

Partnership Handbook

Connecting United Methodists with Schools in Mutual Partnership

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Special Thanks to our One + One Dallas partners at First UMC Dallas, TX



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MISSIOLOGY¹

Mission

The cornerstone for mission in The United Methodist Church stands steady on our mission statement:

The mission of the Church is to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. We go about accomplishing our mission by proclaiming the good news of God's grace and by exemplifying Jesus' command to love God and neighbor, thus seeking the fulfillment of God's reign and realm in the world.²

Mission is our "committed participation, at God's invitation and command, in God's own mission in the world through history."³

One + One

One + One began as the conference-wide, 2015 vision of Bishop Michael McKee and the Center for Missional Outreach. This initiative focuses on one-on-one mentoring through church-school partnerships.

One + One exists as one way to accept God's invitation to join God's mission in loving God and neighbor.

Who We Are

As United Methodists, we acknowledge that children are full human beings in their own right. We believe children have a right to education, and parents and governments have an obligation to provide them with the access to an adequate education. (Social Principles, ¶ 162C)

Following the legacy of our founder, John Wesley, who "was convinced education could change the woes of his day" and preached on the value of children and their education; we Methodists intentionally seek to ensure every child, from every place, in every circumstance, remains a consistent recipient of quality and equitable education. As justice seekers and action takers, we fortify efforts that contribute to the dismantling of inequitable and unjust policies in education that disproportionately impact children in poverty and children of color. Educational equity is core to who we are as United Methodists, therefore, as One + One mentors and volunteers, we seek to "do justice, love mercy and walk humbly with our God" **and with** the children and families in our communities that suffer from unjust practices and policies.

"I preached on the education of children wherein we are extremely wanting. Many were deeply convinced of this. I hope that they will to stifle that conviction" (Wesley, p. 270, Volume 3)

¹ Missiology is the study of mission. It includes biblical, theological, historical, contemporary and practical reflection and research. - Christopher J. H. Wright

² ¶ 120 and 121

³ Christopher J.H. Wright, *Mission as a Matrix for Hermeneutics and Biblical Theology* in *Out of Egypt: Craig Bartholomew*, Paternoster Press 2004, 104.

Who We Want to Be

One + One exists to place United Methodists in one-on-one relationships with children, their families and schools in their community. We desire relationships formed by listening, mutuality and collaborative exchange with our neighbors.

Through these relationships and because of our theological heritage of mercy and justice, the work of One + One exists to:

- 1) Provide educational inequity awareness
 - Only 65 percent of 4-year-olds from the lowest income backgrounds attend preschool (with many attending low-quality programs), compared with 90 percent from the highest-income backgrounds. The best-performing school systems make such access universal and view it as critical to national success.⁴
 - The higher minority population a school district has, the lower their gifted and talented identified population tends to be. This trend exists regardless of size, economic disadvantage, and magnet status. Despite their brilliance, our minority students, on average across Texas, are not being identified as gifted and talented and given the same advantages at the same rate that our white students are.⁵
 - Ensuring racial, social and educational equity for all students is critical to the district's [Dallas Independent School District] mission to educate all students for success. Unquestionably, at times in our district's 100-plus-year history, we have fallen short of this commitment. In those instances, some groups of students did not receive every available resource to help them succeed academically. This inequity created unfair distribution of financial, educational and material resources that has frankly limited the advancement of generations of students.⁶
- 2) Provide relational tools for deeper impact—Includes but not limited to:
 - Cultural Intelligence (CI)/Competency Training
 - Cultural Intelligence can be understood as “the capability to relate and work effectively across cultures.” It is an inner journey, never ending and always moving toward others in love.
 - CI training focuses on how to develop and live into a contextualized commitment of your missional call to the targeted population of your partner school.
 - This training includes but is not limited to, justice awareness/training in the areas of race, gender and class
 - Asset-Based Community Development
 - As you grow in your One + One partner relationships with students and your partner school, we believe God opens avenues for systemic change through our partnered

⁴ <https://www2.ed.gov/about/bdscomm/list/eec/equity-excellence-commission-report.pdf>

⁵

https://public.tableau.com/profile/the.commit.partnership#!/vizhome/GiftedTalentedvs_RaceEthnicitybyDistrict/Dashboard1

⁶ <https://www.dallasisd.org/Domain/19668>

gifts. Working with our partner schools assists us in our sanctifying journey as we seek to uncover often undervalued gifts, talents, dreams, desires and connections to build relationship-based change efforts from the inside of communities.

- 'Ministry With' Theology
 - As missionaries joining in the ongoing mission of God, we enter into relationships with schools and children with a humble heart and a posture of listening and learning. As guests in their school sanctuary, we come to serve and be served. In a relationship of mutuality, 'ministry with' reminds us as volunteers, we have gifts and influence to give and that our partner schools and children we are *with* have gifts and influence to give.
- 3) Provide advocacy training for equitable educational policy for every child through informed relationship.
 - In the spirit of our 18th century Wesleyan heritage, of advocating for adequate education of the materially poor, prophetically speaking out against the enslaving of black people of African descent and an unjust criminal justice system, we Methodists continue that legacy in lifting our voices for those who are caught in the systemic injustices of the educational system.
 - One + One advocacy training includes: 1) discerning legislation to pray about and support as it relates to education 2) Practical steps for raising our voices in support of legislation shaped for the flourishing of *all* students 3) cohort support for educational advocacy champions. For more information about how to access these NTC resources, contact **Jurrita Williams Louie at jwlouie@ntcumc.org**

What Should You Consider?

The first step in knowing how your school partnership will be effective is to check the history of your faith community. If your faith community had a partnership in the past, what did the congregation do as part of their partnership? Purchasing school supplies, encouraging teachers and/or providing a class holiday party may have been part of the vision some years ago or even today. While this is certainly a positive effort, this is not the level of commitment that will raise morale, improve grades, or involve and inspire volunteers. In this manual, we'll explore a model or "best practice" for greater involvement and deeper impact. Before your organization moves forward with the plan for a high impact partnership, consider the following:

- Do we have a person with a passion for education and kids who will lead and coordinate the partnership?
- Do we have leaders who are committed to this project?
- Do we have volunteers who are seeking a project?
- How many volunteers can we gather?
- How much time can we commit?
- Are we willing to provide some training?
- What financial resources can we commit?

PARTNERING WITH A SCHOOL: FIRST STEPS

While each of the steps will probably need to occur during the planning of your program, the order may differ. Throughout the process, remember to be sensitive to the needs of your school, and always listen carefully and respond respectfully.

- **First:** Form a leadership team and work through the questions listed above.
- **Second:** Identify what school(s) your church may begin a partnership with. Base this discernment on listening to your community, proximity to your church/or volunteer base, the school's needs based on current student academic performance and demographic data, etc.
- **Third:** Meet with the principal or community liaison to build rapport, assess their willingness to partner, and listen to the needs of the school, etc.

Demographic

- Is the school in need of help?
- What percentage of the students need mentoring and literacy help?

Academic

- Will your volunteers be able to help address academic needs?

Leadership Structure

- Will the school principal facilitate your work, and help open doors?

The associate director is available to help your church choose a school and complete a formal partnership process. Work will be done with school district administration and your volunteers to organize and host a partnership ceremony. (See Appendix G).

Train your volunteers (See Appendix F)

- The CMO has developed resources and offers training to assist your church in training volunteers.

GETTING STARTED: PLANNING THE FIRST SEMESTER OF SERVICE

Many schools have vast needs, and no one church could adequately fill all of those needs in its first year of service. In order to be sensitive to the leadership of the school, it is better to begin with projects that allow your volunteers to get to know the school and to show their willingness to listen and to serve. A list of possible service opportunities is included (See Appendix A). However, as mentioned above, remember to ask how you can help. Consider your volunteer capacity and your school's needs to find the best starting point.

When your leadership team and the school's administrators have agreed upon the best service opportunities, you can then set goals for your first semester of involvement and write a Letter of Commitment that outlines the activities that you'll complete. Based on this Letter, develop an action plan with a calendar of events, activities and programs.

Remember not to overextend your volunteers or financial resources. Write an action plan that is well within your capacity. Let the principal and or school contact review and approve your plan of action.

GETTING STARTED: CLASSROOM PARTNERSHIP

We begin with a basic model of dividing into teams we call Congregational Communities.

- These teams or Congregational Communities (CC) can include: Sunday school classes, mission/service groups, women's/men's groups, etc.

It is important to identify teams of people that already exist and need to engage in some form of outreach or ongoing service. Begin and sustain conversation with your congregation through mission/service groups, women's groups, and other nonprofit organizations connected to your congregation. Through this network, you may discover how your church can respond to the needs of the community. Assess the culture of your church as you begin or deepen your partnership. Questions you may ask as you begin or deepen your partnership: What assets do you see in your congregation that may contribute to this volunteer base? What barriers have you encountered in the attempt to begin or deepen your partnership? What benefits do you see by reaching out in this way? Have you found new ways of serving others in your community? Has recruiting others for your school partnership gotten started, increased or flatlined?

Of central importance to school partnership is, like Nehemiah, assigning different groups with affinity to partner for a project, a classroom and/or a teacher.

Assign a team a teacher and a classroom. Offer teachers the following:

Tutoring: math and reading tutors available each week

Parties: two parties (per semester) for the kids

Reading: a volunteer to read to the students once a week

Administrative Help: two hours per week of administrative help, i.e., copying, filing, etc.

Remember that in order for your church to truly make a difference, you must gain the trust of your school—particularly the teachers. Keep in mind that you are assisting professionals in their place of work, and honor that professionalism with respect and by completing the tasks you set for your group.

WHICH CLASSROOMS TO PARTNER WITH

Several factors will affect the number of classrooms your group can partner with:

Number of volunteers you have

Number of volunteer groups you have

Number of teachers who would like volunteer help. (It's a good idea to encourage goodwill by making participation optional. Your principal will make this decision.)

Number of classrooms that have a great need for help

Chances are good that you will not be able to partner with every classroom in the school at first. You can set this as a goal to work toward. In most cases, it's a good idea to start with youngest classes for the following reasons:

Most adults find it easier to relate to younger children.

Younger children are often more accepting of a stranger's help.

Because adults find it easier to relate, and children are more accepting of help, your volunteers are more likely to have good experiences, stay involved and recruit others.

REMEMBER that even though you may not be able to partner with older classes, you can still serve the students by consulting with the principal about needs of each class.

GETTING STARTED: ENGAGING VOLUNTEERS

Show Them the Need: Your church should decide upon the best timetable for establishing relationships with the partnering school and motivating your volunteer base. One option is motivating volunteers with short-term activities before diving into some more serious time commitments. Whether you decide to plan these activities at the beginning of your partnership or later in the process, you'll find that new volunteers are engaged at entry-level activities, such as the following examples which allow potential volunteers to see needs of the school, without first making a long-term commitment:

School Supply Drive: Give your volunteer base a list of specific items needed at the school. Encourage competition between church ministries for teams or a goal to be met. Further engage volunteers by sending several volunteers to deliver the supplies.

Spring Cleanup: Divide into groups according to tasks, and cleanup and repair your school in a single day. If possible, invite teachers and students to join you. Remember to be respectful, and don't make teacher or student involvement mandatory.

Summer Reading Book Collection: For many schools, this may be a specific need mentioned by teachers. Find out what level books are needed by your teachers/students. Again, be specific when asking your volunteer base to collect items and give them a goal.

Keep Involvement Simple: Some potential volunteers may be reluctant to join you for any number of simple reasons that can be easily overcome through communication.

Help people understand their roles!

Some people may feel ill-equipped, or not realize what a difference their involvement can make. Provide a simple written job description that team leaders can review with new volunteers.

Help people understand time commitments!

As mentioned above, there are many different roles for volunteers to play when your church has chosen to partner with a school. Let your volunteer base know that there are positions that require different amounts of time—they can be involved, whether they have one hour a month, one hour a week, or one weekend a year.

Help people get to the school!

Many people aren't comfortable venturing into parts of the city where they are not familiar. This is one reason to carefully consider choosing a school close to your church that is relatively easy to access on major roads. Some volunteers can carpool, or seasoned volunteers can provide rides to new volunteers.

Continuing to Grow Your Volunteer Base: Broad "recruiting" announcements over time net a low point of interest. The best way to initially involve new volunteers is to have your committed volunteers invite a friend and potential volunteer to join them on a trip to the school. **While recruiting announcements may have little success, a friend inviting a friend works just**

about every time. By giving volunteers an easy way to begin their involvement (See "Show Them the Need" above), and by reporting back to them (e.g., photos, emails, newsletter) regarding the positive impact of their efforts, you'll encourage your current volunteer base and inspire new volunteers to join the cause.

GETTING STARTED: MOBILIZING VOLUNTEERS

The following organizational strategy has been an effective model for school partnerships. In this model, the leadership team designates one coordinator. This coordinator serves as the primary liaison between the school and your church. The coordinator designates the teams and assigns each of these a classroom. Each team has a leader who coordinates service for that classroom and mobilizes the volunteers in the team.

Coordinator

- Works with leadership team to outline service goals.

- Assigns classrooms to teams.

- Communicates service goals to team leaders.

- Works with team leaders to organize introductory meeting so that teachers and staff can begin to get to know the volunteers.

- Organizes and oversees teams in accomplishing tasks that have been outlined by the leadership team.

- Communicates with the administration at the school, the leadership team at your church, and team leaders.

Team Leaders

- Identify ways their team members can serve at the school. (See appendix A)

- Train team members.

- Ensure that team members submit appropriate forms* for volunteer eligibility.

- Establish a relationship with her/his partner teacher and touch base with the teacher at least twice a month.

- Gather ideas about how to support the teacher: Listen!

Team Members

- Provide the agreed-upon services which may include:

 - Reading to the class.

 - One on one.

 - Organizing class parties.

 - Providing supplies for parties or other activities.

 - Providing a ministry to help the teacher.

As in most jobs, volunteers will be most effective and excited about their positions when you empower them to be creative and to make decisions on their own. While it may be necessary to hold the reins during the first semester of the project, encourage independence as your volunteers learn the ropes. By encouraging creativity among your teams and coordinators, your volunteers will grow to develop real relationships with teachers and students – and they'll also be more likely to become long-term volunteers.

CONTINUING TO SERVE: IMPACTING SCORES

After your church establishes clear lines of communication and is effectively serving your partner school, you may consider stepping up your involvement in order to help impact student

scores. While many services can affect scores, there are two proven methods for significant impact:

Involve parents. It is a fact that parental involvement positively impacts scores.

Provide a catered family dinner meeting at the beginning of the school year for Meet the Teacher Night.

Assist the school with parent communication by providing volunteers to make phone calls or distribute fliers about upcoming events or meetings.

Provide health workshops or fairs at the school to provide an opportunity for parents to visit the school.

Provide health or dental care to help gain the trust and interest of parents.

Ask teachers and administrators how they could reach out to parents if they had more time and resources.

Provide tutoring. One-on-one tutoring helps most students make great strides.

Team leaders should ask teachers for a list of students capable of making great strides with additional assistance.

Provide tutor training for volunteers, or team with local literacy organization.*

Organizations for partnership:

- [Pastors for Texas Children -- pastorsfortexaschildren.com/](http://pastorsfortexaschildren.com/)
- [Reading Partners - readingpartners.org](http://readingpartners.org)
- [Kid's Hope - kidshopeusa.org](http://kidshopeusa.org)
- [Communities in Schools - cisnt.org](http://cisnt.org)
- [Education Opens Doors - educationopensdoors.org](http://educationopensdoors.org)

*The CMO also provides tutor training. Please contact Jurrita Williams Louie, associate director of the CMO at jwlouie@ntcumc.org to set up trainings for your volunteers.

CONTINUING TO SERVE: TIPS FOR ONGOING SUCCESS

Set realistic boundaries on your time commitments and share them with the principal, teacher, and students.

Develop an understanding and appreciation of the school culture.

Remember that you're there to offer assistance, not to run the school.

Ask questions whenever you're unclear about school policies and procedures.

Train volunteers to sign in at the school office each time you arrive at the school, and before entering classrooms or school facilities.

Do not donate or bring items to school without checking with teachers/administrators first.

Do not attempt to convert students regarding any religious doctrine, political ideology, or philosophy.*

*When we are in relationship with children, as people of faith, we trust God is using our consistent presence with them to open up meaningful conversation. It is imperative that we interrogate our assumptions that the children we partner with may have no relationship with God through Christ. We depend on God to show us how we can reveal Christ in creative

ways as we partner through One + One. As we are led by the Holy Spirit, we pray that if they have not already opened their hearts to Christ and his church that we will be used as part of their journey to know God. (See Appendix F: Practical Suggestions: The Do's and the Don'ts)

CONTINUING TO SERVE: HIGH-IMPACT OPPORTUNITIES

The more time you spend around the school, needs other than directly helping teachers and students will become apparent. Often, such needs appeal to individual volunteers who are more project-oriented. Or, it could be an opportunity to mentor students in a different way after school, like starting a Boy Scout troop. Here are a few examples of the needs we have seen through other teams or by people with a passion to start something:

- School library: A team of volunteers worked with the school library to develop a book giveaway to build students' book collections.
- Refurbished the teachers' lounge
- Exterior beautification
- Boy Scout troop
- Health fairs
- Dental care

CONTINUING TO SERVE: THE COST

You may be surprised: It does not take a lot of money to partner with a school. It takes having a big heart.

Partnering with a school really does not call for any upfront investment. Needs arise that the school or district cannot pay for, such as a new coffee machine, jackets for winter temperatures, underwear and socks, or special shampoo needed to treat heads of hair infested with lice. Needs such as these are met through individuals and groups in the form of little acts of kindness.

APPENDIX A: WHO CAN SERVE AND HOW

Just about anyone can serve! One of the most exciting aspects of school partnership is the great variety of opportunities that can be offered to your volunteer base.

Your church as a whole can work to provide something, such as assistance with the purchase or funding of copy machines, which usually factor in as a large percentage of school budgets.

Assign each department or other group from your church to a classroom and provide:

- Administrative help to the teacher on a weekly basis
- One or two parties for the children, per semester
- A guest reader every week
- On-on-one tutoring on a weekly schedule

Consider these opportunities, according to time investment:

Multiple Days Per Week

- Role of coordinator
- Role of team leader

One Day Per Week

- One-on-one tutoring
- Mentoring
- Administrative help
- Help with sports teams or extracurricular activities

One Day Per Semester

- Physically clean the school building and grounds
- Provide chaperones for events and field trips
- Provide lunch or breakfast for teachers at the start of each semester
- Assist with honor roll parties
- Assist with holiday parties
- Assist with back-to-school events honoring teachers
- Provide medical education
- Provide training (e.g., Spanish language)
- Act as test proctor

Absentee Volunteer

- Provide food and clothing for those below the poverty line
- Supply and restock school supplies
- Supply books for classroom and school libraries
- Supply classroom dictionaries
- Provide uniforms
- Buy Christmas gifts for kids *must ask school for this can be done

Opportunities, According to Skill or Interest

- Tutor: special skills in specific subject area

- Language: trained teachers
- Medical: provide education to students or aid to families
- Dentist
- Dental hygienist
- Event Planning: Organize parties for students and/or teachers, or PTO
- Organizational: coordinator or team leader
- Relationships: mentor
- Landscaping and Handy-Man/Woman: Provide leadership on cleanup days
- Coaching
- Scoutmaster
- Carpentry
- Painting
- Crafts
- Prepping kids' game

APPENDIX B: REBUILDING THE LIBRARY

Traditionally, school libraries are understaffed with very few books on their shelves. School libraries often are the only library the student ever sees. Rarely does a student visit or use the city public library, so the school collection serves as a desperate need. Churches can lend a hand in so many ways to enhance reading and motivate children to read.

1. Donate books, new and/or used. Assign Sunday school classes to collect books annually.
2. Process books that are given to the library: stamp, catalogue, code with advanced reader, barcode, laminate book jackets, etc.
3. Read to children.
4. Shelve returned books.
5. Check out books for students.
6. Repair books.
7. Sign up preschoolers under the age of five for Imagination Library.
8. Create bookmarks for the children.
9. Organize student Library Assistants Club.
10. Give a new book to each child at Christmas.

APPENDIX C: REFURBISHING THE EMPLOYEES' LOUNGE

This is the true hub of the school! If the teachers/employees are able to meet, eat, rest, and take care of personal business in a pleasant, comfortable atmosphere, then they will be more relaxed and productive in the classroom. This should be the most inviting area of the school. Yet, it is often run down and neglected by the school district.

Here are some practical suggestions for school partners that could make a huge difference for our teachers:

1. Fresh paint - cheery, yet subdued colors.
2. Clean, manageable work surface for food preparation for lunch and snacks.
3. Large clean eating area with tables and comfortable chairs.
4. Working microwave, refrigerator, and coffee pots.
5. Attractive waste containers—several needed.
6. Attractive pictures/wall hangings—perhaps a local artist would contribute.
7. Furniture that is comfortable and clean, such as a small sofa and upholstered chairs.
8. A secluded area, walled off with cubicle dividers, where personnel can rest if feeling bad, or to make personal phone calls.
9. A small area rug to section off this space that adds a homey feel.
10. Small decorative swags or curtains—check fire codes for this.
11. Decorative plants, kitchen utensils, mugs, paper goods, towels, soap, etc.
12. Soft drink and snack machines that carry items teachers actually want and eat. (Conduct survey to determine this.) Machines can be a moneymaker for teachers' parties.
13. Fresh drinking water—can be donated from a water supply company.
14. Adequate supply of ice. Most refrigerators do not provide enough for entire personnel, so additional ice is needed.
15. Quick and easy access to mailboxes that are labeled with names on each one

APPENDIX D: REFURBISHING THE EMPLOYEES' BATHROOM

This area, which is often adjacent to the Employee Lounge, is used only by school personnel and may be neglected with non-working sink faucets, no hot water, broken towel racks, etc.

1. Fresh paint
2. Sinks with working faucets and hot and cold water
3. Toilet seat that is attached and clean
4. Hand towel dispensers
5. Toilet paper dispensers
6. Hand sanitizer and soap
7. Mirror
8. Basic feminine hygiene needs
9. Trash container

APPENDIX E: EXTERIOR BEAUTIFICATION

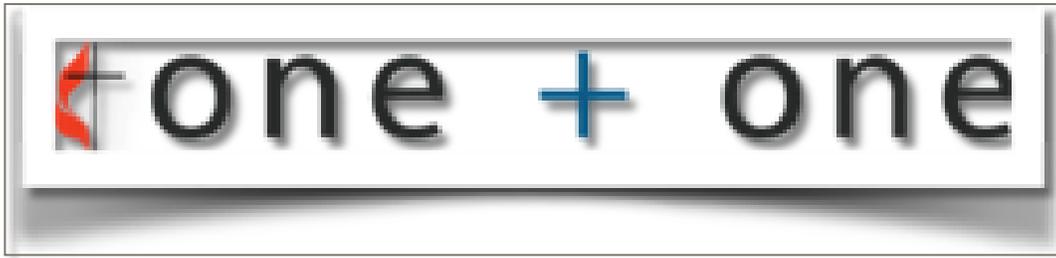
Schools in low-income neighborhoods are often neglected, devoid of flowers or trimmed landscape, shade trees, grass, or seasonal color. The exterior of the local school could provide beauty in an otherwise drab atmosphere for students. With planning and the planting of perennials and low-maintenance shrubs, a much-improved exterior can enhance the learning environment and create community pride.

Some school partnerships hold Clean-Up Days where volunteers, teachers, and parents are invited partner in cleaning and beautifying the school. Often this is the only day that appeals to some volunteers. It is also a great opportunity to spend time working alongside the teachers, kids, and parents on a common-cause daylong project:

This could include:

1. Semi-annual cleanup to rake leaves, trim shrubs, and collect sticks and trash on grounds.
2. Purchase attractive benches and trash receptacles, if needed.
3. Purchase playground equipment, if needed, and plan for repair and upkeep.
4. Plant grass when school is out for the summer; this is an ongoing need.
5. Plant seasonal perennial color.
6. Purchase school sign, if needed, for parent communication.

APPENDIX F: VOLUNTEER TRAINING MANUAL



Training Manual for Coordinators and Volunteers

Mission Statement

One + One began as the conference-wide, 2015 vision of Bishop Michael McKee and the Center for Missional Outreach. This initiative focuses on one-on-one mentoring through church-school partnerships.

One + One exists as one way to accept God's invitation to join God's mission in loving God and neighbor. We dream that every North Texas UMC church will sustain a lasting and thriving school partnership, based on mutuality and trust all across our conference.

We need you!

Scripture for Reflection

The question may arise: Why are we partnering with a public city school? We have a scriptural obligation to our city and our neighbor; we come as servants to bring hope and healing because the children of the city are also our children.

Reflect on the following Scriptures:

“Allow the children to come to me,” Jesus said. “Don’t forbid them, because the kingdom of heaven belongs to people like these children.” Matthew 19:14

“But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear (*in the N.I.V., gentleness and respect*). 1 Peter 3:15

“...but whoever desires to become great among you shall be your servant. And whoever of you desires to be first shall be slave of all. For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life a ransom for many.” Mark 10:43b-45

“Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others. Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross. Therefore, God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.” Philippians 2:3-11

“And seek the peace of the city where I have caused you to be carried away captive, and pray to the LORD for it; for in its peace you will have peace.” Jeremiah 29:7

“He has told you, human one, what is good and what the LORD requires of you: to do justice, embrace faithful love, and walk humbly with your God.” Micah 6:8

The Congregational Communities Coordinator's Responsibilities with One + One

***A Congregational Community (CC) can be described as teams within your church with a heart to partner with a school: These communities include: Sunday school classes, mission/service groups, women's/men's groups, etc.**

The Congregational Communities (CC) Coordinator will have the following responsibilities:

- Oversee that church volunteers accomplish all tasks that were agreed upon in the Letter of Commitment.
- Communicate effectively with all involved persons and the CC.
- Train and communicate necessary information with all CC volunteers. You are welcome to use this Training Manual with your volunteers to assist in the process.
- Contact your partner classroom teacher to find a mutually agreed upon time for you and perhaps a few key CC volunteers to meet the teacher for lunch. Use this lunch as a "Getting to Know You, Your Classroom, and Your Needs" time as well as to begin forging a good relationship with the teacher. Establish the best means for communication with the teacher.
- After meeting with your teacher, sit down with a small team of your CC volunteers and develop a semester "Action Plan/Timeline." This should be based on your conversation with the teacher and the Letter of Commitment.
- Make sure all volunteers have completed and turned in a background check to be processed before they can serve at the school.
- Maintain regular contact with the partner classroom teacher for discovering needs, prayer requests, and developing relationships. (Suggested: Talk with your teacher by phone at least twice a month.)
- Communicate with the CC as needed.
- Communicate regularly with your volunteers about what is going on at the school, your volunteers' involvement, and the opportunities to serve and love your adopted teachers and students.
- Enlist two to four volunteers who will pray for the students and teachers that you partner with by name.
- Direct all requests, concerns, problems, and questions through the appropriate channels.
- Think long-term. Relationships take time. You will not be able to respond to all needs or solve all problems. You are there to bring light through your presence—do not burn out.

One + One Letter of Partnership

Our Congregational Community agrees to be involved as a Partner Class. We understand we are committed to the following:

- Adults in class a minimum of two hours a month helping with administrative duties, such as filing papers, checking papers, making copies, hanging bulletin boards, etc. The teacher might like help up to one hour per week, but this can be arranged through your CC coordinator.
- Organize and throw two parties per semester. Include providing snacks and drinks, one or two age-appropriate games and a simple craft related to the theme.
- A minimum of one adult reader in class once a month. The guest reader will read a teacher-selected book for 10 to 20 minutes, based on time allowed by the teacher. This assignment should be perfect for professionals who have extra time on lunch breaks.
- Assist in connecting a child with a math or reading helper. Work a minimum of one time per week for 30 minutes on class work for which a child needs extra assistance, as directed by the teacher.

School Policies and Procedures

Check In

- The exterior doors of the schools are locked at all times. Ring the bell at the door to contact the front desk for entry into the school.
- Always sign in at the front desk of the school.
- Pick up a volunteer badge to wear while you are on campus.

Check Out

- Report back to the front desk when you are leaving campus.
- Return volunteer badge.

Working with Teachers

- Exchange phone numbers with your partner teacher.
- Be respectful of his or her time when talking with the teacher on the phone or in person at the school.
- Be on time for your commitments; if you will be delayed or unable to come, inform the teacher and/or the school.
- Never show up without first notifying the teacher.

Working with Students

- NEVER BE ALONE WITH A STUDENT!
- Do not bring gifts to the children or personally give a specific item to a child.
- If you notice a particular need for a child, speak privately with the teacher and see about meeting that need anonymously after receiving their input.

Monetary Gifts

- No monetary gifts are to be made by One + One participants to individual teachers, students, or families of students.
- Giving straight monetary gifts can be perceived as a paid source and may not be helpful in building long-term relationships that seek to empower the gifts of students and their families.
- In kind gifts of treats for teacher appreciation can be helpful.

Practical Suggestions: The Do's and the Don'ts

Do...

- Pray for your partner teacher and the children in your partner class.
- Seek to serve the teacher and classroom in love, truth, grace and respect at all times.
Be an imitator of Christ.
- Build a positive, healthy, respectful relationship with your partner teacher and classroom.
This is not about what you give, but it is about the relationships that you develop with everyone you come into contact with at the school.
- Call your teacher at least one day before you go to the school.
- Arrange for specific dates and times to be in the classroom and assist the teacher.
- Set a plan for the semester with the CC team and the teacher for approximate dates and times of when your CC will come to the school.
- Be flexible.
- Sign in each time at the school office when you volunteer.
- Wear your volunteer badge when you are on school property.
- Return your volunteer badge to the school office when you are leaving the campus.
- Compliment and honor the children for positive character displayed. This type of praise needs to be warranted and genuine.
- Let the children know you care about them personally. An old saying says, "They don't care about how much you know until they know how much you care."
- Speak in Spanish, if possible, to the children/families who know Spanish. They appreciate your willingness to communicate with them in their primary language.
- Thank the secretaries, cleaning staff, maintenance crew, cafeteria workers, etc. for their work and effort to make the school the best in the city. This group of people is often overlooked in a school.
- Listen very carefully to what the teacher shares with you. Watch carefully. Sometimes these conversations and the privilege of being in the classroom will give you insight into the overall needs of the class, including individual student needs and the teacher's professional and/or personal needs without having to outright ask the teacher. Then, let these needs inform your prayer life and your CC's response.
- Be ready to "give a reason for the hope within you." A teacher may wonder why you are doing all this. Be ready to give an answer and be respectful of the teacher and their questions. Share your story with the person asking. We encourage you to do this away from the school campus/grounds—ask the teacher to lunch or coffee or invite him/her and their spouse for dinner at your home where you can share your story and answer to the question.
- Build an established, positive relationship with your classroom teacher BEFORE you have a conversation about spiritual matters. Allow them to initiate the conversation. Always ask permission from the person before you step into this type of conversation. If you initiate this type of conversation, please DO NOT do this on school grounds.
- Answer children's questions honestly and lovingly if they initiate a spiritual connection with you. The most important thing here is to model God's love in an authentic, gracious, practical way to the children. It is crucial that we build trust, respect, and a healthy relationship with every child that we come into contact with.

DON'T...

- **EVER BE LEFT ALONE WITH A STUDENT BEHIND CLOSED DOORS. ALWAYS** be in the observable presence of others (in the cafeteria, hallway, etc.).

- Give cash or checks directly to a teacher or child.
- Give gifts to children or to a child you are tutoring.
- Ask teachers or children, “Do you know Jesus as your Lord and Savior?” or “What religion are you?”
- Belittle, use sarcasm, or make negative comments about city leaders/officials or about the city school system.
- Talk about divisive issues—politics, legal system, abortion, etc.
- “Evangelize” or attempt to convert teachers or students on school grounds or at school functions.
- Until that person seeks you out and asks you questions, do not seek to share the gospel with others until a positive, respectful relationship has been established. Do this off of school property.

We want to respect the nature of our relationship with a public school by maintaining healthy boundaries. Our mission statement intentionally does not include evangelism. We are there to bring light and hope out of our desire to fulfill God’s mission of justice and compassion in the community. We are there to develop relationship. Because of this, people may come to Christ. We want to be careful not to jeopardize a good respectful relationship with the school.

“Getting to Know You” Questions and Prompts

Professional Questions

1. How long have you been teaching?
2. How long have you been at this school?
3. How long have you taught in this school district?
4. When did you know you wanted to be a teacher?
5. Did you have a favorite teacher? What were they like?
6. Who impacted you the most or inspired you to become a teacher?
7. What is the greatest challenge today for you as a teacher?
8. What grades have you taught?
9. What is your favorite grade to teach and why?
10. What is your favorite subject to teach and why?
11. What do you see as the best way that we can assist you and the students of your classroom?
12. What do students in your classroom need the most?
13. What are strong academic areas for your students?
14. Which academic areas do your students need help with?

Personal Questions

1. Did you grow up here?
2. What cities have you lived in?
3. Tell me about your family.
4. Do you have family members here?
5. Where did you go to school?
6. Have you done anything else professionally other than teaching?
7. What are your hobbies? What do you like to do in your spare time?
8. What are your favorite restaurants?
9. Do you have a favorite vacation spot?
10. Are you a music lover?
11. Do you follow sports?

APPENDIX G: Letter of Partnership

As a community of faith in partnership with One + One, this is to serve as a representation of understanding that we, _____, are committed to serving

_____ for the entire, or remainder, of the 20__ – 20__ Academic School Year.

We commit to providing:

- Volunteers

Approx. Number of Volunteers	Hours per week

- Financial Resources

Resource Provided (Supplies, etc.)	Quantity	Value of Resources in Dollars (Approx.)

- Other in-kind giving

Gift Amount	School / Organization

- We commit to sponsoring the following events:

Event	Date	Time	Provisions Sponsored

As a faith community, our support will be in the interest of the common good of public education; respecting separation of church and state, and freedom of religion. We commit to serve the teacher and classroom in love, in truth, and with grace and respect at all times.

We volunteer our support and assistance according to the parameters defined by _____ (school) faculty and staff, and our collective plan of action. We commit to abiding by _____ School District restrictions regarding student, faculty and staff safety. We commit ourselves to the communal mission of One + One - to connect UMC churches and schools in partnership. One + One will impact the lives of children in communities in which they live by enhancing the quality of public education in order to establish positive relationships throughout our city.

Signed:

Church Community Representative

Date

Email: _____

Phone: _____