

South Western School District Mentoring Program Application Packet



Elementary Schools

Baresville Elementary
Manheim Elementary
Park Hills Elementary
West Manheim Elementary

Middle School

Emory H. Markle Intermediate School

High School

South Western High School

MENTOR COMMITTEE MISSION STATEMENT

The South Western School District Mentoring Committee is dedicated to providing mentor resources for our learners that facilitate positive, personal and relational development in preparation for lifelong personal growth.

MENTOR COMMITTEE VISION STATEMENT

Learners have a voice and a choice in their ongoing personal and relational development as they become productive and engaged members of the community.



South Western School District Mentoring Program

Dear Mentor Applicant,

Thank you so much for your interest in the South Western District Mentoring Program. It is exciting that you desire to be a part of developing positive, relational experiences with South Western learners. As our mission statement suggests, we are “dedicated to providing mentor resources for our learners that facilitate positive, personal and relational development in preparation for lifelong personal growth.”

We are so grateful that you would take the time to work with us through the various aspects leading to a successful partnership. You are making an indelible impact on the lives, families and culture of our community. If you have questions about any of the materials, please do not hesitate to contact a member of the Screening Committee listed below.

Allen Bittinger
SWSD High School Counselor
Email: Allen_Bittinger@southwesternsd.org
Phone: 717-632-2548 x 21912

Jill Shirey
SWSD Baresville Elementary Counselor
Email: Jill_Shirey@southwesternsd.org
Phone: 717-632-2548 x 23910

Gregory Wentz
SWSD School Psychologist
Email: Gregory_Wentz@southwesternsd.org
Phone: 717-632-2548 x 20113



South Western School District Mentoring Program Overview

Application Process

Mentor Applicants should complete the application enclosed and carefully read through all the documents. There is valuable information that describes some of the processes necessary for each mentor and volunteer within the South Western School District.

Commitment

Mentors are asked to make at least a one school year commitment to the Mentoring Program. If you are unable to do so, please make this known to us as soon as possible. It may not be the right time for you to be matched to a learner. The program involves training, as well as, a relational connection with learners. Shorter terms of involvement may not provide for the greatest success.

References

We require two references to participate in the Mentoring Program. Your references may not come from family members. Please encourage them to complete and return the enclosed reference forms.

Personal Interview

Your experiences, background, preferences, skills, and interests are vital resources in determining how suited you may be for this program and how we might best match you with a learner.

Orientation & Training

Each volunteer accepted into the Mentoring Program will be required to take part in an initial orientation training and periodic ongoing trainings. These sessions will be scheduled with you in advance to allow for your greatest involvement.



South Western School District Mentoring Steps

Prior to interview:

- Read and complete application packet.
- Return completed packet to any South Western School District School Counselor.
- Two reference forms are provided in this packet. Please give them to non-family members and ask them to follow the directions on the reference form.
- You will be contacted by the Mentoring Screening Committee to set up an interview.
- Based on the interview and information provided, you will be informed of our recommendation for the Mentoring Program.

Upon your acceptance as a Mentor:

- Read “Volunteer Manual” (given to you at interview).
- Complete “Preparing Your Packet Guidelines” (given to you at interview).
- If you have any questions or concerns about clearances, please contact Lisa Duke, SWSD Human Resources Clerk (717-632-2500).



South Western School District Mentoring Application

Date: _____

The information you provide is used to match you with your mentee. Please provide as much information as possible.

1. Name: _____

2. Address: _____

3. Home #: _____ Cell #: _____ E-mail _____

4. Preferred number: ___Home ___Cell May we text you? ___Yes ___No

5. What experiences have you had working with youth?

6. Why are you interested in becoming a mentor?

7. In identifying a mentee for you to work with, are there any special considerations you would like us to know?

8. Have you ever been denied acceptance or released from service as a volunteer within a youth organization? ___ Yes ___ No

If yes, please explain:

I consent to & understand that:

1. The references I have listed may be contacted directly by the South Western Mentoring Program.
2. I may be required to provide additional information as it relates to matching mentors with learners.
3. Selected information on this application may be discussed with a learner and/or their parents for matching purposes.
4. It is my responsibility to update this information if it should ever change.
5. The South Western Mentoring Program is not obligated to match me with a learner and may deny my application or terminate a match at any time to protect learners under its care.

Please read the following carefully before signing and submitting to the Program.

I understand that this is an application for a volunteer opportunity and not a promise or commitment by the South Western School District.

I certify that all the information I have provided in this application is true, correct, and complete to the best of my knowledge.

Applicant Signature _____

Date _____

*Please return completed application to a South Western School District School Counselor (school counselor will forward to Gregory Wentz, School Psychologist).



South Western School District Mentoring Application Reference Form

_____ is applying to become a mentor within the South Western School District Mentoring Program. The applicant has given your name as a reference. This program involves mentors working directly with struggling learners to develop positive and growing experiences academically, emotionally, and socially. Your insights related to the applicant will be helpful in establishing a successful experience for learners and families. Would you please complete this reference form and return it directly to the address below? Your answers will be held in confidence. Thank you in advance for taking the time to reply. If you would like to further discuss or explain your answers, or if you have any questions about the program, please do not hesitate to contact us. Please feel free to write on this document or attach additional responses.

1. How long and in what capacity have you known the applicant?
2. Please describe a time when you observed the applicant around children?
3. What impressions or feelings did you have about that interaction?
4. Do you know of any reasons why being a mentor with learners would not be the right volunteer experience for the applicant?
5. Do you know of any reason why this might not be the right time for the applicant to commit to this mentor program?
6. What strengths and weaknesses does the applicant bring to a mentor experience?
7. Is there any additional information you might like to offer related to the applicant's match for a program such as this?

Name: _____

Email: _____

Phone: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____



South Western School District Mentoring Application Reference Form

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Name: _____

Email: _____

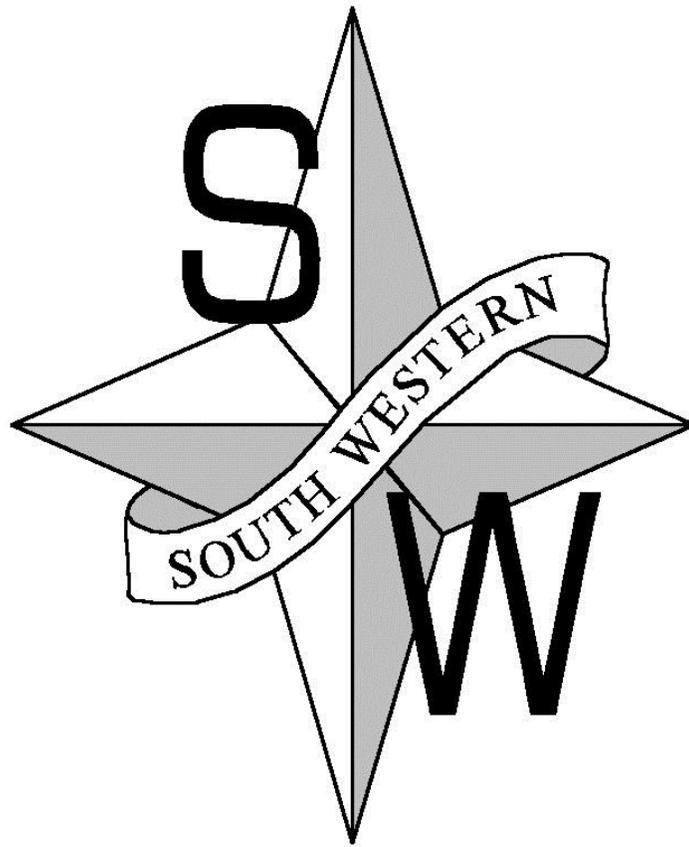
Phone: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

South Western School District

Volunteer Manual



*Learners have a voice and choice
for self-directed, customized learning supported
by a caring and progressive network of
educators.*

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Getting Started

Thank you for your interest in volunteering at the South Western School District. Volunteers are an integral part of the learning environment of our learners. Your support of the facilitators and staff is greatly appreciated as we all work together to provide the best possible educational experience for our greatest asset...the learners.

Volunteers are those who offer assistance or a service to the school district without receiving compensation and have direct contact with learners. (Direct contact with children is defined per the law as: **“The care, supervision, guidance or control of children and routine interaction with children.”**) The District makes the distinction between a volunteer and visitor on a case-by-case basis.

As a part of our ongoing efforts to ensure learner safety, all volunteers are required to complete a Volunteer Registration Form, a PDE-6004 Form (Act 24 of 2011), a Child Abuse Background Check, and a Pennsylvania Criminal Background Check. For anyone who has not lived in Pennsylvania for the last ten (10) consecutive years as an adult, you will be required to complete an FBI Federal Criminal History Clearance as well. Copies of all clearances and completed volunteer forms will be maintained at the administration office as confidential documents.

Volunteers are mandated reporters within the meaning of the Child Protective Services Law; all volunteers are required by law to immediately report instances of suspected child abuse. (*Please review School Board Policy 806 – Child/Student Abuse.*) Opportunities for classroom training are provided periodically throughout the year. You are encouraged to participate in the training, although it is not required. Volunteers may choose to complete free online training (found at www.reportabusepa.pitt.edu). After completing a mandated reporter training course, please provide a copy of the certificate for our files.

School Board Policy 916 – Volunteers defines expectations and guidelines for volunteers. Please review and familiarize yourself with those guidelines as well as the information contained in this manual. If at any time during your service, you have a question or concern, please contact the building principal.

We sincerely appreciate your service to our learners. Our volunteers are one of our greatest assets.

Helpful How-Tos

Basic Volunteer Procedures

- Be sure to sign in and out of the building each time you visit to volunteer.
- Always wear your Photo ID Badge while volunteering.
- Be reliable. Call if you cannot keep a commitment to volunteer.
- Confidentiality is important. Remember that anything overheard concerning learners or staff should never leave the building.
- Keep in mind that you are here to support facilitators, not replace them. Please refer to the classroom facilitator for his/her preferred method of dealing with day-to-day situations.
- Remember – if you don't know, ask. We will be glad to help you.
- You are required to register each year to remain on the volunteer list.

Volunteering With Learners

- A learner's name is very important. Make every effort to remember the names of the learners with whom you work.
- Be sure the learners know your name – establish in the beginning how they are to address you. Check with the classroom facilitator as to what is normally done in the school.
- Demonstrate your interest in the learners by asking them about their activities and listening.
- Help build learners' self-confidence by pointing out the improvement you see in their work, manner, etc. Even when helping to correct a learners' work or manner, try to start the conversation by discussing the positives.
- Discuss learner behavior and/or progress only with the facilitator.
- Make sure you always leave the learners on a positive and friendly note.
- Keep in mind that learners will model the behaviors they see adults displaying – whether the adult is a staff person or a volunteer.
- Common sense and cool heads are always the best in any situation.

Interaction With Learners

The following are guidelines for interacting with learners:

- Avoid situations where you and a learner are completely unobserved.
- Physical violence (including rough grabbing and shaking) should never be used on a learner.
- Do not assist with a personal nature that learners can do for themselves.
- Do not leave a learner unsupervised.
- Do not initiate physical contact with a learner.
- If a learner seems distressed in any way or misunderstands/misinterprets something you have done, please report this to the facilitator as soon as possible.
- You are not responsible for disciplining learners; this is the job of the classroom facilitator.

Accident Reports

Any accident involving a learner, employee or volunteer that occurs on school property must be reported to the school office. School office staff will provide appropriate accident report forms, which should be completed and returned to the office staff. Such forms are needed for the prevention of future accidents. Volunteers are not covered by Worker's Compensation.

Cell Phones

Please have your cell phone ringer turned off while you are volunteering, allowing your cell phone calls to go voice mail. If for any reason you need to take an important phone call, please find a private location to take that call. **Never use your cell phone or any other device to take a picture of the children or anything in school.**

Upon your arrival on campus, your cell phone may connect to the Guest Network, which will allow you limited internet access. As a volunteer of the South Western School District, you must understand and abide by the Board approved network policies: *Policy 815 – Acceptable Use of Computer Network and the Internet; Policy 815.1 – Computer Hardware; Policy 815.2 – Computer Software; Policy 815.3 – Web Page; Policy 815.4 – Non-District Owned Electronic Devices; Policy 815.6 – District Owned Devices; and any/all other district policies.*

Complaints

Any person believing that a volunteer should not be allowed to continue volunteering within the district must make a written and signed complaint to the building principal. The principal must inform the Superintendent of all such complaints received. The principal must investigate the complaint and make a report or his/her findings to the Superintendent. All complaints and investigation reports will be kept confidential.

Confidentiality

To make sure that learners, staff and families feel comfortable, we all need to respect each other's privacy. Volunteers must be especially careful to honor confidentiality. Breaching confidentiality can be hurtful to children, their families and the staff.

No matter how cute, funny or charming a classroom event may be, it is never okay to repeat stories about learners. Similarly, as a volunteer you may hear things from staff or learners, which must not be repeated outside of the school. Generally speaking, what happens in school should stay in school.

Parents may be tempted to ask you about how their learners behave in school, especially if you are friends outside of school. It is not acceptable to put volunteers in this awkward position. If parents have concerns, encourage them to talk to the facilitator or the principal.

If a learner tells you something that causes you concern or if you observe something that troubles you, tell the classroom facilitator or the principal right away.

As a volunteer, you may also come into contact with learner records, including educational, health and disciplinary records. Volunteers are not permitted to copy or remove learner records from the building. Any information that you read or observe in a learner record must be kept confidential and not disclosed to anyone outside the school.

Dress Code

Although there is no official dress code for volunteers, please use discretion and good taste. Remember, a school is a professional environment and as a volunteer you set an example for the learners.

Drug/Substance Abuse Policy

It is the intent of the Board of Directors of South Western School District to make a good faith effort to maintain an alcohol and drug-free school environment. See Board Policy 351 for more information (*available in the library or on-line*). The following policy applies to all employees and volunteers of South Western School District, whether full-time or part-time, during normal working hours and during official work assignments by the South Western School District. The policy applies whether or not the assigned work is carried out in areas under direct operational control of the School District.

It is the policy of South Western School District that manufacturing, dispensing, distribution, possession or use of alcohol or a controlled substance is prohibited in any workplace under operational control of the District, or at any time while working/volunteering for the South Western School District, even if between locations. It is also the policy of the South Western School District that performance of work assignments while under the influence of alcohol or a controlled substance is prohibited. Nothing in this policy should be construed as applying to prescribed medications.

Volunteers who violate the drug and alcohol policy will be terminated from volunteer service.

Definition: Controlled substance means a controlled substance in schedule I through V of section 202 of the Controlled Substance Act (21 U.S.S. 812), and further defined by regulations at 21 CFR 1300.11 through 1300.15.

Fire and Emergency Procedures

In case of fire: In the event a fire starts in the building, use the following guidelines for reporting the fires:

1. If the fire is of a controllable nature (wastebasket or something that is very small in nature), use accessible means to douse it, (water, fire extinguisher, etc.), THEN notify the office and evacuate the area as a precaution.

2. If the fire is of major proportions, ring the emergency fire bell located nearest you.
 - a. Follow the direction of the staff liaison concerning fire drill evacuation rules and procedures.
 - b. Individuals with limited mobility (crutches, wheel chairs, etc.) are to be provided individual attention. If necessary, they are to be carried from the building. Ask for additional help if needed.
 - c. Building re-entry: Everyone must remain outside the building until notified by the authorities to re-enter.

In case of threat or other emergency: In the event of other emergencies, the District has established procedures to be followed by personnel. When a building evacuation is warranted, fire drill procedures should be followed.

General information: All school personnel must know the location of fire extinguishers and alarm boxes within the school building.

Harassment Policy

The South Western School District is committed to providing a safe, positive environment free of discrimination and harassment based on race, color, religion, age, sex, national origin, disability, or any other protected status. See Board Policy 348 for more information. Offensive or harassing behavior will not be tolerated against any person. This policy covers all District learners, staff members, contracted individuals, vendors and volunteers in the schools.

In an effort to prevent sexual and other forms of harassment from occurring, this policy against harassment will be communicated to each employee and volunteer by publication of handbooks, orientation/training sessions and/or posting of notices/signs. No employee or volunteer of the School District is exempt from this policy.

Offensive conduct or harassment may include, but is not limited to:

- Offensive physical action, written or spoken language and graphic communications.
- Any type of physical contact when the action is unwelcome by the recipient.
- Expectations, requests, demands or pressure for sexual favors.
- Slurs, jokes, posters, cartoons and gestures that are offensive.

- Any such offensive conduct will be considered a prohibited form of harassment when any of the following are true:
 - There is a promise or implied promise of preferential treatment or negative consequence regarding employment decisions or status.
 - Such conduct has the effect of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment, or unreasonably interferes with a person's work performance.
 - A third party is offended by the sexual conduct or communications of others.

Harassment is considered a form of employee/volunteer misconduct. Volunteers who engage in harassment will be terminated from volunteer service. Administrators or supervisory personnel are responsible for taking proper action to end such behavior. Any administrator, manager, or supervisor who has knowledge of such behavior, yet takes no action to end it, is also subject to disciplinary action.

Anyone who believes they have been harassed is encouraged to report promptly, orally and in writing, such incidents to the building principal. Complaints will be investigated promptly, and corrective action shall be taken when allegations are verified. Confidentiality of all parties shall be maintained, consistent with the District's legal and investigative obligations. Under no circumstances will an employee/volunteer be penalized for reporting what they believe to be harassment under this policy.

Smoking and Tobacco Policy

In order to protect learners, staff and visitors from the safety and health hazards of smoking, and to promote a pleasant, smoke-free environment, the Board prohibits smoking by any person in school buildings, on school buses, and on school grounds, including personal vehicles on District property. This ban is in effect at all times and specifically includes the regular school program as well as co-curricular and community events held on school property.

Weather Emergency/School Closing

If you are scheduled to volunteer on a day that school is closed, delayed or dismissed early due to weather, contact the teacher and/or the school to reschedule your volunteer time accordingly.

Location of South Western School District Facilities

South Western School District Administration
225 Bowman Road
Hanover, PA 17331
717-632-2500

South Western High School
200 Bowman Road
Hanover, PA 17331
717-633-4807

Emory H. Markle Intermediate School
225 Bowman Road
Hanover, PA 17331
717-633-4840

Baresville Elementary School
135 Sanford Avenue
Hanover, PA 17331
717-633-4870

Manheim Elementary School
5778 Blooming Grove Road
Glenville, PA 17329
717-229-2930

Park Hills Elementary School
137 West Granger Street
Hanover, PA 17331
717-633-4880

West Manheim Elementary School
2000 Baltimore Pike
Hanover, PA 17331
717-633-4890

Office hours and a calendar of events for each building can be found on the District website (www.swsd.k12.pa.us).