

Citizen Teacher Experience FAQ

Why should I volunteer as a Citizen Teacher?

Middle school kids need to learn why their education is relevant. Your passion and career success will show them the connections between what their teachers and tests require and their dreams for their future.

What kind of experience do I need?

Volunteering with Citizen Schools doesn't require any teaching experience as only a handful of our Citizen Teachers come to us with it. Dedication and enthusiasm are the most important qualities in a successful Citizen Teacher. You are guaranteed to experience challenges that will require a personal commitment to working with your apprentices, so experience working with youth or leading teams is helpful.

What kinds of topics can I teach?

Everything from web design to fishing! At Citizen Schools, we are experts at helping you develop fun and engaging apprenticeships, based on whatever you know and love to do. If you are a lawyer or a business professional or an artist, you can teach law or business or art. If you are a lawyer who loves to garden or play the guitar, you can teach those things too. We offer detailed, flexible, time-tested apprenticeship plans in popular areas like business, journalism, creative writing, and technology to get you started. Citizen Teachers have taught hundreds of apprenticeships in a wide variety of subjects.

Where are the school sites in Chicago?

- ❖ [Cesar Chavez Multicultural Academic Center](#) (4747 S. Marshfield, Chicago, IL 60609)
*Click for [map](#), directions, and public transit options [Back of the Yards neighborhood]
- ❖ [Walsh Elementary School](#) (2015 South Peoria Street, Chicago, IL 60608)
*Click for [map](#), directions, and public transit options [Pilsen/Little Village neighborhood]

How many nights a week will I be teaching at the school?

Each Citizen Teacher will teach one apprenticeship, one night a week for 90 minutes. In addition, volunteers will need to factor in time for transit. Our apprenticeship nights will be Tuesday at both schools, and Wednesday at Walsh and Thursday at Cesar Chavez.

Can I teach with someone else?

Yes! In fact, we encourage Citizen Teachers to teach in teams. We find it very helpful to have another set of hands in the classroom. Additionally, if for some reason you cannot be at an apprenticeship session, you will have someone who can lead it that week. We do encourage volunteers teaching in teams to clearly define their responsibilities and roles to facilitate communication and planning.

What if I don't know anyone who can teach with me?

As able, we will match up volunteers who have similar interests and site preferences.

How will I be supported by Citizen Schools in the classroom?

Each Citizen Schools site is led by a Campus Director. Several Teaching Fellows assist the Campus Director in developing curriculum and are in most cases responsible for a team of apprentices. The rest of the campus staff is comprised of Teaching Associates, individuals who are responsible for a team of students. A Team Leader is the Teaching Associate or Teaching Fellow who'll be assisting you in the classroom and providing coaching throughout your Apprenticeship. We find that Citizen Teachers who maintain consistent and timely communication with their Team Leaders have the best experience and the most successful apprenticeships!

What kind of training will I receive?

At Citizen Schools' trainings you will:

- see some of the WOW!s produced by apprenticeships of the past
- get a better understanding of how the Citizen Schools model is helping to maximize out-of-school time for kids
- learn the basic structure of how to develop a lesson plan for your apprenticeship
- better understand how to work with 9-14 year olds and learn behavior management skills
- meet other potential Citizen Teachers and hear their apprenticeship ideas
- meet the staff who'll be supporting your apprenticeship

What is the overall time commitment? (see p.4 for Chicago-specific training dates and activities)

The Citizen Teacher experience is richly rewarding – and hassle-free. The whole experience (including orientation and trainings) spans 13 weeks and between 30 and 40 hours. Here's what it includes:

- Extensive group and 1-1 training with Citizen Schools staff
- An on-site orientation and Apprenticeship Fair in the first week
- 10 weeks of instruction with apprentices, culminating in a WOW!
- On-going coaching with your Citizen Schools Team Leader
- A final session in the 11th week for apprentices and Citizen Teachers to reflect on their journey
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We find that most of our volunteers put far more into their experience with us than we could detail here. It's amazing what comes over you when you start to share your passion with an enthusiastic group of middle school youth!

What kinds of resources are available to Citizen Teachers?

Each apprenticeship receives an \$80 budget for expenses related to the apprenticeship. Generally, this budget has covered expenses like travel during the apprenticeship, snacks and paper supplies. We encourage volunteers to seek donations for apprenticeships if they anticipate needing more than \$80. We can also supply you with flip chart paper, tape, markers and writing utensils at your site. Any items purchased for use in the apprenticeship and reimbursed by Citizen Schools, should be left at the site upon completion of the apprenticeship.

Our greatest resource is our experienced staff. You will form a close coaching relationship with the staff at your site. They will be with you every step of the way offering suggestions and encouragement.

Can I see some existing lesson plans or curricula?

Yes please visit our website www.citizenschools.org. Click on the sections: "Volunteer", then "What Will You Teach?" There you will find an array of examples of Citizen Schools' apprenticeships, and a search engine to help you find apprenticeships by industry, title, region, or affiliated organization. Each apprenticeship page has a summary, an outline of lessons, the lesson plans, and a slide show.

What is a WOW?

A WOW! is the public presentation of what the students learned or produced over the 10 weeks. "WOW!" is also the most common phrase you hear at a Citizen Schools event when students are able to teach you what they've learned in just 10 weeks. Check out some of our WOW!s from across the country on www.WOWshowcase.org

What kinds of facilities are available to Citizen Teachers?

The typical apprenticeship takes place in a public school classroom. Generally, volunteers are not permitted to write on the blackboards (we supply flip charts and markers) because the teachers who occupy the rooms during the school day often leave important class information on the board. Computer labs are available on a limited basis. If you are interested in using computers in your apprenticeship, we will work to place you at one of the sites where we have technology facilities. Cooking facilities, dance studios, and gyms are also available on a limited basis. Please discuss your facility needs with a staff member when applying.

Can I assist an experienced volunteer before trying it myself?

As able, we will match up individuals with an experienced volunteer. Keep in mind that anxiety about teaching is totally natural, but we want you to be as comfortable about your apprenticeship as possible. The staff at Citizen Schools will help you with lesson plans, developing your WOW! and anything else you may need to lead a great apprenticeship. Remember, thousands of adults just like you have become successful Citizen Teachers!

How do I get started?

To begin your Citizen Teacher experience or to speak with someone further about our volunteer opportunity, please visit our website at www.citizenschools.org. Follow the links to the volunteer application and complete that online form. Once submitted, you'll be contacted by an individual in the state you specified. For Chicago specific information, please contact Citizen Schools Illinois Operations Manager, Erin Driesbach, at erindriesbach@citizenschools.org. If you have questions about your corporation or organization getting involved with Citizen Schools on a national scale, please call Claudia Alfaro at 617.695.2300 x 166 or email her at claudiaalfaro@citizenschools.org

We have other volunteer opportunities on a very limited basis. These opportunities include volunteering as a panelist or a judge, helping out at Citizen School events, participating in education reform advocacy, assisting with mailings and administrative work, and coaching apprentices during their homework time. These opportunities are available on a site-to-site basis at the discretion of the Campus Director. Please contact your Campus Director for more information.

Where does Citizen Schools work?

Citizen Schools is a national education nonprofit headquartered in Boston, Massachusetts. Citizen Schools has regional offices in eight states, and school/program sites throughout these states:

- California (East Palo Alto, Oakland, Redwood City)
- Illinois (Chicago)
- Massachusetts (Boston, New Bedford, Revere),
- New Jersey (Newark)
- New Mexico (Albuquerque, Santa Fe, Mescalero)
- New York (NYC)
- North Carolina (Charlotte, Durham)
- Texas (Houston)

Apprenticeship Information

CHICAGO | FALL 2012

DATE	VOLUNTEER ACTIVITY	ADDITIONAL NOTES
Volunteers must select one: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Tues Aug 21 ▪ Wed Aug 22 ▪ Thur Aug 23 	<p>Intros to Apprenticeships (5:30-7pm): Training in which you learn how to use 21st Century Skills to drive your apprenticeship curriculum and create a "clipboard script" for teaching a lesson.</p> <p>Classroom Management (7-8:30pm): Training in which you develop your teacher presence to manage a classroom and learn to set and maintain clear expectations with your students!</p>	<p>All volunteers must attend Intros to Apprenticeships.</p> <p>Volunteers without significant classroom teaching experience must attend Classroom Management.</p>
Volunteers not teaching a pre-made curriculum must watch a 60 minute webinar.	Lesson Planning for CTs: How to plan a lesson and maximize the learning opportunities in each component of a lesson plan	
Volunteers must select one: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Tues Aug 28 ▪ Wed Aug 29 ▪ Thurs Aug 30 	Apprenticeship Design (5:30-7pm): Training in which you will define your vision for the WOW! and plan activities that build student mastery over a 10-week period	
Week of September 3 *You will go on the day of the week that you will be teaching your apprenticeship	Apprenticeship Fairs at the schools	Volunteers "pitch" their apprenticeship projects to students in 5-7 minute presentations
Week of September 10: first lesson Continuing for 9 or 10 weeks through mid-December *Excluding weeks of October 15-26 for Track E Vacation & Thanksgiving vacation week	Teach your apprenticeship lessons!	<p>Teach for 1.5 hours/week</p> <p>Prep for about 1.5 -2hours/week</p> <p>No apprenticeships during Thanksgiving vacation week or Track E Vacation Weeks (October 15-26)</p>
Early October Week 4 or 5 of your apprenticeship	WOW! Planning 201: Group planning session for volunteers and campus staff to focus on the WOW! and revise plan for how to get students there.	Volunteers will work with their staff support person and other volunteers to reflect on progress made towards the WOW! so far, and re-focus and map out sessions moving forward to get students to a successful WOW! finish.
Week of December 10 You will determine your WOW! date in the beginning of the semester in partnership with your campus team.	WOW! Week	Citizen Teachers support students as they present what they've learned to the community! Your WOW! date will be set in partnership with your campus staff member at the beginning of your apprenticeship.