

# *Parent and Community Volunteer Handbook*



## *Integrated Arts Academy at H.O. Wheeler*

*The mission of the Integrated Arts Academy at H. O. Wheeler is to explore academic knowledge through intentional art experiences. Our richly diverse community collaborates and celebrates the world through meaningful learning and creative self-expression as we prepare students for success in the 21st Century.*

*The goal of the Family School Partnership is to coordinate a community-wide system of volunteers who are willing to work within the schools to help enhance the educational experience of IAA students.*

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# 1. Introduction

On behalf of the entire school community, we would like to thank you for your interest in volunteering at the Integrated Arts Academy at H.O. Wheeler. We take great pride in our school and are very pleased that you have decided to volunteer your time to serve as a partner in the education of our students. We have long recognized that there are many outstanding resources in our community and there are many different ways you can get involved.

We hope that this handbook will assist you to make your time with us productive for you and beneficial to our students and staff. Please feel free to ask us for any assistance you need to make your volunteering a positive experience for all. We welcome your suggestions and contributions, and, most of all, your talent and experience. Your efforts enable us to provide a far richer experience to our students and for that we are very grateful. Thank you for giving our students your time and individual talents!

## 2. 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 IAA:

### A. Classroom specific volunteer opportunities \*may include:

- Reading with individual students
- Parent "expert" to present on special theme
- Field Trip volunteers
- Special projects
- Reading Buddy
- Parent(s) help plan and organize classroom events
- 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 Mr. Bobby or attend a Family School Partnership meeting.

\*Note: All classrooms vary and teachers have different curricula, classroom setups and support staff, so not every classroom can and will offer the same volunteer opportunities.

#### B. School wide volunteer opportunities:

- 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.)
- Breakfast or Lunchroom Helper
- Move it! Move it! Coach
- Arts Field Day
- Math Night
- Bulletin Board and Visual Art Displays
- Assistance with the production of School Play
- Recess Monitors

### **3. 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 volunteering begins:

- Fill out and return appropriate forms from the back of this handbook.
- Fill out and return Driver Information Form (if applicable)
- Familiarize yourself with the Guidelines for Volunteering and School Policies and Safety Procedures

## 4. School Policies and Safety Procedures

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 IAA we have developed four basic rules that we expect everyone to follow:

- ◆Respect Yourself
- ◆Respect Others
- ◆Respect All Learning
- ◆Respect 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. Safety Procedures: Please check in with the staff about what to do in the event of a fire drill, lockdown or evacuation procedure.

D. 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.

We expect all volunteers as well as employees to strictly adhere to the FERPA laws and guidelines.

### E. 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.

## 5. Guidelines for Volunteering

**BE CONFIDENTIAL:** Confidentiality is crucial and is the cornerstone of a successful classroom volunteer program. Information about every child is **CONFIDENTIAL**. All conversations with teachers and staff, test scores, behavior, etc. must remain within the classroom. For example, if you are working with a child on spelling words, and that child is struggling and not doing well, it would be inappropriate for you to report that later to the child's parent. Comments about children's progress (or lack of) and behavior in class should be addressed by the teacher. Please give each child the same respect you would want shown to your child by others.

**BE PROMPT AND DEPENDABLE:** The teachers count on you, and appreciate your promptness and reliability. If you know in advance that you will not be able to make it please make arrangements to notify the teacher via email or voicemail.

**BE FLEXIBLE:** Be willing to do what the teacher asks of you. There may be times that you will not directly work with the children, but instead the teacher needs you to staple papers for an hour. Sometimes, a job that seems tedious to you is a big timesaver for the teacher and allows him or her to get more effective teaching time in. Please be open and flexible about whatever the teacher asks you to do.

**BE SURE YOU UNDERSTAND WHAT THE TEACHER NEEDS YOU TO DO:** If you aren't sure, feel free to ask for more clarification.

**BE RESPECTFUL OF THE CLASSROOM:** Please silence your cell phone and limit conversations with other parents to outside the classroom. It would be disruptive to the class to talk on your phone or with other parents during your volunteer time.

**BE POSITIVE:** Make specific, positive comments about the children. Catch the child doing something good and then praise it. This has the biggest impact for students when you elaborate on what the specific behavior is that they are being complimented on. For example: "Wow, I really liked the way you asked your friend if they were ok when you bumped into them," or "Thank you for cleaning the table after snack, that helps keep the room tidy."

**OFFER FEEDBACK TO THE TEACHER:** If you have a concern about a specific child or feel disciplinary action is necessary, please tell the teacher and let him or her decide

the appropriate action to take with a child. You may have observed something she or he did not see, and your feedback is important in helping them do their job.

**PREPARE YOUR CHILD FOR YOUR ARRIVAL:** Let your child know that when you are volunteering in the classroom, you are there to help the teacher and the other children in class as well as your child. One way of explaining this is to say, "We have the same job...to do what the teacher tells us to do."

**VOLUNTEER LOG:** Please sign in at the office when you come to volunteer. You can get a sticker badge there that says that you are a volunteer, and then when you are finished you can sign out.

## **6. Techniques for Working with Children**

- Let children try to do as much as possible without your help; children learn by doing.
- If able, try to get to the students level instead of talking from above them.
- Use a quiet and controlled voice that will encourage and help children feel confident.
- Avoid comparing children and their work
- State directions in a positive tone.
- Be sure a child understands what you are saying.
- Try to be consistent in helping all of the children in your group
- Respect children's differences and personalities.
- Remember that you are an example of appropriate behavior such as sharing, not talking when the teacher is talking, showing respect, talking quietly and taking turns.
- Reward good behavior with a smile or compliment! Praise and encouragement can go a long way!
- In small groups, offer each child a chance to participate; quiet children can sometimes be overlooked!

**Have fun!**

**Thank you for volunteering! We are so very grateful to each and every one of you for your generous commitment of time, energy, skill and enthusiasm!**







**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:

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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.bsdrv.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

