



Springfield  
School  
Volunteers 

1550 MAIN STREET, 3RD FLOOR  
SPRINGFIELD, MA 01103  
(413) 787-7100 EXT. 55697  
[SPRINGFIELDSCHOOLVOLUNTEERS.ORG](http://SPRINGFIELDSCHOOLVOLUNTEERS.ORG)

## ORIENTATION HANDBOOK



# WELCOME

Dear Volunteer,

Thank you for committing to share your time and talents with our students. Volunteers have been a part of the success story of the Springfield Public Schools for many years. Regardless of your specific volunteer role, you will contribute greatly to the future success of Springfield's students.

As you take on this important challenge, this handbook will provide you with helpful information to support and guide you along the way. If you have questions or concerns that are not covered in this handbook, please feel free to reach out to us. A staff directory is on page 9.

We look forward to partnering with you to make a difference in the lives of students – one student at a time!

With gratitude,

*Denise N. Cogman*

## **ABOUT SPRINGFIELD SCHOOL VOLUNTEERS(SSV)**

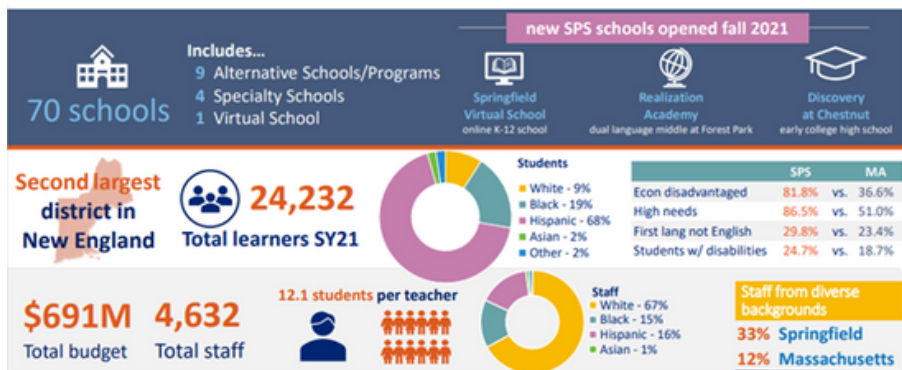
SSV is a non-profit organization that has been matching the resources of the community with the needs of the Springfield Public Schools (SPS) since 1969. In 1979, First Lady Rosalynn Carter selected SSV as a model of the spirit of volunteerism. We have been proudly carrying that torch ever since.

SSV is governed by a board of directors, managed by a small staff, and supported by many caring and committed volunteers. We are funded by the City of Springfield through a contract with the Springfield Public Schools, as well as by grants and individual gifts. SSV's primary focus is to support positive youth-adult relationships with the goal of helping students reach their highest potential.

# THE SPRINGFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

With approximately 25,000 students, 4,600 employees, and 70 schools, the Springfield school system is the second largest district in New England. Led by its Superintendent and the school committee, which is chaired by the mayor, the district's mission is to:

- Develop global citizens who are productive 21st-century leaders;
- Graduate students who are college and career ready;
- Attract knowledgeable, highly effective, and diverse educators and staff;
- Engage parents and community members as essential partners in sustaining its vision of *A Culture of Equity and Proficiency*.



## PORTRAIT OF A GRADUATE

During a period of more than two years, SPS engaged students, parents, school staff, business and faith leaders, and other community members in a series of conversations that led to a community-created vision of what every student in the Springfield Public Schools should know and be able to do by the time they graduate high school - the Portrait of a Graduate.

The Portrait of a Graduate is built on six pillars or key themes: the elements of specific knowledge, skills, or mindsets that every student should master. The six pillars are: Learn, Communicate, Persist, Thrive, Lead, and Work.

# VOLUNTEER EXPECTATIONS



## WHAT IS EXPECTED OF ME?

### Attendance

It is important for volunteers to arrive at their assignment when expected and to notify the school, student, or SSV as far in advance as possible if they will be late or unable to make it to an assignment for any reason.

### Appearance

Volunteers are expected to dress appropriately for their assigned duties and should present a positive, professional demeanor.

### Conduct

Volunteers are expected to follow rules of conduct that protect the safety and privacy of all staff, students, families, and other volunteers. Inappropriate conduct may lead to termination of the volunteer assignment and if necessary, further legal measures may be taken. Examples of such conduct include, but are not limited to:

- Physical, sexual, verbal, or emotional abuse of a child, volunteer, or school staff.
- Volunteering under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs and/or possession, distribution, transfer, or use of alcohol or illegal drugs on school grounds.
- Creating a disturbance on school grounds or at SSV-sponsored events that jeopardizes the safety of others. Threatening, intimidating, or harassing behavior of any kind.
- Unauthorized disclosure of confidential information.

# VOLUNTEER EXPECTATIONS

## **Face Masks**

When face mask requirements are in place in the district, a face mask that covers a person's nose and mouth must be worn by all individuals in school buildings when school is in session, even when social distancing is observed. Individuals are prohibited from wearing face masks containing language or symbols that cause disruption or disorder within the school.

## **Use of Cell Phones and other Portable Communication Devices**

To reduce interruption or distraction while you are volunteering in a school, please keep PCDs off or on silent mode. If you must take a call, please excuse yourself and go to an appropriate location. Cell phones should not be used to capture unauthorized images or videos.

## **Weather**

In the event of inclement weather, volunteers are encouraged to be safe. If school is delayed but you are scheduled to volunteer after the delayed opening, use your best judgment and notify the school if you decide not to volunteer on an inclement weather day.

## **Testing**

Please follow the school's guidelines for visitors during standardized testing.

## **Breaks**

If you need to take a break during your scheduled volunteer time, you may ask a school staff member where you may go. Please note that all school grounds are smoke-free environments.

## **Emergency Procedures**

If there is an emergency while you are volunteering, the school's emergency plan and procedures should be followed. As a volunteer, you have the right to ask school personnel for their school's emergency policies and procedures.

# SSV POLICIES

## CORI POLICY

All who wish to volunteer in a Springfield public school must submit a CORI form along with proof of identity (copy of a valid, government-issued photo ID) to SSV. Applicants and schools indicated on the CORI form will be notified when the CORI clears.

Please note that SSV does not receive information from the background check, and a past criminal offense does not automatically disqualify an individual from volunteering. SPS's Office of Safety & Security determines volunteer eligibility and will contact an applicant directly if more information is needed.

SPS obtains all available Criminal Offender Record Information (CORI) from the Department of Criminal Justice Information Services (DCJIS) for the purpose of determining the suitability of individuals, including volunteers, who may have direct, unmonitored contact with children.

A CORI check is valid for three years, as long as an individual is actively volunteering for each of those school years. Applicants will be contacted when their CORI needs to be renewed.

## NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

It is the policy of SSV not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, age, marital status, national origin, ancestry, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, covered veteran status, physical or mental disability or other categories as defined by state and federal law. To the extent possible, SSV will work with schools to ensure that reasonable accommodations are made for qualified volunteers with known disabilities or circumstances that might require an accommodation.

# SSV POLICIES

## CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY

In connection with your activities as a volunteer, SSV or SPS employees may disclose information (confidential information) to you regarding certain students or their parents/guardians. Except as may be permitted in writing by the Superintendent of the Springfield Public Schools (Superintendent), you shall use any such confidential information only in connection with your volunteer commitment and should never, directly or indirectly, use, publish, disseminate or otherwise disclose any Confidential Information unless compelled to do so by a court, oral questions at a deposition, subpoena, interrogatories, civil investigative demand or similar process, in which event you will reasonably attempt to notify the Superintendent of any attempt by a third party to legally compel such disclosure.

## ILLNESS/INJURY POLICY

SPS and SSV are committed to providing a safe environment for volunteers. We acknowledge that illness or injury may occur as a result of participation in volunteer activities or attendance at SSV or SPS-sponsored events. Volunteers should follow the policies put in place by the Springfield Public Schools in accordance with guidance from the Center for Disease Control (CDC), the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE), and the MA Department of Public Health (DPH) regarding the use of face masks.

Please note that except as otherwise agreed to by SSV or SPS in writing, SSV or SPS do not carry or maintain health, medical, or disability insurance coverage for any volunteer. Each volunteer is expected to obtain his or her own medical or health insurance coverage.



# SSV STAFF DIRECTORY

## **Denise N. Cogman, President and CEO**

[cogmand@springfieldpublicschools.com](mailto:cogmand@springfieldpublicschools.com)

Denise has held the position of President and CEO since 2006 and has been with SSV since 1992. She works in partnership with SSV's Board of Directors to identify and implement the organization's mission and strategy.

## **Katherine Gasque, Finance and Administrative Support Specialist**

[gasquek@springfieldpublicschools.com](mailto:gasquek@springfieldpublicschools.com)

Kathy is responsible for maintaining SSV's financial records, including funds held by SSV on behalf of various SPS schools. She also provides development and administrative support to the President and CEO and Board of Directors.

## **Patricia Hanson-Staples, Director of Programs and Services**

[hanson-staplesp@springfieldpublicschools.com](mailto:hanson-staplesp@springfieldpublicschools.com)

Patricia reaches out to SPS staff members to promote awareness of SSV's programs and services, seeks community partnerships that can help meet the needs of students and is responsible for ensuring and assessing the effectiveness of our programs and services.

## **Alexa Spath, Coordinator of Marketing and Outreach**

[smithal@springfieldpublicschools.com](mailto:smithal@springfieldpublicschools.com)

Alexa oversees SSV's recruitment, marketing and communications efforts, including maintaining our website and social media presence. She also develops and facilitates volunteer and mentee trainings and provides support to volunteer matches.

# JOIN THE SSV COMMUNITY

## CONTACT US:

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SPRINGFIELD, MA 01103  
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## SOCIAL MEDIA:

