



WELCOME TO OUR CLASSROOMS!

Dear Volunteer,

We are truly grateful to have you as part of our classroom communities. Part of what make Horizon Honors special is the commitment and participation of our parents. Without you and your extra hands, loving hearts, and special talents...we wouldn't be who we are today. With that said, we welcome you to our classrooms and encourage you to enjoy the amazing experiences our students encounter each and every day.

In anticipation of your presence, our staff gathered together their feedback on ways you could positively assist in the classroom. Our intention, as always, is to provide the best possible learning experience for all students in our classrooms. As teachers, we have learned that there are strategies that maximize the best results in our classrooms so we welcome the opportunity to share these methods with you. Please read them and let us know if you have any questions. Enjoy the time you spend with all our children. And thanks again for touching our lives and the lives of the children in our classrooms.

GUIDELINES FOR CLASSROOM HELP

- ✓ Support in the classroom requires your attention and while we love all children, bringing additional siblings into the classroom environment places the school and the other students in a compromising position. It doesn't allow you to fully focus on assisting the children and teachers.
- ✓ Ask the teachers when is the best time to arrive to get instructions. When you are in the class, listen to the teachers' instructions for added insight into the lesson.
- ✓ While volunteering in the classroom, continuously roam around the room making sure all students are on task and helping them resolve any problems they might be having with the lesson. Be an extra pair of eyes. Look for students who are struggling with the assignment. For any number of reasons, some students might not ask for help. You can be a gentle guide to help them understand the task they are working on.
- ✓ When working on projects, help the students use the supplies properly. This includes making sure that they are in an appropriate physical position to work on project safely and effectively. Help them to understand that your suggestions are intended to make it easier for them to complete the assignment.

- ✓ Give direction and advice to the children on assignments without judging or telling them exactly what to do or how to solve their problem. Ask students questions to get them to realize the point you are trying to make. It is always easier for us to give them the answers, but the best thing to do is allow them to answer the questions for themselves.
- ✓ Motivate the students by complementing them and commenting on their work in progress.
- ✓ Alert the teacher should you notice any inappropriate behavior. You are the “eye” and should not be responsible for the situation. Our teachers have been trained to handle these situations. Please support them in this process.
- ✓ Some of our students have special needs and challenges. They might display their turmoil in behaviors that are totally, utterly, and completely unacceptable. In many cases, these students have academic or behavior plans unique to them. In these situations, please trust the teacher’s judgment. The teachers know each student’s history, which they are not a liberty to share with parents.
- ✓ Most children (and parents) are comforted by physical nurturing, but please be sensitive to what is appropriate for the classroom environment and how other students perceive this nurturing. Please refrain from focusing on your own child both in the level of help you offer and in your physical proximity. What works best for all children is positive feedback, smiles, and humor. What jeopardizes the classroom is putting children on your laps, grabbing students, and reprimanding them.
- ✓ Horizon Honors prides itself on being flexible. However, for the untrained, frustration usually closely follows. Try to support the changes in schedules, formats, teacher, students, etc.
- ✓ Please avoid judging the teacher’s actions. Having to deal with this produces a stress on the teacher that diminishes the strength they reserve for your children. If you have a concern and don’t understand a teacher’s behavior, please find an appropriate time to sit down and discuss it. This allows for the flow of teaching to be uninterrupted.
- ✓ Discussing your child’s specific needs while volunteering also distracts the teachers from class responsibilities. The teachers are more than willing to listen during non-instructional times of their day. While they are teaching, their focus has to be on the whole class or the smaller groups with whom they are working.
- ✓ *A word about confidentiality and privacy...*We teachers and parents have worked very hard to accept each other’s uniqueness and those of the students. Discussing your child’s day and/or your day with family, friends, etc. is a part of life. However, if these discussions at home jeopardize our school values or the confidentiality of an individual student in the classroom, please let the information remain with you alone.
- ✓ Respect the teacher’s planning areas. The computers and desk drawers often contain private and confidential information. The teacher will assist you in what ‘Common areas’ are for everyone’s use.

THANK YOU AGAIN FOR YOUR KINDNESS AND CONTINUED SUPPORT!