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We’re So Glad You’re Here!

You were born to tutor. No one is more qualified to do this than you, even if the idea of a third-grader with a book report due makes your palms sweat.

So if you’re nervous, don’t be. Even if you’ve never done this before, you’ll soon be equipped with the tools you’ll need to be successful and a community that will help you hone your skills along the way. This handbook will walk you through the way we work, introduce our basic principles, and offer some tips for tackling the issues that come up a lot. And anytime when you’re tutoring, if you have any questions, we’ll be on hand to answer them. But in the meantime, a read-through of this handbook is all you need to start what we hope will be a long 826 tutoring career.

As you progress in your tutoring ventures, you’ll be sure to note that kids are kids, and sometimes they have better days than others. We at 826 take a cumulative approach to helping students grow as writers and thinkers. All of the positive and encouraging support you provide in your tutoring sessions is meaningful, whether or not the student completes the assignment during your session together. Our mantra is, **if you approach your tutees with enthusiasm for the work at hand and an unshakeable belief in their abilities, you will leave a lasting impact on the their attitudes toward writing and learning, and ultimately their belief in themselves.**

We think you’ll enjoy it. Our tutors are lovely, dedicated, incredibly helpful people, but most of them aren’t here only because they’re selfless. They’re also here because they have fun. We hope you will, too.

So let’s get started! That book report isn’t going to write itself, and half a dozen other third-graders are waiting for your attention. They’re in good hands. Go tutor!
ABOUT 826 VALENCIA

826 Valencia is a nonprofit organization dedicated to supporting under-resourced students ages six to eighteen with their creative and expository writing skills and to helping teachers inspire their students to write. Our services are structured around the understanding that great leaps in learning can happen with one-on-one attention and that strong writing skills are fundamental to future success. 826 Valencia was founded in 2002 by author Dave Eggers and educator Ninive Calegari.

Volunteer Engagement Team Statement of Purpose

We leverage a community of caring adults and youth locally to provide individualized support to students across our programs, and recruit creative professionals to honor and amplify our students’ writing across multiple platforms. We actively recruit, screen, and place committed members of the San Francisco Bay Area with a diverse range of backgrounds and experiences, to serve as mentors and leaders within our organization.

We provide a warm, creative, and celebratory community for volunteers to thrive as tutors and pro bono contributors, offering community building, training, and professional development opportunities for their advancement.

We advocate for the needs and expectations of volunteers and interns within 826, because we understand that our strength as an organization is dependent upon the sustained and deepened relationships we have with the individuals and community partners we are fortunate to work with.
826 Valencia Locations

Mission Center
826 Valencia Street, San Francisco, CA 94110
Pirate Supply Store and Mission Center reception desk: ext. 201

Tenderloin Center
180 Golden Gate Avenue, San Francisco, CA 94102
King Carl’s Emporium and Tenderloin Center reception desk: ext. 205

Mission Bay Center
1310 4th Street, San Francisco, CA 94158
Woodland Creature Outfitters, Ltd.

In-Schools Locations

Everett Middle School
450 Church Street
San Francisco, CA 94114

Buena Vista Horace Mann K-8
3351 23rd Street
San Francisco, CA 94110

Mission High School
3750 18th Street
San Francisco, CA 94114

Various other school sites

Contacts

Kavitha Lotun
VOLUNTEER MANAGER | kavitha@826valencia.org | ext. 405

Lila Cutter
VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR (Group Volunteering) | lila@826valencia.org | ext. 225

Paolo Bicchieri
VOLUNTEER ENGAGEMENT COORDINATOR | paolo.bicchieri@826valencia.org | ext. 405

Juan Ibarra
INTERN MANAGER | juan@826valencia.org | ext. 204

Christina V. Perry
DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION | christina@826valencia.org | ext. 229

Questions

Regarding volunteering: volunteer@826valencia.org
Donations: 826valencia.org/get-involved/donate/ or call ext. 202

Looking to contact the staff lead for a particular program?
See pages 4-6!
# OUR PROGRAMS

## Mission Center

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<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Staff Contact</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Storytelling and Bookmaking &amp; Choose Your Own Adventure Field Trips</strong></td>
<td>During the school year, we open up our Mission Center to 2nd-5th grade classes for a two-hour writing and publishing extravaganza. Volunteers type, act, illustrate, lead the class, and offer crucial small-group support to guide students as they learn the elements of storytelling.</td>
<td><strong>Lucie Pereira</strong>&lt;br&gt;Programs Coordinator&lt;br&gt;<a href="mailto:shelby@826valencia.org">shelby@826valencia.org</a>&lt;br&gt;ext. 217</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>After-School, Evening, &amp; Sunday Tutoring</strong></td>
<td>Each Monday-Thursday we provide tutoring support to enrolled students. Because this is a homework-help program, you will get to flex your math and science skills, as well as your writing muscles with elementary aged students after school. The Evening Tutoring program primarily serves middle and high school students who need help with homework in all subject areas. On Sundays we have drop-in tutoring hours, open to any students in need of homework help. Many students return each week, and volunteers are encouraged to do the same!</td>
<td><strong>Kathleen Rodriguez</strong>&lt;br&gt;Programs Manager&lt;br&gt;<a href="mailto:kathleen@826valencia.org">kathleen@826valencia.org</a>&lt;br&gt;ext. 209</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Workshops</strong></td>
<td>We offer a variety of writing workshops to students throughout the year, with topics ranging from journalism to animation to bookmaking and anything our creative workshop instructors can dream up. We need tutors for some core workshops in the evenings throughout the year, and experienced tutors are encouraged to design a class of their own.</td>
<td><strong>Angelina Brand</strong>&lt;br&gt;Programs Coordinator&lt;br&gt;ext. 229</td>
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**Daytime/Weekend**<br>**After-School**<br>**Evening**
# Our Programs

## Tenderloin Center

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Description</th>
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| **Podcasting Field Trips** | In this program, classes of middle and high school students visit our Tenderloin Center to write and record podcasts that build off their learning in the classroom. Volunteers help students edit their writing into an engaging piece to be read aloud, practice their performance skills, and learn about sound editing. No experience with podcasts necessary! | **Jillian Wasick**  
*Programs Director*  
jillian@826valencia.org  
ext. 206  
**Nana Boateng**  
*Programs Coordinator*  
nana@826valencia.org  
ext. 220 |
| **After-School Workshops** | We partner with a variety of neighborhood organizations in the Tenderloin to offer creative writing workshops and homework help to Tenderloin students in second through eighth grade. In this program, you'll help students develop their skills and have fun with the writing process, from brainstorming and pre-writing to drafting and revising.  | **Precediha Dangerfield**  
*Programs Coordinator*  
ext. 406  
**Nana Boateng**  
*Programs Coordinator*  
nana@826valencia.org  
ext. 220 |

| 🌞 Elementary | 🍒 Middle School | 🎯 High School |
| Daytime/Weekend | 🛫 After-School | Evening |
## Our Programs

### Mission Bay Center

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Staff Contact</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>After-School Workshops</td>
<td>In After-School Tutoring at our Mission Bay Center, we provide individualized attention and support to students who are from the neighborhood. In this program, students complete reading, writing, and homework every day. As a volunteer, you'll help a small number of students with their homework, coach them through their daily creative writing, and work on reading and comprehension strategies.</td>
<td><strong>Karla Brundage</strong>&lt;br&gt;Programs Director&lt;br&gt;<a href="mailto:karla@826valencia.org">karla@826valencia.org</a>&lt;br&gt;ext. 408&lt;br&gt;&lt;br&gt;<strong>Shelby Urbina</strong>&lt;br&gt;Programs Coordinator&lt;br&gt;<a href="mailto:shelby.urbina@826valencia.org">shelby.urbina@826valencia.org</a>&lt;br&gt;ext. 413</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
### In-Schools

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Staff Contact</th>
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| In-Schools Projects      | We lead teams of volunteers into classrooms around San Francisco to support with a variety of writing projects. Whether students are composing sonnets, researching for term papers, or analyzing text, 826 tutors sit side-by-side with them and lend a hand to dramatically lower the student-to-teacher ratio. This program includes work at our Writers’ Rooms at Everett Middle School, Mission High School, Buena Vista Horace Mann K-8, and partnerships with schools in the Mission, Tenderloin, and throughout the city. Every spring we host an intensive project with a teacher called the Young Authors’ Book Project. | Ryan Young  
*Programs Manager*  
*Mission*  
ryan@826valencia.org  
ext. 228 |
| Buena Vista Horace Mann K-8 | This program offers after-school creative writing support to 3rd-5th grade students at BVHM. During the sessions, volunteers work side-by-side with the same group of students throughout the school year as they respond to writing prompts and explore the writing process. We also support 6th-8th grade classes with writing assignments and special projects during the school day. | Ashley Smith  
*Programs Manager*  
ashley@826valencia.org  
ext. 212 |

### Program Contacts

**Ryan Young**  
*Programs Manager*  
Mission  
ryan@826valencia.org  
ext. 228

**Jillian Wasick**  
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Tenderloin  
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**Karla Brundage**  
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ext. 408

**Ashley Smith**  
*Programs Manager*  
ashley@826valencia.org  
ext. 212

**Melissa Anguiano**  
*Programs Coordinator*  
melissa@826valencia.org  
ext. 206

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- Elementary  
- Middle School  
- High School  
- Daytime  
- After-School  
- Evening/Weekend
Practice your new knowledge of our programs, alone or with a neighbor, by telling us more about you and which opportunities seem like the right fit for you! We will not collect this at orientation, but use your notes from here to complete your exit ticket.

**Which Kind of Tutoring is Right for Me?**

1. The best program(s) for me, based on my availability, interests, and skills, are:

2. What I hope to gain from volunteering with 826:

3. What goals do I want to set for myself?

4. What support will I need to be successful? Who can I reach out to for help?

5. What skills and/or expertise can I lend to others to help them be successful?
 HOW TO SIGN UP

Signing Up for a Shift

After this orientation you will receive two emails, one from a program staff welcoming you to 826 Valencia and introducing you to the program(s) that you expressed interest in on the Exit Survey. The second from volunteer@826valencia.org will update you on your eligibility status.

Once you receive an email saying that you're approved as a volunteer (yay, you!), the Volunteer Calendar on our website will be your information hub. Using just your email address, you'll be able to sign up for all our volunteer opportunities. Volunteer shifts range from 1-4 hour commitments. Some programs entail a weekly commitment for up to 10 weeks, some are one-time opportunities that you can sign up for as your schedule allows. We encourage you to find a program you like and commit to a schedule so you can develop relationships and see students grow over time. You'll see that we are in greatest need of volunteers on weekdays from 8 a.m.—5 p.m. If you do not receive an email letting you know you're approved to tutor within two weeks of orientation, please contact volunteer@826valencia.org.

Using the Volunteer Calendar

Go to CALENDAR at the top bar of our website (826valencia.org) and then click VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES.
HOW TO SIGN UP

STEP 2
Now you’ll see all the volunteer opportunities in the current month. As you hover over an opportunity, you can see the number of volunteers we currently have and how many we still need. Use the arrows at the top to toggle to the next month.

You can look at everything at once, or you can look at particular programs.

STEP 3
Click the program you want to volunteer for and then click the blue “sign up” link at the bottom of the page, enter the email address you used to register as a volunteer, and you’re done. You’ll receive an automated confirmation immediately. If there’s information you need to know before the session, the 826 staff lead will email you on the day or morning before your shift.
HELPFUL TIPS FOR TUTORING

Our Tutoring Values

We believe that all students have the capacity and desire to learn.
We set and maintain high expectations for growth.

We believe that every student is inherently worthy and deserving of respect.
We honor their assets, backgrounds, interests, and life experiences.

We believe in the importance of meeting each student’s unique needs.
We adapt our approach for diverse learners.

We believe that tutoring (like writing) is a practice.
We commit to self-reflection, receptivity, and continuous improvement.

Yes!

We ask our tutors to communicate a resounding and unconditional “YES!” to every student who walks through our doors. Quite often, tutors are paired with students who have had very different life experiences from their own. Simple things like asking about a student’s interests and noticing what they’re doing well can go a long way to build trust.

And…

We’re also here to transform our students’ relationship to writing, hence the “Yes! And . . .”
When it comes to facilitating learning, the Socratic Method is at the core of our approach. You don’t have to be an expert, but you do have to be willing to ask a lot of questions and challenge students to do their best.
HELPFUL TIPS FOR TUTORING

The Basics

1. Establish a rapport and build connection across difference.
   Sitting down with an adult to work on your homework or writing can be intimidating. From your very first interaction, set the tone for the tutoring session. Show students that you are eager to get to know them and engage in the task at hand. Ask them how they’re doing and seek to learn about their interests. Tell them a bit about yourself and why you’re there. Even a minute or two of casual conversation helps to build trust.

2. Provide positive encouragement.
   Writing isn’t easy, and encouragement can make a world of difference. At 826, we try to model and instill Dr. Carol Dweck’s growth mindset with students. Dr. Dweck found that students who received praise for their effort—as opposed to their innate abilities—were more motivated and resilient, which led to higher levels of achievement. Notice every glimmer of progress and new learning. Let students know how fantastic they are and how their hard work is helping them grow. Try, “You worked so hard on revision and editing today. As a result, your final draft is clear and vivid!”

3. Make it fun, or at least somewhat fun.
   The process doesn’t have to be a blast, but it shouldn’t be painful or boring. Many students already find writing boring, so it’s our job to make it seem like the process of perfecting their work is fun and something to be proud of. Demonstrate that you enjoy learning. Find a personal connection to the assignment and chat about it. Ask what is interesting in this particular class. Be empathetic if the student dislikes school, but balance it with your love of learning and improving.

4. Do some detective work and make a plan.
   Figure out where students are in their understanding and completion of the assignment. Often, if students are getting started or if they’ve fallen behind, they may feel overwhelmed by the thought of the end product. Your first step should be to put them at ease by helping them to identify priorities and break the assignment down into manageable pieces. So when the student shows up, despondent that the giant report on the blue whale is due in three days, just break it into steps: “Today, we’ll research the blue whales online and outline our paper. Tomorrow, we’ll write a page, and the next day, we’ll write one more.”
HELPFUL TIPS FOR TUTORING

5. Reading aloud helps.
When dealing with a problematic sentence—awkwardness, run-ons, etc.—ask the student to read it aloud, even just once. For many students, this immediately illustrates the problem at hand. Chances are, a student has not read the paper aloud, so hearing it spoken will clarify problems not seen on paper.

6. Use the Socratic Method to build independence.
In brief: don’t just give the answer; help the student arrive at the answer for themselves. In an ideal situation, a tutor will sit next to a student, look over their shoulder, and work together on the computer or on paper. And, above all, put your pencil down and don’t pick one up until you’ve read the draft together. Suggestions and corrections are ideally offered by asking questions:

“Read this sentence to me, and let me know if you see where we can straighten it out.” “This sentence is an exclamation. What punctuation should be at the end of the sentence?” It’s not always possible, of course, to phrase a comment in the form of a question. But students will learn and retain the knowledge better if they come to realizations for themselves. And when it’s time to polish up the details, be gentle, and explain your reasons for every suggestion or change. The goal is to foster independence, but don’t be afraid to share tools and strategies.

7. When possible, leave spelling for last.
“How do you spell ________?” is often one of the first few questions you’ll be asked as a tutor. During the early stages of the writing process, encourage students to keep writing; spelling can wait. If it’s a word that’s central to the story or when it comes time to edit, help students build their skills using the Socratic Method. Ask, “How do you think it’s spelled?” “What’s the first sound?” “Let’s take it one syllable/letter at a time.”

Whether you see visible, measurable progress immediately or not, your one-on-one support matters.
We don’t measure our success by the quantity or correctness of the writing in a given day. Our aim is for our students to become capable and confident writers, prepared for college and a career of their choosing. Just by sitting down with the student and taking an interest in their work, you are having a positive impact on their relationship to writing.
HELPFUL TIPS FOR TUTORING

The “Not-So-Basics”

Every student is unique and all of them have a lot going on in their lives outside the moment when you sit down to tutor them. Some of the students you’ll meet are English Learners, some have learning differences, some love creative writing, some get bored easily, and some (most, really) would rather eat Cheetos while the Homework Fairy finishes their assignment. This has never happened. Maybe it will, but in the meantime, here are some time-tested tips for tackling individual issues.

If ever you develop a concern for a student’s (or another person’s) safety, please communicate this as soon as possible to an 826 Valencia staffer.

This is a rare occurrence, but should a student tell you, or anyone else, anything that causes you to worry that they are being hurt, hurting themselves, or hurting others, you must tell a staff member right away; we’ll take it from there. As an agency committed to serving youth, we must follow mandated reporting guidelines when any abuse or unsafe behavior is suspected. This includes sexual, physical, and verbal abuse, as well as neglect. If you have any questions about what constitutes abuse or unsafe behavior, please feel free to discuss this with any staff member, or contact the Volunteer Engagement Director Kavitha Lotun (kavitha@826valencia.org).

The student has a learning difference

If you suspect that your student may have a learning difference that is making the task extra challenging, please be sure to check in with a staff member so they can help strategize an approach. Provide encouragement, acknowledge strengths, and express confidence that the student can achieve at a high level. That said, you should expect that the process and outcome may look a bit different.

The student is an English Learner

When a student is new to learning English, we’ll sometimes try to match them with a tutor who speaks their native language. But that’s often not possible, and it’s certainly not necessary. Even if you don’t know a word of anything but English, you can still provide effective support. Some tips: when going over the assignment, use simple, clear language—no idioms or slang. Use visuals whenever possible. Find out what the student is interested in, and adapt the assignment accordingly. If they have to write a paragraph using new vocabulary words, and they like soccer, suggest writing about soccer. Get out the bilingual dictionary or pull up Google Translate when confusions arise. And if you need more help and there are no bilingual tutors around, ask another bilingual student to translate through the sticky parts.

The student gets distracted easily

This is, by far, the most common problem. Often it’s because the student simply doesn’t understand the assignment or doesn’t believe they can do it, so the first step is to make sure they know what they are being asked to do and that you’re here to help them do it.

When possible, offer a quiet space or opportunities for movement. Are they distracted by or distracting nearby classmates? Consider rearranging seats. Another good strategy is to set
measurable, time-bound goals: “Let’s work on this for five more minutes. I think you can write a whole paragraph in that time. Let's try it, then we can take a break.” If your student is still struggling to focus, this is exactly the sort of thing 826 staff can help resolve—call us over, describe the struggle, and staff will help strategize!

**The student moves around a lot**
The student you are working with may just need to burn off a little energy before hunkering down. If it’s appropriate, let the student take a five-minute break, either to move around or to talk about something else for a minute (take your cue from 826 staff on this). We’ve also, at various times and with varying degrees of success, tried yoga (the tree pose is very calming).

**The student is being disruptive or disrespectful**
For the most part, 826 students respect our space and each other, but occasionally, like all of us, students have rough days. They have, say, too much sugar and get a little loud. Sometimes they have personal struggles that get in the way of learning. If a student’s behavior is interfering with their progress or that of their peers, please do give them a gentle reminder that they need to sit, focus, and work. If a little more authority seems called for (e.g., the student is being disruptive to others and won’t stop), or if you just need a little help, grab a staff member, and we’ll address the situation.

**Reflection questions**

1. What do 826’s tutoring values mean to me?

2. What tutoring tips will I use?

3. What questions do I have?
HELPFUL TIPS FOR TUTORING

Scenarios

Now it’s time to practice!

**Scenario 1:** You are tutoring seventh graders in the Everett Middle School Writers’ Room. The day’s objective is to revise and edit an excerpt from their memoir to prepare for publication. You are paired with two students, Arthur and Isaac. Arthur takes out his work quickly and appears ready to engage. Isaac enters the room slowly, distracts a few classmates as he enters the room, and says “I really don’t want to be here right now” under his breath as he takes a seat. How do you engage and support both students?

**Reflection:**

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**Scenario 2:** You are working with Rodrigo, a second-grade English Learner in After-School Tutoring, who is becoming overwhelmed by his homework assignments. While he is usually pretty upbeat, today he claims that he doesn’t remember how to complete any of his math homework. When you ask him what number comes next in the number line, he exclaims: “I don’t know! Help me!” How do you support this student?

**Reflection:**

---
HELPFUL TIPS FOR TUTORING

Scenario 3: You are working with three fourth-grade students, Jessica, Miguel, and Lucas in the Buena Vista Horace Mann Writers’ Room. They were working hard on drafting superhero stories for the first fifteen minutes of program, but now Jessica is getting fidgety. She keeps initiating off-topic conversations and getting up out of her seat to talk to a student at another table. Miguel and Lucas are beginning to lose focus as well. How do you get the group back on track?

Reflection:  

Scenario 4: You’re at a Podcasting Field Trip with Mission High School, working with LaKeisha, a tenth grader. The prompt asks students to choose from a range of current events topics to respond to in an op-ed. Though LaKeisha has chosen the topic of gentrification, she appears uninterested in brainstorming or proceeding with her draft. She responds to your suggestions with shrugs and silence. How do you proceed?

Reflection:  

The 826 Valencia Tutor Handbook
OTHER THINGS TO KNOW

Ways we say thank you for all you do!

**Volunteer Celebrations**
Every year in the fall we have a big problem: getting our volunteers back into our programs after the summer. So each year, we’re asking 500 of our most active volunteers to take a pledge to come back at the start of the fall. 826 hosts a Welcome Back kick-off event as a thank you to all volunteers before school starts back.

**Volunteer of the Month**
Each month we honor our exceptionally talented team of volunteers by proclaiming a Volunteer of the Month. Volunteers are highlighted in our newsletter and on our website. To nominate a fellow volunteer of the month, write us at volunteer@826valencia.org.

**A few quotes from our Volunteers of the Month:**
“I have been volunteering with 826 Valencia for about 6 years. I started out as ‘support crew’ for Field Trips...I love challenging the students to go deep into their imagination and create great stories about fantastic characters and settings. It helps me remember to be light-hearted, flexible, and fun.” – Donna, Field Trip Leader

“I’ve been volunteering for the after-school tutoring program at 826 since 2005, and the Tuesday point person since 2006...My mom and grandma were public school teachers, and I’ve always gotten personal satisfaction in sharing knowledge and helping people learn. 826 is a perfect place for this. I’ve been able to get to know and help out so many amazing kids, and at this point I’ve seen many of them grow up and move on to high school and college. But it goes way beyond just helping out with math homework. I’ve been lucky enough to hear their stories.” – Ian, After-School Tutor

“[I] learned about 826 Valencia from a coworker at a large national conservation. The coworker raved about the 826 experience. [I] thought, if I ever have any free time, I want to do that. These days [I] concentrate much of [my] volunteering in programs at Mission High School, helping students put together Mission Magazine and working with them on other essay projects.” – Bill, In-Schools Tutor

**Discounts**
All volunteers receive 15% off merchandise at both stores, The Pirate Supply Store in the Mission and King Carl’s Emporium in the Tenderloin.
OTHER THINGS TO KNOW

Behind-the-scenes Opportunities
Want to lend your non-tutoring time and talents to 826 Valencia? Read on!

Volunteer Engagement and Support Team (V.E.S.T.)
V.E.S.T. is a leadership group comprised of volunteers from across our programs and with a wide-range of skills sets. This group provides ongoing guidance and feedback to 826 staff on the volunteer experience, and helps to plan our bi-annual 100 Club volunteer celebration among other volunteer engagement activities.

Volunteer Ambassadors
The 826 Valencia Volunteer Ambassador Program is designed to increase the satisfaction, participation, and retention of new and current volunteers. 826 Volunteer Ambassadors represent a diverse group of volunteers who connect with you, our new volunteers. Look out for these fine folks in your program or email Kavitha Lotun (kavitha@826valencia.org) for more information.

Fundraising
826 Valencia is a nonprofit organization, which means that individual donations, grants, and fundraising events pay our bills and keep our programs free. If you’d like to help us with the important task of raising money, (or make a donation!), please speak to our Development Director, Allyson Halpern (allyson@826valencia.org).

Design, Illustration, and Photography
We are always in need of experienced creative professionals to help with publications, marketing materials, window displays, and products in our stores. We also frequently need professional photographers to document our events and programming. To help with publishing, marketing and photography, please email Brad Amorosino (brad@826valencia.org). To volunteer with the Pirate Store and King Carl’s Emporium for product design or installation artistry, please email Caroline Kangas (caroline@826valencia.org). Be sure to include your résumé and a link to your portfolio.

Editing and Translation
We take our students’ writing seriously, so we give it the full treatment of professional publishing. A handful of books and projects throughout the year pass by the eyes of professional copy editors before hitting the presses, and many of our student publications and marketing materials are published in both English and Spanish to most effectively reach our community. To volunteer as a copy editor or translator, please email Christina Perry (christina@826valencia.org).
OTHER THINGS TO KNOW

Group Opportunities
Maybe you and your corporate, social, meet-up, church group or art class are looking for a unique and rewarding one day volunteer event. Or perhaps you are interested in building a deeper connection to 826 Valencia, allowing your staff to polish their skills as mentors and tutors in our programs on a quarterly, monthly, or weekly basis. 826 Valencia offers a range of ways to bring a group to volunteer. For more information visit 826valencia.org/group-volunteering or contact Volunteer Coordinator Lila Cutter (lila@826valencia.org).

Events
We’re party people here at 826 Valencia, and we like to throw regular open mics, workshops, shindigs, hoedowns, soirees, and other varieties of events to make friends, recruit new volunteers, and raise money. We sometimes need volunteers to help coordinate materials, get the word out, share their work, perform and make contacts for these happenings. Volunteers also serve as bartenders, registration people, and clean-up crew. Please contact Stores Manager Byron Weiss (byron@826valencia.org) or Volunteer EngagementCoordinator Paolo Bicchieri (paolo@826valencia.org) if you are interested in working on future events.

Resources, Support, and Communication

Tutor Training Opportunities
Each semester we offer a range of trainings for tutors who are eager to strengthen their skill sets. Past trainings include: Positive Behavioral Support, Engaging Diverse Learners, and Writing Coach Strategies. Please take advantage of our upcoming volunteer tutor trainings by signing up on our calendar. If you can’t attend a training, no sweat! Check out the Volunteer Resource page (826valencia.org/volunteer) on our website, where you will find helpful links regarding tutoring strategies. We also encourage you to talk with 826 Valencia staff about these materials and any challenges you face in the classroom. Contact Kavitha Lotun (kavitha@826valencia.org) with questions or ideas.

826 Valencia Newsletters
After attending this orientation, you will receive our bi-weekly volunteer and 826 monthly newsletter. The newsletter is a handy way for us to relay all the great things happening in the 826 volunteer world. You can expect to discover new volunteer opportunities, tutor trainings, community events, and hilarious yet heartfelt student content through our newsletters.
## OTHER THINGS TO KNOW

### 826 Observed Holidays

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Holiday</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New Year’s Day</td>
<td>January 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Martin Luther King, Jr. Day</td>
<td>Third Monday in January</td>
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<tr>
<td>Presidents Day</td>
<td>Third Monday in February</td>
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<tr>
<td>Memorial Day</td>
<td>Last Monday in May</td>
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<tr>
<td>Independence Day</td>
<td>July 4</td>
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<td>826 Day</td>
<td>August 26</td>
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<tr>
<td>Labor Day</td>
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<tr>
<td>Indigenous People’s Day</td>
<td>Second Monday in October</td>
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<td>Thanksgiving Day</td>
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<tr>
<td>Day after Thanksgiving</td>
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<td>Christmas Eve</td>
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<td>Christmas Day</td>
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<tr>
<td>New Year’s Eve Day</td>
<td>December 31</td>
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<tr>
<td>Your birthday</td>
<td>Take the day off!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
POLICIES & EXPECTATIONS

Attendance
We literally can’t run our programs without our volunteers! Though we don’t ask for volunteers to make a long-term commitment, we rely heavily on every volunteer who signs up for a shift to honor their commitment, and plan our programs accordingly. All volunteers, interns, and partners are expected to notify 826 Valencia staff ASAP if there is a last minute cancellation.

Please remember that all of our programs begin promptly at their listed time. We ask that you inform us as soon as possible if you are running late or if you must make a scheduling change.

Boundaries
These rules are extremely important, so they’re going in bold! Please never do any of the following when working with our students:

Do not exchange contact information with any of our students at any time. If you want to share something with them or give them feedback on their work from home, ask an 826 staff member to facilitate this for you.

Do not set up appointments with any of our students outside 826 Valencia.

Do not drive students anywhere at any time.

Do not buy anything for students without permission of 826 staff. High-fives, side-hugs, and high praise for effort are all great forms of encouragement.

Communication
Whenever staff sends you emails, please be sure to respond when asked. It’s the surest way to let us know that you have read and understood the content. Also, please make sure to send emails and messages in a professional manner (language, punctuation, grammar, etc.); it goes a long way!

Please do not hesitate to reach out to us if you have any questions or concerns. We are here to support you! Our emails can be found on page 2 of this handbook.

Dress code
826 Valencia is an organization that works with children and needs to be represented as such. During working hours we expect the employees, tutors, and other volunteers at 826 Valencia to dress in a professional manner consistent with their responsibilities (no inappropriate t-shirts, extremely revealing clothing, etc.) You know, dress for kids.
Drugs and Alcohol
826 Valencia provides a drug-free, healthy, and safe environment. While on 826 Valencia’s premises and while conducting 826 Valencia-related activities off 826 Valencia’s premises, a volunteer may not use, possess, distribute, sell or be under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs. Occasionally, 826 Valencia hosts events where alcohol is served. In such situations, volunteers who consume alcohol are expected to act in a responsible manner. If you are under the legal drinking age, you cannot consume ANY form of alcoholic beverages at our events. No matter how tempting it may be to sneak that glass of wine—there will be serious repercussions.

The legal use of prescribed drugs is permitted during volunteer service only if it does not impair a volunteer’s ability to perform the essential functions of the volunteer position effectively and in a safe manner that does not endanger other individuals in the workplace. Volunteers must advise their supervisor if they are taking any prescription or over-the-counter drug which could adversely affect safety or performance.

Emergency Procedures
In case of an emergency, please follow all directions from staff members. Help guide the students to safety in a calm and orderly fashion. Be aware of exit routes at any site you support.

Greetings
Spaces are always warmer when everyone’s presence is acknowledged. Make sure to spread kindness through “Hello”s, “Goodbye”s, “How’s it going?”s, etc.!

Grievances
Conflict is natural and valuable. While conflict might trigger us, it often leads to deeper thinking about a perceived problem and can result in more comprehensive solutions. When having a conflict, it is common to want to vent/consult with others, but invariably such conduct does not adequately resolve the issue and, instead, exacerbates it. If you have a conflict with someone while at 826, please follow these steps:

1. When possible and if you feel comfortable, speak directly with the person involved.
2. If the conflict persists, speak to your supervisor to problem-solve.
3. If the conflict persists further, or if it is egregious, speak with the Director of Volunteer Engagement.
4. If the issues continue or are not appropriately handled via the steps above, consult with the Human Resources Manager Benita Tsao (benita@826valencia.org).
POLICIES & EXPECTATIONS

Inappropriate conversation
This may seem obvious, but it's important that we be explicit about what is inappropriate behavior around the students. A good rule to follow: if you think the child's parents would be uncomfortable if they were present, then you're in inappropriate territory. This means no cursing and no talking about sex, drugs, or violence, unless the conversation relates directly to the work you two are doing. Also, please do not talk about students’ behavior or abilities within earshot of other students. If you ever feel uncomfortable in a situation with a student, speak to one of us immediately.

Mandated Reporting
California law requires mandated reporters (all of us) to make a verbal report immediately or as soon as practical, followed by a written report. If a student says, writes, or suggests that they have been hurt, want to hurt someone else, or want to hurt themselves, immediately report the situation to program staff. It is not your job to investigate the situation—you are simply mandated to report it to an 826 Staff member.

Personal Phone Calls
When you're in a program your cell phone should be off or on silent, and you should not be taking personal calls or texts (you will more than likely be too busy to do so anyway!). During prep time, you may take personal calls, but please keep them to a minimum and take them outside.

Prohibition of Harassment
826 Valencia condemns and prohibits harassment of any individual because of that individual's race, color, age, sex (sexual harassment, gender harassment, and harassment due to pregnancy, childbirth or related medical condition), sexual orientation, familial status, religious creed, national origin, ancestry, medical condition, marital status, or disability.

Smoking
If you smoke, please make sure to not do so in the vicinity of 826 Valencia or our students.

No Solicitation Policy
Solicitation of an employee by another employee is prohibited if either the person doing the soliciting or the person being solicited is on working time. Solicitation in working areas is not permitted at any time. Distribution of advertising materials, handbills, or any other literature by employees in working areas of 826 Valencia is prohibited at all times. Solicitation or distribution of literature by non-employees on 826 Valencia premises is prohibited.
Social Media and Blogs
This is a super-important rule: do not communicate with, share photos of, or write about any of our students over social media. You are welcome to share something that has already been made public on 826 Valencia's communications channels, like a post on the 826 social media platforms or the website (in fact, you're encouraged to share those links.)

If you see or experience something special that we should share with our audiences, please pass it on! You can always send photos, stories, and quotes to the Communications Manager Molly Parent (molly@826valencia.org) or to your program lead, who will determine if the content is a good fit for sharing and make sure we have the necessary permissions before we post.

Finally, whenever you’re with students, please do not use social media on your phone or laptop even if there's down time. This can be distracting for students and might open up an uncomfortable conversation or lead them to seeking you out on social media. Read a book instead—we always have them around!

If you decide to talk about 826 Valencia on your personal social media pages, blogs, or in your life online, please be open and clear about how you are related to 826 (employee, intern, volunteer) and when in doubt, clarify that your views do not necessarily represent those of 826 Valencia.

If you’d like to write a blog post or a media piece about your involvement with 826 Valencia to spread the word about the great experience you’re having and encourage others to do the same, we’d love that. But before publishing, please share the piece with an 826 staffer to share with our Communications Manager so we can help make sure you’re representing our work accurately.

Security
826 Valencia strives to provide a safe environment for staff, students, volunteers and all other community members. Volunteers are responsible for using the following common-sense suggestions to help ensure a safe environment.

- Be aware of any unknown person who comes into our program space and is not accompanied by a staff member.

- Never leave your purse, wallet, or other valuable items on or under your desk. Keep these items out of sight. Keep your wallet or purse with you at all times or keep them in a secure drawer or cabinet. Avoid carrying large sums of money.

- 826 Valencia is not responsible for lost or stolen personal property. We will not reimburse a volunteer for any personal property which disappears from a volunteer site.
826 National Commitment to Inclusion

As an organization committed to encouraging youth in their creative expression, personal growth, and academic success, 826 National and its chapters recognize the importance of diversity at all levels and in all aspects of our work. In order to build and maintain the safe, supportive 826 environment in which great leaps of learning occur, we commit to inclusion: in recruiting and maintaining our volunteer base, in our internal and external relations as members of an 826 staff and board, and in our relationships with parents, teachers, schools, and most importantly—students.

In order for 826 to serve its students in a manner that is respectful, culturally sensitive, and effective, we must collectively and intentionally invest in building a diverse and inclusive organization where all are safe and welcomed. We recognize diversity as a complex constellation of factors in a given individual’s background, including both inborn traits (race, gender) and life experiences (marital status, status as a veteran). We will not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, ethnicity, age, gender identity, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, nationality, marital status, English fluency, parental status, status as a military veteran, or disability.

We understand that fostering a truly inclusive community is an on-going process, and that there is no end-point to this discussion and work. We see this statement as a positive step toward change, but by no means as a limit to the ways we can continue to grow and improve. We value and encourage feedback from our community, and strive to be transparent and proactive in making this statement not only a living document, but one that inspires continual action and movement. By adopting this Statement of Inclusion, the staff and board members of 826 pledge to ourselves and to each other that we will uphold these values. Together we make an active commitment to the vibrancy of a diverse 826 network, now and into the future.

Why Inclusion and Diversity Matter To 826 National

Staff and Board
As 826 staff and board members, we all benefit from developing awareness of the many cultural factors shaping our lives and the lives of our colleagues. We are tasked with representing 826 to a wide variety of audiences: volunteers, students, teachers, parents, donors, the media, and more. It is to our advantage, individually and collectively, to take an active role in understanding and effectively communicating with people of all backgrounds.

Volunteers
826 was founded on the simple yet striking idea that caring, committed one-on-one attention from an adult can be instrumental in the life of a young person. We aim to provide meaningful volunteer opportunities for adults from all walks of life. A diverse volunteer base reflects the variety of student populations we serve, and communicates to students that 826 spaces are safe for everybody. We will actively consider diversity of race, gender, ethnicity, age, disability (etc) in recruiting volunteers for 826 chapters, in training and appreciating volunteers, and in facilitating volunteers’ communication with students and each other.
Students
At 826 we believe that confidence and dignity arise when students are asked, through writing, to place their experiences alongside those of others. In order for this to happen, young people in 826 programs must feel safe to express themselves as individuals, under the guidance of our volunteers and staff. Students and volunteers create important mentorship relationships as they work side-by-side, which encourages students to think critically about their environments and communities. This leads not only to personal growth, but also to academic success as students broaden their worldview and sharpen their analytical skills. At 826 we believe a diverse range of learning styles and intellectual interests can come together under the umbrella of writing, so we welcome students of all abilities to our programs. We believe that the worth of a student is inherent, and that any student can gain the tools to succeed in school and in life.
The 826 Stand: A Commitment to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

by Gerald Richards, former CEO of 826 National

826 National was inspired to take a stand on issues of inclusion and diversity in light of the many events that spotlighted social and racial injustices throughout the country. We as educators, volunteers, and caring adults need to be aware of the wide range of issues our students face on a day-to-day basis. We need to support these young people as they navigate through and try to make sense of the world and their own identities.

We stand for our students.

We stand for our students’ right to express their opinions—freely, creatively, and safely—and to provide them the space to do that, free of judgment and full of support.

We stand for our students’ right to tell their stories, share their experiences, and seek out information and answers. We stand for connecting our students to caring adults—volunteers eager to listen as students search for answers and discover themselves.

Through our work and our actions, we must continuously support the development of our students’ voices and stories, and also celebrate those voices and stories.

We stand for building diverse and inclusive environments for our students, our volunteers, and our staff.

We need the support and the feedback from our community to ensure 826 is living up to these standards. Through our inclusion statement, our internal diversity and inclusion group, cultural competency resources provided to staff and volunteers, and partnerships with other organizations, we are always working towards being a more inclusive and supportive organization.

We at 826 have the privilege of working with the next generation of scholars, teachers, doctors, artists, lawyers, and writers. It’s our job to make sure they are able to take their own stands.

As an organization committed to encouraging youth in their creative expression, personal growth, and academic success, 826 National and its chapters recognize the importance of diversity at all levels and in all aspects of our work. In order to build and maintain the safe, supportive 826 environment in which great leaps in learning happen, we commit ourselves to inclusion: we do not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, ethnicity, age, gender identity, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, nationality, marital status, English fluency, immigration status, parental status, military service, or disability.

The 826 National network is committed to encouraging youth to express themselves and to use the written word to effectively do so. We encourage our students to write, take chances, make decisions, and finish what they start. And 826 strives to do this in an environment free from discrimination and exclusion.
**VOLUNTEER AGREEMENT**

**Inclusion.** As a volunteer, I am committed to encouraging youth in their creative expression, personal growth, and academic success. I understand that 826 Valencia recognizes the importance of diversity at all levels and in all aspects of our work. In order to build and maintain the safe, supportive environment in which great leaps of learning occur, we commit to inclusion: we will not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, ethnicity, age, gender identity, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, nationality, marital status, English fluency, parental status, military service or disability.

**Confidential Information.** I understand that, while I volunteer, I may obtain nonpublic information about 826 Valencia, or its stakeholders, customers, volunteers, and students (“Confidential Information”). I also understand that keeping this information confidential is critical to the success of 826 Valencia. To the extent allowed by law, I agree that I will hold 826 Valencia’s Confidential Information in the strictest confidence. I will not disclose 826 Valencia’s Confidential Information without written permission from the Executive Director, even after my volunteer service with 826 Valencia has ended.

**Student Safety.** I understand that, as a volunteer, I may not exchange contact information with students at any time, set up appointments with students outside of 826 Valencia, provide transportation to any students, or purchase anything for students without permission from 826 staff. I understand that if a student says, writes, or suggests that they have been hurt, want to hurt someone else, or want to hurt themselves, I am mandated to report this to program staff. I will not publish a student’s name, school, or any other identifying information, or share photographs of any students on social media or a personal blog, without the permission of 826 staff.

**Intellectual Property.** I hereby assign to 826 Valencia all right, title and interest in and to any intellectual property I may develop while performing my volunteer duties. I will, at 826 Valencia’s request, promptly execute a written assignment to 826 Valencia of any such intellectual property.

**Waiver of Liability.** I hereby assume all Risks that may arise, in whole or in part, directly or indirectly, from my participation in the Program. I hereby waive and release 826 Valencia, and its respective affiliates, officers and employees, from any and all claims (including claims of negligence), damages and losses, including court costs and attorney’s fees, that may arise, in whole or in part, directly or indirectly, from my participation in the Program.

**Use of Likeness.** I hereby give to 826 Valencia, its agents and its licensees, the irrevocable and perpetual right and permission: to film, record, edit, mix, print, reproduce, publish, perform, transmit, disseminate, market, lease, license, modify, sell, make derivative works of and/or otherwise use for any purpose (collectively, “Use”) my name, likeness, picture, portrait, photograph, image, voice, sounds, performance and personal attributes that may be taken, captured or recorded during the Program (collectively, “Likeness”), in whole or in part, and to use my name, and/or city and state of residence to attribute such Likeness, in all forms of media, broadcast, exhibition, display, performance or distribution, whether alone or with other productions, whether now known or later developed, and in all manners, including extractions, composite or distorted representations.

**Handbook Acknowledgement.** I have received a copy of the 826 Valencia Tutor Handbook and understand that it contains important information on the general policies of the 826 Valencia and on my privileges and obligations as an employee. I will familiarize myself with the material in the manual and understand that I am governed by its contents. I further understand and agree that the volunteer relationship is at will and based on the mutual consent of each volunteer and 826 Valencia.

By signing below, I express my understanding and intent to enter into this relationship with 826 Valencia willingly and voluntarily with no expectation of compensation.

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Signature (Or parent/guardian if under 18)  Date

Print Name (Or parent/guardian if under 18)  Date
826 Valencia is a non-profit organization dedicated to supporting under-resourced students ages 6 to 18 with their creative and expository writing skills, and to helping teachers inspire their students to write. Our services are structured around the belief that great leaps in learning can happen with one-on-one attention, and that strong writing skills are fundamental to future success.

826valencia.org