

CONFIDENTIALITY CODE AND GUIDELINES FOR VOLUNTEERS

As a volunteer of The Bridge: A School/Community Partnership working in the Melrose Public Schools, I realize I am subject to a code of ethics similar to that which binds the professional staff. I, like them, assume certain responsibilities and expect to be held accountable for them. I understand the importance of confidentiality and will keep confidential any information I learn about students or their families, teachers or staff.

Although I am a volunteer, I expect to be held to the same high standards as the professional staff. I believe that I have an obligation to my work, to those who direct it, to my colleagues, to the children, and to the community.

I will keep confidential any information about children or school personnel that I learn as a result of my volunteering. If I have access to confidential files, papers or records I will be sure they are put away after use. I will discuss concerns about students with appropriate school personnel only. I will never ask students for information about other children or their teachers.

I understand that as a volunteer I agree to be prompt and regular in my attendance because people are counting on me. If I must be out or must arrive late I will contact the school office to let someone know. If I work in a program in which I am asked to find my own substitute, I will make a great effort to find coverage. If my efforts fail I will let the teacher or program coordinator know that I will not be available.

Each time I volunteer I will use the volunteer sign in/sign out sheets to legibly sign in when I arrive and sign out when I leave. In buildings that have separate time record sheets I will also record my volunteer time before leaving the building.

To identify that I am at school to work, I will wear my volunteer badge when volunteering.

I will remember that a volunteer's role in the school is a supportive one and I will accept the direction of the teachers or staff with whom I work. If something is not clear I will ask for more specific instructions. If I have a special skill or interest that I would like to share with students I will discuss my idea with a teacher either before or after school to determine if what I have to offer fits with the curriculum.

I will be sure that my presence does not disrupt the school's work of educating the children. I will not use my volunteer time to speak with teachers or staff about my child or grandchild nor will I go into a classroom unless I am scheduled and expected.

When working with students I will remember to offer encouragement. I know that students' need for recognition, attention and success is strong, persistent and demanding. If I am volunteering with my child or grandchild's class I will remember that I am present to help all students and I will avoid providing special attention to my own child or grandchild.

I will refer all discipline problems to the teacher or other staff for appropriate action. If obvious misconduct happens in my presence I will stop it, but will leave the actual discipline to school personnel.

If I know the family of the child being disciplined I will not share information with them. I will remember that it is the faculty's decision as to whether or not a child's difficulty should be left at school or reported home.

If my volunteer work gives me access to the school's computers, networks and Internet services I understand that I will use them for school related purposes only unless school personnel have approved my use of the computer for personal reasons. I know that I have no expectation of privacy in the use of school computers including e-mail messages and stored files.

Knowing that the students and faculty rely on my help I will inform the school personnel with whom I work and The Bridge's Coordinator of Volunteers if I must discontinue my volunteer work.

As a school volunteer I can be an ambassador of good will within the Melrose Community. I understand that any concerns I have about things I observe at school (e.g. concerns about student or staff health or hygiene, concerns about cleanliness or safety of a classroom or other parts of the school building, concerns about noise levels of certain learning situations, concerns about teaching styles or classroom management styles) will be discussed with teachers, the principal or The Bridge's Coordinator of Volunteers, not with other parents or community members.

Being eager to contribute to the education of our children, I have read, understand, and accept this code for volunteers and I agree to follow the policies and guidelines of The Bridge: A School/Community Partnership

Signed _____
Volunteer

Date _____