CASA ESPERANZA MONTESSORI

Volunteer Orientation 2026-2027

Thanks for your interest in becoming an approved volunteer and supporting our school!

There are many opportunities to volunteer in your child's classroom and school-wide. As we start the new school year, please check with your classroom teacher for the specific opportunities available.

Some opportunities to volunteer:

- **Reading-** Parents to listen to children read aloud. Volunteers sit in the hallway outside of the class to listen to students read and/or come and read to students.
- **Chaperone –** parents attend field trips and help teachers with chaperoning students.
- **School Events –** such as Field Day, Literacy Night, Creativity Fair, and being involved in the PFA (Parent/Faculty Association)

And many other opportunities as they come up during the school year. Once you are an ***approved volunteer***, you will receive emails with sign-up opportunities.

How do I become an approved volunteer?

- View this Volunteer Orientation slideshow Presentation
- Fill out the Google form agreeing that you have completed orientation
- Complete a background check by CastleBranch. Find Instructions HERE.

Parking – Arriving on Campus
Check-In & Out Procedure

- When arriving on campus, park at any available parking spot at the front or back of the school. Visitor parking spots (identified with a Visitor Sign at the main entrance) are limited to visitors staying 1-hour or less.
- Ring the buzzer to the right of the front door, and office staff will assist you.
- Sign in at the office. Make sure to bring an ID.
- You will be given a Volunteer's Badge. Please wear this badge while you are on campus.
- When you leave Casa Esperanza, stop by the front office to check out and return your Volunteer's badge.

These requirements are necessary because:

- Safeguarding our students and maintaining campus security is of the utmost importance
- Individual volunteers will be recognized for their dedication and service to our school.

Special Note for Parents of Young Children

- Classroom/Playground volunteers who interact with or supervise students and perform other tasks in the school building during instructional times are **NOT** allowed to bring siblings.
- Taking preschool children with you to a classroom presents a liability problem for the school.
- Keep in mind that you can still help the school by making arrangements to do work at home. Feel free to reach out to your child's teacher.

Discipline

- Disciplinary action is the responsibility of the teachers and school staff
- **Volunteers do not enforce discipline**
- Immediately notify the teacher if there is a discipline problem.

Health Regulations

- Please do not come to school if you are ill. This includes a cold, sore throat, or cough.
- You may think you are leaving the teacher shorthanded and you may want to volunteer even though you are not well, but doing so is not good for you, the children, or the teacher.
- Please contact the school or the volunteer coordinator when you have an unforeseen absence. Children learn by example, and we ask that you, as a role model, use good health habits when you are at school.

Attendance

- Punctuality and reliability are expected since students are counting on you. Please inform teachers in advance of planned absences and call or email the school for unforeseen absences.

- Students will be disappointed you cannot come but will be reassured that you care enough to notify them.

Appearance and Manner

- Volunteers are considered non-paid employees and should be well-groomed and dress professionally. Short skirts and short shorts, exposed midriffs, low-cut blouses, and inappropriate graphics/language on t-shirts are not allowed for volunteers.

- If you are not sure how you should dress, please ask the teacher or volunteer coordinator. Volunteers should also set a good example to students by maintaining professional conduct and language.

Confidentiality

- Volunteers must maintain strict confidentiality concerning information they see and hear about students and staff, including students' grades, records, and abilities.
- Failure to maintain confidentiality can result in loss of volunteer privileges.
- Keep information about students between yourself and the teacher. A misplaced comment can be devastating to a student, the family, and the volunteer program.
- If you have questions or concerns, talk with the teacher or School Director.

Engaging with Students

The following suggestions are provided to help you communicate with students to get positive results:

- Be sure the student understands what you are saying. We sometimes use words they do not comprehend.
- Keep your voice as low as possible. The students will get louder as your voice increases in volume
- Instruct students as though you expect them to comply. Give sufficient warning and time. Example: "Jason, in five minutes you'll need to stop painting and put your apron away"
- If students gain your attention and praise only when they behave, they will soon learn that you expect proper conduct.
- Positive statements greatly influence student's attitudes about themselves and contribute to their success-building experiences.

Field Trips

Classroom field trips might occur on campus or off campus. All off-campus field trips require chartered transportation. Field trip permission forms describing the trip, its purpose, and logistics will be provided in advance to families.

- Volunteers are expected to follow all school policies, field trip rules, and staff instructions at all times.
- Follow the directions and instructions provided by the classroom teacher and supervising staff.
- Volunteers may not give snacks, food, or drinks to students unless specifically instructed and approved by the teacher.
- Help maintain a safe, respectful, and positive environment for all students.
- Stay with your assigned group and actively supervise students as directed.
- Follow all school and field trip expectations regarding student safety, behavior, and supervision.
- If you have questions or concerns during the field trip, please speak with the supervising teacher or staff member.

Important: Volunteers who do not follow school policies, field trip expectations, or staff instructions may **not be permitted to volunteer on future field trips.**

Safety Drills & Emergency Procedures

Casa has established procedures for various situations and conducts drills throughout the year to stay prepared for any of these scenarios. If a safety concern causes a procedure to be implemented, students will not be released until the situation has been cleared. These procedures include the following:

- Shelter in Place - used for a weather-related or environmental situation where it is deemed necessary to keep all students and staff within the school building to protect them from an external situation. Examples include blackouts, chemical spills, explosions, or extreme weather.
- Lockdown - used when there is a major incident or threat of violence within the school. Examples include a school intruder or someone with a weapon.
- Evacuation - used when students and staff need to exit the school building due to a concern within the school. Examples include a fire or a gas leak

School evacuation plans are located in each classroom and are located on the back of the classroom door.

Please note that all external doors to the building are locked and must be accessed with a security badge.

In the event, you are at school during an emergency or a safety drill, please follow the teachers' instructions.

Smoke/ Drug/ Alcohol/ Weapon Free Campus

Casa is a smoke-free, vape-free, drug-free, alcohol-free, weapon-free campus. Vaping and/or smoking is not permitted anywhere on the school grounds. Violators will be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law.

Don’t wait until the last minute

- **Background checks are good for a** whole **year**. For example, a parent/guardian who completed a background check in August 2026 will need an updated background check in August 2027.
- Volunteer Orientation needs to be completed **every school year**.

Complete the process as early as possible! Orientation, forms, and background checks can take time to process and we wouldn’t want you to miss out on your requested opportunity!

Final Step

- To get credit for this online volunteer orientation, please fill out the form found HERE.
- Make sure you have completed a background check by CastleBranch every year. Find Instructions HERE.

Questions?

Reach out to our volunteer coordinator at volunteer@cemcs.org

Thank you!