



ATHLOS LEADERSHIP ACADEMY

VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK

“There is no better investment of time and money than in the life of a child. They are the future.” — Alma Powell



10100 NOBLE PARKWAY NORTH • BROOKLYN PARK, MN • 55443 • 763.777.8942



ATHLOS SPARTANS

Welcome

Thank you for your interest in volunteering your time and services to support the students and staff at Athlos Leadership Academy (ALA). This handbook is designed to provide you with information to assist you in your volunteer placement. Please review this information, and if you have any questions or would like more information, please contact the Family Services Coordinator, Elizabeth Webb at 763-777-8947 or elizabeth_webb@athlosbrooklynpark.org.

Our Mission

Athlos Leadership Academy is a Pre-K through 8th grade public charter school that believes in providing students with a challenging and comprehensive high school preparatory education through high standards for academic scholarship, fitness and nutrition, character development and student leadership opportunities.

Policy Information

For more information about Athlos Leadership Academy and district policies, please visit our school website at www.athlosbrooklynpark.org.

Applying to Volunteer at ALA

All individuals interested in volunteering at Athlos Leadership Academy must first complete a volunteer application and background check. Volunteer applications and background check release of information forms may be found on the district website or by contacting the front office at Athlos Leadership Academy. Per School Board policy, criminal background checks are required of volunteers. Volunteer opportunities can be found on the website or by contacting the Family Services Coordinator.

Contact information

Athlos Leadership Academy
10100 Noble Parkway
Brooklyn Park, MN 55443
763-777-8942 (phone)
763-315-0601 (fax)
www.athlosbrooklynpark.org.

Volunteer Application and Background Check Requirements

Parent Volunteers:

Volunteer background checks for parent volunteers do not need to be processed every year. Volunteers need only complete the background check and volunteer application once and the results will follow all of their students through their Athlos Leadership Academy educational careers. The initial background check will be paid for by the prospective volunteer. Athlos Leadership Academy reserves the right to request an additional background check at any time over the course of their students' time at Athlos in order to continue serving as a volunteer. ALA will pay for any required background checks after the initial process.

Community Volunteers:

Volunteer background checks and volunteer applications for community volunteers must be processed every 3 years. Each background check will be paid for by the prospective volunteer.

ALA Student Graduate Volunteers:

Former Athlos students who are under 18 years of age may request permission to volunteer at ALA by contacting the School Principal. After 18 years of age they may apply as a Community Volunteer. The Principal reserves the right to request letters of recommendation from the prospective volunteer's high school guidance counselor or Principal. Student volunteers must be under the direct supervision of ALA staff during their volunteer experience.

Volunteer Orientation

Before you begin your volunteer experience, you will have the opportunity to discuss the following with an administrator. It will be important to discuss many of these items, as well, with the teacher or administrator with whom you will be working in your volunteer placement:

- How to sign in and out of the building.
- Wearing a badge during each visit
- Volunteer schedule, assignments, location and duration
- Procedures for absences or schedule changes
- Use of school equipment, phones, etc.
- Confidentiality regarding student information
- Introductions to staff
- Entrances, exits, evacuation routes
- Restrooms
- School-wide rules (Ex. Responsive Classroom)
- The teacher's classroom policies, procedures and rules.
- Alternate plans for days when the teacher is absent.
- How the students will refer to you (Ms., Mr., Mrs., etc.)
- Your special interest, talents, and skills.
- School map
- How to sign up for additional volunteer opportunities.
- Emergency plans

Sign-in and Sign-out

Please stop at the front desk immediately upon entering the school. Volunteers must sign in each time they work at school. The school check-in computer is located at the front desk. For security reasons, and in case of an emergency, it is important for the Principal to know who is in the building and why. Upon completion of volunteer duties, volunteers must return to the front desk and sign out. A record of volunteer hours enables the school to evaluate its volunteer program and recognize volunteers for their contribution of time. Volunteers may not be in the school longer than the duration of the assigned volunteer visit unless additional arrangements have been pre-approved by an administrator.

Name Badge

Print a name badge when you sign into the School Check-in computer. By wearing a name badge you will immediately be recognized as a person approved to be in the building.

Volunteer Placement

After you complete your application and are approved to volunteer, we will strive to make the best match possible between our current volunteer opportunities and your interests and availability. If you are interested in volunteering in a particular classroom at ALA, we may be able to honor that request if volunteer needs have been posted for that classroom. We do not require our teachers to post volunteer needs or have volunteers in their classrooms, therefore we respectfully ask that our teachers' preferences are honored if they choose not to use volunteers. If you need to make a change in your assignment for any reason, please speak with the Family Services Coordinator.

Volunteer Feedback

We respect your commitment and will make every effort to use your time efficiently and effectively. If you have any questions, comments, or concerns during your volunteer experience, please contact the Family Services Coordinator.

Guidelines for Volunteering

Accepting Direction and Supervision

While recognizing that you play an important supporting role in the ALA community, we require our volunteers to accept direction and supervision from our ALA staff members who are trained in ALA procedures and systems. You will be assigned a supervising staff person for each volunteer assignment.

Appearance

As representatives of Athlos Leadership Academy, our volunteers are responsible for presenting a positive image to students and to the ALA community. Volunteers should dress appropriately for the condition and performance of their duties.

Assignment

If the assignment does not prove to be what you expected, please notify the supervising staff person of your assignment. If you feel hesitant to discuss your thoughts with the staff person, please contact the Family Services Coordinator to discuss.

Dependability

If you are unable to keep a volunteer commitment, please call or email the supervising staff person as far in advance as possible.

Bullying Prohibition

Athlos Leadership Academy is committed to making Athlos Leadership Academy a safe and caring environment for all students. We will treat each other with respect and refuse to tolerate bullying of any kind. We will endeavor to be kind and respectful in our interactions with others. It is especially important for adults to model these behaviors in order to provide positive examples for student behavior.

Cell Phones

Cell phones may not be used while volunteering in ALA classrooms. If volunteers need to take an emergency call or send a text, we ask volunteers to step into the hallway. Volunteers may not use personal cell phones to take pictures while volunteering at ALA. Volunteers may not take pictures of ALA students using a camera of any kind.

Children

Please note that volunteers may not bring children with them during their volunteer experiences.

Communications

Please maintain proactive communication with ALA staff. Make every effort to discuss any questions or concerns with supervising staff.

Confidentiality

Information regarding our students is confidential. Athlos Leadership Academy is regulated by the provisions of FERPA and the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act. Volunteers may not share any information regarding ALA students. Discussing personal information regarding students will be cause for disciplinary action and/or lead to termination of the volunteer placement. Confidentiality is integral to the integrity of our program. It is important to respect the privacy of all students, staff, and volunteers. Never repeat anything you have heard or seen about individuals while volunteering unless it falls within your requirements as a mandatory reporter.

Crises/Emergency Plans

Crises plans are in place for all locations in the building including fire, tornado/weather and lockdown emergencies. Please follow evacuation plans that are posted in classrooms. Please follow school-wide emergency plans in the event of a lockdown procedure.

Discipline

Volunteers may not discipline students. Volunteers may redirect student behavior to maintain order in their group or activity. Please report any problems with students' behavior to the supervising staff person. ALA teachers and administrators are responsible for discipline.

Mandatory Reporting

Volunteers are considered Mandatory Reporters. That means, you must report when you have knowledge or reason to believe that a child is being or has been neglected or physically or sexually abused. Report any incident or suspicion immediately to the Family Services Coordinator or another administrator.

Religious, Racial or Sexual Harassment

Athlos Leadership Academy prohibits any form of harassment or violence by a volunteer against a student, employee, or volunteer through unwelcome conduct or communication that is based on actual or perceived sex/gender, sexual orientation, race, color, creed, national origin, or religion. Violation of this policy will be cause for disciplinary action.

Responsive Classroom®

Athlos Leadership Academy uses the *Responsive Classroom*® approach. Responsive Classroom is a method of teaching that focusses on academic, social, and emotional growth through a safe classroom community. The approach supports students in building social-emotional competencies that support academic development and the classroom environment. When volunteering with classrooms, volunteers should abide by school-wide procedures including "Showing Five", alongside students and staff. Volunteers may not ask students to "take breaks".

School Equipment

Volunteers may not use school equipment, copiers, office supplies etc. unless trained by the Family Services Coordinator prior to a volunteer placement that requires the use of school equipment. If a supervising staff person requests that you use school equipment, volunteers must first check with the Family Services Coordinator regarding the request.

Snacks

Volunteers may not eat snacks or lunch in front of students unless it is the students' snack time or lunch time. In order to promote the safety of those with food allergies, volunteers may not bring food items to share with the class or individuals.

Staff Lounge

The ALA staff lounge is primarily reserved for employees of Athlos Leadership Academy. Volunteer assignments will typically not be scheduled to span across the lunch hour. In the event of a full-day volunteer assignment, the supervising staff member will ensure that the volunteer has access to the staff lounge or another location for a lunch break.

Staff Responsibilities

Volunteers are an important part of the Athlos team. The suggestions and opinions of volunteers are always welcome. It is the professional staff employed by ALA, however, that is held responsible by law for the decisions that are made regarding the instruction of students and school management. For this reason, volunteers always work under the direct supervision of the professional staff. ALA staff are responsible for everything that goes on in the building including student instruction, safety, and discipline.

Student Contact

As a volunteer, you may meet many students and will enjoy working with them. However, volunteers may not telephone students, communicate with students through social media, or visit students in their homes or off school grounds without permission from the parents and School Principal. Volunteers are only to have student contact during scheduled volunteer time. Touching children carries a risk. A volunteer can be accused of impropriety, unnecessary physical contact, or sexual harassment. Therefore, we require volunteers to refrain from all physical touch when working with ALA students. In addition, when working with students, whether individually or in small groups, volunteers must at all times work in a highly visible area within view of an ALA employee. This is not only for the protection of the student but of the volunteer as well.

Use of Controlled Substances

It is a violation of ALA School Board policy for a volunteer to use alcohol, toxic substances, or controlled substances in any school location or at any school function. Athlos Leadership Academy will discipline or take appropriate action against any volunteer who violates this policy.

Volunteer Hours

Volunteers may only be in the building during pre-scheduled volunteer hours. Once the volunteer assignment is complete, volunteers must return to the front desk and sign out.

Weapons on School Grounds

No person shall possess, use or store a weapon or look-alike weapon in school buildings, on school grounds, in school vehicles or at school-sponsored activities, except as otherwise specifically provided. A dangerous weapon or look-alike weapons is defined by state statute to include, but not be limited to, guns, electric weapons, knives, metallic knuckles, martial arts equipment, or any other object which is capable of inflicting bodily harm, property damage or which endangers the health and safety of students and staff. Violation of this policy will be reported to law enforcement.

What I Shouldn't Do as a Volunteer

- Have access to student records
- Diagnose student needs
- Make final evaluations on student achievement
- Counsel students
- Discuss student information

Tips for Volunteering with Students and in Classrooms

- Call students by name; be friendly and caring.
- Observe and adhere to the classroom rules and procedures.
- Use nonverbal rather than verbal cues to redirect students when the teacher is talking/giving directions.
- Maintain a calm and quiet voice. If you talk quieter than the teacher and students it helps to maintain a quiet work environment for learning.
- Do not give students materials without first discussing it with the teacher.
- Maintain your sense of humor!



ATHLOS SPARTANS

~ Balancing Mind and Body ~

Athlos Leadership Academy Volunteer Agreement

(To be completed prior to volunteering.)

Volunteer Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Email Address: _____

Phone Number: _____

Medical Emergency Contact Names and Phone Numbers:

Medical Emergency Contact #1 _____

Medical Emergency Contact #2 _____

Please check one: NOTE: We will make a copy of your Photo ID for our records.

- I am the parent/guardian of current Athlos Leadership Academy student(s).
- I am NOT the parent/guardian of current Athlos Leadership Academy student(s).

Please check one:

- I am 18 years of age or older.
- I am under 18 years of age.

By signing below I agree:

- *that I have read and I understand the Athlos Leadership Academy Volunteer Handbook*
- *that any photos taken of me while participating in an Athlos Leadership Academy activity may be used in District informational or promotional materials*
- *to review relevant ALA School Policies on the ALA website*
- *to hold harmless the Athlos Leadership Academy District for any actions taken by me as a volunteer*
- *that if I have misrepresented information provided on my application and/or fail to adhere to program guidelines, my application approval may be withdrawn.*

Volunteer Applicant Signature _____ Date: _____