

Reader Question: Do Busy Dads Have To Find Time To Volunteer At Private Elementary School?

Description



Question: At one of our speaking events, a dad in the audience asked a good question: How can busy dads who work full-time still volunteer at their kids school?

Answer: This is a great question! There are so many volunteer opportunities at private elementary schools (unlike smaller preschools) that most dads who aren't at-home dads can usually find volunteer tasks to fit their schedule. At The Willows School, dads chaperone field trips, talk to kids about their careers/jobs, help set-up/break down events, fundraise, and help with computer technology projects and serve on committees, among other things. Also, look for volunteer tasks that can be done from home like graphic design, fundraising, and work that doesn't require taking a day off work.

The 1950s dad is a thing of the past (mostly). These days, dads tend to be involved in all aspects of their kids' lives, including school. In addition to this being important for their family, it is also VERY important to private schools to have dads involved. In most households, dads are involved in the financial decisions for the family. Especially when it comes to writing checks for tuition, annual giving and other school fundraisers. If dads are disconnected from the school, are rarely at the school and have little or no idea of the wonderful things the school is doing, they will be less inclined to contribute generously to the school. The schools know this and therefore actively recruit dads for volunteer roles. For the dads out there, during your first year at a school, pick a volunteer job that you will be able to complete. There's nothing worse than a volunteer (mom or dad) who signs up to do something and cancels at the last minute. This is avoidable if you plan ahead and don't take on too much.

Hint: During the admissions process, some families try to signal they/their husbands have “important” or high-paying jobs by telling the admissions directors these guys will be able to help the school “behind the scenes” or by “serving on committees”. It’s code for “we’re rich”.

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