

# Volunteer Handbook



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## Welcome Letter

Dear School Volunteer:

On behalf of Almond Acres Charter Academy, I would like to extend our appreciation for your dedication and support to our school and our mission of improving the academic achievement of our students. Volunteers play an important and valuable role at our school. Students, teachers, staff, parents and community all benefit from the work of individuals like you who give of your time and talents. We know that you will benefit from this experience as well.

This handbook is directed to all volunteers who wish to devote a portion of their time to our school and students. We want you to get the most out of your volunteer experience and as such, we want to make sure you are an informed volunteer.

Volunteers help in many different ways: tutoring, classroom assistants, playground supervision, office assistants, field trip chaperones, team sports, and special projects. We appreciate your hard work and dedication. On behalf of the teachers, staff, and students, we say "Thank You!"

If I can ever be of assistance to you, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Bob Bourgault  
Executive Director

## Definition of Volunteers

Volunteers are individuals who donate their time, without financial compensation, to benefit their communities. The volunteer's participation may occur in a classroom setting during the school day or outside the school setting as part of an extracurricular activity. *A person who comes to the school for a one-time special event, such as a guest speaker, presenter, or visitor is considered a guest and they do not complete a volunteer application.* School policy prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, creed, marital status, sex, religion, age, disability, or any other protected status as defined by federal, state or local law.

### Volunteer Opportunities include:

- Tutoring
- Mentoring
- Athletics
- Classroom assistance
- School/classroom events like science fairs and field trips
- Before/After-school programs
- Non-classroom (main office, library, etc.) assistance
- Yard supervision
- Food service

### Volunteer Requirements

All volunteers are required to complete a "School Volunteer Application Form." Volunteers may be subject to a criminal background/fingerprint check. No volunteer shall be assigned to provide supervision or instruction of students unless he/she has submitted evidence of a TB Risk Assessment within the past 60 days (to determine that he/she is free of active tuberculosis in compliance with CA Education Code section 49406. Volunteers who are found to be free of infectious TB shall thereafter be required to have a TB Risk Assessment every four years.

Acceptance as a volunteer is based on factors including, but not limited to:

- No record of a serious or violent felony conviction (pursuant to Ed Code 45122.1) or requirement to register as a sex offender under California law (Penal Code 290)
- Live Scan fingerprinting, with clearance from Department of Justice
- A completed "School Volunteer Application Form" on file.
- Tuberculosis (TB) Clearance (Risk Assessment or Skin Test)
- Positive attitude; interest in and enthusiasm for working with children
- Ability to work cooperatively with school personnel and participate regularly
- Good communication skills, health, and personal hygiene; ethical conduct; dependability.

## **Suggestions for Making Your Volunteer Experience Successful**

The following are suggestions that should prove helpful in developing a successful partnership with Almond Acres Charter Academy students and staff.

1. Meet with the teacher/staff member before you start. Volunteers are placed with teachers or other staff members who have requested volunteer assistance. Some have specific roles and tasks for their volunteers, while others identify those tasks on an as-needed basis.
  - a. Ask questions if you are unclear about something
  - b. Keep communication open
2. Get to know the school grounds
  - a. Know the location and phone number of the school office
  - b. Know the location of important rooms such as the office, restrooms, staff lounge, etc.
  - c. Find out where to park.
3. If you are volunteering in a classroom, spend some time observing the class
  - a. Become familiar with classroom routines
  - b. Identify the location of supplies and materials within the classroom.
4. If you are volunteering on the playground, be well-informed of the playground supervision expectations and rules, and if you are unsure, ask a staff member.
5. Establish positive relationships with the students.
  - a. Be friendly; let them know you are glad to be here!
  - b. Be encouraging to students.
6. If you are experiencing some problems with your placement or responsibilities, try to resolve them first with the teacher or staff member with whom you are working. If you need more assistance with your problem, please contact the Executive Director or designee.
7. When the teacher/staff member first orients you, the following should be discussed:
  - a. Days and time to work in classrooms/on campus
  - b. Procedures for you and staff member to be in communication
  - c. Alternate plans for the days when the teacher or staff member is absent
  - d. How you will be told of the day's assignment (folder, note, etc.)
  - e. What name the students will call you
  - f. Teachers' own classroom management
  - g. Where to leave your personal belongings
  - h. Where the lounge and adult restrooms are located.
8. Be punctual. In the event that you must be absent, please notify the teacher or staff member as soon as possible.
9. Sign in and out upon your arrival and departure in the main office.

10. Wear your nametag or school badge throughout your stay on campus. This badge or nametag will help students, staff, and other volunteers recognize that you are a volunteer on campus.
11. Remember that you are a role model for students and the school community.
12. Remember that a volunteer is not a teacher or a teacher's aide, not a therapist or a counselor, but first of all a friend who accepts the students as they are.
13. Feel free to ask questions about programs, policies, materials, and supplies. Talk to the teacher about any difficulties at appropriate times, not in front of students or parents.
14. Learn the names of students.
15. Help students tackle their work but do not do their work for them. If they get off-track, help them get back on task in a tactful manner.
16. Work at the student's level; sit or stand with him/her. Show your interest and involvement.
17. Speak in a positive manner to students; point out the things they have done right and the things they do well.
18. Remind students of appropriate behavior if they are disruptive, but remember that corrective discipline is the responsibility of the teachers, and School Administration.

## School Volunteer Procedures/Checklist

Procedures for all volunteers are as follows:

- Fill out Volunteer Application Form
  - Provide a valid state issued driver's license/ID Card
  - Read and sign the Volunteer Agreement Form
  - Read and sign the Volunteer Confidentiality Agreement
  - Agree to and provide a Criminal Background check with Live Scan if requested
  - Obtain a TB Risk Assessment from a medical professional
- A. All volunteer work is done under the direction of an assigned teacher, office staff, or Program Site Counsel (PSC) volunteer coordinator. Volunteers must comply with the sign-in/out procedures at the school site and other terms and conditions of this Volunteer Handbook.
- B. Volunteers do not receive compensation, health benefits, or worker's compensation. Additionally, section 35330 of the California Education Code contains the following statement of immunity in favor of the school when students or volunteers are participating in field trips: "All persons making the field trip shall be deemed to have waived all claims against the district, charter school, or the State of California for injury, accident, illness, or death occurring during or by reason of the field trip or excursion."

I have read and acknowledge the information contained in paragraphs A. and B.

By: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Volunteer Signature

Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

# Volunteer Application

(Please type or print)

School Name/Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Last First Middle Maiden Name/Other Names Used

Residence Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Street City State Zip

Home Telephone: ( \_\_\_\_\_ ) Work or Mobile Telephone: ( \_\_\_\_\_ )

Emergency Contact Name and Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ ( \_\_\_\_\_ ) \_\_\_\_\_

Health Insurer and Policy # \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ CA Driver's License or ID Card: Yes ( ) No ( ) Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Length of residence in county? \_\_\_\_\_

Previous Address (if less than 5 years): \_\_\_\_\_

Physical Limitations: Yes ( ) No ( ) Explain: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Relationship to any student(s) or staff members at school? Yes ( ) No ( ) Explain: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Languages spoken: \_\_\_\_\_

Please respond to the following: "I am interested in volunteering because \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_"

Do you have any felony convictions: Yes ( ) No ( ) If so, please list: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Have you **EVER** been convicted of any sex offense for which you must register with any Law Enforcement Agency pursuant to Penal Code Section 290? Yes ( ) No ( )

I certify under penalty of perjury that the foregoing statements are true and complete, and I authorize Almond Acres Charter Academy to complete a background check as a condition of school volunteer service, as provided by California Education Code 45125.5

I understand that I will not receive any compensation or salary, or any other health or retirement benefits, or workers' compensation insurance coverage during this volunteer assignment. I agree to waive all claims against the Almond Acres Charter Academy and hold the Almond Acres Charter Academy, its officers, agents, employees, authorizer, and volunteers harmless from any and all liability or claims which may arise out of or in connection with my participation in this volunteer activity.

In the event of illness or injury, I do hereby consent to whatever x-ray examination, anesthetic, medical, surgical or dental diagnosis or treatment and hospital care and emergency transportation considered necessary in the best judgment of the attending physician, surgeon, or dentist and performed under the supervision of a member of the medical staff of the hospital or facility furnishing medical or dental services.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_



## **Volunteer Guidelines and Agreement**

1. Immediately upon arrival, I will sign in at the main office or the designated sign-in station.
2. Volunteers will follow all policies, procedures and other rules established by the school and all applicable laws.
3. Volunteers must wear the appropriate identification badge and will show volunteer identification whenever required by the school to do so.
4. Volunteers must follow the appropriate dress code. Dress code included in this handbook.
5. Volunteers cannot smoke in any school facility or building or within 50' of a school building.
6. Volunteers will not lend money and/or bring gifts to students, unless authorized by the school principal or designee.
7. Volunteers will not transport students unless they have been given express permission to do so by the school Director and have provided the appropriate insurance and driving record verification. Do not put yourself in the position of being alone with any student in any vehicle.
8. Volunteers must not be alone with students in unsupervised areas of the campus or activity location and shall abide by school policy regarding the touching of students.
9. Volunteers will not have access to student educational records. All volunteers will sign a confidentiality agreement.
10. Volunteers will not photograph or videotape students unless authorized by the Director or designee.
11. Volunteers will not dress/undress or provide personal hygiene assistance, or supply medication to students.
12. Volunteers should not exchange telephone numbers, home addresses, e-mail addresses or any other home directory information with students for any purpose unless it is required as part of your role as a volunteer.
13. Volunteers will use universal precautions to avoid contact with bodily fluids.
14. Volunteers will use only "adult" designated restrooms.
15. Volunteers can monitor student behavior; however, if a situation is serious, the volunteer should seek immediate assistance from school personnel.

16. Volunteers will not discriminate against or harass any person and will report all harassment or discrimination observed, in accordance with school policy.
17. Volunteers will not search students or student property.
18. Volunteers will make every reasonable effort to make sure that the school's technology resources are used appropriately and responsibly.
19. Volunteers will make themselves familiar with and agree to follow the school's evacuation and lockdown procedures.
20. Volunteers will not direct a student to remove an emblem, insignia, or garment including a religious emblem, insignia, or garment. If the volunteer believes a student's clothing is disruptive or promotes disruptive behavior, the volunteer will contact a staff member immediately.
21. Volunteers must report suspected cases of abuse or neglect to the school administrator or professional staff.
22. Volunteers understand that the school will not be responsible for lost or damaged personal items brought to school by the volunteer. You are discouraged from bringing valuables to the school.
23. Volunteers understand that the school reserves the right to decline their volunteer services at any time.
24. Volunteers shall not be in possession of or under the influence of, alcoholic beverages and/or illegal drugs, or in possession of firearms while serving in a volunteer capacity.
25. Volunteers shall not use obscene or discriminatory language at school or at any school event.

I, \_\_\_\_\_, have read and agree to abide by the above guidelines.

Volunteer Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Volunteer Confidentiality Agreement

**In accordance with federal law, all school volunteers are expected to maintain confidentiality while working at the school.** All things that are seen and heard at school about employees or children and their families should be considered privileged/confidential information. Trust must be established and maintained in order for our volunteer program to be successful. Volunteers can strengthen the bond between themselves and the school by following these guidelines:

- Treat all student and employee information as personal and confidential regardless of the source.
- Communicate relevant information about students only to the respective classroom teacher or Executive Director/Assist. Executive Director.
- Seek clarification of unusual situations that occur in the school from the person(s) involved and avoid discussing such matters with others unless so directed by the assigned teacher or Executive Director/Assist. Executive Director.
- Retain a sense of perspective regarding comments heard and actions observed.
- Understand that not all information can and will be shared with volunteers, due to legal considerations including state and federal law.
- Deal impartially with students regardless of background, intelligence, physical or emotional maturity.
- Do not discuss student progress or behavior with the parent. All relevant information should be referred to the teacher or the Executive Director/Assist. Executive Director Direct all inquiries about students to the professional staff.
- Speak constructively of all school staff; however, report difficulties involving the welfare of students or the school to the principal.
- Do not discuss confidential information with anyone. This information includes, but is not limited to:
  - Scholastic and health records
  - Test scores and grades
  - Discipline and classroom behavior
  - Character traits of children
  - Supports and services a student may receive
- All volunteers are required to sign a statement of confidentiality.

**Discipline:** Discipline of students is solely the responsibility of the teacher in charge. Volunteers should under no circumstances discipline students. Should students misbehave in your presence, you should report this immediately to the teacher in charge. The teacher will then determine the necessary course of action. Also note that we expect students to treat volunteers with the same level of respect given to other school personnel. If you feel that students are not being respectful towards you, do not hesitate to discuss the matter with the teacher or Executive Director.

**While all student information should be treated confidentially** and sharing student information with others may be a violation of the law, do not make a promise to a student that you will keep confidential any information that pertains to the welfare of the student(s). Although the student is free to share confidential information with you, there are

certain things you are required by law to tell the principal or school administrator. Any personal information learned from a student, should be held in strictest confidence **except:**

1. If a student confides that he or she is the victim of sexual, emotional, chemical, or physical abuse (including bullying and cyber bullying).
2. If a student confides that he or she is involved in any illegal activity.
3. If a student confides that he or she is considering homicide or suicide.

Should one of these exceptions arise, you are required by law to immediately notify the Executive Director or an administrator. Remember, the information is extremely personal and capable of damaging lives, so do not share it with anyone (including other school staff members) except the principal, school administrator, or other appropriate authorities. If you have questions, please ask the Executive Director or your assigned school administrator. Any needs of students communicated to the volunteer should be referred to the appropriate staff person.

**Volunteer Statement:**

I, \_\_\_\_\_, understand that in the course of my association with Almond Acres Charter Academy, I am responsible for maintaining the confidentiality of all employee and student information (both written and verbal) that may become known to me during the course of my volunteer activities.

I further understand that in the performance of my volunteering, I am not to discuss academic or other confidential information regarding students or employees with anyone, including the parents of any student. Any breach of confidentiality will be carefully reviewed and if substantiated may result in termination of any and all volunteer involvement with the school and may be reported to the proper authorities.

I acknowledge that I have read and understand this statement of confidentiality.

Volunteer Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Procedures for Returning Volunteers

Returning volunteers that have tested negative must have on file with the school a TB Risk Assessment showing that within the last four years, the person has been examined and has been found to be free of communicable tuberculosis in accordance with Education Code 49406. (Education Code 45106, 45347, 45349, 49406 & Health and Safety Code 121545)

### AACA Volunteer Dress Code

**Dress Appropriately. ☺**

#### **Women**

- No low cut blouses
- No spaghetti straps
- No short skirts
- Solid colored jeans
- Shorts are acceptable if they are modest in length

#### **Men**

- Solid colored jeans
- Shorts are acceptable

#### **All**

- No workout gear
- No flip flops (wear open toed sandals)
- No shirts with vulgar, profanity or inappropriate language

#### **Field Trips**

- Dress appropriate to the location