



WELCOME!!!!!!

I. Introduction

Welcome to the McCabe Volunteers/Room Parents Program, and thank you for your participation as an active partner in our children's education. We look forward to another year of growth and success for this program. This handbook outlines the guidelines and procedures for participation in the program and has been written to serve as a guide and reference tool. This handbook was created for our parent volunteer's protection. Please read through it carefully. If you have any questions, please call the PTO President Michaela A. Costa at 949-2244 or the School Principal Dr. Jill A. Barnhardt at 949-2058.

Confidentiality - The faculty and staff of Anna M. McCabe Elementary School are grateful to all of the McCabe Volunteers/Room Parents for the support and assistance they receive. The faculty and staff expect the McCabe Volunteers/Room Parents to show the utmost discretion and confidentiality regarding the students' academic performance and/or aptitude. Should there be a concern, please discuss it with the teacher or the principal immediately. At no time should such behavior be discussed with another person.

Background - The McCabe Volunteers Program was launched in 1997 as VIPS, or Volunteers in the Public Schools of Smithfield. Over 150 parents and local community members take part in this program in a variety of supportive roles.

Philosophy - Anna M. McCabe Elementary School recognizes the importance of volunteer involvement with the students. The McCabe Volunteers Program was formed to meet the academic, social and emotional needs of the children it serves and operates upon the foundation of confidentiality, trust and respect. We believe our McCabe Volunteers/Room Parents will work cooperatively with the faculty and school administration to create a school environment which will benefit the educational goals of our children.

Goal - The primary goal of the McCabe Volunteers Program is to support and enrich the educational experiences of McCabe students through collective volunteer efforts as both McCabe Volunteers and Room Parents.

Program Structure - The McCabe Volunteers Program is coordinated by the PTO President in conjunction with McCabe's Principal. Together, they guide the direction of the McCabe Volunteers Program. Please address any questions or concerns to the PTO President, Michaela A. Costa at 949-2244 or mc1788@yahoo.com or the McCabe Principal, Dr. Jill A. Barnhardt at 949-2058 or jbarnhardt@smithfield-ps.org

Who is eligible to become a McCabe Volunteer/Room Parent?

Any adult over the age of 18 who possesses a sincere desire to contribute time and energy in a positive way, **is willing to attend ONE mandatory Volunteer Orientation session**, and is committed to adhere to the protocol and participation guidelines as defined in this handbook is welcome to join. McCabe Volunteers offers a broad range of opportunities for Volunteers and Room Parents to share their specific and diverse skills and interests with McCabe students and join in on some of the fun and exciting field trips, crafts and other activities planned for the school year.

How can I become a McCabe Volunteer/Room Parent?

Simply complete the Volunteer/Room Parent Application form as thoroughly as possible, indicating how and where you would like to volunteer at McCabe. You will then be required to attend ONE Volunteer Orientation session, where you will be issued a Volunteer Handbook. The orientation will address issues of philosophy, policies, responsibilities and confidentiality. Once these requirements are met, you may volunteer at Anna M. McCabe Elementary School. Lists of Volunteers/ Room Parents names, availabilities and areas of interest will be forwarded to each staff member, who will match names with their specific needs. A faculty/staff member will then contact you directly for help.

Difference between Room Parent and Volunteer

Room Parents and Volunteers are both valuable resources for classroom teachers and staff. Room Parents are those people who choose to work **ONLY in their own child's classroom**, helping plan and implement class parties and special classroom events and activities, and serving as field trip chaperones. McCabe Volunteers/Room Parents are willing to accept assignments anywhere in the school. These assignments tend to be more curriculum-related. Please be clear about your commitment level to either program. If desired, you may choose to be both a Room Parent and a Volunteer.

Where can I volunteer?

- **Room Parents will only be assigned to their child's classroom as stated above.**
- **Volunteers may be asked to help in several capacities, including:**
 - Classrooms- for preparation hands-on-projects
 - Recess/playground (Walking club)
 - Office
 - Tutoring in math or reading
 - Library
 - Reading resource room
 - School nurse (Walking club)
 - Computer assistance
 - Art room
 - At-home classroom preparation work
 - Taping student's reading for assessments
 - Preparation of math curriculum materials and games
 - Bookbinding projects

How assignments are made?

Faculty staff members will refer to the list of McCabe Volunteers/Room Parents in order to identify which McCabe Volunteers/Room Parents are most suited for a specific assignment. The staff will contact you directly to discuss a mutually agreeable schedule. As in the past, a particular assignment (such as a field trip) may have more McCabe Volunteers/Room Parents than needed. The Staff will make every effort to ensure that all McCabe Volunteers/Room Parents participate in some way.

II. Policies and Guidelines

The policies and guidelines of the McCabe Volunteer are very important and should be followed. They are put in place for the protection of the faculty/staff, McCabe Volunteer and most importantly our students. It is imperative that it be known where a McCabe Volunteer is at all times and that he or she is following these policies and guidelines stringently:

Arrival time

- All McCabe Volunteers/Room Parents are to arrive and exit through the main school entrance. All other school entrances are not to be used. You should identify yourself as a McCabe Volunteer. Please arrive 10 minutes ahead of schedule in order to allow time for administrative processing*. You must check-in with the main office secretary or the principal. At check-in you must show a copy of your driver's license as identification and sign the volunteer book. Please identify where you will be volunteering in the school building. For school events such as school pictures, field day, popcorn, etc. McCabe Volunteers/Room Parents must also identify their name on a Volunteer List in the possession of the main office staff. **Your name must be on that list to volunteer.** If your name is not on that list to volunteer the PTO Executive Board Member assigned and responsible for the volunteer coordination will be called immediately to verify your volunteer assignment.
- Field trip chaperones are asked to arrive 15 minutes prior to the scheduled departure time, unless otherwise instructed by the classroom teacher. Field trip chaperones will follow the same arrival procedure as McCabe Volunteer/Room Parents

Parking

- All McCabe Volunteers/Room Parents are asked to park in the lot near the basketball courts or on Pleasant View Avenue in front of the school. McCabe Volunteers/Room Parents are not allowed to park in the front of the school.

Signing in

- McCabe Volunteers/Room Parents must sign their name, the time and location where you will be volunteering in the Volunteer log book at the front office. You must show photo identification for the protection of our students (i.e. a driver's license) a copy of your photo identification will be kept on file. If you are volunteering for a specific school function (assembly, popcorn, walking club, etc) you must also identify your name on the list-specified for the school function.

Name tags

- Every McCabe Volunteer/Room Parent will be provided with a name tag to be worn while participating in any assignment, field trip, etc... The name tags will be kept in a box near the Volunteer log book at the front office. The name tag will be given to you upon properly signing in at the main office. **Be sure to wear it in a visible manner.** This will make you easily identified for security and safety purposes. (If your name tag has not yet been made, please wear a Visitor tag in the meantime). Please remember to return your name tag to the box.

Signing out

- Upon completion of your assigned duties, please return the name tag to the box at the front office, sign out in the Volunteer log book, and exit the building through the front door. It is imperative that the main office staff and principal know that you have concluded your volunteer duties and are leaving the building.

Assignment duties

- When you arrive at the appropriate classroom, please check with the Faculty/staff member regarding your duties for that particular day. They may have set up a folder or other format for you to refer to so that the disruption is limited. Remember, visitors are a diversion to the regularly scheduled activities of the day. This distraction may be more of an issue to some students, so we ask your understanding and cooperation in making your presence as subdued as possible.

Assignment location

- Always conduct your duties in a professional, timely manner that does not disrupt other school activities. **Please remain in the area of the school building to which you are assigned. You are not allowed to roam the hallways of the school and make unannounced visits.** Any other classroom visits must be scheduled with that particular teacher in advance, and separate from volunteer time. Please note that if you must follow the McCabe Volunteer/Room Parent policies/guidelines for those visits as well.

Discipline issues

- While working with students one-on-one or in groups, please maintain a cheerful, low key demeanor that encourages student participation. If at any time a discipline issue arises, notify the faculty/staff member immediately. Never at any time is a McCabe Volunteer/Room Parent to reprimand or discipline a student in any way. If the faculty/staff member is not in the immediate area, notify the principal immediately. This serves as a protection for both the McCabe Volunteer/Room Parent and the student.

Gifts, Prizes and Other Incentives

- McCabe Volunteers/Room Parents may not award any gifts, prizes or incentives (including candy, stickers, money, snacks, etc.) to the students in school.

Room Parents at Parties

- Room Parents are asked to follow the teacher's direction regarding food items that are brought and served inside the school. **The Room Parent Coordinator is responsible to relay this food item information to other parents when the scheduling of a class party is taking place.** Many children have specific food allergies that could potentially cause serious side effects. Each teacher is acutely aware of any allergies among his/her students and will exercise discretion about the selection of party foods accordingly.

Room Parents on field trips

- While on field trips, Room Parents are expected to help the classroom teacher keep a close eye on the activities and whereabouts of students. Room Parents who travel with students on a bus are asked to remain alert and attentive to the needs of the students in their charge. If any concerns arise, Room Parents are asked to notify the classroom teacher immediately. Room Parents should be aware of their surroundings. The Room Parents must remember that they are serving a purpose to help the teacher chaperone the students while out of the classroom, therefore they are also refrained from discussing known personal issues in groups while on the field trip around other students. Information is very sensitive and so are our children. For their privacy and protection please keep talking in groups to a minimum. Children must also be supervised when visiting the rest rooms. Please make sure that children are accompanied to and from the rest rooms at all times.

Absence

- Once arrangements have been made for you to volunteer, and you find that you cannot be there during your scheduled time, please call the school as soon as possible and ask that the staff member you were to help be notified of your absence.

Siblings and preschoolers

- In order to give full attention to your volunteer job, please do not bring your young children to the school while you volunteer, unless specifically approved by the staff member with whom you are working. It is a distraction to the students and it is a disservice and protection for your child/children.

Physical contact

- As parents, we all have natural nurturing impulses that we display with our children, and often with those close to our families. Unfortunately in a school or school-related setting, physical displays of affection are not appropriate, and misunderstandings can occur. All McCabe

Volunteers/Room Parents and Room Parents are asked to refrain from any form of physical contact with the students.

Dress code

- Please follow the school's guidelines for student dress code. Dress comfortably, but remember that you are a role model for our students.

Smoking

- Please do not smoke during your volunteer time, whether on school property or a field trip. It is illegal to smoke on school property.

Language

- Please refrain from using inappropriate language (swearing, derogatory comments, etc.) during your volunteer time. Again, you are a role model for our students. This includes whispers! They hear more than you realize!

Emergency procedures

- Everyone is expected to observe and participate in all school-wide emergency procedures including fire drills, building evacuations, etc. Please follow the procedures of the class you are in. That is why it is very important that after an outdoor volunteer activity (i.e. field trip, walking club, and field day) the McCabe Volunteer/Room Parent must return their name tag, sign out and exit through the main entrance. Please do not leave if a fire drill is in progress. The principal is responsible for making sure that everyone is accounted for and that includes our McCabe Volunteer/Room Parents.

**On behalf of the Anna M. McCabe Elementary School
and the Anna M. McCabe Elementary School PTO**

THANK YOU FOR VOLUNTEERING!

Dr. Jill A. Barnhardt
Principal

Michaela A. Costa
PTO President 2009-2010

Confidentiality Agreement McCabe Volunteers Program

**The following agreement is a requirement
of the McCabe Volunteer/Room Parent Program and must be fully completed
and signed before any volunteering may commence.**

I have read the McCabe Volunteer/Room Parent Handbook and agree to abide by its policies and guidelines. I will maintain the confidentiality of all student education and/or personal records. I understand and agree that failure to abide by the Handbook requirements may disqualify me from further services as a Volunteer and/or Room Parent.

McCabe Volunteer Name (print)

Signature

Date Signed

Date Trained

EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION

(For McCabe Front office use when you volunteer)

Please provide us with the name of an emergency contact we may notify should you become unable to volunteer due to accident or illness. This is someone you would like us to contact should you be unable to operate a motor vehicle or need to be transported to a medical facility.

Name _____

Phone _____

Optional:

If you would like us to know of any known medical conditions (i.e. diabetes) please state so. All information will remain confidential.

Please detach and return to the PTO main office (Attn: Mrs. Whitaker) after you have read the Handbook. The PTO must have this form in order for you to volunteer at the school.