

St. Louis School Guardian Program

Program Mission

The goal of the St. Louis Guardian program is to have at least one additional volunteer present each regular school day to actively engage with students and school functioning. Guardians are an extra set of eyes and ears – the mere presence of Guardians on campus enhances the overall security at the school.

Program Overview

Guardians are mothers, fathers, grandparents, parishioners, and other adult role-models who volunteer a day to spend time interacting with students and faculty of St. Louis School while enhancing the safety and security of all those present. Guardians live a “day in the life of St. Louis School.” Guardian volunteers will be public presence on campus and will assist with student activities, play at recess, eat lunch with their children, play in the gym, monitor the school hallways, assist with pick up and drop off, and other fun activities all while being a positive Christian role model and experiencing their children’s learning environment.

Guardian participation is fun, worthwhile, and beneficial to the students, the school, and you! Each volunteer day earns you 9 hours of St. Louis volunteer credit – so take a vacation day from work and spend it being a role model to your kids!

Similar programs across the country have experienced overwhelmingly positive results:

- 79% of principals agree that these programs significantly contributed to safety at the school.
- 96% of volunteers who complete the end-of-day survey agreed that the experience was rewarding and would volunteer again.

Volunteer Procedures

Before your volunteer day

You must be EIM certified to be a Guardian (or a volunteer for any other school activity). Contact the school office if you need certification or recertification.

Visit the school office and obtain a Guardian identification badge (if necessary) to be worn on your Guardian day. Also purchase your Guardian T-shirt from the office. Don’t forget to buy a shirt for each of your children – when you are working as a Guardian they get a Free Dress Pass to wear a “Guardian Kid” t-shirt just like yours! Cost is only \$7 each.

If you can’t make it to the office to obtain your badge and shirt prior to your volunteer day, plan to arrive about 10 minutes early on your volunteer day to take care of this.

On your volunteer day

Expect to arrive at St. Louis by 7:20 a.m. This will give you time to register at the school office and obtain supplies and assist with morning drop off. As a volunteer, you'll get your photograph taken with your children and placed on the Guardian Wall of Honor in St. Louis!

Check in at the school office first, with your children, so that you can all be in the photograph for the Wall of Honor. Provide your name to Mrs. Bruns so she can introduce you as the Guardian during morning announcements. The office will then provide you a radio and your Guardian day will begin.

During your day, use this schedule as a general guideline:

- Assist with morning drop off (either secondary or primary)
- Escort your child to their homeroom classroom and listen for morning announcements.
- On mass days, attend mass with the school. Sit with the parishioners or faculty, not with your child.
- Throughout the day, perform numerous walkthroughs of the parking lot areas (at least 3 times each)
- Throughout the day, perform numerous building/hallway walkthroughs
- Attend multiple recess times with different grades/classes
- Attend your child's class (no more than 2 primary classes for no more than 15 minutes each)
- Attend some elective classes such as art/music/religion (for no more than 15 minutes each)
- Attend a gym class
- Assist in the library
- Spend an hour or more in the lunchroom with the students
- Assist with afternoon pick up

After your volunteer day

Check in with the school office to return your radio. Take 5 minutes to complete the Guardian survey and leave it with the office or return to Chris Thompson.

What to do as a Guardian:

- Be a positive, energetic, and Christian role model for children on campus
- Encourage students!
- Introduce yourself to all adults on campus. Be courteous and assist them locating the school or parish office, if necessary. Every adult (faculty and visitor) on campus should be wearing St. Louis issued identification badges.
- If anything out of the ordinary is observed or if you have any questions, radio the school office.
- Bring a sack lunch or eat cafeteria food.
- Speak to children about the importance of education and career choices.
- Complete the volunteer survey and sign up for another day.
- Smile!

What *not* to do as a Guardian:

- Show impatience, anger, or poor manners in front of the children.
- Don't spend *all* day with your children – be seen all over campus and visit other classrooms and recesses.

- Do *not* attempt to apprehend anyone. Radio the school office for assistance, observe from a safe distance, and keep children out of harm's way.
- Don't spend time on your cell phone. Take calls as necessary, but make this a day for your children and St. Louis School.
- Do not abuse your time in the classrooms. Limit it to 15 minutes for observational purposes only. You are there as a security Guardian, not there to evaluate educators.
- Do not espouse political or personal beliefs to the kids. Be a Christian.

Dress code:

Guardians should look comfortable but professional during the day. Since you will be in a uniformed school environment and may attend mass on your volunteer day, the follow this minimum dress code:

- Wear your St. Louis Guardian T-shirt!
- Slacks or cargo pants. No jeans.
- Wear comfortable shoes as you will be walking a lot.

And remember, when you are a Guardian, your children also get to sport a Guardian t-shirt all day at school to show how proud they are of you!

Rules:

- Guardians will wear their St. Louis issued identification badge at all times.
- Carry your radio with you at all times to maintain communication with the school office.
- All volunteers must be EIM certified (per St. Louis parish and Diocesan policies).
- Use of tobacco is prohibited.
- Always use appropriate language.
- Only discuss age-appropriate topics; never touch a child inappropriately.
- Interact with students but address scenarios where disciplinary action is required to a school employee.
- Do not give students gifts, rewards, or food without permission of a school employee.
- Always check in with teachers, faculty, coaches, and staff when spending volunteer time in a school area.
- Use only the bathroom located in the main hallway across from the principal's office. No volunteers are permitted to enter student bathrooms.
- Any student personal information obtained is to be kept confidential.
- Non compliance with these rules and procedures could lead to removal from the Guardian program.

How to get started

Becoming a Guardian is easy and the benefits to you, your children, and St. Louis are tremendous.

To get started, simply:

1. Obtain EIM certification.
2. Contact Volunteer Coordinator Chris Thompson who will send you a link to the internet Volunteer calendar.
3. Pick days on the calendar to volunteer.
4. Complete a volunteer registration form (for first-time volunteers only) and submit as outlined on the form.

5. Donate \$7 for a St. Louis Guardian t-shirt – which is yours to keep and wear every time you volunteer. Don't forget to get one for your kids to wear that day too.
6. Take a vacation day from work and arrive at school ready to have fun!

Questions? Contact the school office or St. Louis Security Committee Chair:

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