coincides with the District Count Day to promote the importance of good attendance.

What: Order and distribute small appreciation gift (ie. pencils) to all students.

When: October

Time: QT 

Student Council: Help students develop leadership skills.

What: Help students coordinate elections and other Student Council related activities.

When: All year

Time: OG 

Turkey Trot: Family event that promotes being active.

What: Promote and organize event.

When: November

Time: QT  

T-Shirt Sales: School logo t-shirts, sweatshirts, etc. sold to promote school spirit.

What: Advertise and organize the sale and distribution of t-shirts, sweatshirts, etc.

When: October and February

Time: OG  

Volunteers / Involvement

Encourage and coordinate parent and staff involvement and volunteer recruitment.

Buddy Family Program: Program that pairs veteran families with new families to help ease the transition.

What: Coordinate pairing of families and provide informational materials.


When: August, and all year

Time: OG  

Office Help: Provide assistance to the office staff to help with registration.

What: Man the front desk and answer phones.

When: August

Time: QT or OG 

Playground / Lunch Room Helpers: Provide additional support and supervision during recess and lunch time.

What: Schedule volunteers to be available as needed.

When: Daily, weekly or monthly

Time: OG 

Volunteer Appreciation: Recognition for volunteers for their hard work and dedication.

What: Plan and execute event or gift for volunteers.

When: May

Time: OG 

Sharing Knowledge, Tips and Ideas

Although Montclair has many special traditions, new ideas arise each year. To make the best of both, we encourage volunteers to share their insights with one another, with staff, and with the Montclair School P.E.A.K. Partnership.

If you see a better way to do something, don't be shy to come forward. Names and contact details can be found in the School Directory and at the end of this handbook. Similarly, if you have a great experience from another school, share with us your ideas about a potentially great fundraiser or exciting school-wide project.

After you work as a volunteer, you might decide to take on the role of a project coordinator. As a coordinator, it is helpful to keep notes on your events and to pass these along to future project leaders.

Contact Information

School Phone #: 303.333.5497

School Address: 1151 Newport Street, Denver CO 80220

Principal: Shannon Hagerman

shannon_hagerman@dpsk12.org

Assistant Principal: Emily Pulver

emily_pulver@dpsk12.org

School Secretaries: Helen Brady

helen_brady@dpsk12.org

Monica Sanchez monica_sanchez@dpsk12.org

P.E.A.K. Board Members

Judy Todd, President • 303-322-3494 • judith_todd@comcast.net

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Anne Jacobs, Classroom Coordinator (staff) • anne_jacobs@dpsk12.org

Susie Snodgrass, Classroom Coordinator (parent) • 303-881-9360 • mscue5678@mac.com

School Schedule:

8:30-8:55 a.m.

Supervised playground coverage

8:55 a.m.

First Bell

9:00 a.m.

Tardy Bell

11:30 a.m.-1 p.m.

Lunch

3:45p.m.

Dismissal

Office Hours: 7:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Monday-Friday

