



## Volunteer Program Mission

The mission of the Volunteer & Community Resource Program is to serve students and staff by coordinating the resources of the community to enhance educational opportunities and provide positive role models for students.

## Annual Report 2015-16

### Volunteerism in the Shakopee Public Schools

Volunteers are one of the many strengths of the Shakopee Public Schools. They play an essential role in enhancing the quality of instruction and school experience for Shakopee students. Shakopee schools consider volunteers to be partners in education and recognize that they:

- Make a difference by working with staff to help our students achieve success.
- Allow our schools to offer expanded activities and services.
- Bring a wide range of expertise and skills to our schools.
- Demonstrate that they value education by giving their time and effort to our schools.
- Provide an important and positive influence on our students.

Volunteers assist in classrooms, workrooms and on athletic fields. They work one-on-one with students, serve as mentors and chaperone field trips and activities. Volunteers lead enrichment programs, complete marathons of clerical work, shelve books in media centers and monitor hallways. They lead and participate in school-based parent groups and serve on advisory committees. Volunteers serve as resource speakers using their skills, expertise or profession to enrich curriculum and programs. Co-curricular events and activities such as sports and music depend on the support of volunteers. Through their dedication and service, volunteers allow us to optimize district resources well beyond what we might otherwise be able to afford.

The purpose of this annual report is to:

- 1) Provide a quantitative overview of volunteer service to the district; and
- 2) Highlight the scope and diversity of volunteer resources used to support student learning.

### Volunteer Statistics

A summary of volunteer contributions made throughout the 2015-16 school year is outlined here. The statistics represent volunteer efforts tracked through the sign-in system at individual schools or reported by staff. In addition to these documented volunteers and their recorded hours, we recognize there are many more volunteers whose names and service hours go untracked. In spite of our best efforts, the volunteers who work behind the scenes on committees and with parent groups and booster clubs along with their many hours of service are difficult to track.

Active, documented volunteers (unduplicated number)	1944
Documented hours of service	29,242
Symbolic value of volunteer time*	\$736,898
Full-time employee equivalent	14

\*The symbolic value of volunteer time is calculated using data developed by the Independent Sector, a coalition of nonprofits, foundations and corporate giving programs ([www.independentsector.org](http://www.independentsector.org)). Amazing as this figure is, it doesn't begin to encompass the true worth of volunteer service to our students and staff. The dollar value is only a tool and one way to quantify the immense value of the many intangibles that our volunteers provide.

## 2015-16 Volunteer Program Highlights

- Involved more than 275 community volunteers (non-parents/guardians) as partners helping to enrich student learning. This school year, community volunteers represented approximately 14% of the total documented volunteers - up from 6% the year before. They served as tutors, mentors, resource speakers, enrichment program leaders, classroom assistants, etc. Community volunteers served in programs such as: Art Adventure, Junior Achievement, AVID (Advancement Via Individual Determination), Project Lead the Way and STRIVE (Students Taking Renewed Interest in the Value of Education). Their involvement with these programs connected lessons taught in the classroom with real world experiences.
- Collaborated with Junior Achievement (JA) of the Upper Midwest to bring 44 parent and community volunteers into classrooms allowing the JA program to be presented in 63 classrooms at four Shakopee elementary schools.
- Worked with the Kids Voting Shakopee Community Steering Committee to coordinate the annual Kids Voting program making it possible for over 1000 students to cast ballots in their home precinct. Provided support to teachers in grades 3-9 who utilized the Kids Voting USA curriculum to provide civic learning opportunities for their students.
- Coordinated the third grade Art Adventure Program making it possible for over 650 third grade students to gain a deeper appreciation of art. Sixteen parent and community volunteers, trained at the Minneapolis Institute of Arts, visited classrooms to facilitate discussions about this year's themed works of art.
- Coordinated the scheduling of classroom presentations about the care and cleaning of teeth as part of the health curriculum. Dental hygienists from two local dental offices shared their expertise with over 1700 students in 75 first and second grade classrooms.
- Honored 32 exceptional volunteers with the district's Above & Beyond Volunteer Award as part of Volunteer Week in Shakopee Schools. These volunteers made an outstanding commitment to volunteerism and gave of themselves to enhance our students' educational experiences.
- Held regular meetings with the district's eight site volunteer coordinators to ensure consistent and effective application of volunteer policies and procedures across the district. Conducted program reviews with individual coordinators to identify successes and challenges at their site and explore potential program enhancements.
- Continued to expand use of the HelpCounter volunteer management software implemented in the fall of 2014. The system facilitated enhanced background check compliance, volunteer organization and recruiting, reporting of service hours, communication with volunteers and consistency among the individual schools. The volunteer, visitor and student sign in feature of HelpCounter helped to increase safety, security and emergency preparedness in the individual schools.
- Increased the number of community members serving as volunteers, generating positive publicity for the school district. Strengthening school-community relations is an indirect and less obvious effect of volunteer engagement, yet still an important outcome. Volunteers help to spread the word to the rest of the community about what's really happening in our schools and the needs and challenges of education today.

### Thank You

None of these program highlights would be possible without the help and partnership of our parents and community. We thank the hundreds of parents, individuals, businesses and organizations who support Shakopee Schools' programs and activities through their generous gifts of time, talent, and monetary donations. Every hour spent helping students and staff, to every donation of materials or funds help contribute to the academic achievement of our students and the success of our schools. The district is especially appreciative of the work and support of school parent groups, booster organizations and the cooperative relationships with area business and civic organizations. A heartfelt thank you to all of our esteemed partners in education.

Thank you also to the Shakopee School Board, district administration and staff for their support of the Volunteer and Community Resource Program. A special thank you to the district's site volunteer coordinators who worked tirelessly this year to manage volunteerism in our schools: Becky Anderson, Julee Gessinger, Shawn Hallett, Jennifer Klecker, Jayne Kubler, Deb Malone, Sherry Meersman and Krystal Wendland. Their work makes the district's impressive volunteer engagement possible.