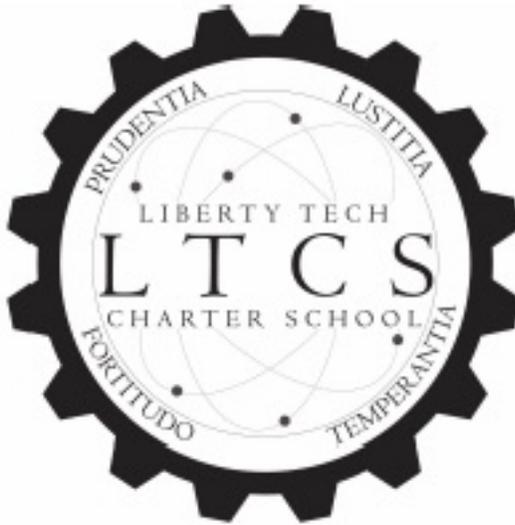


Liberty Tech Charter School Volunteer Handbook



119 Price Rd.

Brooks, GA 30205

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Knowledge + Virtue = Wisdom

Liberty Tech Charter School Volunteer Handbook

Thank You for Being a Volunteer!

Volunteering is the giving of time, energy, and concern. We thank all volunteers for their participation and dedication to the students of Grant Street School and OCEAN. Together we can make each child's years in the Port Townsend School District a solid foundation upon which to build a lifetime of successful achievement.

Ways That Parents Can Volunteer

There are many ways parents and/or caregivers are invited to volunteer, some of which include:

- PTO Events/Activities and Volunteer positions
- Helping children in the classroom (e.g. reading, math, art, science, computer lab)
- Garden care and assistance
- Field Trip Chaperones
- Parent Editors
- Correcting papers
- Tutoring
- Copying and preparing materials
- Computer tasks/web sites
- Providing place based instruction resources

PTO has many volunteer opportunities and will send information home with students regarding ways parents can sign up to volunteer. For classroom focused volunteer opportunities, speak directly with your child's teacher. Please feel free to ask in the office for further information regarding volunteering.

Volunteer Program Benefits

Volunteers have always been an important resource in our school. A strong volunteer program benefits teachers, students, parents and the community at large. Some of the positive effects of a strong volunteer program include:

Teachers

- Increased time to teach and plan
- Increased opportunity to enrich the curriculum
- Reduction in discipline problems

Community

- Increased knowledge and appreciation of the education process

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Volunteer Program Benefits Continued...

Students

- Increased individual attention
- Increased motivation
- Increased ability to relate to adults
- Increased respect for adults

Parents

- Increased understanding of the education process
- Increased understanding of your child's learning process
- Increased familiarity with the staff and community
- Opportunity to practice and build skills
- Opportunity to share expertise and talents

Volunteer Training and Orientation

Sometime during September or October, all volunteers will have an opportunity to attend a 45 minute Volunteer Training program to help answer any questions about volunteering at Liberty Tech Charter School.

Background Check

The state has approved legislation requiring school districts to have volunteers complete Background Check forms if they are working with students. All volunteers are required to complete a Background Check through the local sheriff's department. The Background Check is good for 2 years.

Scheduling, Sign In, & Sign Out

All volunteer activity should be scheduled on the school's volunteer calendar. All volunteers must sign in and out at the main office. As a safety measure, it allows the school to know who is or who has been in the building. (Our insurance requires the school to know who is in the building at all times.) Signing in also helps the school to find you if there is an emergency. Lastly, signing "in" and "out" enables us to collect and tabulate volunteer hours necessary for many grant applications.

Also, once signed in, please wear your volunteer badge or a visitor's tag in a visible location while you are on school grounds. This will help everyone, including students, to get to know you more quickly and allows the school to know that you have a reason to be there.

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Volunteer Role

A volunteer provides support not only to the students, but also to the teacher, the nature of which is based on the discretion of the teacher for whom you are volunteering. As a parent, you have a unique perspective and ability to understand students. However, as a volunteer, you must act in that capacity first and foremost.

Volunteers must not lend money to students, and shall not give children gifts, food, or presents.

Facilitating Classroom Learning

In order to facilitate classroom learning, teachers have a set of volunteer guidelines for working with students. These guidelines may involve specific questions or procedures to ensure students are provided the appropriate challenge and support for their learning.

Professionalism

Although the job is voluntary, the commitment is professional. Besides maintaining an attitude of mutual respect and confidence, you should become familiar with school and classroom policies and practices. Working with the teaching staff requires flexibility and a willingness to follow directions.

Please be on time! Volunteers' timeliness affects a teacher's ability to execute their daily plan. (Please note: Arrive early for field trips. Siblings are not allowed on field trips).

Remember, too, that teacher's desks may contain confidential files and information that should remain private.

Dependability

Students, teachers and staff members rely on the services performed by volunteers. If you are unable to volunteer on your scheduled day, please make every effort to find a substitute. If you cannot find a substitute, notify the teacher or staff member within 24 hours of your scheduled shift. Room parents may be helpful in identifying substitutes.

Respectful Behavior

Volunteers are expected to exhibit behavior that is respectful and assumes equality toward members of the same and opposite sex, and all ethnic/racial and religious groups. Volunteers shall not make any comments that can be construed as racist, sexist, or otherwise discriminatory.

Volunteers shall avoid promoting any commercial products, religious doctrines or beliefs, as well as any political candidates (this includes political buttons) or parties.

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Confidentiality

Confidentiality is extremely important for everyone who works or volunteers in a school. Volunteers must protect staff and students' right to privacy.

Once a volunteer begins to work in a school setting, s/he becomes privy to knowledge about children's behavior patterns, academic ability, emotional maturity, relationships with others, etc. In some cases, information of this nature is imparted so that the volunteer can work more effectively with the child. In other cases, it is simply acquired in the course of frequent contact in the school.

In addition, volunteers are in a position to learn more about staff members than would normally be learned from their public image. One also forms personal opinions about the professional competency of individual teachers and staff.

Regardless of how a volunteer comes by this type of information and/or develops personal opinions, it is considered privileged and, must be kept personal and private.

A volunteer is expected to:

- Never share opinions about behavior and/or academic program of students.
- Never share personal information about the student or student's family with other people.
- Never contact students' families regarding classroom or playground issues
- Never share specific information with a parent about their child or other children based on your classroom experience, whether positive or negative.
- Never share knowledge and/or opinions about the professional competency of individual teachers and staff in the community.
- Never make comments harmful to the reputation of any student, professional or other volunteer.

If parents and friends ask about your work, tell them you enjoy working with the children and discuss the activities you do rather than specific information about the child, the teacher, or the school.

If problems develop, the line of communication regarding a situation in the school is always first with the staff member concerned and then, if necessary, with the principal.

Discipline and Classroom Management

Allow the teachers to discipline children. If there are incidents of misbehavior, it is the teacher's job to deal with them. As a volunteer, it is helpful to be specific about rules and expectations with students. Keep limits and boundaries in place. Consistently and calmly work with students taking a neutral stance, restating rules and expectations and offering reasonable choices.

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Schedule Teacher Conference Time

Important conversations deserve preparation and dedicated time. If you need to speak with a teacher about your child, schedule a mutually agreeable time outside of class time.

Parking

Be sure to park in the designated parking spaces in one of the three parking lots. Never leave your car, even for a minute, in the loading zone, fire lane, or dismissal area.

Hallways

Please keep in mind that hallway conversations can carry into classrooms and may disrupt instruction. Please keep conversations quiet or pick a location in the building for longer conversations that will not disrupt classroom learning.

Preschoolers/Siblings

Please do not bring preschoolers or siblings when you volunteer in classrooms during school hours. Exceptions may be made for classroom parties. Check with your teacher.

Coats/Purses

Please do not bring anything of value to school. Coats, purses, umbrellas, etc. may be kept in the classroom where you are working.

Smoking

There is no smoking on school property.

Dogs

No dogs allowed on campus. Thank you for being respectful of those with allergies, and for helping to keep our play areas clean.

Mandatory Child Abuse Reporting

All volunteers are deemed by the state as mandatory reporters of suspected child abuse. All volunteers must complete mandatory reporter training annually by viewing the training video.

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Telephone/Cellular Phones

School phones are available for your use if needed. Please turn off cell phones or place on silent mode. You may leave the school office number in case of emergencies.

Exhibition Workshop

The exhibition workshop contains the resources available for the construction of many projects with which volunteers may be assisting. The workshop remains locked during the school day, and access is only permitted through the instructional coach.

Sometimes there can be a lot of demand for the copy machine. Priority is given first to teachers, then to paraprofessionals, and finally to volunteers. If you are using the machine and a teacher needs it, please make it available to her/him. If you are copying for a teacher please let others in the workroom know.

Be sure to clean up the workroom after you use it.

Restrooms

Please use the adult restrooms located near the staff lounge.

Emergency Procedures

If there is a fire, earthquake, lockdown drill or emergency exercise of any kind, please follow your class and do as the teacher instructs the students

Field Trip Specifics

Fieldtrips can be especially challenging. Teachers recommend that volunteers

- Realize your first responsibility is to help and keep all children safe.
- Follow all teacher guidelines and directions.
- Never leave any student alone for any reason.

Volunteers are the best!

We are all here to help you with your volunteer experience. Any time you need help, please just ask. We are so grateful and thankful that you are willing to help us enhance the lives of children at Liberty Tech Charter School.

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Volunteer Commitment

As a volunteer you are a representative of Liberty Tech Charter School. As such, the expectation is that you uphold the virtues of our school at all times.

- Temperance - Temperance means to be self-controlled; it is to give yourself to something, but with restraint. It's an active, thoughtful resolve to restrain our wills, minds, actions, and tongues; in a word, our whole self. At Liberty Tech Charter School, we strive to govern our behavior with self-control in a manner in which what we say and do always represents the best of who we are as individuals.
- Prudence - At Liberty Tech Charter School, we strive to execute good judgment at all times. We are careful to reflect upon how our current actions will impact future outcomes. We prepare ourselves with the knowledge necessary to make wise decisions that lead to future success.
- Justice - A commonly accepted definition of Justice is that it is a moral standard of all men to one another requiring them to perform their social and moral as well as legal obligations to each other and to grant to each other all that fairly be granted. It is through the practice of justice that we ensure a safe environment for learning. At Liberty Tech Charter School, we hold justice as a key virtue because the safety of all our community members is of utmost importance.
- Fortitude - Fortitude is a willingness to freely go beyond the call of duty, to make sacrifices, to act on your convictions. Fortitude includes the courage to confront our personal weaknesses and attraction to vice. Fortitude allows us to push through difficulty. Fortitude helps us to resist fear. At Liberty Tech Charter School, we realize that it takes fortitude in order to stand up for what is right. We realize that it takes fortitude to face challenges head on. We realize it takes fortitude in order to chart new paths. At Liberty Tech Charter School living with fortitude is a way of life.

By signing below, I acknowledge that I have read and understand the entirety of the Liberty Tech Charter School Handbook. I also recognize that it is my responsibility to govern myself according to the principles outlined in this handbook, and that failure to do so can result in my inability to further volunteer at Liberty Tech Charter School.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Printed Name: _____