



# Volunteer Handbook 2024-2025

A *love* for God. A desire to *learn*. A commitment to *serve*.

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# 1 Welcome

*Everybody can be great. Because anybody can serve. You don't have to have a college degree to serve. You don't have to make your subject and your verb agree to serve... You don't have to know the second theory of thermodynamics in physics to serve. You only need a heart full of grace. A soul generated by love.*

*--Martin Luther King, Jr.*

Thank you for your interest in volunteering at SJCS! Education is a team effort, and volunteers are a critical part of the school team. Through the generous efforts of community members like you, we are able to provide an exceptional program and education for each student.

Our volunteer program is designed to encourage parent volunteers while protecting the safety and interests of our students. It is our hope that this Volunteer Handbook will serve as a helpful reference to ensure a safe, productive, and Christ-centered learning environment for the students, our staff members, and you. Above all else we desire to honor God in our words and deeds and advance God's kingdom at our school. By volunteering, you are joining in making that vision a reality.

We are extremely proud of our community, and we sincerely thank you for providing your precious time, individual talents, and expertise as a school volunteer.

## 1.1 MISSION STATEMENT

*The mission of SJCS is to advance the kingdom of God by providing exceptional teaching and curriculum fully integrated with Biblical perspective. Within our committed Christian community, we live to engage and transform culture for Jesus Christ.*

## 1.2 CORE VALUES

1. Biblical Worldview: At SJCS we value seeing life through the lens of scriptural truth and living accordingly. We acknowledge the sovereignty of God over every aspect of creation. We address the fallen-ness of humanity and the broken-ness of creation by directly addressing their effects on life as God intended it to be. We do not avoid difficult issues; we teach biblical discernment.

2. Educational Excellence: We value high academic standards for our students, cultivating each child's potential capacity as an image-bearer of God. We value proactive innovation, carefully assessing the need for change and seeking new methods to improve education when appropriate. We provide educational excellence for each student within a safe and loving environment.

3. Whole Child: We value each child as a unique workmanship of God himself. We develop the wholeness of each child's character, academic progress, effort, physical abilities and artistic expression.

4. Outstanding Teachers: We value outstanding, passionate and faith-filled teachers, who meet the highest professional standards and are flourishing both personally and professionally. Our teachers are committed to the calling of Christian education.

5. Responsible Stewardship: We value responsible Kingdom-advancing stewardship over all of creation, including community, people, time, facilities, financial resources and the environment.

6. Intentional Christian Community: SJCS is a covenantal, faith-infused community. Our faith is passionate and the Spirit is alive among us. We lovingly hold each other accountable to the core values stated here. We demonstrate unwavering support to our fellow community members in upholding these same values.

All volunteers are expected to support and uphold the mission and values of SJCS. Please also refer to Section 1 of our Parent/Student Handbook to read more about our statement of faith and general parent responsibilities.

## **2 VOLUNTEER REQUIREMENTS AND EXPECTATIONS**

*You make a living by what you get. You make a life by what you give.  
--Winston Churchill*

San Jose Christian School was founded by believers for the purpose of educating their children for Christian life and service. Volunteers play an essential role in fulfilling that purpose, and as a volunteer one of your main responsibilities is to model a Christian life for students.

Parents have a legitimate right to assurance that their child is learning in a Christian environment at SJCS or on SJCS-sponsored field trips. As you support the mission of SJCS as a volunteer, it is important to help students be excited about the Lord and have a positive attitude as they learn what it means to follow Christ. We also urge you to be a strong advocate of the school by sharing your positive experiences and encouraging others to become involved at SJCS.

The requirements for volunteers are designed to protect both students and volunteers. The school has a legal responsibility to do everything in its power to provide a safe environment for its students and staff. Please view these expectations not as an imposition, but rather as a means of creating the best possible environment for authentic Christian education to thrive.

### **2.1 BACKGROUND SCREENING PROCESS**

For the safety and security of our students, all volunteers will be required to undergo a fingerprint background clearance. Fingerprints are obtained through a computerized Live Scan at the volunteer's expense. The scanned fingerprints are sent to the State of California's Department of Justice and the Federal Bureau of Investigation. Live Scan clearance does not need to be renewed each year and is a one-time cost. Live Scan will be available on campus at various events through the year, but it can also be completed at any Live Scan location (most UPS stores offer Live Scan, as does the sheriff's office). Be sure to check in the school office to get the form with our organization number on it.

Information obtained through background checks will be held in strict confidence, and only administration and human resource personnel will have access to it. If the screening process or background check reveals criminal charges or other credible information about the volunteer's history, that candidate will be ineligible to work or volunteer in programs until they are cleared by the administration. The administration may also remove a volunteer from consideration if the volunteer screening process indicates an inability of the applicant to conform to the school's behavioral or spiritual standards.

Youth volunteers (under 18 years old) must be screened and authorized by administrators, but no fingerprint background check will be required.

## **2.2 COMMITMENT, DEPENDABILITY, AND PROFESSIONALISM**

Please do not commit to more service than you can provide. If an issue arises that will keep you from performing your volunteer duties, please inform the office or supervising teacher as far in advance as possible.

Volunteers who are ill or otherwise physically impeded (broken limb, etc.) from performing their volunteer role safely may not supervise or transport students. In the event of illness or injury, please inform the office or supervising teacher as soon as possible so a replacement volunteer may be arranged.

Remember that you are a role model for students, both in actions and appearance. Personal cleanliness and neatness are expected, and clothes should be appropriate for a Christian school setting. Punctuality and dependability are also necessary for volunteers. A great mantra for volunteers is “early is on time.”

## **2.3 APPROPRIATE CONDUCT**

Students observe and learn from the behavior of the adults around them. Volunteers are expected to exhibit Christ-like behavior, proper decorum, good manners, and respect toward others. The following are guidelines for helping your volunteer work go smoothly and productively. This list is not all-inclusive; when in doubt about whether an action or decision is appropriate, err on the side of caution.

- Be a Christian role model.
- Develop a partnership with the supervising teacher or staff member.
- Protect and respect school property.
- Disable cell phones or other electronic devices while supervising students.
- Do not smoke, drink alcohol, or use any controlled substances during or before volunteering (with the exception of prescribed medications that do not impair volunteer performance).
- Do not bring other children with you while volunteering—your focus needs to be on the students in the class.
- Use only adult restroom facilities.
- Do not post any pictures or names of students on your personal social media sites.
- Do not engage in one-on-one digital communication (texting, social media, etc.) with a student.
- Use appropriate language. Students should be addressed in a manner that reflects the fact that they are made in the image of God.

## **2.4 CHILD PROTECTION RESPONSIBILITY**

Volunteers are not considered “mandated reporters” under California law, but volunteers should be aware of child abuse reporting requirements for school employees.

School employees must report:

- Cases of suspected infliction of physical or mental suffering on a minor,
- Cases of suspected physical injuries to minors by other than accidental means,
- Cases of suspected neglect (child being denied necessities), and
- Cases of suspected sexual molestation.

If you become aware of suspected child maltreatment, report your observations to the administration immediately.

## **2.5 FIRST AID AND UNIVERSAL HEALTH PRECAUTIONS**

Volunteers should not administer first aid to students. Find a school employee to perform any necessary first aid. If a student receives an injury that requires immediate medical treatment, send someone to get help from the office. Do not move the student until after the extent of the injury has been assessed. The volunteer should keep bystanders away and reassure/calm the student until a staff member calls 911 (if necessary) and comes to manage the situation.

Volunteers who are supervising students are expected to take reasonable steps to prevent students from coming into contact with any bodily fluids. Precautions should be used in all settings involving any bodily fluids, especially blood. In the school setting, those precautions include hand washing, wearing protective gloves, and careful trash disposal.

Volunteers should be aware of the allergy alerts for the students they supervise. There is an allergy alert chart in every classroom.

## **2.6 COMMUNICATION**

Do not say or write things to a student that you would be uncomfortable sharing with the student’s parents or the school administrators. Do not make any comments and/or innuendos that could be construed as sexual in nature, and refrain from giving students compliments that focus on physical attributes.

When working with other volunteers or staff members, conflicts may occur. If a concern arises or you take issue with something you see or hear at the school, please take the concern to the appropriate person. SJCS desires to handle all concerns in a Biblical manner as spelled out in Matthew 18. Any classroom issues should go to the teacher first. If the teacher is unable to resolve the issue, bring it to the principal.

Please do not allow concerns to contribute to gossip, but rather seek resolution and the improvement of the school.

## **2.7 STUDENT CONFIDENTIALITY**

Volunteers are expected and required to keep all student information acquired while working as a volunteer confidential. Student information includes all academic, medical and personal information. It is important that you do not discuss students or their progress with others—even their parents. The only person who should be told about a student's work is their teacher. If parents ask about their student's progress, suggest in a friendly way that they contact the teacher. Under no circumstances should information or gossip about a student or teacher be shared with other students or parents.



## **3 INTERACTIONS WITH STUDENTS**

All interactions with students should be professional and focused on learning. Volunteers should not try to be a peer or buddy to students; students are best served when grown-ups behave as responsible adults. Volunteers are expected to follow all school guidelines and be adult Christian role models at all times. Your example as a Christian servant is a vitally important part of the training and education provided to our students.

### **3.1 SUPERVISION**

Students must be supervised by an adult at all times. Volunteers should never be alone in a classroom, office, or vehicle with an individual student. Volunteers must observe the “two-person rule” at ALL times. This means that volunteers must make every reasonable effort to avoid situations where an adult is alone with a student. There should always be another adult or another student present. This rule protects both the student and the adult.

### **3.2 STUDENT CONTACT**

Appropriate physical touch is important for a child’s development and is generally suitable in a school setting. Babies need to be held, children need to be comforted, teens need affirmation, and each require physical touch. What is appropriate for one age group is not always appropriate for another. Some examples of appropriate touch are side hugs, high fives, and pats on the back. It is imperative that employees and volunteers make sure their conduct is appropriate for the student age group assigned.

Touching should be initiated by the student. It must be a response to the student’s need for comforting, encouragement, or affection and not based on an adult’s emotional need. A student’s preference not to be touched should be respected. Touching must not give even the appearance of wrongdoing. Employees and volunteers must foster trust and their actions must be above reproach at all times.

Inappropriate touching or questionable behavior by parents, relatives, friends, students, employees or any others is to be reported immediately to the administration.

### **3.3 DISCIPLINE**

Volunteers are NOT responsible for disciplining students. However, as a supervising adult, you carry all necessary authority to ask and expect that students follow your directions. If you experience non-compliance or defiant behavior from a student, you should refer this immediately to your supervising teacher or the principal. Volunteers must always treat students with respect and without favoritism. Put-downs, sarcasm, derogatory remarks, inappropriate familiarity, or offensive comments must never be used with students.

## **4 TRANSPORTING AND CHAPERONING**

Most volunteer opportunities take place on school grounds during school hours with school staff present. However, there are exceptions, such as field trips, athletic events, Fine Arts Festival, and overnight trips. Extra care should be taken to understand and follow all volunteer guidelines before volunteering to drive or chaperone on an off-campus trip. *To be eligible to go on any field trip, chaperones must attend the pre-trip meeting to discuss the rules and educational goals of the trip.*

### **4.1 TRANSPORTING STUDENTS**

At times, parent-driven carpools are needed. When adults are asked to transport students to an event or activity, the driver must have completed their background check and the driver clearance process (submit a copy of their drivers license and valid proof of insurance) in the office *before* the date of the trip. On all field trips, chaperones will travel in a caravan and must stay with the group.

- Drivers need to be aware of the location of other drivers/vehicles in the caravan, should not modify the route, and should only stop for emergencies.
- Students must be transported to and from the event in groups of two or more.
- No driver may deliver a student to his/her home.
- Students cannot be left alone or with any one adult at the school following a school-sponsored event.
- Chaperones must be active participants in the learning activities and should not use cell phones (or other devices) or withdraw from the group.

When off campus, always check the safety of public restrooms prior to allowing students access. Ensure that students go to the restroom in groups of two or three, report to you before they go, and let you know when they are back.

### **4.2 CHAPERONING OVERNIGHT TRIPS**

Overnight field trips involve the most extensive supervision of students. It is imperative that volunteers follow all policies and guidelines listed in this handbook. Adult volunteers should never be alone with a student or leave the group with any individual student.

Adult leaders and students must respect each other's privacy, especially in situations such as changing clothes and taking showers. Volunteers may only enter student changing areas or bathrooms to the extent that health and safety requires it. Adults must protect their own privacy in similar situations.

Whenever possible, separate shower and bathroom facilities should be used for adults and youth. If separate facilities are not available, separate shower times should be scheduled and posted. When using restrooms, adult volunteers should wait outside for all youth to finish before using the restroom themselves.

## **5 EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS**

Volunteers should be familiar with the safety procedures of the school in order to be prepared for emergency situations. Please study the attached campus map to familiarize yourself with safe evacuation routes.

### **5.1 EVACUATION/FIRE ALARM**

In the event of a fire or evacuation, assist the teacher in helping students exit the classroom safely and calmly and proceed to the designated area (the fields). Be sure that doors are closed but not locked and notify a school employee if any students are missing. Wait for further instructions from the office or for the “all clear” signal before returning to the classroom.

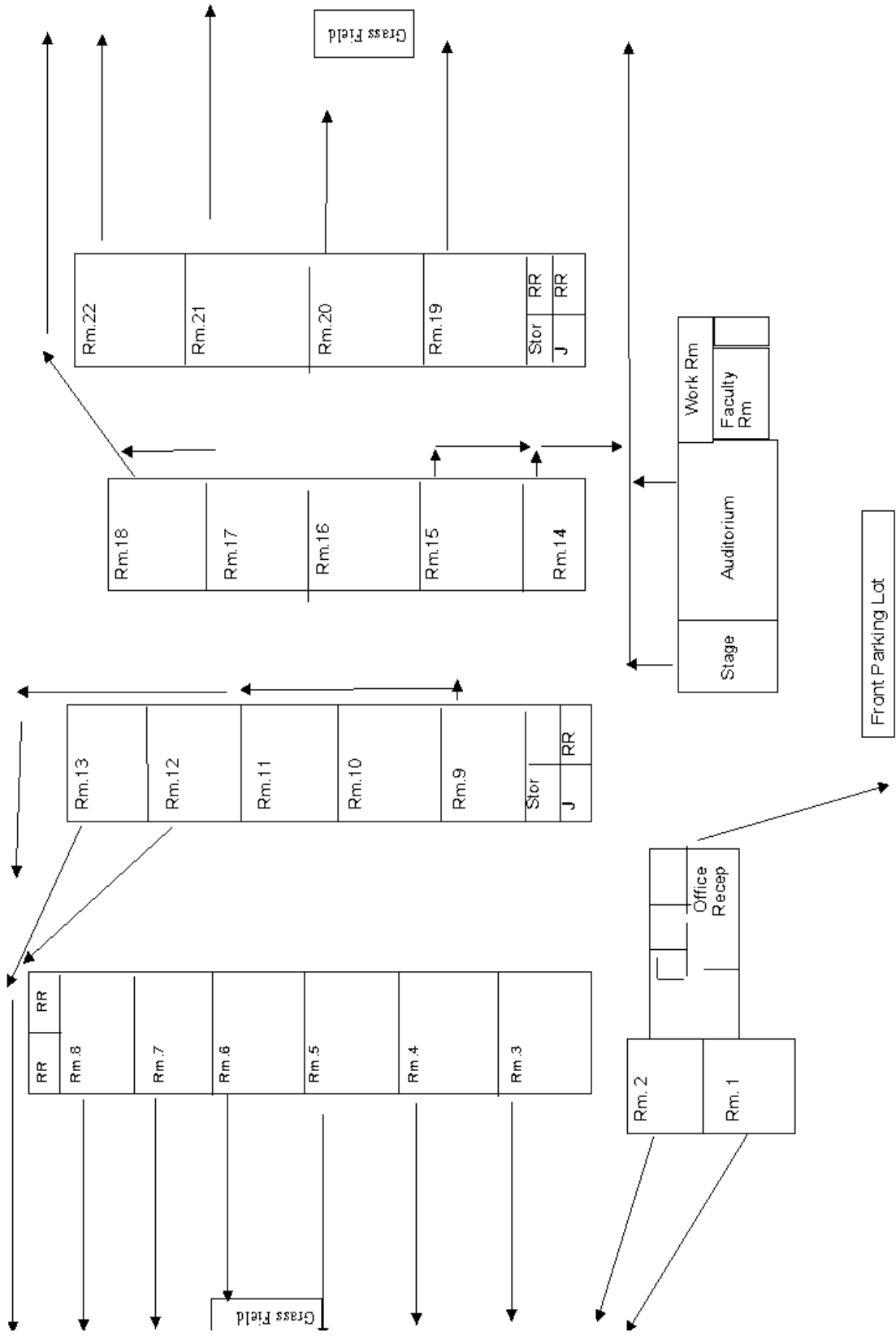
### **5.2 LOCK DOWN**

Go to the closest room or location and assist the teacher or staff. Close and lock doors and windows. Turn off the lights and stay away from windows and doors. Stay calm and make decisions based on the situation. Wait for law enforcement or administration to unlock the door, or for the “all clear” signal.

### **5.3 EARTHQUAKE**

In the event of an earthquake, *Drop, Cover, and Hold On*. Students should drop to the floor, make themselves as small as possible, and protect their head, neck, and chest by taking cover under a sturdy desk or table. They should cover their head with hands and arms. Sheltering next to interior walls generally provides safer cover than exterior walls, and students should not shelter under anything that is likely to fall on them. If an aftershock occurs, follow the same procedures. After the shaking, if you deem an evacuation is necessary, scan the room for any students that may be injured and follow the same evacuation procedures as a fire alarm.

# SJCS CAMPUS EMERGENCY EVACUATION



## **6 VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES**

There are a variety of ways to volunteer at SJCS, both in and out of the classroom. The list below provides many options, but please feel free to suggest other ways you can use your skills/passions on campus. Teachers and staff rarely know all of the skillsets of our parents, so don't be afraid to make a suggestion!

*The smallest act of kindness is worth more than the grandest intention.*

*--Oscar Wilde*

### **6.1 School-wide Volunteer Opportunities**

- Sports (coaches, assistant coaches, drivers, snack providers, setup, cleanup)
- Media Center/Library—Book Fair, reading, shelving books, general assisting
- Art class assistant
- Signage coordinator
- Office/administrative/clerical
- Music assistance for concerts & programs
- Drama assistance for our annual productions (set creation, costuming, directing, etc.)
- Sports Boosters assistance—selling food and drinks at home games
- Events and activities volunteer—refreshments, hosting, etc.
- Technology, video, photography assistance
- New parent support—Mentor families
- Shopping volunteer
- Selling logo wear
- Leading an after school club (administrator approval required)
- Lining sports fields
- Campus grounds beautification—gardening, weeding, etc.
- Campus “fix it” projects (painting, etc.)
- Faculty lounge/office cleanup

### **6.2 Classroom Volunteer Opportunities**

- Room/homeroom parents
- Guest readers
- Classroom decorator
- Event coordinators
- Guest lecturer/speaker
- Field trip chaperones
- Assisting with special projects in classrooms
- Other opportunities as specified by individual teachers



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## VOLUNTEER AGREEMENT FORM

I recognize that volunteering is a privilege, not a right. All volunteers serve at the sole discretion of the administration, and permission to volunteer in the school may be revoked at any time by the administration without the need for explanation.

By my signature below, I request to be designated as an approved volunteer at San Jose Christian School and acknowledge the conditions of my participation as outlined below:

- I agree to act in accordance to all school policies and will serve as a Christian role model to students and members of the community.
- I will protect the confidentiality of any student or staff information that I come into contact with in my volunteer service.
- I agree to be an advocate for the school and not participate in gossip or actions that are detrimental to school culture.
- I certify that I am in full agreement with the school mission, core values, and statement of faith, and my conduct will demonstrate that agreement.
- I certify that I am not withholding any pertinent information from my past that would disqualify me from volunteering with children.
- I understand my role as a volunteer, and I will act in partnership with the school staff and teachers.
- I have reviewed and understand the SJCS Volunteer Handbook.
- I agree to have a LiveScan background check submitted to SJCS at my expense.

### Legal Disclaimers:

I understand that accidents may occur during volunteer activities. I release SJCS, its trustees, employees and volunteers from any and all liability for any damage, loss, or injury that may arise from my participation as a volunteer.

I certify that I am medically fit to participate in volunteer activities. I understand that SJCS does not provide any health benefits or accident insurance for me as a volunteer; it is my responsibility to provide this coverage if desired.

In the event of a medical emergency, I consent for the school to arrange medical transportation and I consent to whatever care is considered necessary in the best judgment of the attending medical professional. I understand that SJCS is not responsible for payment this care.

I give SJCS permission to use photographs or other media that may include my voice or image to promote the school.

I have read and understand the policies as outlined in this Volunteer Handbook, and I agree to adhere to these policies.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date