

MEDIA RELEASE

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O.N.E. Our Network for Education **District announces new volunteer program**

The Wausau School District is proud to announce its new volunteer program, O.N.E. (Our Network for Education). Introduction of this program will mean some positive changes to the District's past practice of managing volunteers solely at individual school sites. Benefits of O.N.E. include:

- Online registration for volunteers and online access to volunteer opportunities.
- District support for school-based volunteer activities.
- Background checks for certain levels of volunteers who work with District students (thus developing a safe environment for students, staff, and volunteers).
- Online volunteer handbook with access to key District information for volunteers.

This District-wide program is being piloted this fall at four WSD elementary schools including Franklin, Grant, Lincoln, and G.D. Jones. The program will expand to other schools throughout the year.

To oversee this new initiative, the District has utilized grant funds to employ a new part-time Volunteer and Community Involvement Coordinator. Roxane Hagedorn is new to the position, but has served last year as the District's VISTA volunteer to research and build the O.N.E. program. She will work to help schools coordinate volunteers and assist them in developing volunteer matches with program needs.

A growing body of research shows that community involvement makes a tremendous difference in academic achievement of children. According to Joyce Epstein, Director of the National Network of Partnership Schools at Johns Hopkins University, schools, families and communities are the major institutions that socialize and educate children. According to Epstein, certain goals, such as student academic success, are of interest to each of these institutions and are best achieved through their cooperative action and support. ***O.N.E.*** will help bridge the common interests of all three partners in one of the most important jobs our community has—educating our children.

For more information, or to schedule an on-set television interview about the O.N.E. program, contact WSD Volunteer and Community Involvement Coordinator Roxane Hagedorn at 261-0584 (Monday-Friday, 8:00 AM to 12:00 PM) or at rhagedor@wausau.k12.wi.us.



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