

Room Parents 2016-2017

Preschool – 3rd Grade

Overview & Responsibilities

Thank you for volunteering your gift of time and your talents to serve as a Room Parent for your child's class. The teacher and students greatly benefit from your assistance throughout the school year. It is the goal for the room parents to find the best way to be inclusive of all parents from the class. In addition to supporting the teacher, you are a vital link between the Parent Collaborative (PC) and your classroom. Please note: these guidelines and are meant to be a helpful guide if you are new to the school or this role.

There will be 2 room parents for your class to allow for division of responsibilities:

- Emailing class families with a welcome letter and any PC communications.
- Collecting classroom funds for Christmas and Year-End gifts for the teachers and Class Treasure for the Under the Stars Auction (please see details below).
- Getting volunteers for the classroom parties by establishing a Sign-Up Genius for each party.
- Organizing and making the Classroom Treasure for the Under the Stars Auction, or delegating the task.
- Recruiting a parent to coordinate secret reader or any other duties for which the teacher may need volunteers. Please encourage your volunteers to use Sign up Genius.
- Preschool- see end of document for special considerations

Teacher meeting: Please meet as soon as possible with the teacher and the other room parent from your classroom to coordinate the roles and learn the teacher's expectations for the year. Here are a few things to discuss during the meeting:

- Party dates, times and ideas (see below for more information)
- Schedule of dates / times when volunteers will be needed and volunteer responsibilities (i.e. secret reader, centers, making copies)
- **Important allergies to note in the class** - consider "party in a bag"

Welcome letter: After the meeting, the room parent responsible for communication should send a welcome email to the class introducing themselves and the other class parents. Please include your contact information, important dates, and instructions about how parents sign up to help. (See below for a suggested letter)

Classroom parties: Please keep in mind, as you and/or other room parents in your same grade make decisions regarding parties to consider keeping a balance between being generous and not reaching extravagance.

- Each party usually consists of 2 - 3 activities such as games, crafts, and stories. Consider collaborating with the room parents from the other homeroom to come up with ideas for crafts and games.
- Set up a Sign-Up Genius for each party
- When planning for food, make sure that there are no food allergies, and try to keep it to one sweet, one salty treat. Ideally the sweet is fruit. *One option is doing a "party in a bag" and have the students bring their own snacks.*
- Keep it simple – less is often more! The children are happy with a break from their regular classroom activity.

Classroom funds for gifts and class treasure: Please decide whether to collect once at the beginning of the year or throughout the year. Please make sure the parents know both participation and specific amounts are optional.

In the past, classes have collected \$50 per family to present classroom gifts (Christmas & Year End) to the head teacher and assistant teacher, the specialists (Art, Library, Spanish, Gym, Music, Computers), the Nurse, Janitor and then the Class Treasure for the annual Auction(\$5).

Tip: AAA offers a promotion where they waive the transaction fee on Amex gift cards in December. TD Bank also has VISA Gift Cards without fees for \$25 or more. If you choose to do gift cards for Christmas and Year End, they can be purchased at that time.

Class Treasure Project for Under the Stars Auction: Each homeroom donates an item for auction or raffle at the Under the Stars Auction Event in March. The Auction Committee will email more details to you as the time approaches, but we wanted to give a general time frame for planning purposes. Room parents may delegate this task to any interested classroom parent. Use of a suggested \$5 per student for creation of these items.

November/December – Generate project ideas/Submit idea

January/February – Coordinate with teachers, students to complete project.

February – Drop off completed project to school, usually the week after February vacation.

(Optional) Classroom Social: As the room parent, you are the connection for most parents to the rest of the school and you will be valuable in creating a community for the parents in your classroom! One way you can do this is by hosting, or coordinating, a play date or a parent's night out in the first couple of months of school. This is something that has worked in the past for some classes. It is optional but encouraged, especially if you have new families in your grade.

*** Special Room Parent Considerations for Preschool:**

- It is recommended that at least 2 room parents be selected for the preschool class: One from the 2-day program and one from the 3-day program.
- All parties must be run twice so that both 2-day and 3-day children can participate. Responsibilities should be split amongst the room parents.
- Certain school-wide activities happen on a specific day (such as class picture, end-of-year celebration, etc.), which may not be a child's scheduled day at school. Room parents should help to emphasize this change in schedule for parents in the 2-day and 3-day programs so that they can make arrangements as necessary.
- Classroom funds for gifts may be allocated differently than noted above as there are two head teachers in this classroom.
- Preschool is the first introduction to BSS for many families! Your role as room parent will be vital to creating a welcoming and supportive community for new families. Thank you!!

Most importantly, please make sure to **DELEGATE** in order to keep the work load reasonable AND to get all parents involved.

Thank you so much for accepting this important role; take pride that you are a great role model for your children!

If you have any questions, please contact Lauren Tessier - Room Parent Coordinator

Suggested Checklist for Room Parents

- Set up teacher – room parent meeting
- Divide room parent responsibilities
- Create sign up genius links for each party/volunteer opportunity
- Send out welcome letter to class with class information and volunteer info
- Decide which PC meetings each room parent will attend
- Organize a play date or parent's night out to foster classroom community
- Choose Class Treasure Project Idea (November/December)
- Work on Class Treasure Project with kids and teachers (January/February)
- Submit Class Treasure Project (end of February)

Welcome Email example: Please tailor after your meeting with the teacher, this is something to get your started.

Dear Families of (class),

Welcome Families to the new school year! We wanted to take a minute to introduce ourselves as this year's room parents for (class). For those of you new to the school, our role is to help our classroom families find ways to help the students and the teachers throughout the year in and outside of the classroom. There is a lot of information in our email, so please read all the way through.

Classroom Parties:

We help coordinate the parent volunteers who assist with many parties and events in the classroom. For our classroom, there will be (# of parties). As we get closer to each party date, there will be a sign up genius email link for each event, so you can sign up to volunteer in the classroom, or you can sign up to send something into the party.

Ideas and donations are always appreciated! We are hoping to provide an opportunity for everyone to get involved. Once you have signed up for the event, it is typical that those parents will organize activities for the time slot. For example, a craft or game that the children can do with the theme.

Classroom Funds:

We also organize the Classroom Fund, which is used to buy a Christmas gift and Year-End gift for the teachers and specialists. This Classroom Fund is completely voluntary, and the suggested amount is \$50 for the year. We are happy to accept whatever amount you are comfortable donating, and no amount is too small. A portion of the Classroom Fund will also be set aside (approximately \$5 per student), to create the student-made Class Treasure Project for the school's largest fundraiser, the Under the Stars Auction in March.

Please feel free to send in your Classroom Fund donation in an envelope address to (room parent name) and the Student's Name. You may drop it off at the office, hand it to the teacher, or have your child hand it to the teacher. Thank you again.

Other Classroom Activities (Secret Reader, etc.): (*This may or not apply to your classroom*)

For those of you new to the school, parents select a date to read a book in the classroom. We are looking for a coordinator to set up and manage the secret readers sign up genius for the classroom. Please let us know if you are interested in coordinating this activity.

Back to School Night:

Back to School night is a great opportunity for you to meet other parents in the school community and classroom. There will be a presentation by the administration, as well as information on school clubs and activities. You will also get to visit your child's classroom and meet the teacher and other parents. We hope to see you there!

Feel free to email one of us with any questions or ideas you may have. This is a great class and we are looking forward to working together this year!

Thank you and we are looking forward to a fun and fabulous year!

Room Parent Contact Information:

(insert names, contact information)