

# Working with Classroom Volunteers

Helpful hints from the



## Survey Parents the First Week

Send a note to parents outlining the ways that they can be helpful to you and the students. Do you need guest speakers? Can they run off materials, correct papers, work with small groups, or assist with big projects? Give them examples of ways they could contribute. Find out what they are willing to do.

## Organize Your Resources

Make note cards with the names, addresses, phone numbers, availability, and the assistance each volunteer is willing to provide. Find ways to use ALL of them. Organize your groups, activities, etc. around the use of those volunteers. Many parents say they volunteer but are never called.

## Plan for Routine

Working with volunteers needn't be extra work for the teacher. Have an established area for volunteers to check in. Have a box or a basket that contains materials they will need. Provide numerous routine tasks that can easily be picked up and done at any time, (flashcard drills, correcting, filing, listening to readers). Volunteers should be able to get started without interrupting your lesson.

## Train Your Volunteers

Take an hour or more and invite all of your volunteers to meet together. Go over your expectations (confidentiality, discipline, punctuality). Show them where to find materials, how to operate machines, and where to put their belongings when in the room. Answer all of their questions at the meeting and save yourself and them a lot of valuable time later.

## Value Time and Effort

Remember that they are VOLUNTEERS. They may have conflicts and be unable to come every time you request them. Value them and appreciate the time they DO give. You will have better working relationships with volunteers if they know they are making an important contribution to the students. Be sure to thank them. Send cards or give other demonstrations of appreciation.