



Volunteer Handbook 2011-2012

**360 Lynn Fells Parkway
Melrose, MA 02176
781-979-2299
www.melroseschools.com/bridge**



Melrose Public Schools Administrative Offices

360 LYNN FIELDS PARKWAY, MELROSE, MA 02176

Telephone: (781) 662-2000 V/TTY
FAX: (781) 979-2285

JOSEPH F. CASEY
Superintendent of Schools
Email: jcasey@melrose.mec.edu

GREGORY ZAMMUTO
Business Manager
Email: gzammuto@melrose.mec.edu

Dear Volunteer:

Looking back over the last few years I have been privileged to see how the community has stepped up to help our students every day in ways both big and small. The time and effort that you and your peers donate to our children sends the message that Melrose cares and that you are the voice of the city made real.

In my conversations with many of you, I have heard it expressed that what you do is "... no big deal" or that "... it isn't very much." I am here to tell you that your "not much" makes a difference in the life of a student every day. An anonymous author once said "The difference between ordinary and extraordinary is just that little extra..." You are the extra that makes an extraordinary difference in the life of a child. That is the role that The Bridge: A School/Community Partnership and you, as volunteers, play in our schools.

I know that by working together we can create an educational setting that will enable all of our children to succeed. The ongoing support and commitment of volunteers helps to foster an atmosphere of respect, learning and achievement across the district and into the homes of our students. Therefore, allow me to welcome you and thank you in advance for that "little extra" you bring to our schools.

Best wishes for the 2011-2012 school year.

Sincerely,

Joseph F. Casey
Superintendent of Schools

WHO IS A SCHOOL VOLUNTEER?

You are the most important part of THE BRIDGE: A SCHOOL/COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP. You are the person who cares enough about the students in the Melrose Public Schools to give up some of your valuable time to help them.

Anyone who wishes to contribute his or her services to the school system can be of help. People of all ages and backgrounds have something valuable to offer.

A school volunteer does not need a special degree or particular educational training; the skills of each volunteer can be utilized with careful placement and follow-up. You may have a talent to share. Your work or hobby could enrich the school experience for many students.

Volunteers strengthen school-community relations by bringing diverse perspectives from the community into the schools. For students, the presence of volunteers demonstrates the importance of their education. Volunteers help improve instruction in the school by permitting more individual help to students under the direction of a teacher or by doing jobs that free the teacher, allowing more time directly with the students.

There are three types of volunteers, depending on time available.

REGULAR VOLUNTEERS are assigned a continuing task for the entire school year or a part of the school year. These volunteers might work weekly, twice a week, biweekly or every other day. They know what day or days they will be expected at the school. The staff really counts on the services of regular volunteers.

SHORT TERM VOLUNTEERS are assigned to special projects during the year. Volunteers know when these projects begin and end. This is an ideal situation for people who want to help but cannot commit themselves for a lengthy period of time.

ONE TIME VOLUNTEERS are people who may have very limited time to offer but want to help. They may help with a field trip, a class party or some other special event. Some one time volunteers have special knowledge or talent needed to enrich a unit being taught or who are asked to participate in a special class activity. One time volunteers who help by giving a presentation or demonstration are listed in The Bridge's Human Resource Directory.

PHILOSOPHY

The Melrose Public Schools believe that the schools and community must work together in a partnership to provide the best possible education for their students.

Through their gifts of time and talent, volunteers demonstrate the community's commitment to the education of their young people. They set an example for the students to follow.

Volunteers bring diversity of culture, skills, experience and perspective. They provide a bridge between the schools and the community-at-large.

Volunteers and salaried staff working together are supported by a volunteer management system that enables trust and respect to flourish.

HISTORY

The Bridge: A School/Community Partnership is one of the programs developed as part of the Melrose School Committee endorsed Strategic Planning Process that took place in the early 1990s. In May 1991, a thirty-member community planning team was formed. This team consisted of volunteer representatives from city government, the school system, senior citizen groups, students, business leaders, and community leaders. From October 1991, through February 1992, the planning team developed system-wide goals, strategies, and preliminary lists of success indicators. In March 1992, community meetings were held to establish action teams. Six teams were formed. The members of the action teams were members of the original planning team and people who volunteered during the planning process.

One action team was the Parent/Community Partnership. This team had a vision of the Melrose community re-investing in and valuing its public schools. Recognizing that parents have always been generous in their support of the schools, they believed that involving a broad cross-section of the community in education, as volunteers, provides a "reason for caring" for many who might otherwise not have an opportunity to get involved. The team looked to other cities and towns to learn how they included people from all segments of their population including professionals, business people, retirees, college students, and government employees. With the help of the Office of Community Planning at City Hall they applied for and received a grant to fund a pilot volunteer management program: The Bridge: A School/Community Partnership.

Both the philosophy of the volunteer program and initial plans for organization were formulated at a two day workshop held in January, 1993. At the workshop there were parents, teachers, school administrators, members of the school committee, the newly hired Coordinator of Volunteers, and interested members of the community. From this group the Bridge Advisory Committee was formed. By mid February 1993, the first volunteers were recruited for a pilot program at the Lincoln and Horace Mann Schools and with the high school math department. Throughout the pilot period the Advisory Committee worked together to formulate guidelines and evaluate the program. Based on the success of the pilot program, The Bridge's volunteer management program expanded during the 1993-94 school year to include the Beebe, Ripley, and Winthrop Schools as well as all other departments at Melrose High School. During the 1994-95 school year The Bridge's volunteer management program further expanded to include the rest of the Melrose Public Schools: Hoover, Roosevelt and Melrose Middle Schools.

As the configuration of the Melrose Public Schools has changed with the closing of schools and the addition of the Early Childhood Center, The Bridge has continued to provide a centralized volunteer program in which the number of recorded volunteer hours grows each year. The Bridge is truly a school-community partnership as it is funded in part by the Melrose School Department, in part by grants and in part by the Trivia Bee, The Bridge's annual fundraising event that will take place this year on March 31, 2012.

MELROSE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Volunteer Office

The Bridge: A School/Community Partnership
360 Lynn Fells Parkway
Phone: 781-979-2299 Fax: 781-979-2285
E-mail: erubenstein@melrose.mec.edu
Coordinator of Volunteers: Emily Rubenstein

Melrose High School

360 Lynn Fells Parkway
781-979-2200
Principal: Mr. Daniel Richards
Secretaries: Ms. Diane Carpenter
Ms. Mary Loughnane
11-12 projected enrollment: 1000 students

Melrose Middle School

350 Lynn Fells Parkway
781-979-2100
Principal: Mr. Thomas L. Brow, Jr
Secretaries: Ms. Deb Hardy
Ms. Peggy Sorrentino
11-12 projected enrollment: 843 students

Hoover School

37 Glendower Road
781-979-2180
Principal: Dr. Dennet Sidell
Secretary: Ms. Marcia Fabiano
11-12 projected enrollment: 263 students

Horace Mann School

40 Damon Avenue
781-979-2190
Principal: Mr. Jeffrey Strasnick
Secretary: Ms. Linda Jeffrey
11-12 projected enrollment: 272 students

Lincoln School

80 West Wyoming Avenue
781-979-2250
Principal: Mr. Brent Conway
Secretary: Ms. Rose Sullivan
11-12 projected enrollment: 329 students

Roosevelt School

253 Vinton Street
781-979-2270
Principal: Ms. Kerry Clery
Secretary: Ms. Bethany Collins
11-12 projected enrollment: 393 students

Winthrop School

162 First Street
781-979-2280
Principal: Ms. Mary Alise Herrera
Secretary: Ms. Terry Greenberg
11-12 projected enrollment: 360 students

Early Childhood Center

Franklin School
16 Franklin Street
781-979-2260
Director: Ms. Jenny Corduck
Secretary: Ms. Maura Conlan
11-12 projected enrollment: 228 students

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 _____

School Calendar 2011-2012

Tuesday	August 30	Opening Day, Grades 1-9; Kindergarten Screening by Appointment
Wednesday	August 31	Opening Day grades 10-12; Kindergarten Screening by Appointment
Thursday,	September 1	First Day for Kindergarten students - abbreviated session for full day students; 8:15am-11:00am 8:30am-11:15 am for half day students
Friday	September 2	School Closed, Labor Day Weekend
Monday	September 5	School Closed, Labor Day Weekend
Tuesday	September 6	First full day for Kindergarten students; full day is 8:15am-2:20pm; half day is 8:30am-11:05am
Week of September 6		Students at the Early Childhood Center begin program. Exact day depends on the program in which the student is enrolled.
Monday	October 10	Columbus Day Holiday - No School
Tuesday	November 8	Professional Day for Teachers – No School
Friday	November 11	Veterans’ Day – No School
Wednesday	November 23	Thanksgiving Recess begins at noon
Monday	November 28	School reopens at regular times
Friday	December 23	Winter Vacation begins at close of school day
Tuesday	January 3	School reopens at regular times
Monday	January 16	Martin Luther King Day - No School
Friday	February 17	February Vacation begins at close of school day
Monday	February 27	School reopens at regular times
Saturday	March 31	Bridge’s Annual Trivia Bee, 7PM, Memorial Hall
Friday	April 6	Good Friday – No School
Friday	April 13	April Vacation begins at close of school day
Monday	April 23	School reopens at regular times
Monday	May 28	Memorial Day Holiday - No School
Tuesday	June 19	Scheduled Last Day of School (185 th day) - Actual Date is determined by number of snow days. June 12 is 180th day.

School Hours

Melrose High School	7:45 AM - 2:09 PM
Melrose Middle School	7:40 AM - 2:03 PM
Elementary Schools	
Full Day for Grades K-5	8:15 AM - 2:20 PM
Half Day Kindergarten.....	8:30 AM - 11:05 AM
Early Childhood Center.....	Days and Times Vary by Program

Early Release Dates for Elementary Schools
On these dates students are dismissed at 12:30.
Volunteers scheduled to work in the afternoon
should speak with teachers.

Tuesday, October 25
Wednesday, October 26
Thursday, November 3
Wednesday, February 1
Tuesday, March 6
Wednesday, March 7
Wednesday, May 30

Snow Days

For school cancellations please listen to WBZ, WEEI WHDH, WEZE,
watch Channels 3, 4, 5, 7 or 16, or go to melroseschools.com

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