Randall L. Woodfin
Mayor

Galvin K. Billups
Director

Page Pals School Volunteer Policy

Purpose:

This policy outlines the guidelines and expectations for volunteers desiring to participate in the Department of Youth Services and its Page Pals Program. Page Pals is a reading program designed to produce more effective 3rd-grade student readers inside and outside the classroom. To support students, Page Pals is a reading initiative created in partnership with Birmingham City Schools (BCS) to increase third-grade students' reading proficiency. Page Pals creates more opportunities for students to read inside the school with volunteers. The safety and well-being of students are the top priority, and this policy is designed to ensure a safe and productive environment for all.

Eligibility:

1. Volunteers must be at least 18 years old.
2. Volunteers must complete a background check and screening processes.
3. Volunteers should be genuinely interest in working with children and supporting their education.
4. Volunteers must complete all required program forms, training and orientations.

Volunteer Roles and Responsibilities:

1. Volunteers will assist BCS personnel (i.e., teachers, instructional aides, reading coaches, librarians, etc.) with various tasks, such as reading assistance and classroom activities, during scheduled reading times.
2. Volunteers should follow the guidance and instructions provided by the BCS administrators and school staff.
3. Volunteers are expected to maintain confidentiality regarding student and classroom information.
4. Volunteers should dress appropriately and professionally while in the school setting.
5. Volunteers are encouraged to communicate regularly with DYS staff and BCS personnel to ensure they understand their role and any specific needs in the school.
6. Volunteers must immediately report any concerns or issues related to student behavior, safety, or welfare to the teacher or school staff.

Code of Conduct:

1. Volunteers should model respectful behavior and language at all times.
2. Volunteers must not discipline or reprimand students; the BCS administration and staff are responsible.
3. Volunteers should not discuss personal or sensitive topics with students.
4. Volunteers should avoid using personal electronic devices (e.g., smartphones) during volunteer times.
5. Volunteers should refrain from sharing their personal beliefs, including religious or political views, with students.

Safety and Security:

1. Volunteers must check in and out at the school office when arriving and departing. Volunteers are asked to show appropriate ID to school staff at check-in.
2. Volunteers should wear identification badges the school provides while on campus.
3. In the event of an emergency or lockdown, volunteers should follow the instructions of school staff and assist in ensuring the safety of students.

Removal from Program/Termination of Volunteer Status:

1. The DYS reserves the right to terminate a volunteer's status if they fail to comply with this policy or if concerns about their conduct or suitability arise.
2. Volunteers may discontinue their service anytime by notifying the DYS.

Acknowledgment:

By volunteering for the Page Pals program, all volunteers acknowledge that they have read, understood, and agree to abide by this policy. Failure to comply with this policy may result in the termination of volunteer status and removal from the program.

Policy Updates:

This policy is subject to periodic review and updates as needed to ensure the safety and well-being of students and the effectiveness of the volunteer program.