



For any further information on volunteering or supporting Ronald D. O'Neal. Please contact Mrs. Marzullo—Principal At [marciemarzullo@u-46.org](mailto:marciemarzullo@u-46.org)

**Ronald D O'Neal Elementary**

**Volunteer Handbook**



**Ronald D. O'Neal Elementary School**  
**510 Franklin Blvd. Elgin, IL 60120**  
**847-888-5266**main line  
**847-608-2753**fax

Dear O'Neal Volunteers,  
Thank you for choosing to volunteer at Ronald D. O'Neal!  
There are many contributions you can make to the children  
of our community through your involvement in school.

This handbook is designed to provide you with information,  
guidelines, and support in order to help you effectively work  
as a volunteer in our school.

We are very appreciative of the gift of time you are giving  
to us. Even more importantly, we are grateful for the impact  
you will make on the children of O'Neal. We are confident  
that you will find your volunteer experience a rewarding one.

Sincerely,  
Marcie Marzullo  
Principal

- V** is for the **VERY** special people that you are.
- O** is for the **overwhelming** support you offer others.
- L** is for the **little** things you do that make such a  
difference in someone's life.
- U** is for the **unspoken** words that sometimes mean just  
as much.
- N** is for the **need** you fill when other's aren't able.
- T** is for the **time** you give of yourselves on top of your  
own busy schedules.
- E** is for the **emotional** support you continually give.
- E** is also for the **endless** energy you all seem to possess.
- R** is for the **responsibility** you have taken on & never  
once complained.
- S** is for the **smiles** you bring to the students & families  
by just being you.

- ◆ Keep promises and make none that you cannot keep-kids never forget.
- ◆ If a child or teacher reveals personal information, it is confidential. If a child reveals something you are concerned about, tell the teacher as soon as possible in a private matter.
- ◆ If a student is misbehaving, try naming the behavior you are correcting. If the student continues to behave inappropriately, consult with the teacher. Discipline is the teacher's responsibility.
- ◆ Treat students with the same courtesy and respect you expect them to show you. Try not to take it personally if a student does not behave appropriately; assume the child is having a problem not related to you. Be fair, consistent, and impartial.
- ◆ Try to enjoy children because they are different rather than merely tolerating difference. Look for the contribution each student can make.
- ◆ And, always maintain a sense of humor and perspective!

## Ways to say "Good Job!"

- "You are really working hard today!"
- "I appreciate the way you are trying!"
- "I knew you could do it!"
- "You are on the right track!"
- "That is a good point!"
- "Super!"
- "Much better!"
- "Wow!"
- "Congratulations!"
- "Good Thinking!"
- "Keep it up!"
- "I like seeing you stick with it even when it's frustrating!"

## Procedures for Volunteers

**Policy:** Volunteers in school buildings during the day who are supervised by an administrator or certified teacher do not require a criminal background check.

- Background checks and fingerprinting is required for overnight chaperones and chaperones for full-day field trips.
- Offenses that would disqualify a volunteer from working with U-46 students include convictions for sex offenses, murder, violence against youth, and some drug offenses typically involving distribution of narcotics. Additional information can be found in the Policy (105 ILCS 5/10-21.9; 5/21B-80; and 55 ILCS 5/3-9005).
- Volunteers need to only be fingerprinted once. After a volunteer is in the U-46 database, Human Resources will receive updates from the Illinois State Police and the Federal Bureau of Investigations if that volunteer has been convicted of any offenses that would exclude him/her from volunteering.

## Procedures for Volunteers—Cont'

**Parking:** The parking lot may be full. Please park on streets surrounding the school. Do not park directly in front or the back of school. This is where bus arrival and drop off occurs.

**Check-In:** Sign the visitors log and receive a visitor badge. The badge must be worn the entire time while in the building.

**Cell Phones:** We ask that you refrain from making or taking calls during your volunteer time if at all possible. If you do need to take a call on your cell phone, please do so in the front of the building.

**Emergencies:** Please follow the teacher's directions in case of fire, tornado, or lock down emergency. Directions to fire exits and tornado shelter are posted on the walls of the classrooms. All students are instructed on what to do in case of emergencies. Please assist us by watching and listening to the teacher's directions.

### Friendly Reminders

- Be reliable and punctual. Remember to call the school (847-888-5266) if you will not be able to come at the time the teacher is expecting you. Respect the fact that the teacher's time is needed for fulfilling work responsibilities. If you wish to conference about your child, please set up a time for reviewing work, questions, or concerns.
- Make other arrangements for younger children. Other students or siblings may not accompany you while volunteering at O'Neal.
- Set a good example for others through behavior, speech and dress.
- Adhere to the classroom teacher's rules and management system. Please follow all of the teacher's directions.
- Practice patience and kindness.
- If a teacher needs to use the copy machine that you are using, please allow them to complete their work first. They only have a short planning time to finish their task.

## Hints for Working with Children

- ♦ Be warm and friendly. This will help set a mood that promotes trust and learning. It takes time and patience to build friendships with children.
- ♦ Learn the names of the children and show interest in what they are doing and telling you. You are very important as a listener.
- ♦ When working with students, encourage them to do their own thinking.
- ♦ Children learn best by doing, not observing. Encourage children to ask questions and to search for answers, to use all of their senses whenever possible, and to discover, experiment and repeat experience on their own to build confidence. Give them plenty of time to answer—silence often means they are thinking and organizing what they want to say or write. Practice waiting 10 or 20 seconds before saying anything. This feels much longer than you think!
- ♦ Give honest, specific, and deserved praise, especially for student effort. You are in a special position to focus on student's strengths and positive behavior. Use PBIS CARE BUCKS to promote positive behavior. When you must correct, keep it constructive and try to balance the correcting comments with something positive or encouraging.
- ♦ If you don't know an answer or aren't sure what to do, admit it to the student and then work it out together. Feel free to ask the teacher for help when you need it.
- ♦ Be consistent with the teacher's rules and the school's rules for student behavior, schedule, and a classroom atmosphere.
- ♦ Be patient and keep a long-term perspective. It takes time to build relationships and most young people have short attention spans, especially when they are not succeeding. Simple gestures of caring and interest go a long way: a smile, a pat on the back, an inquiry about something the student cares about will mean a great deal—even if it doesn't show at first.

## Volunteer Expectations of Teachers

- ◆ Consideration
- ◆ Patience
- ◆ Appreciation
- ◆ Respect
- ◆ Courtesy
- ◆ Sincerity
- ◆ Good directions
- ◆ Has tasks ready
- ◆ Cooperative attitude
- ◆ Organization
- ◆ Explains specific expectations for volunteer work
- ◆ Explains policies and procedures of the school and classroom
- ◆ Willing to help the volunteer as needed.
- ◆ Assigns tasks volunteers are capable of doing
- ◆ Tells volunteer about schedule changes
- ◆ Provides needed materials for assigned tasks
- ◆ Offers constructive criticism for correction but not in front of the students
- ◆ Welcomes creative ideas and suggestions.

## Code of Ethics

In order to promote volunteerism at Ronald D. O'Neal, it is essential that all school volunteers adhere to a professional code of ethics. We ask volunteers to:

- ◆ **Have a positive attitude.** Please come to school with an attitude that says, "I'm glad you asked me to be here," and one that will say to the student you will be working with, "You are so special. I'm glad I have this opportunity to work with you." Also, please be positive about our teachers and staff. The school environment is not the place for negative talk or gossip.
- ◆ **Be dependable.** The teachers and children are counting on you!
- ◆ **Communicate.** We want your time at O'Neal to be an enjoyable and fulfilling experience. If you have questions, don't hesitate to ask the appropriate person.
- ◆ **Maintain Confidentiality.** You may have access to grades, records, or other information about children. You may know or see children who have special needs or who are struggling academically, behaviorally, or emotionally. **Please remember that any information pertaining to a child must be left in the classroom.** As volunteers, we do not want to be responsible for sharing information that might be detrimental to a child. **Parents who violate this confidentiality policy will not be able to volunteer in the classroom.**

## Holiday Parties

Every school year the students will have the opportunity to take part in 3 classroom parties. These parties will be held during the regular school day and will be in observance of special times of the year. Room Parents/Guardians, with input from the classroom teacher, plan, prepare, and help at the parties.

- ◆ A.M. Kindergarten will have parties from 10:00-11:00am. Afternoon parties for P.M. Kindergarten and all other grades will begin at 1:00pm.
- ◆ Siblings, both younger and older, are not allowed to attend room parties with their parents. Please be sure to make other arrangements for them.
- ◆ Please be aware of all allergies and other health concerns in your child's class when choosing a treat. Treats need to be store-bought with nutritional labels attached. Sorry, no homemade treats.
- ◆ All food for parties will be checked by the nurse to ensure that the food follows our safe-food guidelines. Safe food will be delivered to the classroom by school staff. Unsafe food will be kept in the office until the end of the school day.
- ◆ Only PARENTS who are volunteering for the party, and who are listed on the sign-in sheet will be able to attend the party. Check-in will begin 20 minutes prior to the start of the party.

## Birthday Treats

- Please bring in any birthday treats at the beginning of the day. Teachers will arrange for the treats to be passed out at lunch or during a snack time. This will allow us to limit interruptions in instruction during the school day. All treats must also be store bought and adhere to any dietary/allergy restrictions in the classroom.

## Teacher Expectations of Volunteers

- ◆ Love of Children
- ◆ Promptness
- ◆ Enthusiasm
- ◆ Flexibility
- ◆ Dependability
- ◆ Patience
- ◆ Loyalty
- ◆ Professional attitude
- ◆ Imagination and Creativity
- ◆ Non-Disruptive Influence
- ◆ Tact
- ◆ Sense of Humor
- ◆ Initiative
- ◆ Discretion and trustworthiness concerning confidential matters relating to the classroom and students.
- ◆ Willingness to help, ask for direction, try a variety of approaches and techniques with students.
- ◆ Sensitivity regarding the children's needs and the teacher's time needs.
- ◆ Recognize that the teacher is the authority in the classroom.
- ◆ Ability to maintain firm but kind discipline when working with small groups of children.