I am only one, but I am one. I cannot do everything, but I can do something. And I will not let what I cannot do interfere with what I can do. ~ Edward Everett Hale
Paradise Honors Elementary School
Volunteers

We are excited to have you as a part of this year’s volunteer team!

Our Mission as volunteers is to provide teachers and staff with the extra time and help they need to make the educational process more effective. This is of great value in itself, but we also have an added benefit. Current research indicates that a greater involvement on the part of parents and guardians in the education of their children generally results in higher achievement scores, improved student behavior and reduced absenteeism.

With all these advantages for our children, we can’t help but be a winning team!

Paradise Honors Elementary Schools mission is to provide a safe learning community committed to fostering personal growth and academic excellence.

Thank you,
Principals: Amy MacWilliams and Allison Gonzales
Volunteer Coordinator: Danielle D. Persons
Paradise Honors Elementary School

We Love and Need Our Volunteers!

Everyone who cares about children and education is a potential volunteer. Prior teaching experience is not necessary. Volunteers are:

- Parents/Guardians
- Grandparents
- College Students
- Community Members

PHES School volunteers:
- Recognize that well-educated children are our greatest natural resource;
- Are dependable;
- Have good health and moral character;
- Are willing to accept supervision and responsibility;
- Have talents that enrich the school program;
- Understand and appreciate the work of the school staff.

Volunteers…

Paradise Honors Elementary School offers a wide variety of volunteer opportunities. Some jobs provide the volunteer with a chance to work with children while many other jobs are available for those who prefer not to work directly with students.

Volunteers choose the jobs that interest them and decide how many hours and days they wish to contribute.

For a complete list and description of volunteer opportunities, call Paradise Honors Elementary Schools Volunteer Coordinator, Danielle Persons at (623) 547-7225.

Here is a sample of the jobs from which you may choose:

- **Home Room Parent**- Will develop and maintain strong communication between the PEP booster and the families of the students within each classroom. The collaboration and communication among our families is critical to the success of our fundraisers, which benefit the overall school experience for all PHES students. The Homeroom Parent may also help facilitate volunteer involvement for class parties/projects & school events. The extent of parental involvement varies from teacher to teacher.

- **Classroom Instructional Volunteer**- Will work directly with individual students or small groups of students. Volunteers listen to students read, reinforce basic math skills or assist students with written assignments.

- **Classroom Assistance Volunteer**- Works with a teacher and performs tasks such as putting up bulletins, correcting papers, preparing teaching aids and special learning materials, duplicating worksheets and other jobs which will provide the teacher with more time to plan for and teach students.

- **Office Clerical Assistant**- Works with school secretaries and office staff to provide support and assistance with duties such as sorting mail, duplicating for office and/or teachers, getting classroom supply orders ready, typing and answering phones.

- **Special Education Volunteer**- Our school system serves many children with special needs. Children with physical, mental or emotional handicaps benefit greatly from the assistance of an extra caring adult. Volunteers are needed to assist students who attend special education.

Some volunteers assist in classrooms helping individual students with learning activities, while other volunteers lend a hand to students who need assistance at lunchtime, during physical activities, or before or after school.

- **Reading and Math Volunteer**- These tutors sit and read with students or help them practice math rote memory work.

- **Health Office Assistant**- Works in the health office with the school nurse providing clerical assistance and helping with health screenings such as vision tests.
PEP Booster Volunteer- Help out our parent group with selling items at events or Cub Cash Exchange, Box Tops collection or coordinating extra curricular events (ex. Carnival or Family Dance) throughout the school year.

How To Begin Volunteering…

Your first few days…
Starting a new job is always exciting and can even be a bit frightening. The first days are usually the busiest because there are so many new people to meet and things to learn about. As you become familiar with the school and your assignment, you will feel more at home. Here are some suggestions:

Set up a time to meet with your volunteer coordinator and/or supervising teacher-
At your initial visit to the school, the volunteer coordinator can go through this handbook with you and make sure you have had a school tour. In this way you will have an opportunity to learn your way around and be introduced to key people.

When you meet with your supervising teacher, plan to discuss any questions or concerns, add them to a list now so you won’t forget to bring them up at the conference.

Take time to observe-
If you’ll be working with students, the first day or two in the classroom will probably be spent in observing the teacher and children. You’ll become familiar with the teacher style your supervising teacher uses. You’ll see what acceptable behavior is for students and what is not, how much freedom is allowed and what the daily routine is like.

While you are observing, you can also work on various tasks the teacher will assign such as filing and preparing learning materials. You’ll want to get up from time to time and move among the students as they are working. Don’t hesitate to ask individual children what they are doing. Students love to have the opportunity to explain their assignments.

-VOLUNTEERS MUST REGISTER…

Each person who volunteers at Paradise Honors Elementary School must complete an application before he/she begins work. (This includes parent volunteers.) The information you provide is especially important in the event that you become ill or are involved in an accident while on campus.

We also want to make certain that you are aware of our school volunteer policies and the other information, which is included in this handbook. Please read the handbook carefully before you begin your new volunteer job.

Volunteer screening…

Volunteers’ will need to fill out and submit a Phes Volunteer Application packet. Volunteers working consistently with or around students will need to have a fingerprint background check done annually unless they have a Fingerprint Clearance Card. Fingerprints will need to be rolled and processed or a copy of your fingerprint Clearance card will need to be submitted before chaperoning on field trips or volunteering consistently in classrooms.

All parents interested in being a field trip chaperone will need to be fingerprinted and approved 6 weeks prior to the day of the field trip or have a clearance card prior to being chosen as a chaperone. A copy of your current driver’s license will also need to be on file. The reason for this process is that we have a responsibility for the children in our school and we take it very seriously. We appreciate your patience and understanding concerning this matter. Everyone at our school including staff goes through this process.
Volunteer Guidelines Are…

Dress and Behavior
Take your lead from the professional staff and dress appropriately for the job you are doing. It is best to neither overdress nor under-dress. Casual clothing is fine as long as it meets the criteria listed below:

- No clothing with inappropriate language, gestures or logos.
- No strapless shirt/dress and midriff blouses.
- No mini skirts or short shorts – the length is appropriate if it is past the fingertips of the wearer’s hands when held down at sides.

Keep in mind that you are in a position to set an example for students. Your speech and behavior should serve as good models for them to follow.

Volunteer Signature

Supervision of Volunteers
School Volunteers always work under the direct supervision of the Principal and professional staff and only with those teachers who have requested the services of the volunteer. The school is responsible for the education, safety and well being of each student.

Confidentiality
As you work with the staff and students, information of a confidential matter may be shared with you. The problems, abilities, relationships and confidences of students, their parents and the staff should never be discussed with anyone who does not have a professional right or need to know them. Please do not discuss the needs of children at home, in the Staff Lounge or with friends.

Like teachers, volunteers are bound by a code of ethics to keep confidential matters within the school. The staff and students need to know they can trust you.

Please do not discuss a child’s school progress or difficulties with his/her parents. This is the teacher’s responsibility.

Occasionally, a child might confide in you about family matters or personal problems. Keep this confidential, too. If you feel that it is vital for the school to have this information in order to help the student, discuss the child’s conversation (in private) with the teacher or principal.

Discipline
Students rarely have behavior problems while working with volunteers. However our school has a detailed discipline plan, and the responsibility for discipline rests with the professional staff. Volunteers may not discipline students. Please make the teacher aware of any discipline problems that might arise while you are working with students.

Restrooms
Staff restrooms are available for volunteers. We ask that you do not use student restrooms. For your own protection, we need to ask that you also do not accompany children into or to the restroom. If young children ask for assistance with clothing outside the bathrooms, refer them to other students or the teacher.

Dismissal of Students
Volunteers may never dismiss a student from school. Children who must leave school early for any reason must receive permission from the school office and sign out before leaving. Under no circumstance may a volunteer take a student off campus. Volunteers may not walk or drive students to their homes unless the child’s parent has notified the school office.

Tobacco Free- Weapons Free Campus
Public schools are tobacco, drug, alcohol and weapon free zones. If you smoke or chew tobacco, you cannot do so on public school grounds.
Health
If you are not feeling well, don’t try to keep up your volunteer duties in spite of an illness. You’ll accomplish more in the long run if you allow yourself time to recuperate. Do call in advance to let the teacher know you won’t be coming in at your scheduled time, however.

Schools are particularly concerned about keeping students and staff healthy. This is another reason for staying away from school if you have a contagious illness.

You need to be aware that your own insurance will need to continue to cover you while you volunteer.

Your Commitment
Before you agree to volunteer, carefully consider the commitment you are making. The work volunteers’ do is important. Whether they work in the classroom, main office, or health office, the staff and students quickly become dependent upon volunteer assistance.

Don’t promise to volunteer more time than you will be able to provide. It’s better to start out with a few hours a week and gradually build up to more hours or days if you find you have the additional time.

Dependability
Please be prompt and consistent! We know there will be times when you will be ill, on vacation or unable to volunteer for one reason or another. However, please let the teacher know as far in advance as possible. Remember, the teacher will be expecting you on the days you are scheduled to volunteer and so will the children! If you fail to show up at your appointed time on your appointed day, everyone is disappointed.

Be prompt and 100% dependable-
Come when you say you will. Give the staff plenty of notice when you won’t be available at your scheduled time.

PLEASE: Telephone the school office and leave a message for the teacher or staff member with whom you work. Let them know in advance if you will be unable to volunteer.

Find out about school rules.
Become familiar with the rules and policies of the school. It’s a good idea to read through the school’s handbook. Ask your supervising teacher to explain the school’s policy for smoking, use of telephones, eating facilities, fire drills and emergency procedures.

Use reasonable judgment in making decisions when there appears to be no policy or when the policy is not communicated. As soon as possible, consult with the supervising teacher for future guidance.

Be a good communicator-
The staff will welcome your questions and comments. If you do not understand something, always ask. Volunteering should be an enjoyable and rewarding job. If you are unhappy or concerned about something, discuss the situation with the staff. If you have concerns about your placement and/or the job you are doing, feel free to call the Principal or Volunteer Coordinator.

We all have different ways of doing things-
When you have been assigned a task, make certain you know exactly how the teacher wants the job done. Ask for clear directions and, if necessary, ask that the teacher give you samples or demonstrate how tasks are to be performed.

Try something new-
The opportunity to learn new skills is one of the benefits of being a school volunteer. Be willing to try new tasks assigned by the staff, but accept only as much responsibility as you feel comfortable with.
To Summarize…

Volunteers are an important part of the educational team. The suggestions and opinions of volunteers are always welcome. It is the professional staff, however, that is held responsible by law for the decisions that are made regarding the instruction of students and the management of the school. For this reason, volunteers always work under the direct supervision of teachers and administrators. PEC reserves the right to limit the duration/frequency of volunteer hours.

Is there anything volunteers shouldn’t do?

YES! The professional staff at the school is responsible for everything that goes on in the classroom including student instruction, safety and discipline. Volunteers supplement and support the program, but may not:

- Provide the curriculum or teaching plan;
- Discipline students;
- Take charge of the classroom for any length of time;
- Have access to materials in students’ permanent record files (psychological records, grade cards, health histories, etc.)
- Diagnose student needs;
- Evaluate achievement;
- Counsel students; or
- Discuss student progress with parents or other people
- Take students to the bathroom

A volunteer is never considered a substitute for a member of the professional school staff.

Routine tasks are important-

The staff often relies upon volunteers to do the routine jobs such as preparing learning aids and organizing materials. Because volunteers are able to assist with these jobs, teachers are free to spend more time working with students or planning for quality instruction.

Look forward to the year-end recognition and evaluation-

During the month of April, the volunteer coordinator will be asking for your evaluation of your time spent during the past year.

This will be a time to share and discuss the pleasure and concerns and the promise of the next year. We will also be enjoying a recognition event with volunteers, a treat to look forward to!
Working with students...

Call students by name at each opportunity.- A child’s name is very important. Make every effort to pronounce and spell each child’s name correctly.

Closely observe the techniques used by the teacher.- Try to model these instructional methods when working with students.

Accept children, as they are – Children are unique. Some children may be very different from you own children. Be ready to accept these differences in background, values, vocabulary and aspirations.

Be firm with students, but also be warm and friendly.- Let each child know that you care about him/her. Your individual attention will be important.

Encourage and praise students.- Use positive comments that will make children feel good about themselves even when they are having difficulty. Avoid saying anything that will make students feel bad about themselves or their ability to learn. Be ready to praise children for even the smallest successes!

Remember that children never forget.- If you promise them something, be prepared to keep the promise. Be careful not to make promises that you will be unable to keep.

Encourage students to do their own thinking.- Try not to give students the answers before they have had an opportunity to solve questions on their own. Give children plenty of time to answer your questions. Silence often means that a child is thinking. Beware of the occasional students who may try to get you to do their work for them.

Follow the teacher’s lead.- Always be consistent with the teacher’s rules for classroom behavior. Don’t allow children to do things that their teacher doesn’t allow. Remember, the teacher is always available and ready to handle discipline problems. Make sure the children with whom you are working do not disturb the rest of the class.

Reinforce good behavior.- When children (especially younger students) are behaving well, always let them know how proud you are of them and how much you appreciate their effort. This will encourage them to try even harder. If possible, do not pay attention to a child who shows minor misbehavior problems, but note things the child is doing well and praise him/her for it.

Remember, it’s okay if you don’t know all the answers.- Admit to the children that you do not know answers or are not sure what to do. Work the answers out together with students or feel free to ask the teacher for assistance.

Keep students on task.- You will want the children to learn as much as possible during the short time they spend with you. Keep the lessons or activity moving. Try to avoid letting one or more students get you or the group off the track for long periods of time by discussing topics that have nothing to do with the lesson.

Supervise students’ carefully.- Under no circumstances should you leave a student or small group of students without supervision. Always be fully aware of what students are doing at all times.

Know when to give or not to give.- Your positive words of encouragement will go a long way in helping students to become excited about learning. Younger children may also enjoy stars, stickers, stamps and especially little notes of praise from the volunteer. You and the teacher can discuss the use of these motivational materials.

Please do not give students food without first checking with the teacher. Volunteers may not give students advertisements or fund solicitations.
The Rewards of Volunteering…

As a volunteer, you not only serve the needs of the children, you also provide a vital link between the school and the community. Students, their parents and the community will view you as a representative of the school. They will pay close attention to what you say about the staff and the educational programs.

Sometimes the community hears about the negative aspects of education or stories about few students who misbehave. Because of your volunteer experience, you’ll be able to share the many positive things that students and staff are doing. You will have an opportunity to let the community know what is going on in the school! (Remember not to share confidential information.)

We know you will enjoy your volunteering experience. Each year, many volunteers tell us they receive so much more in return than they give to the program. By sharing your time with our students and staff you will:

- Be given the opportunity to use your skills and talents;
- Gain a better understanding of how children learn;
- Have a chance to meet and work with teachers and other volunteers;
- Know that the work you are doing directly affects the quality of education for the children of our community;
- Have a great chance to learn valuable new skills that you might use in future endeavors.

Directory…
For quick reference, refer to the following information and keep this handbook in a convenient location. If you will be unable to volunteer at your scheduled time, please call the school secretary and ask her to notify the staff member with whom you work.

School: Paradise Honors Elementary School
K-2nd Grade Principal: Amy MacWilliams
5th–8th Grade Principal: Allison Gonzales
Phone Number: (623) 975-2646
Address: 15533 W. Paradise Lane
   Surprise, Arizona 85355
Volunteer Coordinator: Danielle D. Persons
Email: dppersons@paradiseschools.org

Danielle will be available on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday’s. However we ask that you please keep in mind that the days Danielle is available may vary throughout the school year.

Share your experience….

If you have friends or relatives who might be interested in volunteering in our school, please ask them to call Paradise Honors Elementary Schools Volunteer Coordinator at (623) 546-7225.
Important!!! All Volunteers Must Comply

Please turn in the following forms to the office before you begin volunteering:

- Completed Application
- Copy of Fingerprint Clearance Card or Fingerprint Background Check completed
- Copy of Driver’s License
- This form with your signature

You will not be able to begin volunteering until all of these forms have been received.

*****You do not need to submit these forms if you are a returning volunteer from the 2018-2019 school year and you have already submitted this paperwork with a copy of your fingerprint clearance card. Please make sure you email Danielle Persons if you need to update any your personal information.*****

Thank you,

Danielle D. Persons
Volunteer Coordinator

I, ____________________________________, have read and understood all of the guidelines described in the Volunteer Handbook.

_________________________________________  __________
Signature                                      Date
Paradise Honors Elementary School
Volunteer Application

Date: _____ / _____ / _____

This application is to be completed by all applicants for any volunteer position involving working with children. It is being used to help the school provide a safe and secure environment for the children who attend school here. Information from this application will also be used to form a volunteer database for the school’s use.

PERSONAL AND CONFIDENTIAL

Name: ____________________________

Last Name: ________________________
First Name: ________________________
Middle Name: ________________________
Maiden Name: ________________________
Nickname: ________________________

SSN: __________ - __________ - __________
DL#: __________________________
ST: ______

Date of Birth (MM/DD/YYYY): __________ - __________ - __________

Current Address: ____________________________________________________________

Child’s Name  Grade  Child’s Name  Grade  Child’s Name  Grade

Please check the number and/or E-Mail address that is the best way to contact you.

☐ Home Phone: ________________________  ☐ Work Phone: ________________________

☐ Cell Phone: ________________________  ☐ Pager: ________________________

☐ Primary E-Mail Address: ________________

Are you the parent/legal guardian of a student enrolled at Paradise Honors Elementary School? Yes____ No ___

Have you ever been convicted of a crime? Yes _____ No ______

In order to thoroughly review your background, it is necessary to know where you have lived for the past five years. Please use the lines below. If more space is needed, please use the back of this form. (If you cannot remember your exact address, please be sure to at least give us the city, state, country and dates of your residence. Thank you.)

Address: __________________________________________________________

Number  Street  City  State  Zip  Country  Dates

Address: __________________________________________________________

Number  Street  City  State  Zip  Country  Dates

I authorize Paradise Honors Elementary School to check whatever is necessary of my background to insure that I am qualified to work with children. I understand a check on my background to include felony and/or misdemeanor criminal records may be necessary, will be kept confidential, and will only be used to determine my eligibility to work with children. The information I have provided is true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

Applicant’s Signature: ________________________________  Date: __________________________

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