


Process Four (of 6)

A step-by-step guide for

GUIDES ON THE JOURNEY: RECRUITING, TRAINING AND USING VOLUNTEERS

NOTE: Steps marked with a  are accompanied by one or more inserts, included in this packet.

A volunteer program is part of an overall approach to organizing family involvement.

This section draws heavily on the work of Epstein and the National PTA .

- 1 Survey staff** to find out how they'd like to use parents' time and talents.

This can be informal at a staff meeting or through a survey such as INSERT A for VOLUNTEERS Step 1. INSERT B for VOLUNTEERS Step 1 identifies research-derived benefits to achievement, behavior and culture for schools who nurture volunteer relationships.

- 2 Sort volunteer tasks into** categories for easy browsing.

Differentiate between school-wide and classroom activities, and between those that must be done during the school day vs. those that can be completed off-site and outside of regular school hours.

- 3 Survey families and community** to learn about their talents, experience, interest and skills.

INSERT for VOLUNTEERS Step 3 is a suggested worksheet.

- 4 Charter a Volunteer Coordinating Team** to supervise scheduling, training, evaluating, and rewarding volunteers. The principal will serve as the overall supervisor of the volunteer program and meet with the Volunteer Coordinator at least weekly at the start of the program.

- 5 Write job descriptions** for volunteers.

Take time at a staff meeting to have grade-level teams write these. Include in each a detailed description of what needs to be done, the time required, a schedule for at least a month in advance, the person to whom the volunteer is responsible, the importance of the task to the individual student, to the class and to the school, and a hope for what the volunteer could gain from the experience.

- 6 Recruit and assign volunteers.** Continue recruitment throughout the year as new families move in and situations change.

Give each volunteer an assignment notification with the "Key Hints" for volunteers on the back. See INSERT for VOLUNTEERS Step 6 for a sample.

- 7 Train and welcome volunteers.**

Build an orientation and training program that sets a welcoming tone and a supportive environment. Include a map and tour of the building and introductions to key staff. Hand out "guidelines" of your expectations of volunteers (INSERT for VOLUNTEERS Step 7 is a sample). Establish a location for volunteer materials, a welcoming volunteer "lounge" and a schedule for assignments and meetings.

- 8 Publish a "Volunteer Directory."** Work with the Volunteer Coordinator to produce and distribute the directory to parent leaders, teachers and office staff.

- 9 Set up a system for knowing who is in the building.**

Establish a badge or button system for volunteers when in the building. Have a set location for the Volunteer Sign-in/out form. (See INSERT for VOLUNTEERS, Step 9) Explain why this is important.

Ask volunteers and staff for feedback about the program periodically.

