



HARRIET TUBMAN
PUBLIC SCHOOL

VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK

Dear Volunteer,

Thank you for your interest in being a volunteer at Harriet Tubman Public School. Volunteers enable teachers to give individualized attention that is essential in the school program. With assistance, teachers can better accomplish their professional duties. We appreciate your decision to volunteer your time, energy and talent to help Harriet Tubman Public School Public School be a better place for our youngsters. We hope you will enjoy the time you spend with us, but most of all, we want you to know that we sincerely value your services. To make your volunteer service a pleasant experience, we would ask that you comply with Harriet Tubman Public School Public School in these procedures:

1. If you have decided to become a volunteer at the school please contact the school principal to express your interest.
2. Complete the Harriet Tubman Public School Volunteer Information Form (found at the end of this package) and return it to the office.
3. When your services are required you will be contacted by a school staff member and a volunteer time will be scheduled.
4. During your volunteer time we would ask that preschool children not accompany you to the classroom. We want the teaching day to proceed as normally as possible for the students.
5. Volunteers may be subject to privileged, confidential information regarding students, staff, parents, other volunteers or school reports. This information should not be shared with other students or individuals inside or outside of the school.
6. When you are volunteering at the school please ensure that you have signed in at the office. Before you leave return the badge and sign out.

Again, we welcome you to our Harriet Tubman Public School Team and look forward to working with you.

Sincerely

The Harriet Tubman Public School Staff

VOLUNTEER POLICY FOR THE DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD OF NIAGARA

DEFINITION

Volunteers in the school shall mean responsible persons from the community who provide services to the school that meet specific needs determined by the Principal, in consultation with the staff.

ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- (a) Principals will endeavour to match the skills of the volunteers with student, staff and program needs.
- (b) School volunteers may be required to participate in an orientation and/or informal "training" program.
- (c) School volunteers are required to maintain the confidentiality of personal information regarding staff and students.
- (d) School volunteers shall be responsible to the Principal of the school, but depending on the task, may be supervised by other staff.
- (e) School volunteers do not have ultimate responsibility for the supervision or formal discipline of students.

LIABILITY

School volunteers who are working within the scope of their duties are covered by the Board's liability insurance.

COMMON QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS - RE: VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

1. **Who can be a volunteer?**

Volunteers come to the school from a variety of sources. Our volunteers consist of parents of our students, grandparents, aunts, uncles, older siblings, community members and students. Although they may be earning a school credit, we consider Co-op Secondary School Students, College Child Care Students, University Psychology Students and College of Education Student Teachers as part of our volunteer program.

2. **What jobs do volunteers perform?**

Volunteers assist in a multitude of ways such as working with students in the classroom under the direction of a teacher or in the library with our teacher-librarian. They also assist in decorating bulletin boards, making costumes for plays, reading orally to students or duplicating materials for the teacher. Volunteers are involved with our pizza days, fundraising activities, class trips, school team transportation and special activity clubs. These are just a few tasks that volunteers perform and are by no means the entire list of possibilities.

3. **What about confidentiality?**

At times in the course of their duty, volunteers may be subject to privileged, confidential information regarding students, staff, parents, other volunteers or school reports.

Careful attention must be paid to the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act mandated by the Education Act.

A breach of confidentiality by a volunteer could result in the principal terminating the volunteer services of that person for the school year.

4. **What are the expectations of the school staff regarding volunteers?**

Harriet Tubman Public School Staff expects volunteers to:

- accept both school and board policies
- serve under the direction of the principal or designated teacher
- to become familiar with school routines and procedures
- to help maintain a positive, professional and cheerful atmosphere
- to perform duties as carefully and thoroughly as possible
- to be an important part of our Harriet Tubman Public School team

5. **What should I do if I am unable to perform my volunteer duties?**

If you are ill or have a previous commitment, please call the school as soon as you know so that the office personnel can notify your volunteer contact. (The school telephone number is 905-934-3325.)

6. **What about the Staff Room?**

The staff room has two functions: to serve as a location for lunch/coffee breaks and to serve as a quiet place for staff to work or conduct scheduled conferences during their preparation time. Please feel free to come to the staff room at break times and enjoy a coffee or tea. During all other times the staff room is in use since available space in our school is at a premium.

7. **What if problems or conflicts arise?**

If any problems arise with students, refer them immediately to your volunteer contact. If at any time you are uncomfortable about your work for any reason, please discuss it with your volunteer contact and/or principal as soon as possible. Communication is the key to happiness and success.

8. **Volunteers who are parents.....any special concerns?**

If you are a parent with children attending Harriet Tubman Public School, you must realize that your children will be proud of your participation and they will benefit from your better understanding of school programs. Your presence in the school is special. Be sure your children don't become informed about things that they normally wouldn't hear. Also, to discuss your child's progress with his/her teacher, please arrange an appointment other than your regular volunteer time. It is extremely rewarding to work in your own children's school and to be such an important part of their educational

experience.

Harriet Tubman Public School VOLUNTEER INFORMATION FORM

Harriet Tubman Public School VOLUNTEERS 2014 - 2015

Thank you for accepting this invitation to become a volunteer at Harriet Tubman Public School Public School. The information that you provide will be considered as it relates to the needs of the school and will be kept centrally for staff to access when the need for volunteer service is required. Your Volunteer Information Form will remain on file as long as you continue to be a school volunteer in good standing. Volunteer Information Forms for those individuals who have not served as school volunteers for a period of one school year will be disposed of, by shredding. Please note that the Principal retains the authority to accept or decline any volunteer's offer of service, and to halt, without appeal, a volunteer's involvement in an activity.

The role of volunteering with the District School Board of Niagara generally involves interaction with students to varying degrees, and as well, places volunteers in a position of trust and confidence with regard to information they may receive. The Board's 'duty of care' for our students requires that we take reasonable steps to determine the suitability of prospective volunteers. We thank you for providing us with information in our screening process for volunteers.

Please complete the following and return to the school's office:

Name : _____ Date : _____

Telephone : () _____ E-mail : _____

Certification/ Experience with Children : (related skills, knowledge; experiences) _____

In what capacity do you wish to volunteer ?

Availability: (time of day/week) _____

Orientation/Training Needed: _____

Personal information on this form is being collected in accordance with the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act for administrative purposes as determined in the School Volunteers Policy. Questions regarding the collection and use of this information may be directed to the Director of Education, District School Board of Niagara, 191 Carlton Street, St. Catharines, Ontario, L2R 7P4 (905-641-1550).