



# Volunteer Handbook

*Dear Gentry Volunteers,*

*We are so excited for the start of the 2023-2024 school year. We want you to know that we are so thankful to have you working with us!*

*Our vision is preparing children in our community for college, work and life. To accomplish our mission, we provide the best of the best (we're talking about YOU!) as well as a wide variety of programs to a growing variety of age groups. There is so much that we want to accomplish this year and we know that with a lot of hard work and dedication, we will get where we need to go!*

*We are providing you with a volunteer handbook to help us communicate our expectations and to answer some commonly asked questions. We hope that it will be a good source of information concerning Gentry's. Please read through it carefully and keep it handy throughout the school year.*

*Thank you for working with us to enrich the lives of children!*



# Hours of Operation

**After-School Tutoring (JES) Monday-Thursday, 4:00-5:30**

# J.E.S. Tutoring Calendar

## SEPTEMBER

11 First Day of Tutoring for 1<sup>st</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> grade students.

## OCTOBER

9-13 Fall Break

16 Kindergarten tutoring begins.

31 No Tutoring

## NOVEMBER

7 No School/No Tutoring

9 No Tutoring

20-24 Thanksgiving Break

## DECEMBER

7 Holiday Celebration & Last Day of Tutoring for 2023

## JANUARY

8 First Day of Tutoring for 2024

15 No tutoring-Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday

## FEBRUARY

19 No tutoring-President's Day

## MARCH

11-15 Spring Break

## APRIL

11 Last Day of Tutoring for 2023-24 School Year



# Program Philosophy

Gentry's Educational Foundation is a 501(c)(3) charity that was established to provide educational and social support to at-risk children. Community leader and veteran teacher, Evelyn Hickerson, started the program with a small inheritance she received from her parents passing in 2005. The foundation provides homework support, after-school tutoring, and enrichment programs to Pre-K through 6<sup>th</sup> grade students. The foundation also provides summer enrichment programs to hundreds of children in Williamson County, Tennessee.

## **Mission**

We assist and prepare young people in our community for school, work and life.

## **Vision**

Every child in the Gentry community will realize their own potential and have tools for a lifetime of success.

## **How We Do It**

We provide research-based, individualized academic support with state-certified teachers, mentoring and positive character development, while encouraging family engagement.



## **Contact Information**

**Evelyn Hickerson, Program Director**

(615) 925-1033

[hickersoneve@fssd.org](mailto:hickersoneve@fssd.org)

[ehickerson@gentryeducationalfoundation.org](mailto:ehickerson@gentryeducationalfoundation.org)

**Lindsay Ismailovic, Site Director JES**

(615) 828-9760

[ismailoviclin@gmail.com](mailto:ismailoviclin@gmail.com)

**Pamela Bright, Asst. Site Director JES**

[pvashti54@bellsouth.net](mailto:pvashti54@bellsouth.net)

**Johnson Elementary School (K-4<sup>th</sup> grade)**

815 Glass Lane

Franklin, TN 37064

Ph: (615) 794-4837 Fax: (615) 790-4749

## **Volunteer Practices**

**Gentry's Educational Foundation takes the education of our students very seriously. We have high expectations for our tutors, students and volunteers. Please keep in mind when you come to tutor that you are a key part of this organization and your focus, professionalism and kindness makes a difference in the lives of the children your work with each day.**

### **Professional Standards**

Our program upholds a professional, respectful work environment. Volunteers are expected to:

- Exhibit and practice courtesy, respect, and professional judgment in dealings with all stakeholders (children, parents, supervisors, colleagues, school administration and staff, community members, etc.)
- Maintain confidential information about children, families or staff and not discuss personal information about families or staff in front of others.



- Please refrain from any behavior that could distract and/or disrupt the students during tutoring. i.e. cell phone use, personal conversations, etc.

### **Dress Code**

Professionalism in dress is expected of all Gentry's volunteers. Skirts and shorts should be 3 inches above the knee in length or longer. No clothing revealing midriff, lower back, or cleavage is allowed and no undergarments should be showing.

### **Volunteer Paperwork Requirements**

We are required to have a volunteer application and background check on file for all volunteers. It must be turned in **before you can begin volunteering** in our program. Please make sure to let the site director know if any information on your application changes throughout the year. If you have questions about this, please contact Lindsay Ismailovic.

### **Parking**

Park your car in the parking spots facing the road in front of the school. Do not park in the fire lanes or on the curb by the front porch.

### **Volunteer Sign In/Sign Out**

Tracking volunteerism is important for us in reporting to funders and managing our resources and can be helpful for you at school or work. Please help us keep an accurate account of volunteer hours by signing in and out in the front office. This is also for your safety and the safety of the students. **Volunteers may NOT arrive before 4:00 PM.** This is due to safety regulations at the school and to prevent any confusion in the office during dismissal time.

### **Drugs and Alcohol**

All use or possession of any illegal substance on school property or in any venue of the After-School Program or reporting to work while under the influence of intoxicants or drugs is prohibited and will not be tolerated. The use, dealing or possession of any illegal substance would constitute grounds for immediate dismissal. Any observed use or possession is to be reported directly and immediately to the program or site director. The failure to report such activity may also be cause for immediate dismissal.



### **Cell Phone Usage**

Incoming cell phone calls and/or text messages are disruptive to an efficient work environment. When volunteers are working with or in close proximity to students, Gentry's asks that volunteers silence their cell phone ringers. We understand there are occasions when cell phones must be used, but we ask that discretion be exercised and that such calls be limited as much as possible.

### **Inclement Weather**

Gentry's Educational Foundation follows the inclement weather decisions made for the Franklin Special School District. For example, if the Franklin Special School District cancels school, then Gentry's will close as well.

We will make every effort to notify you when we have an unscheduled closure on a day for which you are scheduled to volunteer. However, if there is inclement weather, please check appropriate news and school closure information in the event that we are unable to reach you. If FSSD schools are open and you do not hear from your volunteer supervisor, you can assume we are open, and you should plan to volunteer as scheduled. If the school district decides to keep its schools open but you do not feel safe coming in because of inclement weather in your area, please contact your volunteer supervisor as soon as possible.

**Emergency Procedures** Emergencies take many forms and may require a number of different actions. No one can foresee the type or extent of the emergency, and how it affects people and structures, so it is impossible to provide definitive, all encompassing, advice. All Gentry's staff has been trained in emergency response procedures. We will always have at least one CPR trained staff member present at all times. General instructions for emergency situations can be found in all tutoring classrooms.

### **Name Tags**

When you sign in the first day, you will be given a Gentry's volunteer nametag. When you sign out, you may take your nametag with you or leave it on the hook in front of the desk. You must always have your nametag on during tutoring.



## **Volunteers Rights & Responsibilities**

### **A Volunteer has the right:**

- To be treated as an equal partner with the Gentry staff working toward our Mission
- To have a suitable assignment that matches your personal preference, personality and life experience
- To have sound leadership and a clear job description
- To have safe and enjoyable working conditions
- To provide feedback, positive or negative
- To be free of discrimination, harassment, intimidation, bullying or coercion
- To have the opportunity to make a difference!

### **Your responsibilities as a Volunteer:**

- If you have a criticism or concern about another volunteer or staff member, you should express this to the Site Director, Lindsay Ismailovic privately.
- Attend orientation and training sessions.
- Always be considerate and work as a member of a team.
- Seek assistance from experienced staff members whenever you need guidance or help
- Accept the right of Gentry's Educational Foundation to dismiss a volunteer because of negative performance or harm caused by their actions
- Able to work with a culturally diverse population of our community
- Maintain participant confidentiality and data privacy
- Adhere to Gentry's Volunteer Handbook expectations, rules and procedures
- Exhibit professionalism at all times

## Tips and Strategies for Successful Volunteer Tutors



- When you meet for the first time, introduce yourself and confirm the students/tutors names.
- Take your lead from the tutors and teachers in the classroom. They are there to help guide you!
- Sit next to (rather than across from) your student if possible, so the two of you can work together.
- Don't be afraid to ask for help! Not everyone comes from a background in education, so if you aren't sure how to best help a student ask another tutor or teacher.
- Observe how the teachers and tutors interact with the students and follow their lead.
- Make sure the student is the one actually doing the work.
- Aim for improvement and long-term growth.
- Offer praise and encouragement. Offer positive reinforcement to help students become more confident in their abilities.
- Your attitude and behavior will influence the students. If you come in behaving silly, they will mimic this behavior and get off task. If you are kind and focused, they will be as well! ***This is especially important for our younger volunteers to remember.***





# **Gentry Lead Teachers & Classroom Locations**

## **Kindergarten**

Beth Parrish

**(Room 205)**

## **First Grade**

Anna Best

**(Room 105)**

## **Second Grade**

Bethany Wiseman

**(Room 106)**

## **Third Grade**

Sandra Johnson

**(Room 306)**

## **Fourth Grade**

Emma Green

**(Room 300)**

## **Site Director**

Lindsay Ismailovic

**(Room 112-computer lab)**

## **Assistant Site Director**

Pam Bright

**(Room 112-computer lab)**



## **Donations and Other Ways to Help...**

As you may or may not know, Gentry's is funded solely on grants from the State of Tennessee and private donations. In order to sustain our programming for the children in our community we are always in need of donations.

We accept donations of all sizes. If you feel called to make a monetary donation to our program, please consider sponsoring a child's tuition for the school year in the amount of \$455.

We are grateful for you and appreciate all the love that each of you pour into our students each day.

Check out our website at [www.gentrysed.org](http://www.gentrysed.org)!



# GENTRY'S EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION

## VOLUNTEER Fingerprinting Procedure

Gentry's Educational Foundation requires a Criminal Background Check (CBC) for all new employees and current employees every five years. This must be cleared before you can begin working. The total cost of the CBC is currently \$38.00, which includes TBI & FBI reports.

You have **TWO** easy ways to register for fingerprinting! Prepay using VISA, MasterCard, American Express, or Discover online or through phone registration.

**\*PAYMENT BY PERSONAL CHECK OR CASH WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED\***

### Call Center Registration

*Available Monday-Friday, 8AM- 4:30PM CST.*

1. Call (855) 226-2937 and speak to an experienced, friendly representative.
2. Be sure to have the **ORI number TNCC94068** handy when calling.
3. Representatives will collect required information and payment, which will complete your registration.

**(AGENCY- NON DCS CHILD CARE/ADOPTION PROVIDERS)**

**(APPLICANT TYPE- CHILD RELATED WORKER (VOLUNTEER))**

### Online Registration

*Available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week*

1. Go to [www.identogo.com](http://www.identogo.com) and select Tennessee from the drop down menu.
2. Select *Digital Fingerprinting*
3. Select the green box- *Schedule a New Appointment*
4. Select *Agency- Non DCS Child Care/Adoption Providers*
5. Select Applicant Type- *Child Related Worker Volunteer (Private) no compensation from the agency*
6. Enter **ORI number TNCC94068**
7. Select YES to proceed if agency name is correct
8. Complete the Acknowledgement/Release
9. Enter zip code to determine closest fingerprinting location
10. Appointment details- Click to Schedule
11. Appointment Information- Follow the instructions

**Further questions contact Identogo (855) 226-2937**