

Adopt A Class Safety Agreement

Program Overview:

Our Mission: Adopt A Class connects businesses and civic groups with students in our economically challenged schools. By pairing volunteer teams with individual classrooms, our mentors expose the students to a breadth of experiences and training to be job and career ready. For the organization, this engagement fosters a culture of teamwork and increased knowledge of our community's needs & the challenges faced by our youth.

Our Vision: A Greater Cincinnati where all students have access to caring adults who expose them to a breadth of life and career experiences so they can unleash their full potential.

Who We Serve: Pre-K – 8th grade students in schools where at least 75% of the students receive free or reduced lunch. On average, 92% of the students we serve are eligible for free or reduced meals.

How We Work: Volunteers spend **one hour, once per month** mentoring their class, during the school day between October and May, where they engage in educational activities (*College & Career pathways, Essential Employability, and STE(A)M focused*). The mentor teams also coordinate field trips and a pen pal option with the students to spur conversation, build awareness, and deepen learning for students.

Best Practices:

Establish a positive relationship with your class by:

- Creating mutual trust and respect. Follow through with promised sessions or email teacher in advance if you need to cancel so he/she can prepare the class.
- Maintaining regular interaction and consistent support. Many of the students in our program do not receive enough stability from the adults in their lives; mentors can help fill this void with dependable, sincere, and consistent attention and concern.
- Making your time together enjoyable and fun!

Be mindful of communication. Do not make comments of any kind that relate to a student's physical appearance, development, financial or life situation. Remain neutral and non-judgmental.

No physical contact. Encouragement and friendship should be conveyed through words and gestures, not through touching.

Set Limits. The Adopt A Class program **is to take place in a group setting at all times** under the supervision of the classroom teacher or identified school staff person. **At no time (whether in person, or virtually) should an Adopt A Class volunteer be alone with a student.**

Mentor Agreements:

- Mentors will follow all school, district and program policies and procedures.
- No mentor will go on or participate in an in-person field trip unless they have participated in a mentoring session in the school and checked in through the schools designated security system (i.e. LobbyGuard, Raptor, background checks).
- Mentors will maintain strict confidentiality concerning information they learn about students and staff, including student grades, records, abilities, and life/family situation.
- Mentors will not discipline students. Report discipline problems to the teacher.
- Mentors will not supervise a classroom or give permission for a student to leave a classroom.
- Mentors will set a good example for students in their manner, appearance, and behavior.
- Mentors will not take photographs of students, unless given permission by the teacher. Mentors will not post any student photographs or student information on social media without permission from the teacher.
- Mentors will not interact with any student outside of our program.
- Mentors will not give their contact information to any student nor shall they take contact information from students.
- Mentors will not transport students in vehicles.
- Mentors may not use their time with students to promote partisan politics, religious matters, or other personal affiliation.

Mentors Must Never:

- Leave the classroom with a student.
- Transport any student.
- Escort any student to the restroom.
- **Be alone with any student for any reason.**

While engaging in the program, Mentors will not engage in:

- Discriminatory or racist statements or behaviors.
- The use of alcohol or illegal drugs.
- Any unlawful activity.
- The carrying of a firearm.
- Sexual harassment including jokes, innuendos, insults, sexist or sexual remarks, the display of derogatory or pornographic pictures, leering, touching or kissing.

Volunteer Dismissal:

Adopt A Class will reassign or dismiss volunteers when such action is in the best interest of Adopt A Class, the volunteer, the student and/or the school. Possible reasons for dismissal may include:

- Refusal to attend required trainings.
- Excessive tardiness.
- Disclosure of confidential information.
- The use of drugs, alcohol or other inappropriate substances.
- Involvement in any illegal activities.
- Failure to adhere to all Adopt A Class or school policies, guidelines or procedures.
- Engaging in any of the prohibited behaviors specified above or any behavior deemed inappropriate by program administrators.

Reporting Process:

If any mentor has any questions or concerns about their time in the classroom, questions about appropriate behavior of ANY volunteer in the program, or any complaints about inappropriate behavior by another volunteer, a student, teacher, or an Adopt A Class representative, he or she should contact Sonya Fultz, Chief Executive Officer of Adopt A Class, at Sonya@aacmentors.org.

Covid Protocols:

Adopt A Class closely monitors all health and safety requirements for within our partner schools in an effort to protect the health and safety of all program participants. All mentors in our program are required to follow all health and safety requirements including masking, social distancing and any other practices required by our partner schools. Please read any Adopt A Class communications closely and follow us on social media (@adoptaclass) for updates.