



The Seattle Public Library

Volunteer Services Program

## **Homework Helper, 2025-2026 School Year**

### **Volunteer Service Description**

#### **Summary**

The Seattle Public Library provides homework help and learning activities for K-12 students throughout the school year until June 11, 2026. Volunteers support students with their homework assignments and with developing literacy, mathematics and study skills.

The Homework Help Program supports diverse communities in Seattle. Volunteers and Library staff support students to advance racial equity and close the education opportunity gap for students. Volunteers provide a supportive learning environment where students and their families feel welcome.

Homework Help is available for students in grades K-12. However, the program primarily serves elementary and middle school students. Most of the students attend Seattle's public schools and speak a language other than English at home. Volunteers must be comfortable tutoring children and teens.

We request a volunteer commitment for the entire school year (or at least six months).

#### **Responsibilities**

1. Actively listen as students read their homework assignments and describe school projects to you. Ask open-ended questions to engage students in a discussion to support their understanding of an assignment and how to get started. Check back with students who are working on assignments and respond to their questions.
2. Assist elementary school students with reading comprehension and learning vocabulary. Take turns reading aloud and discuss stories. Offer to play literacy and math games with younger students.
3. Explain math concepts and approaches for solving math problems. Ask students to explain their completed math homework assignments to you and what they learned.
4. Help students develop academic skills, including how to organize and prioritize homework, proofread and check their work, take notes while reading textbooks, use study guides and workbooks, etc.
5. Enable students to understand their essay assignments by reading guidelines together and discussing essay formats. Ask open-ended questions to help students decide what they would like to write about. Ask students to read their essays to you. Provide constructive feedback.
6. Assist high school students with writing college application essays in order to tell their personal stories. Refer students to librarians to learn about resources for researching college, university and vocational programs.
7. Share your knowledge of a subject, such as English, history, social studies and STEM. Engage students in conversations about their educational and career interests.
8. Refer students who request help with conducting research and finding reference materials to staff. Staff are happy to recommend materials and show students how to use the Library's catalog, databases and reliable websites.
9. Inform middle and high school students about the Library's free online tutoring service (Tutor.com). Refer students to Library staff for assistance with accessing Tutor.com.

10. Support students' social and emotional learning (SEL) skills and a growth mindset. SEL will be discussed in the volunteer orientation. You can learn more at: <https://casel.org/fundamentals-of-sel/what-is-the-casel-framework/>.
11. Communicate regularly with your Homework Help volunteer liaison regarding questions, absences, suggestions and to request supplies.
12. Inform the volunteer liaison of absences at least two weeks in advance so that a substitute can be arranged. When you must cancel a Homework Help shift, request coverage for your shift by sending an email to the branch's Homework Help volunteer email list.
13. Abide by The Seattle Public Library's confidentiality policy and support for intellectual freedom.

## **Qualifications**

### *Required qualifications:*

- Must be at least 18 years old.
- Must be a high school graduate or have a GED diploma.
- Empathy, a friendly demeanor and communication skills, especially active listening.
- Considerable patience, flexibility, creativity and an ability to use a variety of methods to support students' learning and a growth mindset.
- A personal commitment to cultural humility when interacting with students, family members, volunteers and staff. Cultural humility is a lifelong process of self-awareness and reflection whereby the individual not only learns about another person's culture and values, but understands their own cultural identity, values, assumptions and biases.
- Ability to work as part of a team with other Homework Helpers and Library staff.

### *Desired qualifications:*

- Experience with youth as a family member, volunteer, tutor, mentor or teacher.
- Ability to support students with reading comprehension and writing in English.
- Ability to explain and demonstrate math concepts to elementary and middle school students.
- Knowledge of high school mathematics (algebra, geometry, trigonometry and calculus) is helpful but not necessary.
- Proficient in using email, Word and the internet. Volunteers are expected to read email from Library staff and volunteers on a regular basis and use the Better Impact portal for volunteers.

After their interview, volunteer candidates will be asked to provide consent for a nationwide criminal background check. The Library is unable to place volunteers who have assault, abuse, theft or other serious criminal convictions.

Volunteer candidates must be a citizen or a legal permanent resident of the United States for the criminal background check. We are unable to conduct background checks on people who have student, visitor or temporary worker visas.

## **Locations and Time Commitment**

Homework Helpers tutor K-12 students once a week when Seattle's public schools are in session. Those volunteers who are unable to provide a weekly commitment can be scheduled as substitute Homework Helpers at least twice a month. Homework Help volunteer shifts are offered at the following locations.

**Broadview Branch**, 12755 Greenwood Ave. N.

Tuesday, 4:00 p.m. until 5:30 p.m.

Tuesday, 5:30 p.m. until 7:00 p.m.

Wednesday, 3:00 p.m. until 5:00 p.m.

**Columbia Branch**, 4721 Rainier Avenue S.

Tuesday, 4:00 p.m. until 5:30 p.m.

Tuesday, 5:30 p.m. until 7:00 p.m.

Wednesday, 6:00 p.m. until 7:30 p.m.

**Douglass-Truth Branch**, 2300 East Yesler Way

Tuesday, 4:30 p.m. until 6:30 p.m.

Thursday, 4:30 p.m. until 6:30 p.m.

**High Point Branch**, 3411 S.W. Raymond St.

Monday, 4:00 p.m. until 5:45 p.m.

Tuesday, 4:00 p.m. until 5:45 p.m.

Wednesday, 4:00 p.m. until 6:00 p.m.

Wednesday, 6:00 p.m. until 7:30 p.m.

**Lake City Branch**, 12501 28<sup>th</sup> Avenue N.E.

Tuesday, 4:30 p.m. until 6:00 p.m.

Tuesday, 6:00 p.m. until 7:30 p.m.

Wednesday, 4:30 p.m. until 6:00 p.m.

Wednesday, 6:00 p.m. until 7:30 p.m.

Thursday, 4:30 p.m. until 6:00 p.m.

Thursday, 6:00 p.m. until 7:30 p.m.

**NewHolly Branch**, 7058 32<sup>nd</sup> Avenue S.

Thursday, 5:30 p.m. until 7:00 p.m.

**Northgate Branch**, 10548 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue N.E.

Monday, 3:30 p.m. until 5:30 p.m.

Tuesday, 3:30 p.m. until 5:30 p.m.

Tuesday, 5:30 p.m. until 7:30 p.m.

Wednesday, 3:30 p.m. until 5:30 p.m.

Wednesday, 5:30 p.m. until 7:30 p.m.

**Rainier Beach Branch**, 9125 Rainier Avenue S.

Monday, 4:00 p.m. until 5:45 p.m.

Wednesday, 4:30 p.m. until 6:00 p.m.

Wednesday, 6:00 p.m. until 7:30 p.m.

**South Park Branch**, 8604 8<sup>th</sup> Ave. S.

Wednesday, 3:30 p.m. until 5:30 p.m.

### **Application and Orientation Process**

The Volunteer Services Coordinator will read applications, interview volunteer applicants who meet the Homework Helper qualifications, and conduct nationwide criminal background checks. New volunteers will be invited to a Homework Help volunteer orientation with the Program Managers and then referred to a librarian for a branch welcome meeting.

### **Benefits to the Volunteer**

- Interaction with children and teens from diverse cultural backgrounds.
- Opportunities to make a difference in the lives of youth and support their learning.

### **For More Information**

Please contact our Volunteer Services Coordinator at [volunteer@spl.org](mailto:volunteer@spl.org) to request information about volunteer openings and an application.

**Sponsor:** Youth and Family Learning Services Managers

Updated: 6/12/2025