



**uplift**education  
Shine through.

# Family & Scholar Engagement

## Volunteers in Partnership

VIP

## Handbook

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### Volunteers in Partnership Mission

Uplift has established a parent volunteer structure, Volunteers in Partnership (VIP), designed to provide opportunities for volunteers to work in partnership and collaboration with the schools for the enhancement of the school and scholar success on their road to college and career.

#### Uplift Mission

Uplift's mission is to create and sustain public schools of excellence that empower students to reach their highest potential in college and the global marketplace and that inspire in students a life-long love of learning, achievement, and service in order to positively change their world.

# Welcome Families

Uplift's mission is to create and sustain public schools of excellence that empower students to reach their highest potential in college and the global marketplace and that inspire in students a life-long love of learning, achievement, and service in order to positively change their world. This could not be accomplished without parental support and the volunteer contributions of parents just like you! Job descriptions for VIP members and committee chair roles are listed below. To get you started, here are the answers to a few frequently asked questions:

## ***What does the VIP do for the school?***

The VIP works with parents and faculty to organize and facilitate events both during and after school hours that serve to enrich our children's educational experiences and build a stronger community. Some of the programs VIP helps support include but are not limited to: Field Trips, Health and Wellness Committee, Global Committee.

## ***Why should I serve on the VIP committee?***

1. Your child feels a sense of pride to know that his/her parent holds an office.
2. You get to meet and work with wonderful people!
3. You stay updated and informed on what is going on at our school.
4. You can more effectively share feedback.
5. It will assist our school in having strong family engagement. Everyone has different strengths and talents. Everyone has something unique to offer our school and our children!

## ***Can I be a member and work full time?***

Yes! Work within the boundaries of your personal and professional life. You create your own schedule

## ***Do I have to be a mom to serve on VIP?***

No! We love to have all family members. Come one, come all. Anyone who cares about Uplift and the students who attend here are welcome to be a part.

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Collaborating with the

Community

Parents =  
Advocates

School provides welcoming atmosphere, makes room for families, facilitates health initiatives, and opens building to community

Decision Making: 2-way Communication

Schools Host Town Halls, Directors talks, Advocacy efforts, PTO equivalent groups

Parents lead initiatives: Volunteers in

(VIP), Parent Ambassadors help recruit and mentor other parents, participate in committees

Home Learning

School offers Parent Universities, Reachable teachers, Math & Science/Literacy Nights, Homework Activities for Family, Reading Log for Home, Health Fairs.

Parents as continuous learners  
Learning instruction for families to build capacity and serve scholar as a whole

Volunteering

Schools must collect an information bank on skills and professions to call on parents. Assign a volunteer coordinator/liason

Parents as contributors  
Harnessing parent's skills to improve school and help families

Communication: One-way (School to

School: Newsletters, reports, conferences, positive outreach calls, social events

Parents: Attend leader/teacher led meetings  
Improved flow of communication to parents

Parenting: Pre-Enrollment and

School aids parent understanding of child development, home learning, school choice and family support

Parents as advocates for their scholars

Parent participate in Pre-attendance conferences; Commitment to Excellence and

Road to College & Beyond

Advocacy

Engagement

Involvement

## VIP Vision

Leaders collaborate with their scholars' families to ensure academic success by means of parent/guardian education, information, and involvement inside and outside of the classroom. Creating strong parent/guardian leaders alleviates the obstacles of limited human capital and creates a stronger bond between the school and the community.

This will be achieved by:

- Establishing and utilizing a consistent framework to identify and communicate volunteer opportunities for the school community.
- Managing, as requested by school administration, the volunteer efforts so they are aligned with the Uplift Model and are effective in their outcomes.
- Modeling actions and facilitating communication that promotes effective relationships among all the members of the school community as well as external stakeholders.

## Values

**Accountability:** We acknowledge our responsibilities and obligations and deliver on our promises.

**Commitment:** We take an active role in the educational success of our scholars by promoting and supporting the schools programs, policies and procedures.

**Inclusivity:** We invite all parent/guardian to participate. We value and seek involvement from different perspectives and experiences. We work as a team.

**Integrity:** We seek consistency in actions, morals, values, principles, expectations, and outcomes.

**Respect:** We possess an attitude of consideration of our colleagues and ourselves.

## Communication

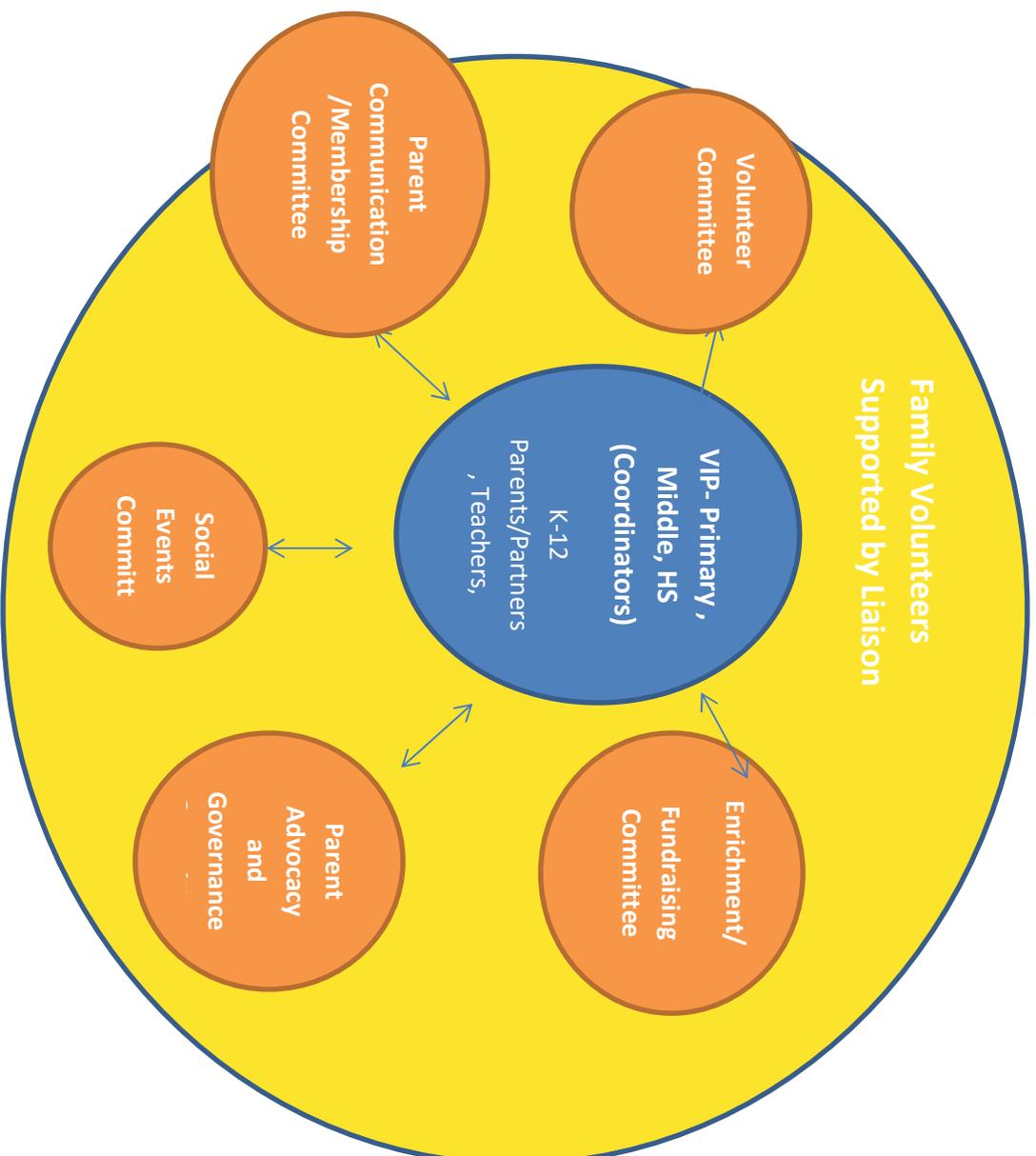
Every parent/guardian is a member of the (school) VIP program. VIP is a place to help facilitate ideas and communications between parent/guardian and the administration. VIP can help school communications by creating. *(as approved by school leadership to spread the word about school sponsored events)*

- Phone tree
- Communication coffees
- Networking events

## Protocol

- Volunteers must have a background check when interacting with scholars
- It is important to always use good standard communication rules
- Provide enough notice of meetings/events that school leadership will be able to contribute (2-4weeks)
- Take minutes so the organization's actions are transparent to others

## Uplift Volunteers In Partnership Model & Recommended Committees



\*All VIPs should have a staff appointed by leadership to help support and guide the group in absence of a parent liaison. All VIP initiatives must be approved by school leadership. Anyone handling money must receive training from the Uplift finance team

## Letter to Families

Dear Uplift Families,

Welcome to Uplift Education. We look forward to partnering with you this year to continue the tradition of quality programming at our Uplift Education schools. Volunteers play an important role in every area of our school community. As you will notice, we are quite busy and thanks to all of the Volunteers In Partnership (VIP) parents, teachers, administrators, staff and friends, we continue to enrich the lives of our scholars on a daily basis. Through your efforts, no matter how great or small, you are contributing to scholar growth and development more than you know.

Volunteering provides you with the opportunity to devote your time, energy, and compassion to helping the scholars gain a valuable education and sense of belonging along with supporting teachers and staff. The volunteer program partners you and school staff and enables you to become an integral part of the team that along with you are responsible for the education of your scholar. We are always looking for new ideas and believe communication is key. Most importantly, your involvement with the school through volunteering will assist your student in understanding firsthand what good citizenship is all about.

By getting involved you gain valuable experiences. It's an opportunity to put your skills and hobbies to good use for a good cause-your scholar and all scholars in our school community. You will be a part of the solution, through helping us make positive changes. As we look forward to the upcoming school year let us all join together to build a strong bridge between, parent, scholars, and the school staff community.

Thank you,

Family Engagement Coordinator

## School and Family Expectations

### Parent and Family Expectations:

- to maintain a spirit of cooperation and respect amongst all families, scholars and school staff
- work within school policies and guidelines
- get approval for all recommended supports to the school to host events and activities along with getting all dates approved
- schedule all meetings in advance and provide notice to school leadership
- be inclusive of all families
- complete background check
- work with the school FEC as their main and daily point of contact

### School Leadership Expectations:

- allow VIP to lead their organization; serve as a thought partner and provide monthly updates to the team along with ways VIP can support the school
- work in partnership and collaboration with the VIP
- assign a designee (school leader) to attend VIP meetings monthly
- work directly with FEC to ensure that VIP is aligned with school goals
- Set behavior and financial expectations along with guidelines for members when interacting with scholars and representing on behalf of the school
- ensure that all VIP and families that volunteer complete the background check in VOLY
- be responsive to VIP needs (responding in a timely manner)
- make sure expectations are clear
- ensure all volunteer opportunities are uploaded in VOLY platform

## Steps to Establish a Successful VIP

VIP parent leaders and school leadership will set up committees based on need. A Family Engagement Coordinator will be designated to help guide committees and to collaborate with community resources/organizations to facilitate the VIP’s success.

1. Identify school needs ----- Collaborate to *Create Family and Scholar Engagement Calendar (School leaders will include a VIP wish list/activity menu)*
2. Recruit family members early in the school year (set a target date for nominations and voting day) establish positive relationships with a diverse group of parent leaders
3. Identify goals/special events/projects for each school in collaboration with school teams that align with school and network goals
4. Hold a volunteer (Parent VIP) information session/social event and define how often VIP meetings occur (Beginning in August). *Make sure meetings align with school leadership availability*
5. Establish committees, committee leaders, and committee goals – *projects and events established earlier can be used as a menu that committees can pick from*
6. Have each committee fill out a Work Plan for all events/projects they would like to take on –*work plan should be submitted for all projects well in advance (4-6 weeks) for administration to approve and support adequately*
7. Implement Work Plans throughout year with school leadership consent and liaison support and guidance

### Family and Community Engagement Volunteer Calendar Example

**Work with FEC to complete task**

Month	Event	Planning Ownership	School Role	Parent Volunteer Role
August	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meet the Teacher Night</li> </ul>	Instructional Team/liaison		
September	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Family Lunches begin</li> </ul>	liaison/ Ops Team		
October 20-24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parent Teacher Conferences</li> <li>• Family/Cultural Celebrations (?)</li> </ul>	Instructional Team/ liaison/ Ops Team		
November	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Family Lunches</li> <li>• Trick or Treat “Math Night” (?)</li> </ul>	liaison/ Ops Team		
December	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Winter Festival</li> <li>• Classroom Winter Parties</li> </ul>	liaison/ Specials Team		
January	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Family Lunches</li> </ul>	liaison/ Ops Team		
February	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Friendship Day Celebration</li> </ul>	Instructional Team/ liaison		
March	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parent Teacher Conferences</li> </ul>	Instructional Team/ liaison/ Ops Team		
April	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher Appreciation Events (?)</li> <li>• Spring Festival (?)These are a month early but perhaps a better time instead of May?</li> </ul>	Instructional Team/ liaison		
May	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Field Day</li> <li>• Field Trips for all grades</li> <li>• Mother’s Day brunch</li> <li>• Kinder Graduation</li> <li>• Literacy Night/Summer Kick-off event</li> </ul>	Liaison/Instructional Team		

## VIP Parent Leadership Team

**Family Engagement Coordinator\*** –Supports VIP through recruiting families as partners. FEC helps support parent leaders and school leaders in identifying needs and implementing project plans (above 1-7).\*In absence of FEC will select a point person to support VIP.

### **It is required that all VIPs have three officer positions:**

1. **VIP Chairman**- This person serves as the official representative of the body and leads the organization by following all network guidelines, handbook and code of conduct. This person works directly with the campus FEC.
2. **VIP Secretary**- This person captures all business in official meetings for review at every meeting. All minutes must be approved at each meeting.
3. **VIP Financial Secretary**-This person handles all financial matters of the organization with record keeping and collection of funds and works closely with the school operations team.

*\*Should be elected by parent body.*

**Committees** - Exist to split the work done by VIP in order to be as efficient and effective as possible. Each Committee will work independently but will reach out to members of the other committees as well as campus VIP coordinators/partners for project assistance and execution. Each committee will appoint a chair/coordinator. Chairs/coordinator will be part of the lead steering committee that meets monthly for strategic planning and coordinating for scheduling, fundraising and effective organizing purposes.

**Committee Chairman** - Leads and helps implement specific committee initiatives with support from campus partners and FEC. Responsible for communicating with FEC the initiatives their committee(s) are working on, including submitting minutes/work plan to get approval for projects, fundraising or events they would like to do. Will also communicate with parents in their campus committees (independent committee meetings) and hold their committee(s) accountable for projects/events they have committed to. Will give updates at Parent VIP Meetings. Coordinators will also be part of the lead steering/advisory committee that meets monthly for strategic planning and coordinating.

*\* If conflict occurs or parents cannot come to a decision, the coordinator will be appointed by school leadership*

*Must attend training conducted by Family and Scholar Engagement Department (FSE)*

*All Parent leaders handling money must go through finance training.*

**Coordinators** - Oversee campus wide events and functions. Partner with Administrators and Campus Partners and other committee chairs to plan and execute events and functions. Attend monthly Enrichment Committee meetings (can be split up between Coordinators).

**Campus Staff**– Work in partnership with VIP Coordinators. Plan and execute campus specific (Primary School, Middle School, Upper School) events and functions. A campus staff representative should attend the monthly meetings

## Work Plan Template

**Purpose:** To create a “script” for activity/event execution.

- Directions:**
1. Use this form as a template to develop a work plan for each goal identified through the needs assessment process. (Modify the form as needed to fit your specific goals)
  2. Distribute copies of each work plan to the members of the committee.
  3. Keep copies handy to bring to meetings to review and update regularly. You may decide to develop new work plans for new phases of your reform effort.

**Goal:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Results/Accomplishments/Impact on Scholar well being:** \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Action Steps</b> <i>What Will Be Done?</i>	<b>Purpose</b> <i>Why is this necessary?</i>	<b>Responsibilities</b> <i>Who Will Do It?</i>	<b>Timeline</b> <i>By When?</i> <i>(Day/Month)</i>	<b>Communications Plan</b> <i>Who is involved?</i> <i>What methods?</i> <i>How often?</i>
1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				
5.				

# Volunteers in Partnership Operating Guidelines

## Must Know

-VIP uses Uplift's Non-profit status- the scholar enrichment fund is used to account for VIP's fundraising (fundraising & sales tax) the focus of all activities is to support scholars

-Simple Operating Guidelines (membership & terms) and Financial Guidelines (see fundraising guidelines)

## Standing Meetings & Steering/Coordinator Committee Examples

It is very important to establish consistent meeting times early on in the year to encourage in increase parent volunteer participation and connectedness. The choices below are based on current school models that have successfully engaged parent volunteers.

**Monthly VIP General Meetings** - All parents invited K-12- Evening or Saturday morning meetings. These meetings provide an opportunity to update all families about VIP initiatives and engage new families. Scholar/community presentations are great for these meetings (1 hour monthly). Every meeting must have the following:

- **Agenda and sign in sheet**- created by VIP secretary in collaboration with VIP Chairman (see agenda template)
- **Minutes**- created by secretary from previous meeting (including a list of who was present)
- **Financial report**- created by financial secretary that provides a balance and incoming and outgoing funds

*\*\*agenda template items on next page must be reflected on each agenda (Roberts Rules of Order)*

### Choice A (suggestion for smaller school/campus)

Monthly VIP General Meeting and Steering/Coordinator Committees meet at the same time.

General Presentation with school leaders and/or parents presenting updates the first 30 minutes. Afterwards parents break into working committees for no longer than an hour.

### Choice C (primary & secondary campus)

Monthly VIP General Meeting and Steering/Coordinator Committees meet at the same time. General Presentation with school leaders and/or parents is first 30 minutes and after is committee breakout sessions for 30 minutes to an hour

## Committee Examples

- Membership (helps to increase membership, contests in primary, middle & high)
- Events (helps coordinate programs for monthly meeting (grade level presentations)
- Communications (asks school leaders for key events, meetings, notices)
- Volunteer (coordinates office volunteers, club sponsors, and room parents)
- Enrichment ( coordinates spending of monetary donations collected by VIP)
- Hospitality

# Meeting Agenda Template

VIP Meeting Agenda # \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Time: \_\_\_\_\_

School/Campus VIP: \_\_\_\_\_

**Call to Order (2 min.)**- VIP Chairman

**Reading and approval of minutes from previous meeting (5 min)**- Record keeper

**Parent Power Session- (10 min)**- FEC or designee

**Upcoming events/Volunteer Opportunities (5-10 min)**-FEC or designee

**Report of Special Activites and Events (10 min)**- VIP member/committee chairman

*\*\*make sure all activities are aligned to support the school goals.*

**VIP Officer reports (10 min):**

- Chairman
- Financial Secretary

**New Business (5 min):**

**Unfinished Business (5 min):**

**Action Steps (5 min):**

**Adjournment of meeting:**

**Next Meeting Date and Time:**

## Volunteer Consent and Authorization for Release of Information

I hereby consent to and authorize (the "School") to obtain a background check through Uplift Education's VOLY platform and agree that such information may be obtained each year while I am a volunteer at the School or at such other times as is necessary or appropriate to comply with law governing the School or with School policy.

I understand that the criminal history record information obtained by the School may not be released or disclosed to any person except as provided by law and that such information obtained will be treated as CONFIDENTIAL.

Please check one of the statements.

- I will not be working directly with the students of the school and have chosen not to fill out the information set forth below.
- I will be working with the students in the School and am providing the following information that I understand will be used by the School for a background check.

Print Name	Date of Birth
Signature	Driver's License Number and State
Date Signed	Telephone Number
Address	City, State, Zip
Other Name(s) of Record	

## TEMPLATE FOR CAMPUS PARENT POLICY (Title 1 requirement)

School will use the **Calendar Year** to help keep parents engaged and proactive in order to create a strong charter school and a strong charter network.

(Mark the ones you feel are effective)

Beside the Calendar Year School will use the following as tools in communicating with parents

### Tuesday Notes/Newsletter

- Information translated
- \*\*need to have an internal system to ensure that Tuesday Notes are distributed in a timely manner\*\***

### Utilizing Webpage/Social Media

- Put Tuesday Notes
- Feature new stories every week/bi-weekly to show that site is up to date
- Teachers update their class pages
- Power School
- \*\*Translate all content into Spanish\*\***

### Town- Halls/ Parent Information Night (P.I.N)

- Could be held monthly or quarterly held in coordination with student event or student performance
- Identify an operating structure for conducting the meeting
- Opportunity for parents to come and share comments and concerns with school Leadership
- Opportunity for school Leadership to get input on upcoming projects from parents
- Have translation available
- Follow up on topics discussed and decisions made in Tuesday Notes and on webpage

### Coffee or Tea with the Director

- Establish agenda beforehand
- Opportunity to announce topics (academics) beforehand
- Update on Parent Volunteers in Partnership for those that are unable to attend regular meetings



## VIP (Volunteers in Partnership) Sign Up Form

Parent Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Uplift Campus: \_\_\_\_\_

Grade(s) of Scholar(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Parent Email: \_\_\_\_\_

How do you prefer we communicate with you?

Phone Call

Text Message

Email

In which areas are you most interested in volunteering?

School Events

Field Trips

Carline

VIP Leadership

Day-to-day tasks

Fundraising

Room Parent

Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

COMMITMENT: As a parent, caregiver, or caring adult of my Uplift scholar, I pledge to be an active parent volunteer, and answer the call for assistance whenever it is made by my school's leadership.

Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# VIP Code of Conduct

## I. Introduction

What is a Code of Conduct? A code of conduct is a set of guiding principles that act as a benchmark for professional behavior. It is a promise to adhere to the values we all share as VIP members such as honesty, respect, responsibility, fairness, and compassion.

## II. Organizational values

As a VIP member, I promise to abide by the fundamental values that underpin all the activities of this organization and remember that it is all about the children.

### A. Integrity and honesty

These will be the hallmarks of all conduct when dealing with colleagues within VIP and equally when dealing with individuals and institutions outside it. As a Member, I will treat those I come in contact with, with the same courtesy and consideration I expect from others.

### B. Accountability

The activities I perform for the committee will be able to stand any test of scrutiny by others.

I will discharge the duties and responsibilities of my membership with fidelity and integrity and declare any and all personal and/or extended family conflicts of interest when VIP issues, decisions and funds are involved.

I will not misuse any VIP funds for unauthorized purposes nor disburse funds for any purpose other than authorized, budgeted VIP programs, projects, and activities.

### C. Transparency

VIP strives to maintain an atmosphere of openness throughout the organization. Our members decide the course of our organization and we keep them informed at all times.

### D. Law, mission, policies

I will not break the law or go against non-profit regulations in any aspect of my role as a board member.

I will support the mission of VIP and consider myself its guardian.

## III. Conflicts of interest

I will always strive to act in the best interests of the VIP.

I will declare any conflict of interest or any circumstance that might be viewed by others as a conflict of interest, as soon as it arises.

If I am uncertain whether or not a conflict exists I will consult with the VIP membership and school leadership and abide by their decision.

As a board member, I shall not use my relation to this VIP for financial, professional, business, employment, personal and/or political gain.

When a conflict of interest is declared, I shall not use my personal influence or position to affect the outcome of the vote.

The minutes of the meeting shall reflect that a conflict of interest was declared.

#### **IV. Person to person**

I will not break the law, go against non-profit regulations or act in disregard of Uplift's organizational policies in my relationships with members, school staff, volunteers, or anyone I come into contact with in my role as a VIP member.

I will strive to establish respectful, collegial and courteous relationships with all I come into contact with in my role as a VIP member.

I will agree to disagree when necessary without anger or rancor. I will respect the vote of the body.

I will take to my work an attitude of open-mindedness and a willingness to be trained for it and to bring to it interest and attention.

#### **V. Protecting the organization's reputation**

I will not speak on behalf of VIP to the media or in a public forum without the prior knowledge and approval of Uplift's school leadership and Communication and Marketing Department.

When speaking as a private citizen I will strive to uphold the reputation of the VIP and those who work in it.

I will not share working copies of documents or other organizational information until those materials have been finalized, approved, and are available for release to the general public.

When speaking or acting as a member of this VIP, I will conduct myself in a manner which does not reflect poorly upon myself and the Uplift school I represent.

#### **VI. Personal Gain**

I will not personally gain materially or financially from my role as member, nor will I permit others to do so as a result of my actions or negligence.

I will document expenses and seek reimbursement according to procedure.

I will use VIP resources responsibly, when authorized, in accordance with procedure.

I will honor the authority of the VIP leaders and respect his or her role as meeting leader.

I will engage in debate and voting in meetings according to Robert's Rules of Order, maintaining a respectful attitude toward the opinions of others while making my voice heard.

I will accept a majority vote on an issue as decisive and final.

I will participate in induction, training and development activities for VIP members.



Project Appleseed  
the national campaign for public school improvement

# Uplift Education Parental Involvement Pledge™

**AS A PARENT, GRANDPARENT OR CARING ADULT**, I hereby give my pledge of commitment to help our community's children achieve a truly independent future. My declaration of responsibility and commitment to my public schools is stated in these five self-evident truths as spoken by President Woodrow Wilson:

- As an American, I am an owner of the public-school system;
- That as an owner, I bear a responsibility to participate in the system
- That accountability for my public schools, their safety, and its employees and its funding rests with me and the rest of the system's owners;
- That my child's future depends on the improvement of public education;  
And that this improvement depends on my participation;



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**THEREFORE, AS A PARENT, GRANDPARENT OR CARING ADULT**, I take personal responsibility for my child's safety and education and the safety and education of children in this community.

- I pledge to volunteer a minimum of five hours of my time to my public schools each semester.
- I pledge to spend a minimum of fifteen minutes each school night reading with my child or we will work together on homework and enrichment activities.
- 

**Step 1: This is My Commitment to \_\_\_\_\_ and our public schools.**

Student Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent, Grandparent or Caring Adult

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent, Grandparent or Caring Adult

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