

The VIPS program was initiated during the summer of 1982 after a Massachusetts Department of Education conference on ways to increase interaction between schools and their communities. VIPS brings volunteers into the public schools as tutors for individuals or small groups, as assistants in libraries, art and music programs, science and computer laboratories, helpers to teachers and administration, and as mentors for motivated and at-risk students. The program has improved community/school understanding and appreciation in both directions.

VIPS provides the schools with an organized, reliable volunteer corps which supplements and enriches the curriculum. Volunteers are given the opportunity to use their talents, time, and energy in creative, worthwhile ways. Students of all grade levels have benefited from the added hours of volunteer help. Teachers, students, and volunteers have gained in the process.

VIPS grew quickly - from 1983-2007 the program increased from eight volunteers in one school to over 1,400 in all seven schools.

Since 1983, a vast number of hours have been donated to the school system by volunteers - 681,237 hours and counting! During the current school year alone, nearly 40,000 hours have been logged so far by VIPS volunteers.

A crucial element to the continued success of the Program is the role of the **Building Coordinator** - a volunteer who manages VIPS in an individual building. They coordinate, schedule, watch for emerging or changing needs for volunteer assistance in the school, report to the Program Director frequently, and attend Building Coordinator meetings at which coordinators are able to network on a regular basis.

**Project Leaders** are also key members of the VIPS team. They manage and supervise one particular program either system-wide or in an individual school.

Although VIPS receives generous financial support from the school budget, the **VIPS Board of Advisors** is responsible for raising a substantial share of the VIPS operating budget. Major fundraisers include the Spring Expo, the Golf Tournament, and the Feasts of Falmouth & Beyond. *For these events, we are always looking for sponsorship and donations for raffles and prizes.*



Interested? Please contact the VIPS office today, (508) 548-1621 or [vips@falmouth.k12.ma.us](mailto:vips@falmouth.k12.ma.us). We require all volunteers who register to fill out a CORI form and a registration card (it takes approximately two weeks to process the paperwork). These are necessary *prior* to commencing any volunteer activities



Anyone who wishes to contribute his or her services to the school system can be of help. Persons of all ages and backgrounds have something valuable to offer. A school volunteer does not need a special degree or particular educational training; the skills of each volunteer can be utilized with careful and sensitive placement and follow-up. You may have a talent to share, and your work or hobby could enrich the school experience for some student.

***VIPS programs in need of volunteers:***  
**Project Inquire** - A 6-week mentor program that matches volunteers with motivated students. This is an enrichment study program for curious students who welcome the challenge of going beyond the limits of the normal classroom curriculum. Mentors and mentees meet once or twice each week for one hour each time. *Training is provided.*

**Project Rise (Raising Interest and Self Esteem)** - A year long mentor program that matches caring volunteer mentors with students who have not adjusted their social and academic skills to their full potential. Mentors and mentees meet during the school day for one hour each week. Mentors and students become special friends. *Ongoing training and networking is provided.*

**Falmouth High School/Lawrence Mentor Programs** - Mentors attempt to create positive changes in teen/adult perceptions and in teen decision making and behavior patterns. *Ongoing training and networking is provided.*

**Art Appreciation/Arts Alive** - Volunteers are trained to present a variety of artists to elementary school students in an interesting way using a "fun" educational approach. *Training is provided.*

**Computer Program** - Volunteers assist students using computers in individual school computer labs. *Training is provided.*

**School/Business Partnerships** - Individual schools or school programs and a business develop an ongoing exchange of a mutually satisfactory nature that enhances the education of students. It establishes a structure for the sharing of resources, which may include, but is not limited to: knowledge, skills, time, space, and materials.

**Literacy** - Volunteers tutor English As a Second Language (ESL) students or those who are functionally illiterate. Volunteers and students usually meet at least once a week at a mutually convenient time and place. *Training is provided.*

**CAST (Cross Age Science Training)** - Lawrence School (grades 7 & 8) students are trained to teach hands-on, inquiry-based science lessons to students in elementary school classrooms.

**Read Naturally** - A fluency-building, instructional reading program now in place at each of Falmouth's elementary schools and Morse Pond. Developed by a reading teacher, the program helps students improve fluency, an important component of good reading and reading comprehension. *Training is provided.*



*Linking the Public Schools  
and the Community*

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