

Attention Fathers and Father Figures:

Hesston Elementary School participates in the WatchDOGS program. Please take a moment to read the following, we hope this is a program you feel you can support. You will have the opportunity to sign up at Donuts with Dad, Sept 27th. We will have WatchDOGS in the building starting in October.

What are the objectives of the WATCH DOGS Program?

There are two main objectives of WATCH DOGS:

1. Provide positive male role models for the students. Dad, you *can* be a positive male role model to your student and the entire student body. In every school, there are students that need extra time and attention from a positive male role model. WatchDOGS serve in that capacity. **We strongly encourage WatchDOGS to interact with students in order to 'sow seeds of success'** in their lives and let them know that their education is so important that you took a day off of work **just to come to their school and help.**

2. Enhance school security. One of the many naturally occurring benefits of the WATCH DOGS program is the extra sets of eyes and ears of the volunteers. Fathers and father figures are asked to serve as an unobtrusive presence in the school as they assist the faculty in many of their daily duties. The overall goal is to help create a safe and productive educational environment. Bullying and other distractions seem to practically disappear when a WatchDOG is in the classroom, hallway, or on the playground.

We invite fathers and father figures to volunteer **one full day, over the course of the school year**, to work with the teachers in their child's school. WATCH DOGS seek to have at least one father or father figure (stepdads, granddads, etc.) present in Hesston Elementary School three days a week of the school year for the simple purpose of being 'Dad' at school.

The primary focus will always be geared for each father to make a positive connection with his **own son and/or daughter**, but the need for interaction with the entire student body as a whole is also vital.

Who are WatchDOGS?

You guys are the WatchDOGS for Hesston Elementary School. Most days, you may be known as a banker, a construction worker, a fireman or whatever your profession is, but at least one day a year you can be an extra set of eyes and ears, as well as, a **hero in the eyes of your student** and the school staff. **You are not** principals, teachers, school resource officers, counselors, or any official school authority. However, **you can help** with bus/car loop, monitoring hallways and buildings-inside and outside, assisting in playground duty, assisting with lunchroom duty, etc.

You **cannot** go into boys' or girls' restrooms, be alone or unsupervised with students, or espouse political or religious beliefs to them. But you can eat lunch with students, play on the playground or in the gym, read to classes or individual students, work with flashcards, share about your career, help apply your trade in classes, tutor small groups

of students, and **actively and positively engage with your student** and the student body. Ultimately, **you can make a difference!**

Everyone likes to be a winner and to play on a winning team. And you know what? This is a win/win opportunity. So, **who are the winners in this program?**

The first winner is the student! Study after study shows the negative effects that fall upon children when a 'dad' checks out, whether physically or emotionally. But studies also show the **positive effects** that children receive when 'Dad' is present in the home and positively engaged in the lives of his children. Ironically, when most of us men who are going to be WatchDOGS went to school, it was a negative thing when dads showed up! It usually was the result of a behavior problem at school. But today, across America, when dads are showing up to be WatchDOGS **it is a positive thing!**

The second winner is the school, and ultimately the community! In many cases, when a WatchDOG shows up for his day of volunteering, it will be the first time in a long time that he has been at school, so he may have no concept what it is like to be an educator in the 21st century. When we dads show up and become actively involved, we quickly move from possibly being a cynic of public education to a strong advocate, and a stronger bridge is built between the home and the school.

The third winner is you, the 'Dad'! Regardless of your educational or athletic background, when you are in your student's school, you will become Michael Jordan on the playground, Albert Einstein in the classroom and Superman in the hallways. In essence, you become the "Big Man on Campus." This in turn elevates your self-esteem as fathers. It feels great! You will want to come back to be a WatchDOG again and again.