



**RESOURCE GUIDE
FOR SSV SCHOOL CONTACTS**

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WELCOME TO THE RESOURCE GUIDE FOR SSV SCHOOL CONTACTS

Welcome & Overview

Thank you for serving as a liaison between Springfield School Volunteers (SSV) and your school. As a school contact, you play an essential role in connecting SSV, your school, and the community. By helping us coordinate communication and logistics, you help us ensure that students get the maximum benefit from the time and talents of dedicated volunteers.

This guide is designed as a quick reference to provide you with the information, tools, and resources needed to carry out your role with confidence. Whether you are supporting CORI/SORI processing, serving as the contact for our Read Aloud or Mentoring programs, or acting as the Fiscal Sponsorship contact for your school, your efforts help ensure a positive experience for students, volunteers, and staff alike.

Annual Program Selection Process

School contacts are identified through our annual Program Selection process, which is launched each spring (typically April or May) through the CSO Bulletin. Using the Program Selection form, schools indicate which SSV programs and services they will access during the upcoming school year, and identify a point of contact for each. This process ensures that we have the necessary program details in place before the new school year begins so we can provide efficient and coordinated volunteer support.

Important reminders about the annual selection process:

- **CORI/SORI processing:** We ask that each school provide us with a contact for CORI/SORI notification purposes, regardless of whether other programs and services are selected.
- **Read Aloud:** Schools that select Read Aloud must provide the requested information by the cutoff date. We need classroom numbers and schedule information to order books and recruit volunteers. We understand that information may change by the fall when the program begins, but cannot guarantee that we will be able to accommodate all changes.
 - * Please provide as accurate a count as possible of the number of classrooms per grade that will participate in the program.
 - * It is important that you provide the designated day and time and the scheduled dates for Read Aloud sessions for each month. Having this information early helps us begin recruiting volunteers for your school as soon as possible.

GENERAL INFORMATION

The Role of School Contacts

Your role as a school contact is vital to the success of our programs. Together, we can ensure a smooth, positive experience for your students, and volunteers. We count on school contacts to help us expand awareness about our programs and available volunteer opportunities at your school. Here are a few ways you can do that:

- **Remind staff** that they may submit requests for volunteers to assist in their classrooms, or to work directly with individual or small groups of students.
- **Share with families** that they are welcome to serve as volunteers at your school, and let them know that the mentoring program is available to their children at no cost.
- **Encourage students** to take advantage of available volunteer support.

Guidelines for Requesting Volunteers

SSV is always looking for volunteers who are interested in supporting schools and students. Staff can request a volunteer to work directly with students or to help with other needs at your school. To request a volunteer(s), please complete this [Request Form](#) to provide information about your volunteer opportunity. We will follow up for additional information as needed.

** Please note that before a student can be matched with a volunteer mentor, a signed [Parent/Guardian Consent](#) form must be submitted. A fillable PDF version of the form is available in [English](#) and [Spanish](#) on the [For Schools](#) page on our website.*

Tips for Hosting Volunteers

- **Create a welcoming environment** – A warm smile and a kind greeting go a long way. Small gestures, like introducing them to staff, help them feel part of the school community.
- **Provide direction** – Volunteers may not be familiar with the building, protocols, or staff. Offer clear instructions on signing in, where to go, and whom they should check in with.
- **Be approachable** – Your open, friendly tone will help volunteers feel more comfortable.
- **Show appreciation** – A simple “thank you for being here” shows them that they are valued.

Best Practices for Working with SSV

- **Notify SSV in advance** of upcoming events (field trips, field day) that may generate a high volume of volunteers to be processed.
- **Submit forms early.** Encourage parents to submit volunteer paperwork at the beginning of the school year, but at least two weeks prior to the date of a scheduled event.
- **Reach out to SSV.** If you have any questions or concerns or need assistance at any time, feel free to reach out.

**** NOTE: Massachusetts law prohibits volunteers from being left in charge of a class or group of children. Volunteers must be within sight or sound of a school employee at all times. ****

INFORMATION FOR CORI/SORI CONTACTS

Overview

SSV works closely with SPS to ensure that all volunteers, including individuals who volunteer for SSV programs, parents/guardians attending field trips, volunteer coaches, and other individuals supporting schools in a voluntary capacity, are properly screened. This includes completing a CORI/SORI check, which is valid for three (3) years, as long as there is no disruption in service.

Your Role:

As the CORI/SORI contact, you play an important role in helping ensure the safety and security of students. To help the screening process go smoothly, please take note of the following:

- Make sure volunteers are using the most up-to-date version of our forms, which are linked below and can always be found on our [website](#).
- All volunteers must complete both the Volunteer Application and the CORI/SORI form, regardless of their volunteer assignment.
- The background check process can take up to 10 days. Paperwork should be submitted well in advance of the event or volunteer opportunity. Submitting forms electronically is the best way to expedite the process since mail delivery can be delayed.
- A copy of a valid (not expired), government-issued photo ID (passport, driver's license, or other state-issued ID) is required to process the background check. Volunteers should NOT send copies of bank, credit, or Social Security cards.

What You Can Expect From SSV:

- We notify you when individuals who apply to volunteer at your school pass the CORI check.
- If there is a problem with a background check, SSV is NOT notified. Safety & Security will contact the applicant directly.
- We track CORI/SORI expiration and contact volunteers in advance to assist with renewal.
- We will provide you with a list of volunteers with valid CORIs once a year or at your request.

Quick Reference Checklist:

- Be sure both sides of the CORI/SORI form are completed: On page one (1), the form should include the name of your school and volunteer assignment, and must be signed & dated. On page two (2), the form must include the last **six (6)** digits of the social security number **if an individual was never issued a SSN, 00-0000 can be entered.*
- Be sure nothing is written in the "Subject Verification" section.
- Be sure proof of identity (valid photo ID) is included for each applicant.

Forms:

We have a [new online Volunteer Application](#) that can be completed and submitted fully online! A fillable PDF version is also available. The CORI/SORI form is available only as a fillable PDF.

[Access the new online Volunteer Application and the current CORI/SORI form here](#)

Send forms via email to volunteer@springfieldpublicschools.com or via interoffice mail.

INFORMATION FOR READ ALOUD CONTACTS

Program Overview

The Read Aloud program brings volunteers into participating Pre-K – grade five classrooms once a month, from October through February. After reading, volunteers leave the books in the classroom to help build classroom libraries. On scheduled Read Aloud dates, volunteers gather in a designated area to pick up the assigned book and wait for students to escort them to the classroom. Ideally, volunteers read to the same class for the five months of the program.

YOUR ROLE

As the Read Aloud contact, you help ensure a smooth and positive experience for volunteers and students by coordinating key program logistics. Your responsibilities include:

- **Sign up:** Work with the principal to provide classroom numbers and schedule information during the annual program selection process.
- **Communication:** Share program information with teachers, parents, and other potential volunteers. Provide teachers with the schedule and book list, and remind them monthly of Read Aloud dates.
- **Books:** When you receive the books, count them as soon as possible to make sure there are enough for each grade. Notify SSV of any discrepancies, and return any excess books promptly. Please keep the books in a secure location. (We cannot replace stolen books!)
- **Scheduling:** Notify SSV and/or your volunteers if a grade or class is unavailable for Read Aloud due to testing, ECOS, or other conflicts.
- **Volunteer Coordination:** Identify a designated space for volunteers to pick up and review books each month. Remind them to sign the bookplate and leave books in the classroom after reading. Ask teachers to select students to escort volunteers to classrooms. Adding a note with the volunteer's name, assigned grade, room #, and teacher's name is helpful.
- **Welcome & Recognition:** Warmly welcome volunteers. Encourage the Principal to stop by to greet and thank volunteers. Optionally, provide name tags and light refreshments. You can also encourage teachers to have students write thank-you notes to their volunteers.
- **At the end of the program:** If appropriate, invite volunteers to continue reading monthly or to explore weekly volunteer opportunities.

What You Can Expect From SSV:

- **Books:** We will order books based on the classroom numbers provided and make sure they are delivered at least one week before your first scheduled Read Aloud.
- **Recruitment/Screening:** We will do our best to find volunteers for all participating classrooms and will ensure that all volunteers, including those you help to recruit, are properly screened.
- **Volunteer List:** Each month, we will send you a list of your Read Aloud volunteers, including which grade they are assigned to and any special requests.
- **Volunteer Support:** We provide volunteers with information and supporting resources.

Tools/Resources:

- Visit the [Read Aloud page](#) for most up-to-date schedule, book list and other resources.

INFORMATION FOR MENTOR CONTACTS

Program Overview

SSV's Mentoring Program matches students in grades K-12 with volunteers who serve as caring friends and guides. To support these positive youth-adult relationships, we provide training, resources, and ongoing support to volunteers. Mentors are expected to meet with students in one-on-one or small group settings for at least 30 minutes once a week to provide social, emotional, and academic support.

Your Role

As the Mentor contact, you play a vital role in ensuring the success of mentor matches by providing consistent communication, coordination, and support. Your responsibilities include:

- **Pre-match meetings:** Attend and invite parents to these meetings, which ensure that all parties involved understand their roles, expectations, and program requirements.
- **Referrals:** Students should be willing/able to build a relationship with a caring adult and understand that consistently missing meetings may result in being dismissed from the program. Students with significant struggles (i.e., chronic absenteeism, severe academic challenges, or ongoing disciplinary issues) may require more intensive interventions.
- **Scheduling:** Work with SSV to determine a consistent meeting day/time that works with your school's schedule for mentors to meet with students for 30 to 60 minutes weekly.
- **Space:** Secure a suitable location where the mentor pair or group can meet consistently (e.g., cafeteria, library, counselor's office, or another quiet space). Please ensure that an SPS staff member is always within sight or sound of the mentor and student(s).
- **Student Availability:** Contact the mentor (or assign someone to do so) if the student is absent, testing, or otherwise unavailable to meet with the mentor. Notify SSV if the student transfers to another school or moves out of the district.
- **Forms:** Ensure that all required paperwork is submitted for participating students.

What Can You Expect From SSV

- **Recruitment/Screening:** We will recruit, screen, and train mentors, including those you may help to identify, to ensure they are properly vetted and prepared.
- **Matching:** We will review student referrals with you and make thoughtful matches based on student needs and mentor strengths, and facilitate pre-match meetings to clarify roles.
- **Match Support:** We maintain regular communication with you, mentors, and students and families as appropriate, to provide guidance, support, and troubleshoot issues that arise.
- **Reporting:** We will share student impact reports to support continuous improvement.

Tools/Resources:

- Submit this [Volunteer Request Form](#), and an SSV staff person will contact you.
- Students cannot participate until a [Parent/Guardian Consent Form](#) is completed and returned to SSV. (A [Spanish language version](#) is also available.)

INFORMATION FOR FISCAL SPONSOR CONTACTS

Overview

When possible, school funds and fundraising efforts should be managed through existing SPS systems and processes. However, if donors require funds to be distributed to an organization with a 501 (c)(3) tax-exempt status, SSV can establish an account to manage those funds. SSV charges a small administrative fee for fiscal sponsorship, depending on the level of work involved. We work closely with SPS's Office of Business and Financial Services to determine when funds would be best managed by SSV and to ensure that they are managed effectively.

When a school establishes an account with SSV, the principal designates a Responsible Party, who is accountable for the fund. They may also designate other Authorized Signers, who may sign off on disbursement requests. The following information will help individuals in both roles.

Your Role

- **Forms and documentation:** Submit the required forms to establish an account with SSV or to request disbursements from the account. Appropriate documentation must accompany any request for payment. (See Tools/Resources below for more information)
- **Provide donors with instructions for making donations:** Contributions made via check must be payable to Springfield School Volunteers with the name of the account/program in the memo section of the check. Online Contributions can be made either via the Donate page on SSV's website or by utilizing another online giving platform. (See Tools/Resources)
- **Timely Submission of Grant Requests:** If applying for a grant through SSV, please contact SSV's President and CEO with relevant details and requests for support at least three business days prior to the due date of the grant.
- **Thanking your donors:** SSV doesn't thank donors directly, but we will send an acknowledgement of the donation at your request or the request of the donor.

What Can You Expect from SSV

- **Administrative and financial oversight:** SSV manages funds on behalf of the sponsored program, ensuring compliance with nonprofit and school district policies. Account reports will be provided to contacts annually or can be provided at a reasonable request.
- **Processing of donations and payments:** SSV receives, records and handles payments or reimbursements related to approved program expenses.
- **Support with grant proposals and documentation for funders:** SSV will provide information requested for grant proposals to help ensure timely and accurate submissions and Charitable Contribution Acknowledgements at the request of you or the donor.
- **Access to staff support:** Fiscal sponsor contacts can reach out to designated SSV staff for clarification, problem-solving, or general support related to their sponsored program.

Tools/Resources:

- Please refer to these [guidelines](#) for access to forms and directions for seeking contributions or establishing an account with SSV.

SSV STAFF DIRECTORY

The SSV Office is located on the 3rd floor of Central Office. We can be reached by phone at (413) 787-7100, ext. 55697, or by email at volunteer@springfieldpublicschools.com.

Denise N Cogman | President & CEO

cogmand@springfieldpublicschools.com

Denise oversees all aspects of SSV operations. Contact Denise for “big-picture” questions about SSV, questions about fiscal sponsorship opportunities, disbursement or reimbursement requests, account reports, or other finance-related questions.

Patricia Hanson-Staples | Director of Programs

hanson-staplesp@springfieldpublicschools.com

Patricia oversees all aspects of program operations. Contact Patricia with input on program planning and implementation, or guidance on troubleshooting program challenges.

Elyssa Parrish | Read Aloud Program Coordinator

parrishe@springfieldpublicschools.com

Elyssa manages all aspects of the Read Aloud program. Contact Elyssa with questions about or feedback on volunteer assignments, scheduling, program logistics, and book selections.

Vanessa Stefanelli | Program Support Coordinator

stefanelliv@springfieldpublicschools.com

Vanessa manages SSV’s Mentoring program. Contact Vanessa with program inquiries and student referrals, or questions about required forms, volunteer scheduling, or match support.

Alexa Spath | Community Engagement Coordinator

smithal@springfieldpublicschools.com

Alexa manages volunteer recruitment and onboarding and organizational communications. Contact Alexa with any outreach/recruitment opportunities or questions about the annual Program Selection Process.

Lina Villalongo | Office Administrator & Data Entry Specialist

villalongol@springfieldpublicschools.com

Lina handles volunteer intake and screening. Contact Lina with questions about CORI status, to request a list of CORI-cleared volunteers, or for help with accessing or completing forms.