

Lighthouse Parent Organization (LPO)

The Lighthouse Parent Organization (LPO) is open to all enrolled families at The Lighthouse School.

With guidance from the school administration, this group's primary role is to organize volunteers for events and activities while nurturing a sense of community. The LPO is not a fundraising committee, but works in connection with Friends of Lighthouse School (FOLS) in executing some fundraising activities. Unlike traditional PTA's the LPO is not a Corporation and does not handle any financial liabilities or bank accounts, and does not require membership dues or fees.

A Volunteer Coordinator leads the LPO as a whole. This person is not paid by the school nor acting on behalf of school administration. The LPO Coordinator is approved by School Administration before official appointment in the role.

LPO meetings generally occur once per month (may be more frequent during event planning), are usually right after school dismisses and are held at The Lighthouse School. ALL parents, guardians and adults with a significant role in a Lighthouse Student's life are welcome and encouraged to attend LPO meetings.

LPO meetings help to facilitate the school's traditional events and teacher approved classroom activities. Event teams are formed each year and someone other than the LPO Coordinator leads each team, with the LPO Coordinator overseeing all of the teams. All new ideas or proposed events must be brought to the school's Director for preapproval and coordination, and if necessary brought before the school's Board of Directors for pre-approval.

The LPO helps.....

Families, by connecting to each other through volunteerism and providing a welcoming environment to all families.

Students, by supporting academics, sports, activities and other social elements of school. LPO's coordinated volunteerism helps students feel a connection to their school and build a sense of camaraderie among all grades

Staff, through the organization of many of the school events, LPO helps to minimize efforts that would otherwise overburden busy staff members and allows them to focus on students. The LPO also provides a monthly staff luncheon in appreciation for all they do for our students.

Community, to promote the collaboration and engagement of families and educators within The Lighthouse School community, through our programs such as The 12 days of Giving, Caroling at the Mission and Handwork from the Heart. The LPO also helps Lighthouse students partake in community opportunities, bringing awareness and coordinating participation in local events.

Volunteering at The Lighthouse School

All Volunteers, in accordance with ODE Regulations and The Lighthouse School Policy, must complete and pass a background check and provide requested documentation prior to volunteering for any activity involving students.

- The premise of volunteerism is that **kids learn better when their family is invested in their education**. This is also why younger siblings coming into Kindergarten immediately have a space in the class, so that families can be together.
- **Each family is asked to give 40 hours of volunteer time** to the school each school year. This request is per family, not per child/student of the family. There is no mandate of volunteer hours, it is simply an ask to improve the school environment.
- **Volunteerism comes in many forms**, not just time spent in the classrooms. There are those in-school activities during the school week, *and* there are also at-home tasks like laundering linens and compiling packets, donations of items needed for school and classroom projects, working tables and booths during evening and weekend school functions, and even attending planning meetings for school events.
- **Parents are responsible for tracking their own volunteer hours**. There is a small box of file cards on the counter outside of the school office that is alphabetized by last names and each family has a card on which to write the date and number of hours spent volunteering. If you have any questions about this box or process, please ask the office staff for assistance.
- When **calculating how your donated items equate to "volunteer hours,"**
 - Take **how much you spend on the donated item and divide that by an hourly rate of pay**. This might be the amount you get paid at your job or it might be the amount that you feel your time is worth (we are all busy parents here, don't sell yourself short!).
 - Example: \$30 of supplies / \$20 hourly rate = 1.5 hours of volunteer time
 - Then be sure to **add in the time that you spent shopping** for those supplies.
 - Example: 1 hour of shopping = 1 hour of volunteer time
 - In total of these examples, you would record 2.5 hours of volunteer time for this supply purchase and donation.
- It's important to note that **the school takes your word for the hours that you report**. Families will never be questioned on what they record on their volunteer card, or asked for receipts or to show their work on the math. It's an honor system and should not be a point of stress for any parents.