



Volunteer Academic Mentor Policies and Procedures

Getting Started:

- **Your regular attendance is critical.** It is also extremely important that you be **punctual** to your sessions. Your consistency and enthusiasm will be the most important thing you can do to build and maintain a relationship with your student and teacher.
- When you are matched with a student(s), please bear in mind that the initial student match is **subject to change** depending on the student's, teacher's, or the class' needs. Although our goal is to form long-term academic mentoring relationships, student(s) might be switched or pulled out from academic mentoring. Please **inform** Boston Partners in Education if there are any changes in your student assignment(s).
- If possible, exchange phone numbers and/or e-mail addresses with your teacher so that you can notify them as soon as possible if you must be absent or late. If you are unable to reach the teacher or school, call Boston Partners in Education at (617) 451-6145 and ask that we try to contact the school.
- Remember to wear your Boston Partners in Education **nametag** when you are in the school. If your nametag has been misplaced, please contact your Partnerships Manager or call (617) 451-6145.
- Prior to starting as an academic mentor, every volunteer must pass a CORI/SORI background check. After your interview, we submit your signed CORI/SORI form to Boston Public Schools' Office of Human Capital who performs the check. This may take up to four weeks to process. Once a background check is complete, BPS will notify Boston Partners in Education, and we will continue through the matching process. All volunteers, regardless if new or returning, must complete a background check every school year
- It is mandatory to **report to the school office** when you arrive at the school. On your first day of volunteering, make sure you have available a copy of your match confirmation. Please identify yourself as a Boston Partners in Education volunteer academic mentor and sign in and out each time you visit the school.
- Check your school calendar on a regular basis so that you are aware of days off. Ask your teacher to notify you of school assemblies, professional days, or field trips that may interfere with your volunteering.
- Appropriate dress is required. The school can provide specific dress code information, and Boston Partners in Education suggests you model your attire after the school staff.

Communications:

- Your Partnerships Manager will periodically reach out to monitor and support your match. **Please respond to these check ins with any concerns, updates, or positive stories you have. If an issue requires immediate attention, please contact your Partnerships Manager.** If you are unable to reach your respective Partnership Managers, please contact our Senior Partnerships Manager, Shara Guarnaccia at shara_guarnaccia@bostonpartners.org or our Program Director, Peter Darling at peter_darling@bostonpartners.org or (617) 451-6145.
- If you decide to change the subject and time(s) and day(s) you volunteer, please confirm with your Partnerships Manager and teacher that the changes are acceptable.
- Develop a system of communication with the teacher or site coordinator, whether by phone, email, or an alternate method. Clear communication with the teacher or site coordinator is essential to understanding student needs and addressing any logistical issues.

In the Classroom:

- The teacher is in charge of all discipline, first aid, and medication of any kind. Refer all cases of discipline, sickness, or accidents immediately to the teacher or another school staff member.
- **Massachusetts State Law prohibits leaving volunteers in charge of a class.** If for some reason the classroom teacher needs to leave the room, you are not permitted to watch the class. Please have the teacher ask a school staff member to watch the class.
- **Outside meetings with your student are not permitted.** Please make sure your relationship is confined to the classroom. Meetings with your student should be held within the view of another adult.
- **Refrain from using your cell phone during your sessions with your student(s).** This includes calling, texting, and/or checking email. This can be very distracting for both you and the student(s). Boston Partners in Education encourages you to turn off your phone while at the school.
- Refrain from giving students gifts or food, due to issues of students' health and safety.

Confidentiality:

- Please respect the confidentiality of all information and activities related to students and others in the school. If a student mentions something that concerns you, **please report it to a school staff member.** Volunteers are not considered mandated reporters in the state of Massachusetts, however, paid school staff members are.
- In order to ensure students' and teachers' rights to confidentiality, please do not send articles to newspapers or magazines or grant interviews regarding your services in the schools without clearance from Boston Partners in Education.
- Volunteers are in the schools to support the students and teachers. Avoid criticizing school personnel and/or school procedures. If you feel that an action or procedure is questionable, please contact Boston Partners in Education for guidance.