

TIPS FOR HOSTING COMMUNITY VOLUNTEERS



OAKLAND
PUBLIC EDUCATION FUND



**OAKLAND
SCHOOL
VOLUNTEERS**

Thank you so much for celebrating a read-in with community volunteers! We hope that this is a great experience for all parties. Our goal is that the volunteers help your school to highlight the importance of agency, diversity, reading, and learning!

This document is intended to help you plan for a meaningful event with relative ease.

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CHECKLIST OVERVIEW

THANK YOU FOR CELEBRATING THE READ-IN!

Please use this checklist to plan a meaningful event with relative ease!

☐ **Talk with teachers and plan your event:**

- ☐ Convey the event's **purpose** and why your school is choosing to celebrate.
- ☐ Convey the **expectations** that teachers do not leave the room when volunteers visit and that they support with behavior if need be.
- ☐ Share the event **schedule**.

☐ **Confirm with volunteers once we e-introduce you:**

- ☐ **Logistics:** Send parking and office sign-in information. Let volunteers know where to meet you.
- ☐ **Schedule:** Let volunteers know the number of classes and grade levels that they will be reading to.
- ☐ Ask them to confirm with you.

☐ **Prepare for volunteer arrival:**

- ☐ Have some **extras books** on hand incase volunteers forget.
- ☐ **Remind teachers** about the event.
- ☐ Print out a schedule (and map!) for volunteers.
- ☐ **Optional:** Recruit students to serve as “Ambassadors” to welcome the volunteers and walk them to their assigned classrooms.

☐ **Enjoy the event:**

- ☐ Prepare a meaningful **welcome** for volunteers where you appreciate them, share read aloud tips, and let them know why your school rules!
- ☐ Share logistics of the event.

DETAILED INFORMATION ABOUT EACH STEP

#1 TALK WITH TEACHERS AND PLAN YOUR EVENT

EVENT ORGANIZATION:

We recommend having the whole school celebrate at once. This builds school community, reduces the work load of welcoming volunteers, and reduces the opportunity for volunteer confusion or no-shows. When you registered to participate, we already asked you how many teachers would like a reader. If you need to change this number, please email our staff. *Example Read-In Assignments:*

	9:30 – 10:00 am	10:00 – 10:30 am
Volunteer A	Teacher #1	Teacher #5
Volunteer B	Teacher #2	Teacher #6
Volunteer C	Teacher #3	Teacher #7
Volunteer D	Teacher #4	Teacher #8

For example, if 8 teachers would like a reader, we will send 4 volunteers (minimum) to each read twice.

Starting in 2019, we will recruit **more volunteers than needed** so that if there are any no-shows or last-minute cancellations, you will still have plenty of readers. And if every volunteer does arrive as assigned, they can double up to buddy read together. Most volunteers are very happy to do this.

EXAMPLE NEWSLETTER OR EMAIL BLAST TO TEACHERS:

Dear Educators,

Our school is celebrating the **[Insert Read-In Name Here]** Read-In on **[date and time here]** with the Oakland Public Education Fund. Community volunteers will visit classrooms to read aloud, connect with students, demonstrate a love of reading, and celebrate the **[Insert Read-In Name Here]** community. You can learn more about this city-wide event online: www.oaklandedfund.org/read/

If you would like a reader, here are the logistics you need to know!

- Volunteers will be in the classroom for about **30 minutes** or less.
- Usually the volunteers introduce themselves, read aloud, and then take a few questions from the students.
- Volunteers will come to your classroom **ready with a book to read**. *(Either they will bring their own or they will borrow one from our school ahead of time.)*
- You are responsible for classroom management while the volunteer visits, and that they may NOT leave the volunteer alone with students.

If you would like a reader, please let me know and we will add you to the schedule.

Thank you!

#2 CONFIRM WITH VOLUNTEERS

THE OAKLAND ED FUND'S ROLE:

Once we have recruited enough volunteers for your school, we will:

1. Send all of you a google calendar invite for the event.
2. Send an email to you with the volunteer contact information.
3. We will send volunteers the recommended booklist and tips for reading aloud.
4. All volunteers are expected to bring their own book to read aloud, or, let you know if they are unable to do so.

YOUR ROLE AS THE HOST:

Please **confirm attendance** with all of the volunteers that you have been assigned.

Please share the following information with them:

- ☐ Where to park
- ☐ Where the office is to sign in
- ☐ Where and who to meet after signing in
- ☐ How many classes they'll be reading to (most likely it'll be 2)
- ☐ What grade level(s) they'll be reading to

If you cannot reach any of your volunteers ahead of time, please let us know and we will help you.

EXAMPLE READ-IN SCHEDULE:

Example Read-In Schedule:

9:00 am – Volunteers arrive, sign-in, and prepare

9:30 am – Volunteers read aloud to their first class

10:00 am – Volunteers read aloud to their second class

10:30 am – Volunteers head out for the day

#3 PREPARE FOR VOLUNTEER ARRIVAL

We ask all volunteers to arrive 30 minutes ahead of their first read aloud assignment. This is to ensure that there is enough time for traffic and parking issues so that it does not interfere with your schedule.

The introductory time should be used to welcome your volunteers, give them time to practice their books, confirm classroom assignments, offer in-person tips for reading aloud, and answer any last-minute questions.

- Make a list of room numbers, teachers' names, and grade levels for each volunteer.
 - **PRO TIP** – Include a map of the school and highlight which rooms the volunteer is going to visit.
- Have extra books on hand. Some volunteers may bring books at the wrong level, or books that are too long, or books that are not good for reading aloud that you will want to switch out before they go to read.
- Remind teachers that they have a visitor coming the day before.
- **Optional:** Recruit students to serve as “Ambassadors” to welcome the volunteers and walk them to their assigned classrooms to read aloud. Student Ambassadors should work in pairs.

PRO TIP!

A lot of these preparation steps can be repeated from read-in to read-in. Since we host 4 each year, we recommend that you hang on to your materials to reuse and lighten your future work load.

#4 ENJOY THE EVENT

Welcome volunteers! It is best to have a designated spot where everyone can congregate before going to the classrooms. This will help volunteers feel supported by having a place to settle and the opportunity to meet fellow-volunteers.

The first 30 minutes of the event are for volunteers to arrive, sign-in, double check that their book is appropriate, and practice their book if it's new or if they hadn't had a chance to practice yet. During this time:

- Ask if the volunteers have ever read-aloud to students before.
- Give a few times for how to do a great read-aloud!
(We share tips with them as well, but it is always helpful to have a reminder.)
- Let the volunteer know if you'd like to meet with them when they are finished volunteering or not.
- Let the volunteer know where the adult restrooms are located.
- Thank them for volunteering and invite them to come back! We invite all of the read-in volunteers to become ongoing volunteers and perhaps that will be motivated to do so!

