



Calling all dads! Margaret Black Elementary is excited to offer a new program at our school and we need your help. Please sign up by sending in the attached form or bringing the form in with you at Parent/teacher conferences.

WATCH D.O.G.S. (Dads Of Great Students) is an innovative father involvement, educational initiative of the National Center For Fathering. There are two primary goals of the WATCH D.O.G.S. program.

1) To provide positive male role models for the students, demonstrating by their presence that education is important.

2) To provide extra sets of eyes and ears to enhance school security and reduce bullying.

WATCH D.O.G.S. began in 1998 in a single school in Springdale, Arkansas and has since grown into a national recognized program that has brought hundreds of thousands of fathers and father figures into the school classrooms and hallways across the country, creating millions of hours of “in school” volunteer time and having a tremendously positive impact on the educational process. Today more than 4,704 schools in 46 states plus DC participate in WATCH D.O.G.S. Currently, there are WATCH D.O.G.S. programs in China, Canada, Mexico, Puerto Rico, and Barbados.

Who Are WatchDOGS?

WatchDOGS are fathers, grandfathers, uncles, and other father-figures who volunteer for at least one day each year at an official WATCH D.O.G.S. school. During the day, WatchDOGS may read and work on flash cards with students, play at recess, eat lunch with students, watch the school entrances and hallways, assist with traffic flow and any other assigned activities where they actively engage with not only their own students, but other students as well. Many school principals have reported that the mere presence of a WatchDOG dramatically reduces reports of bullying. On the day of their participation, WatchDOGS are given a brief review of their involvement and they wear an official WATCH D.O.G.S. t-shirt with a disposable ‘Dog Tag’ identifying them as WATCHDOGS.

Program Effectiveness

During 2003, **WATCH D.O.G.S.** conducted a survey of 50 participating schools nationwide. Key findings:

- 89% agree that **WATCH D.O.G.S.** is a valuable component of the school’s efforts to promote a safe and positive learning environment for students.
- 79% agree that since implementing the **WATCH D.O.G.S.** program, the school has experienced an increase in father involvement in areas other than **WATCH D.O.G.S.** (parent-teacher conferences, volunteerism in the classroom or after school, PTA involvement).

Program Benefits

- Students gain positive male role models.
- Schools gain an extra set of eyes and ears. The presence of a father or father figure will provide an additional deterrent to bullying, enhance a sense of security in the building, and will help to create an environment conducive to learning.
- Fathers get a glimpse of their students’ everyday world and learn about the increasingly complex challenges and decisions today’s youth are facing. As a result, they can learn to relate better to their student and hopefully connect with them.

- Fathers gain a greater awareness of the positive impact they can have on their student’s life in three critical areas including: academic performance, self-esteem, social behavior.
- Due to budget shortfalls and cutbacks, often teachers are presented with larger classrooms each year. Fathers and father figures (aka WatchDOGS) provide real and important help for the teachers and the students.

Program Recognition (many more recognitions are cited on the website)

- Featured on NBC’s [Today Show with Matt Lauer](#) which aired February 11, 2013, on NBC’s Nightly News with Brian Williams on September 12, 2012 and on [ABC World News Tonight with Charlie Gibson](#) in their “Spirit of America” segment on November 17, 2008.
- WATCH D.O.G.S. has also been featured on National Public Radio, BBC, on hundreds of television stations and in print and online publications around the globe.
- In June 2011, US Department of Education Secretary Arne Duncan visited a local WATCH D.O.G.S. program in the DC area to encourage fathers and father figures to become more active in the educational system and to get a firsthand glimpse of the program.
- Endorsed by the President’s Advisory Council and included in the March 2010 report to the President.
- In October 2006, **WATCH D.O.G.S.** was invited to participate on the panel for the White House
- Recognized as a “best practice” by Joyce L. Epstein, Ph.D., Director of Center on School, Family, and Community Partnerships, Johns Hopkins University.



Please fill out this form and return to the classroom teacher or the office. We look forward to having your help getting this program off the ground!

Yes! I am interested in participating in Watch D.O.G.S.

My name is: _____

My child’s name(s): _____ Teacher: _____

I would also be interesting in being a Top DOG and helping organize the Watch DOGS program.