

COMMUNITIES IN SCHOOLS OF GREATER WICHITA FALLS AREA



Communities
In Schools

Greater Wichita Falls Area

VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK

BUSINESS OFFICE CONTACT INFORMATION

705 8th Street, Suite 700
Wichita Falls, Texas 76301

Phone (940) 264-6743 Fax (940) 264-6744

E-mail: cis@cisgwf.org

For more information visit our web sites:

wichitafalls.communitiesinschools.org

Who we Are:

The mission of Communities In Schools of Greater Wichita Falls Area, Inc. is to surround students with a community of support, empowering them to stay in school and achieve in life.

Who we Serve:

Communities In Schools of Greater Wichita Falls Area, Inc. (CISGWFA) is a non-profit 501 ©(3) agency, providing a multiple of services and programs to students in grades 6-12 that have barriers to staying in school, graduating, or being promoted. Environmental factors that place students “at-risk” may include lack of parental involvement, association with criminal activities, drug abuse, language barriers, or other factors that impact the student’s academic success. Individual factors may include lack of basic academic skills, difficulties in behavior or attendance, and/or issues of family conflict and crisis. “A specific situation may not actually lead to dropping out, but sets of situations identify the potential to do so.” (The Journal of At-Risk Issues).

Campuses Served:

Barwise Middle School	Hirschi High School	Kirby Middle School
McNiel Middle School	Rider High School	Wichita Falls High School

Why and How

CISGWFA believes that every child needs and deserves the five basics.

A personal one-on-one relationship with a caring adult.

A safe place to learn and grow.

A healthy start in and a healthy future.

A marketable skill to use upon graduation.

A chance to give back to peers and community.

Each Communities In School’s campus staff works full time at one of our 6 campuses in the Wichita Falls ISD. Working with students, parent(s) and faculty, campus service plans are developed to address the existing barriers to the students’ academic success, using the

CIS Model's **Six Components:**

Academic Enhancement
Counseling/Supportive Guidance
Health & Human Services
Parental/Family Involvement
Pre-employment/Employment
Enrichment

Campus wide programs are also developed to meet the needs of the extended student body as well as those of the CIS Students.

A One-on-one relationship with a caring adult.

It is the volunteers' work and commitment that push our students to improve their academic performance, decrease the number of missed school days, and have better behavior in class. While teachers and CIS staff are paid to assist students, it's the relationship with someone who has no obligation to be a friend that pushes students to achieve.

Examples of other programs and services that provided to CIS students include:

Mentoring	Career Fairs
One-on-one tutoring	Educational Field Trips
Life Skills Groups	Family Game/Craft Nights
Community Health Fairs	Food & Clothing Drives
Homework Club	Teen Parent Services
Social Skills Programs	Crime Prevention Programs
Social Service Referrals	Holiday Assistance

Volunteer Positions

Administrative Assistance: Volunteer works with staff at the CISGWFA central office with various organizational and administrative tasks. These tasks may include, but are not limited to: making copies, filing, data entry, faxing, gathering reporting information, and distributing information to campus staff mail boxes.

Mentor: Individuals who meet with students at school during the school day or afterschool to develop a friendship type of relationship. While mentors may assist with homework, the emphasis of the relationship must be on getting to know the student and to build on successes and strengths. Mentors must be committed to meeting regularly for a minimum of one school year.

Group Facilitator: Individuals who meet with students at school during the school day or afterschool to develop or assist with group activities including crafts, book club, dance groups, or other special topics. This position may have a shorter-term focus than that of a mentor. Group facilitators may wish to limit their activities to a special focus.

Tutor: Volunteer tutors meet with students during or before school to focus on specific

academic needs with one or more students. This position typically has a shorter-term focus than that of a mentor. Tutors can limit their tutoring to a specific subject.

Volunteer Communications: This volunteer will assist staff in keeping on-going communications with current volunteers. Duties may include addressing special occasion and thank you cards; sending electronic newsletters, sending welcome letters, making follow-up calls to new mentors, sending satisfaction surveys. Volunteers in this position should possess excellent written communication skills and organizational skills.

Phone volunteer: A person is needed to answer phones at the Central Office during Staff meetings or while staff is out of the office for other duties. This volunteer should possess excellent communication skills and ability to field calls.

Afterschool Program Assistant: Volunteers assist 1-3 hours on school days with afterschool curriculum. Programs offered may include, academics, arts, nature studies, drama, music, crafts, sports, dance, character building and academic enrichment.

Summer Program Assistant: Volunteers assist 2-4 hours on selected days in June with summer curriculum. Programs offered may include, drama, music, crafts, sports, dance, character building and academic enrichment.

Special Events: Specific tasks are assigned as needed for annual events including:
Fundraisers/Special Events
School/Clothes Supply Drive
Bingo Night
Winter Holiday Drive

Anyone with a specific skill to offer should contact the CISGWFA Central office to discuss how their skills can benefit the organization. Examples of skills used to improve services include:

- Fundraising assistance
- Technology assistance
- Marketing/Public Relations
- Event Planning

Volunteer Guidelines

1. **Honor your commitment.** Be dependable and on time for your weekly visits at the school. Your student(s) look forward to this time. Please contact the CISGWFA site staff if you need to miss a week or need to change the meeting time.
2. **Sign in and out at the school office** (unless otherwise directed). Ensure you have a CISGWFA or campus "Volunteer" identification badge. Proceed to pick up your student from the designated location.
3. **Students must remain on the school campus.**

4. **Respect cultural, social, and religious differences.**
5. **You must notify the CISGWFA staff/principal immediately if a student confides that he/she is a victim of physical, sexual or emotional abuse.** If your student shares other sensitive issues that are of concern to you, see the CISGWFA staff.
6. **Volunteers are discouraged from giving students gifts.** Volunteers may, however give the student books, pencils, pens, magazines, posters, etc., as rewards and incentives for academic/behavior achievement or birthday recognition (value kept under \$10, pre-approval by CISGWFA staff is required).
7. Volunteers are role models. Please **dress and speak "kid friendly."**
8. Volunteers may wish to become involved in **school events** with students. Participation is encouraged, but not required.
9. Volunteers will **refrain from any of the following activities** with students/families served in the CISGWFA program:
 - **Selling products or network marketing of any kind**
 - **Distributing literature not provided to you by CISGWFA**
 - **Religious proselytizing or inviting people to a church**
 - **Political Views**
10. In the event that a physical altercation breaks out in the presence of a CISGWFA volunteer, their first responsibility is to contact the school security or administration. It is the policy of this agency that its **volunteers** will not jeopardize their safety by attempting to stop the fight themselves.
11. Volunteers will treat all information about a student or family as strictly confidential.
12. **Don't share personal information** such as phone number, home address or e-mail address, and don't request their phone number, home address, e-mail address or other personal information.
13. **CISGWFA does not allow** volunteers to "friend" students on any type of social media, i.e., Facebook, Myspace, twitter, and Yammer.
14. **Avoid talking to your student about their financial status** or poverty.
15. In regards to the issue of human sexual activity we will promote abstinence from sexual activity as the preferred choice of behavior in relationship to all sexual activity as it relates to our students.

Spending Time with Students

First, get to know the student.

- Know how to pronounce and write your student's name.
- Discuss interests in order for you and your student to begin to get to know each other.
- Your student may be curious about you and your personal life. Be careful not share personal information that may burden or worry your student.

Some Conversation starters might include:

What they like to do for fun	Where they were born
What sports they play or watch	Your/their favorite sports team
What type of music they like	Your/their favorite TV show/movie
What pets they have	Your school/teacher
What subjects they like in school	What subject is hard for them
Your/their favorite book	Classes they are taking in school
What they want to do when they grow up	What happens at recess
What happens at CISGWFA	Experiences at other schools
Their family	

In subsequent sessions...

- Get reacquainted. Have the student tell you something about him/herself since your last meeting.
- Assess progress. What did you do last session?
- Review for reinforcement. Start with a task you know the student can do such as a skill review.
- Introduce the new skill or learning activity.
- End session.

Additional Activities...

Talking and Listening

Likes and Dislikes

Friends, family, pets, and/or travel

School, sports, career aspirations Ask if the student had three wishes what would they do

Favorite movies, activities, games

Reading

A book with the readers alternating every paragraph or page

Poetry

Newspaper and Magazines

Open a dictionary to any page and read new words

Writing

Create made up stories

Write an autobiography Make a wish list

Start a journal of your visits

Academic Skills

Play hangman and word games

Work Crossword puzzles with spelling words

Use the computer lab

Play math games with flashcards Use globes, atlases, and maps

Play Chess and/or Checkers

Just for Fun

Arts & Crafts, Play board Games

