

JMS PTA Writing Lab Coordinator 2017-18 Report

The Writing Lab is used by all students at JMS . The PTA Writing Lab Coordinator works directly with Mrs. Melissa Kelly, the JMS writing clinician, who provides the opportunity for volunteers to come in and conference with students on their writing projects. These conferences are an integral part of the writing program/process at JMS. It's important that volunteers are recruited to come in when teachers request help. The teachers and students really appreciate the effort. Mrs. Kelly runs the lab, coordinates the classes, trains the volunteers, and directs/supervises the volunteers when they are in the school building. The PTA Writing Lab Coordinator supports her in reaching out to all the volunteers who've signed up, letting them know when they are needed, and organizing that sign-up process. The coordinator works via EM with the volunteers to make sure all slots are filled. The coordinator also sends e-blasts to volunteers with any necessary information on security clearances or procedures on an as needed basis.

- WHEN: This volunteer does not need to come to the school during school hours and volunteer in the Writing Lab as they are coordinating those who do come in. He/she is, of course, welcome to do both if interested and/or able. The time commitment is the entire school year. However, it is intermittent as it is based on teachers' requests for volunteers determined by their writing assignments. On average, this is about once per month October to May. In Sept/Oct, this volunteer will update the e-blast list in the gmail account. Mrs. Kelly has a sign up form during sixth grade & new student orientation and during Open House to reach and add new volunteers for the upcoming year.
- HOW: **It is essential that this volunteer have regular, consistent access to EM and a computer as this position is basically fulfilled via EM.** All is done via EM and a spreadsheet accessed via gmail. For this position, a gmail account has been created with the spreadsheet and shared link that is sent to volunteers so they can access the sign up sheet. The EM list and current EMs of volunteers is also maintained in this gmail account.

This volunteer must be able to:

- have access to EM & a computer for the Google sign-up spreadsheet
- be on EM daily to see and respond to requests from Mrs. Kelly in a timely manner. **IMPORTANT NOTE:** The volunteer WILL NOT be getting an EM request every day. Again, on average, it's about once per month but Mrs. Kelly cannot give a regular schedule like first of the month every month, e.g. The assignments vary and the teachers' needs vary, so the volunteer has to be on the lookout for when the volunteers are needed. Typically, these requests are sent roughly one to two weeks before the first volunteer is needed. Sometimes, however, the turn around time for getting volunteers is less than one week. Mrs. Kelly does her best to work with the teachers to collect requests and get them out to ensure that there is enough time to give volunteers adequate notice.

- take Mrs. Kelly's requests and create a sign-up sheet (a spreadsheet in Google docs) for the volunteers to access. If only one or two teachers is requesting volunteers, this might take about 5-10 minutes. If it's a whole month's worth of volunteer slots at one time (multiple teachers), it might take about 30-45 minutes using the current template. Often, the requests are clumped together which means that, typically, this volunteer is setting up a sign up sheet about once per month.
- send an EM notification to the volunteer list that teachers have requested help. A gmail account for this committee with the sign up sheet and list of volunteers is created/updated each school year to use for these e-blasts.
- check EM after an e-blast has been sent to make sure volunteers are filling the slots and answer or forward to Mrs. Kelly any questions they may have. This is typically about 1 to 5 minutes per day after an e-blast has gone out. Most volunteers remain from prior years, so they know the drill and just sign up and have no questions.
- nudge volunteers (via an e-blast) to sign up and fill the slots. Sometimes, this step is necessary daily. Sometimes, once per week. In either case, it's only necessary during periods when a sign-up sheet is active with teacher requests. Again, it's not every day throughout the school year.
- at the beginning of each school year, update the e-blast list in the gmail account with information from Mrs. Kelly's sign up sheets

Ideally, this volunteer will attend the training session in September at the school. If they can't make it in during the school day for this meeting, they can coordinate otherwise with Mrs. Kelly.

To summarize, the position's responsibilities are fulfilled via EM and a google spreadsheet. When the volunteers are actively needed, it might involve a daily EM to remind volunteers of slots that are still open. On many days, there is nothing to do at all because slots are filled or the Writing Lab does not need any volunteers at that time. On average, once per month, it will require 30-60 minutes to set up the sign-up sheet and send it out to everyone. During the busiest weeks, it might be 5-10 minutes per day for that week.