



Volunteer FAQ's

- **What schools does All Students Matter support?** All Students Matter volunteers work in the Ravenswood City School District at Belle Haven, Willow Oaks, Brentwood Academy, Costaño, and Los Robles in grades TK (Transitional Kindergarten) through 5th grade. The district serves children in eastern Menlo Park and East Palo Alto.
- **Do I need to have prior tutoring or teaching experience?** No, volunteers come with a wide range of backgrounds, but all enjoy working with children and have a desire to support their learning. We will provide initial and on-going training, monthly coffees, on-site liaisons, guest speakers and more.
- **What will I teach?** Volunteers typically support students in very small groups or one-on-one as directed by the classroom teacher. All Students Matter does not introduce curriculum, rather we support existing district curriculum and follow teacher direction.
 - Most volunteers support students in literacy through a technique called Guided Reading, after attending an ASM training session.
 - Math support is also an option, and some volunteers opt to be trained by ASM in Common Core techniques in order to support mathematics.
 - In grades 3-5 some volunteers work with students in Readers Workshop or Writers Workshop, and if so, receive training from ASM to do so.
 - At Los Robles School, volunteers support students in a bilingual setting.
 - We provide special support in a structured Literacy Intervention program targeting students just below grade level, directed by the district. This volunteer placement is a two-hour commitment each week and volunteers must be particularly reliable.

If specifically interested in any of these areas, please indicate this in the comments box at the bottom of the Application Form.

- **Do I need to speak Spanish?** No, nearly all classrooms are taught in English. However, if you are Spanish-bilingual, please let us know.
- **May I commit for less than one year or split the commitment with a friend?** No. It is critical for the students and teachers to be able to depend on the consistency of seeing the same volunteer each week at the same time as they build trust and an emotional bond with our volunteers. This weekly time also helps foster a stronger learning environment as sessions build on each other throughout the full school year.

- Do you have after-school hours or volunteer opportunities for high-school students? No. Our volunteers support students in their classrooms during school hours as directed by the classroom teachers.
- Is it dangerous to go to the schools? No. In the 10 years we have supported this district, we have had no safety-related issues at all. RCSD schools are safe havens for students and our volunteers feel comfortable spending time in the neighborhood. A 2015 report in [Palo Alto Online](#) describes how violent crime is rapidly decreasing, down 64% in one year.
- What does an hour in a classroom look like for an ASM volunteer? Volunteers are placed in one classroom for the full school year, and help every week for at least one hour. Each teacher has a minimum of three All Students Matter volunteers throughout each week.
- Because we follow the lead of the classroom teacher, every volunteer has a slightly different daily routine. However, volunteers will typically work with small groups or 1:1 for about 10 to 30 minutes each, depending on grade level and student ability, focusing on literacy or math. Volunteers will rotate to new groups of students as time allows. Volunteers often form strong bonds with the students, and we find that the emotional support our volunteers offer is as important as the academic support we give to the students.
 - Structured programming: The Literacy Intervention program is our most structured volunteer opportunity. Note that this placement is a two-hour morning commitment weekly.
 - Less structured programming: Transitional Kindergarten (TK) through 5th Grade support is highly dependent on each classroom teacher's style. Some teachers give volunteers a wide range of flexibility when working with students, and some provide a greater degree of structure.

If you have a strong preference for one type of classroom setting or another, please indicate this in the comments box on the [Application Form](#) so we can do our best to place you.