

# Saint Matthew School

## Volunteer Program 2009

## Introduction

Welcome to the Saint Matthew Volunteer Program.

This handbook has been prepared to offer volunteers specific information relating to the duties and responsibilities of the volunteer at school. It cannot begin to answer all of your questions, but it will make you feel more comfortable as you begin the very important task of helping to meet the needs of students and teachers.

## Saint Matthew Volunteers

It is mandatory for all people who work with students 1 hour or more a week to have the following steps completed. Examples are all school volunteers, cub/boy scout leaders, brownie/girl scout leaders, lunch room and library helpers, destination imagination, lego league, and any other activity supported by the church or school.

1. Acknowledgement form for covenanted personnel filled out yearly.
2. Background Checks.
3. Virtus Training by the Archdiocese of Dubuque.
4. Copy of acknowledgement form and Virtus training must be turned into the office for our records.
5. If you have been trained you may verify your certificate is on file in the office.

Saint Matthew volunteers are concerned, dedicated people who are not paid and work regularly, or as needed, to support the efforts of professional personnel. The use of volunteers is restricted to activities requested, approved, and supervised by a Saint Matthew staff member.

Volunteers are assigned only upon the request of the teacher, the principal, or other school personnel. Whenever possible, volunteers are assigned where they wish to serve. Volunteers serve only in an auxiliary capacity. They are not substitutes for members of the school staff.

Volunteers are many things: an extra pair of hands, an extra measure of personal warmth, a valuable resource for classroom enrichment, a bridge between the instructional program and the Saint Matthew community. We cannot buy what volunteers give to our school.

No longer are volunteers only parents; they are also grandparents, high school, college students, and retirees.

As volunteers, you are assisting the staff in their daily endeavor of providing the best educational experience for each child in Saint Matthew School.

## Saint Matthew School Philosophy

St. Matthew School is a living faith community founded on Christian principals by which we form the total person in Christ. Complementing the family, our school provides an environment in which the child can grow spiritually, emotionally, physically, socially, and intellectually. St. Matthew School strives to make learning relevant and prepare children to find Christ in our changing world.

## Volunteer Program Goals

The Saint Matthew volunteer program operates with the approval of the Saint Matthew Board of Education and the principal and is at all times guided by the principles and policies of Saint Matthew School.

Goals of the program are:

- ❑ To assist teachers in providing more individualization and enrichment of instruction;
- ❑ To enrich the students' experiences;
- ❑ To assist in the development of the students' self-esteem;
- ❑ To increase students' motivation for learning by providing a positive attitude toward education;
- ❑ To relieve teachers of certain non-teaching tasks;
- ❑ To provide an opportunity for interested community members to participate effectively in our school's program;
- ❑ To strengthen school-community relations through direct and positive participation in the school; and
- ❑ To enhance all aspects of the educational process.

## Job Descriptions

The volunteer may be asked to:

- ❑ Assist the teacher during class;
- ❑ Work with small groups of students or with individual students;
- ❑ Prepare materials for instruction, such as work sheets, flash cards, charts, games, bulletin boards, art materials, transparencies, and audio-visual materials;
- ❑ Assist with clerical duties, such as typing, duplicating, filing, checking papers, and recording scores;
- ❑ Contribute to building a sense of unity in the school
- ❑ Support and promote the philosophy of Catholic education.

## Volunteer Responsibilities

### DEPENDABILITY

Come on time. The staff you work with will depend upon you to be present at your scheduled time. Their tasks are planned with your help in mind. If you will not be able to volunteer on a certain day, please notify the school office (362-3021). This will mean so much to the teacher and to eager students.

Volunteer only for the time you can realistically expect to contribute.

Remember that you are a role model for the students.

### CONFIDENTIALITY

Please remember! All of your work is confidential. Names of students, teachers, and staff and their actions and abilities are never appropriate topics of discussion outside school. Respect the students' confidences and accept them as they are.

### Getting Along With Students

- ❑ Express a genuine interest in helping students.
- ❑ Show each child that he or she is an important individual by calling him or her by name.
- ❑ Closely observe instructional techniques used by the teacher, and try to use these methods when you are working with individual students.
- ❑ Relax, and be yourself. Keep your sense of humor.
- ❑ Students make mistakes. Let them know that doing so is a part of living. Do not be afraid of making mistakes yourselves.
- ❑ Be willing to learn and accept supervision. Meet with the teacher or staff member you will be working with.
- ❑ Be patient. Children learn at different rates and in different ways. Any sign of progress, slight though it may be, will be your greatest reward.
- ❑ Give assistance when you are asked, but try not to supply answers before the student has a chance to solve the problem on his own.
- ❑ Listen attentively. Encourage and praise students for even the smallest success.
- ❑ Let students know that you recognize their efforts when they behave well. Inform the teacher if a behavior problem arises.