



Working in the Classroom

It is important for the RE-SEED volunteers and partner teachers to understand their roles in the classroom. The use of a contract or memorandum of understanding is strongly encouraged, and can be helpful in establishing and sustaining a strong teacher-volunteer partnership. A sample MOU will be provided, but the following are some general rules of thumb for RE-SEED volunteers and teachers:

- The teacher is always in charge of the classroom. As your relationship with the teacher develops, you will find your participation growing. Do not try to rush the process, as teachers have difficult and often conflicting classroom goals. As you begin to understand the teacher you will find ways to help the teacher reach these goals and keep a positive, nurturing classroom environment.
- The teacher must never leave the volunteer in charge of a class. This is Massachusetts law, and if the teacher must leave the classroom for any reason, a teacher in a nearby room or the principal must be notified and brought in to the room.
- The teacher is in charge of all discipline, first aid and medication of any kind. Refer all cases of discipline, sickness or accident immediately to the teacher or other school staff member.
- Avoid physical contact with students: there is always the possibility of misinterpretation and in any event most school districts have strict rules against any physical contact between students and adults.
- Outside meetings with your students are not permitted. Please confine your relationship with your students to the school, or school sanctioned events such as field trips and after-school programs and on-site tutoring. We suggest that every meeting with your students be held within view of another adult.
- Please refrain from giving presents to students. Favoritism, allergies, appropriateness, safety; all could become issues despite your best intentions.
- Please respect the confidentiality of all information, files, papers, records and activities related to students and others at the school.
- To ensure the students and teachers right to confidentiality, please do not take pictures in the school or send articles or grant interviews to newspapers and magazines regarding your services in the school without clearance from the teacher, school, and RE-SEED program staff.
- Schools and districts may request to file a CORI/SORI form on your behalf – to process criminal background checks. Depending on your site, this may or may not be necessary.
- Not all placements work out. If the volunteer or teacher feels at any point that the relationship is not effective, please contact Daniel Sullivan at the Center for STEM Education to discuss alternative options (da.sullivan@neu.edu).