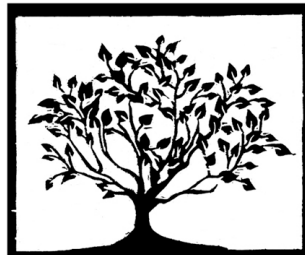


VOLUNTEERS IN THE CLASSROOM

Methow Valley



Community School
Celebrating Authentic Learning

A GUIDE TO PARENT HELPING AT MVCS

Parent and Community INVOLVEMENT

Parent involvement may be fulfilled in many different ways that meet both the needs of the program and the interests of the parents.

Parents may work regularly to assist in the class where needed; such as listening to a child read; tutoring; helping with class projects in writing, art, cooking, science; driving for outdoor ed.

Working parents may help during the lunch hours supervising students while they eat or work in the classroom, also by providing additional adult supervision on the playground.

Parents who can help only occasionally in the classroom can make bulletin boards, help with special projects, be a guest speaker, teach a mini-course, or substitute for a regularly scheduled parent.

Parents may assist out of class by coordinating activities, finding guest speakers, shopping for class needs, making learning/teaching materials and games, constructing classroom furniture and setting up activities for the children.

Training for some jobs will be offered. The success of the parent participation aspect of the program depends on each parent carefully considering how she/he can make a meaningful and quality contribution of time. Each classroom teacher will consider how parents can best be used, and will attempt to work closely with parents needs and interests.

Ways parents and community can volunteer at MVCS

- Assist with curriculum in the classroom
- Curriculum focus – offer your expertise in an area being presented in the classroom
- Cooking
- School photographer
- Music
- Art
- Technology
- Story Telling
- Outdoor Ed.
- Gardening/greenhouse
- Typing class books
- Year books
- Sharing family culture and traditions
- Recess games
- Sports
- Bulletin boards
- Room clean-up and organizing
- Classroom shopper
- Hobbies
- 1 on 1 with a child

- Assist teacher with tasks
- Clean and organize class space and materials with teacher's direction
- Research for curriculum
- Resource collector
- Help teach kids jobs so they can contribute
- Public relations
- Fundraising
- Special events
- Tutoring
- Community Service

PARENTS AS PARTNERS IN THE CLASSROOM

Reminders and Suggestions

We want parents and community volunteers to feel welcome, safe, and comfortable in our school and in the classroom.

Please ask questions and feel free to say what you are comfortable doing and what you are not comfortable doing. Please let the teacher know if you have an area of expertise or a particular interest or talent you would like to bring to the classroom.

Please:

- **Develop a relationship with the teacher(s) and the children with whom you work.**
- **Observe and ask questions.**
- **Respect the right to privacy of each child. Please talk only to the teacher about the children in the class.**
- **Give the teacher an opportunity to answer your questions about the classroom or any child's program. She/he has the whole picture.**
- **Please assume all children are doing the best they can. Assume innocence. Ask open ended questions in order to be helpful.**
- **Respect and honor the ways children learn. There are many ways to be smart!**
- **Use your knowledge and common sense. If something looks unsafe, stop the behavior and ask the teacher for help.**
- **Notice the classroom CODE of CONDUCT. Use that language to remind students of expectations.**

STRATEGIES FOR INTERVENTION WITH CHILDREN

- Assume innocence
 - Develop a relationship
 - Model
 - Ask open-ended “wh” questions, (that cannot be answered yes or no)
 - ✓ How could I help you right now?
 - ✓ What do you need to....?
 - ✓ Where could we work together?
 - ✓ Who know how to do this well?
 - ✓ Etc....
 - The agreement is _____. Can you do that? Thanks a lot!
 - Clear messages/directions then walk away:
 - ✓ The rule is to come in when you see the teacher.
 - ✓ I am going in and I will count to 20. I want to see you in the class.
 - ✓ THEN GO IN!
 - ✓ (If the student does not come in report to the teacher and ask for help)
 - Return/report to the teacher or director
 - Make a plan for next time so you are comfortable working in the classroom or with this/these child(ren).
 - Please.....When there is a problem....
 - ✓ DO NOT chase children
 - ✓ DO NOT “grab” children
- Both behaviors tend to escalate the situation

GUIDELINES FOR APPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR & COMMUNICATION

At MVCS our students’ safety and your protection are paramount. We strive to provide a safe, healthy, supportive work environment for students, staff and volunteers. To help ensure this, we ask that you follow these guidelines.

Safe Interaction with Kids

In compliance with state guidelines, volunteers work under supervised conditions. This means:

- There should be another volunteer, employee or parent in the area where you are working with students. If you’re going to work alone leave the door open and make sure you are in plain site.

Safe Verbal Communication

- Let your conversations demonstrate respect for others, and avoid language that may be perceived as discriminatory, sexist, or offensive. Remember that you are a role model for the students.
- Treat all students in the same manner.
- If a student shares with you anything that causes you concern for their safety or health, TELL THE TEACHER OR DIRECTOR. Be assured that they will follow up on the information with utmost discretion.

Safe Touch Areas

- Hand shakes, “high fives” and an arm around the shoulder are safe, warm and friendly touches.
- NEVER touch a child in anger.

In short, use your best judgment at all times. Treat the students as you would wish to be treated....with dignity, care and respect.

PARENT TRAINING

WORKING WITH A SMALL GROUP

Often you will be asked to work with a small group of children. Please remember your common sense, the class constitution, and our school agreement. MVCS is a community committed to learning, kindness and fun. Any behavior that interrupts learning or is hurting in any way is unacceptable behavior.

Let’s assume you are taking a small group of children to a space outside of the room. Here is one collection of strategies that may be helpful.

Before moving to the space:

Gather the children around you to quickly give **expectations** of hall behavior and gathering behavior once you get to the space. (This may be done by the teacher, but if not, be prepared.)

“Your teacher has asked me to work with you on your play. I’m **looking forward** to it – I love plays and this is one of my favorites.

We’re going to walk together down to the gym. Please **stay beside me or behind me** as we walk. Remember your **quiet voices** so we won’t interrupt learning as we pass other rooms or people working in the hall.

When we get to the gym, please **sit in a circle**. Are there any **questions?**”

(Eventually you will only need to greet your group and give a quick reminder: walk beside or behind, quiet voices, sit in a circle)

Acknowledge the group for moving to the new space and keeping the agreement.

Troubleshooting:

Children start to run ahead of the group

- Give one reminder: “Jason, remember to walk beside or behind me.” OR “Jason, the rule is to walk beside or behind me. Can you do that? Thank you.”
- If the reminder is ignored: “Jason please return to your teacher in the classroom. You can try it again another day.”

Children who do not come to the circle

- Give one direction to the child: “Lucy, please quickly join us in the circle.” OR “Lucy, our rule is to join the circle and sit. Can you do that quickly? Thank you.”

During the group lesson

Do not begin the activity until you have your learning circle where everyone is sitting and ready to start. We use the “Give Me Five” method that the children learn at the beginning of the year to gather everyone’s attention. Once they’re ready, quickly review the work or job:

- “Our **job**” for the next 20 minutes is to review the play. When we share ideas, remember to **raise your hands** to talk. (*We want to hear everyone’s ideas and we can only listen to one person at a time.*)

Troubleshooting

Child starts **talking without raising a hand**

- Give one reminder: “Susan, remember to raise your hand.” OR “Susan, our rule is to raise your hand. Please do that.”
- If Susan continues to talk without raising her hand: “Susan, time out. Scoot back two scoots for two minutes.” (After two minutes.) “Susan, are you ready to try it again?”

Child starts to **lie down** in a prone position during the group lesson.

- “Lying down gives your brain the signal to rest or sleep. Since this is a learning group, your brain needs to be awake. Please continue to sit.”

Child becomes **disruptive** to the learning of the group.

- “Joe, we’ve agreed not to interrupt learning. Can you do that? Thank you.”
- If disruption continues:

- “Joe, please return to your teacher. We’ll try it again another day.”

HELPFUL TIPS

Guidance phrases and directions should be delivered in a quick manner and then attention should be redirected right back to the task. ***The less attention paid to inappropriate behavior the better. Also the less verbiage, the better.***

THE SPECIAL LANGUAGE OF ENCOURAGEMENT

Phrases that demonstrate acceptance:

- I like the way you handled that.
- I like the way you tackle a problem.
- I’m glad you enjoy learning.
- I’m glad you’re pleased with it.
- Since you’re not satisfied, what do you think you can do so that you will be pleased with it?
- It looks as if you enjoyed that.
- How do you feel about it?

Phrases that show confidence:

- Knowing you, I’m sure you’ll do fine.
- You’ll make it!
- I have confidence in your judgment.
- That’s a tough one, but I’m sure you’ll work it out.

Phrases that focus on contributions:

- Thanks; that helped a lot.
- It was thoughtful of you to _____.
- I need your help on _____.

Phrases that recognize effort and improvement:

- It looks as if you really worked hard on that.
- I see that you’re moving along.
- Look at the progress you’ve made. (be specific; tell how)
- You’re improving in.....(be specific)

SOME ROLES OF THE VOLUNTEER IN THE CLASSROOM

Your major role in the classroom as parents is to support the teacher in serving the students. Some of the ways you may be asked to do this are:

1. To monitor and assist students during **teacher-directed, whole class instruction**.
2. To monitor and support students during **independent work** or cooperative learning activities.
3. To provide **follow-up instruction** after teacher directed instruction.
4. To occasionally provide teacher planned **small group instruction** to students (for instance, lead a reading group, practice a play, cook with a small group, etc).
5. To support students' instructional program through the preparation of materials and the fulfillment of other **clerical tasks**.
6. Occasionally you may be asked to **monitor** a group of students on the **playgroup** or **teach/play a game** with them **outside or in the gym**.

ROLE #1 SUPPORT WHOLE CLASS INSTRUCTION

To monitor and assist students during whole class instruction.

GOALS:

- To increase students' **attention** during whole class instruction.
- To enhance students' demonstration of **appropriate behavior**.
- To ensure students' understanding of teacher **directions**.

GUIDELINES for ROLE #1

During teacher-directed instruction, you may frequently be asked to do some clerical work that the teacher needs. If, however, the instruction being given is for an activity immediately following in which you will be assisting students, it will be helpful for you to **listen carefully** so that you can guide the

students when they do the activity. **If some students are having difficulty paying attention** and staying on task during the lesson, **there are a number of things you can do to help:**

- During the lesson stand or sit to the side of the circle with your body facing the teacher. Give an **immediate “five”** along with the students whenever the teacher requests it. You will be **modeling attentive behaviors** for the entire class.
- When a **behavioral challenge** begins to emerge, assist in a **non-intrusive manner** that allows the lesson momentum to continue.

Suggestions:

- **Stand or sit near the student(s)** exhibiting inappropriate behavior. **Maintain your attention on the teacher.** This leaves the student(s) a window of opportunity to make a new choice without a power struggle.
- **Touch** the student’s back lightly, then step or move away **while maintaining your attention on the teacher.**
- Communicate to the student using **–non-verbal** procedures such as **eye contact, a nod or gesture.**
- If the previous tactics have not been successful quietly approach the student and ask, **“What can you do right now that will help you learn?”** and quietly back away.
- If it is still necessary, give a **quiet, private redirective** to the student. Tell the student the exact behavior that you desire, **“Please be quiet right now and listen to the teacher.”**
- If the student refuses to change his/her behavior, you have tried these five non-intrusive measure, and anything further you do will result in a power struggle, you now need to **quietly back away and let the teacher handle it.** At a neutral time, you may need to apprise the teacher of the problem.

BE NON-INTRUSIVE

ROLE #2 MONITOR INDEPENDENT WORK

To monitor and support students during independent work or cooperative learning activities.

GOALS:

- To increase students’ **on-task behavior.**
- To improve students’ demonstration of other **school behaviors.**

GUIDELINES OF ROLE #2

The teacher will establish a procedure for gaining assistance that promotes independence and on-task behavior. For example, most of our teachers **encourage asking his/her partner or another peer for assistance first**. With younger children who require dictation during writing, a hand raised is often the signal for assistance.

- **Move around the classroom.** This in itself increases students' on-task behavior, but does not increase the accuracy of their work.
- **Monitor students' work.** "Glance" at work of higher performing students. "Gaze" at work of lower performing students.
- **Acknowledge** students who are on-task and performing correctly. "Thank you, I see you have 5 done, you are following directions, etc....."
- When an incorrect response or behavior is noted, **prompt** the student to produce the correct work using the same wording as the teacher utilized during initial instruction.

ROLE #3

PROVIDE FOLLOW-UP INSTRUCTION

To provide follow-up instruction after whole class instruction.

GOALS:

- To increase the **amount of instruction** that students receive individually, such as one on one math tutoring and shared reading.
- To provide **additional input** to students that parallels the teacher input.

GUIDELINES FOR ROLE #3

If the parent observed the lesson,

- **I DO IT** - provide additional **modeling** (demonstration) using wording similar to that used by the teacher.
- **WE DO IT** – **prompt** our guide students in completing the assignment. Again, use wording that matches that of the teacher. **Fade** the assistance as students demonstrate competency.
- **YOU DO IT** – observe students completing items independently. Coach when necessary.

If the parent did NOT observe the lesson,

- **PREPARE** – first, **stop** and carefully **examine** the title of the lesson, the examples provided, and key wording.
- **EXAMPLES** – guide students in examining the examples provided. This will help familiarize you with the lesson.
- **I DO IT** – **model** the skill or strategy using the first one or two items of the lesson. Match the instructional wording to that provided in the lesson.
- **WE DO IT**.....
- **YOU DO IT**.....

ROLE #4 SMALL GROUP INSTRUCTION

To provide small group instruction to students.

GOALS:

- To provide time for reading in small groups.
- To work with a small group of students on selected activities such as cooking, art projects, research study projects, drama, special math, play, learning games.

GUIDELINES FOR ROLE #4

Please refer to “Working with small groups” instructions included in this packet.

ROLE #5 CLERICAL TASKS

To support students’ instructional program through the preparation of materials and the fulfillment of other clerical tasks.

Often during whole group instruction, the teacher will ask you to do various clerical tasks, such as searching out equipment, gathering materials from the main office (located on the 2nd floor), making copies, cutting.

An initial orientation of the office and equipment will be provided, however do not hesitate to ask for assistance from either the office assistant or director in the main office.

ROLE #6 HELPING TO FACILITATE MORNING GROUP GAMES AND LUNCH TIME FREE PLAY

Volunteers are a huge asset when we are outdoors.

The following are **guidelines to safe play** on the playground and elsewhere. It is helpful if we all **model this same behavior** and recognize that there are things you may allow your own children to do when you are supervising them outside of the school situation that may become unsafe activities when you are trying to watch a large group of children or when many children together engage in the activity.

Protocol for Morning Group Game and Lunch Time

- Two adult facilitators will be with the children at all times during their outdoor play
- Morning Group Game will begin with snack at 9:50, followed by the choice between 2 or 3 all-school games from 10:00-10:25. Each child and adult facilitator will be prepared to fully participate.
- Lunch and free play will begin at 12:00.
 - While weather permits, lunch will be an all-school affair at the picnic pavilion in the park. Students will be asked to sit for at least 15 minutes to eat their meals.
 - Once finished eating, students may ask to be excused, clean their place, put their lunch box under the “common tree”, and have free play
 - Park boundaries will also serve as free play boundaries, giving adult facilitators the ability to see all the children all of the time
 - Bathroom protocol – students may use the library facilities w/a buddy. Younger Crew students must buddy with an Older Crew student. Students will inform one of the adults before leaving the park
- Moving from school building to other locations via walking
 - All students will be expected to walk in single file, behind their crew Yelmihom (leader of the week)
- Equipment – share it and put it away when you are done OR at the end of recess. This is everybody’s job. If you see equipment on the playground, please pick it up and return it. IT IS NOT THE ADULTS’ JOB, but of course they will model and help.
- Boundaries – the Winthrop Park is a public-access area as is the library and ball field. Please remember the buddy system when using the washrooms – never go there alone. Recess boundaries are generally the boundaries of the Park, as long as an adult can see you and you can see them.
- Play Safe!
- Be Kind!
- Take Turns!
- Include people (all ages) in games!

FREE PLAY CONCERNS ARE GREAT CLASS MEETING MATERIAL.