

Meramec PTO Room Parent Guidelines

2019-2020

Guidelines for Room Parents 2019-2020

Make sure each parent(s) and/or guardian(s) has/have filled out a volunteer enrollment form and background check in order to participate in the school activities, no exceptions. This enrollment process is required yearly.

Room Parents General Responsibilities

- Help with party planning and execution.
- Insure your classrooms have parents present to run the 3 room parties throughout the year. Notify your Room Parent Team if unable to assist with the class parties. If no one for the Room Parent Team can make the party, reach out the other parents in the classroom at least two weeks before to ensure that the party is hosted.
- Take pictures at room parties and send them to the Yearbook Staff.
- Support the 5th Grade Promotion Ceremony and Reception. Specifically the 4th and 5th grade Room Parents help with planning and hosting the event.
- If assistance is needed from PTO (notification will be sent out), help to contact families who have not contributed party dues if needed. Dues are \$10.00 per student.
- Do not discuss your child with the teacher at the parties or on field trips.
- Preschool children will not be allowed at parties or on field trips as this is a time to give attention to our students.

Room Parent Team and Communication

- Room Parents of each classroom are considered a working team.
- A Room Parent contact information list will be emailed soon after the Room Parent meeting to all Room Parents. Please become familiar with your Room Parent Team.
- Do not be shy about initiating communication with your fellow class Room Parents around party planning and any other responsibilities. Please know that your individual contribution to the Parent Team is essential in initiating and completing the Room Parent Responsibilities.
- Please select one Room Parent of the team to communicate with the teachers and other classrooms in the grade in order to simplify the party planning process.
- Group Communication Responsibilities: initiating party planning for your classroom, being the point of contact for other Room Parents to inform of absence at the parties, and reminding Room Parents to submit school activity pictures to the year book email
- If you are planning to be a Room Parent for more than one classroom, please notify all Room Parent Teams of your plans for splitting time between the classrooms or absences well before the actual parties.
- It is encouraged to complete a roll call of your Room Parent Team to verify who will be at the party at least two week prior. Please let your Room Parent Team know as soon as possible if you plan to be absent. If several Room Parents are unable to attend the party, please send out an email to the other classroom parents asking for help. Otherwise, the party will not have prepared parents supporting the classroom.

Party Guidelines

I) Party Assignments and Coordination/Communication

- Parties begin at various times – please see details below
- School-wide snacks that are peanut-free and drinks will be planned, provided and delivered to each class by the Room Parent Co-Chairs. Room Parents will be responsible for passing them out to the students.
- As there are three parties and three classes per grade, one class should plan, obtain and distribute supplies for each party for all classes in the grade. Please see the Classroom Party Assignment in an upcoming email after the initial Room Parent meeting in September.
- 3 weeks prior to the assigned party, the assigned Room Parent Team should initiate communication with each other to create a party plan to be used in all 3 classrooms in their grade.
- 2 weeks prior to the party and once a plan is solidified, Room Parent Team from the assigned classroom is to contact all 3 classroom teachers for plan feedback and approval.
- 1 week prior to the party and once teacher approved, the assigned Room Parent Team is to email party plans and directions to each classroom teacher in the grade, all Room Parents in the entire grade and cc Room Parent Co-Chairs (Kelly Rotskoff and Karen Fouke).
- The assigned classroom/Room Parents are responsible for obtaining all supplies, organizing and disseminating them with instructions to each classrooms a few minutes before the party.
- Please avoid using any food items in your party activities as we are trying to avoid any potential allergy issues or noncompliance with the schoolwide smart snack policy. Room Parent co-chairs will be coordinating with the school nurse to plan and provide compliant/safe snacks to each classroom before the parties.
- If there are activity supplies left over, please offer them to the teacher unless they were purchased with personal funds and you wish to keep them. If there are enough supplies left over to support another 3 classroom party, please collect them and let the Room Parent Co-Chairs know as they can be held for a future party.
- The budget per party is \$60 for the entire grade or all 3 classrooms. Please, figure the cost of party before purchases are made (reimbursed for \$60, tax is not reimbursable; tax exemption letter available upon request).
- Please keep all receipts for reimbursement and fill out the PTO Reimbursement Form which are then turned into the PTO mailbox in the front office of the school.
- The goal is to minimize any teacher responsibility in planning, executing or cleanup of the room parties (aside from approving the party plans).

a. HALLOWEEN PARTY

Thursday, October 31 – 2:45 p.m. The Halloween parade begins at 2:30 p.m. The Room Parents in charge of this party should check with the teacher to see if he/she needs you to help the children dress in costumes prior to that time. Pass this arrival time information onto the other Room Parents in the party plans. Room Parents are encouraged to dress in costume if they wish and march in the parade.

Time Line of Coordination/Communication:

1. 10/10/19 – Room Parent Team is to initiate party planning with fellow Room Parents in the assigned class.
2. 10/17/19 – Assigned Room Parent Team is to solidify party plans and present/email to the 3 teachers for feedback and approval.
3. 10/24/19 – Assigned Room Parent Team to email party schedule and plans to all Room Parents in the grade, all three teachers and both Room Parent Co-Chairs.

- 10/31/19 - Assigned Room Parent Team to have all party supplies and instructions obtained, organized, and delivered for all three classes

b. WINTER PARTY

Friday, December 20 – 10 am to 1040. The Winter Sing Along is held in the Meramec School Gym starting at 9:00am. Since this is close to drop off, parents may go to the gym to wait for the Sing Along to begin. Room Parents are invited to attend and then move to the classrooms after the Sing Along is over

Time Line of Coordination/Communication:

- 11/29/19 - Room Parent Team is to initiate party planning with fellow Room Parents in the assigned class.
- 12/6/19 - Assigned Room Parent Team is to solidify party plans and present/email to the 3 teachers for feedback and approval.
- 12/13/19 - Assigned Room Parent Team to email party schedule and plans to all Room Parents in the grade, all three teachers and both Room Parent Co-Chairs.
- 12/20/19 - Assigned Room Parent Team to have all party supplies and instructions obtained, organized, and delivered for all three classes

c. VALENTINE'S DAY PARTY

Thursday, February 13 – 250. Valentine distribution may take the place of games for this party. Please check with classroom teachers.

Time Line of Coordination/Communication:

- 1/23/20 - Room Parent Team is to initiate party planning with fellow Room Parents in the assigned class.
- 1/30/20 - Assigned Room Parent Team is to solidify party plans and present/email to the 3 teachers for feedback and approval.
- 2/6/20 - Assigned Room Parent Team to email party schedule and plans to all Room Parents in the grade, all three teachers and both Room Parent Co-Chairs.
- 2/13/20 – Assigned Room Parent Team to have all party supplies and instructions obtained, organized, and delivered for all three classes

II) Classroom Party Tips and Ideas

- Example Party Plan Format:
2:45 - 2:55 Coloring Book/Page while handing out/eating snack
2:55 - 3:05 Art/craft Project
3:05 - 3:15 Game
3:20 - Help clean up and help children pack up
Setting up 3 stations of games/crafts after group snack can also be a helpful format depending on if there are enough room parents to manage each station. If there are less than 3 room parents, the previous format may be a better fit.
- Have a written schedule for your party. Estimate how much time will be needed for each activity and plan accordingly. Remember to leave time for clean up!
- Always have an emergency plan or activity in mind in case your original plan does not work or you end up with extra time (extra coloring or activity sheets work well).
- If you have several adults to help, dividing the children into small groups and rotating them through several activity stations works very well. They all do the same games or crafts but at different times. It is nice to begin or end the party with a whole group activity.
- Planning and preparation will make for a smooth party that everyone will enjoy. Do everything that you possibly can ahead of time. Check with the teacher to see when you can begin to set up the classroom.
- While it is fun to see our fellow parents, class parties are not a time to socialize with other parents. Please, participate in classroom activities and assist the teachers accordingly.
- Please respect each child's needs, abilities, and privacy.
- Remember, the party should be fun for everyone, so no child should feel left out or forced to do an activity he or she doesn't want to do. If prizes are included in games, have a prize for every child regardless and try to plan non-competitive games.

- Please avoid using any food items in your party activities as we are trying to avoid any potential allergy issues or noncompliance with the schoolwide smart snack policy. PTO co-chairs will be organizing and providing snacks and water.
- To ensure the safety and participation of grade level students, we ask that parents do not bring preschool age siblings to classroom parties.
- Keep the Halloween party simple. The students are excited after the parade. There is less time for the party because of the parade.
- You may use the gym for the 5th grade parties. Contact Cathy Kopp as soon as possible to reserve the gym and secure tables for the crafts/activities (please give her as much notice as possible).

III) Party Planning Resources:

If you find an activity, craft, handout, etc. that is a real hit or that you particularly like, please pass it onto the Room Parent Co-Chairs, Kelly Rotskoff or Karen Fouke. We are trying to add to our resources that we can provide to Room Parents to make party planning easier.

Go to the following website for detailed party ideas for each holiday. Click on the Room Parent Information link or you can email the Room Parent Co-Chairs directly:
<http://www.clayton.k12.mo.us/domain/1066>

General Ideas:

- Check the public library and the Meramec library for game/craft ideas.
- Party City, Target and 5 below are great for decorations and party favors. Buy in quantity and have enough for each classroom.
- Avoid excessively messy crafts and activities (such as those that include paint and glitter) to reduce clean up. Also, remember that projects requiring liquid glue will likely not dry before dismissal, so consider if glue stick or tape or self-adhesives if they're options.
- **Bingo** popular at almost any age, individually or in teams. Write the number on the board for younger classes. Vary markers (no food/candy) according to holiday. Vary requirements for Bingo ("X" shape, fill in one specific row, fill the whole card). Have them yell something theme-appropriate instead of Bingo.
- **Guess How Many?** Fill a see-through container with items (preferred non food/candy) and have each child put his/her name and guess on the chalkboard. At the end of the party, hold up a card with the correct answer. Closest guess receives a prize!
- **Charades** type games can be adapted to different themes and age groups. Write out the actions or sounds on slips of paper and have each child draw one out of the container.
- **Treasure Hunt** – hide toys or prizes around the room, with or without clues
- **Indoor relay races** - silly races like rolling an orange or balancing an egg on a spoon (don't tell them its hard boiled) are always fun. For Halloween – broom races.
- **Toss Games** – Use Styrofoam "snowballs" for winter party.
- **Storytelling** – Younger children enjoy a special story time; can be a good wind down activity. For Halloween, try darkening the room and listening to a scary story on tape.
- **Jokes** – Halloween is also a good occasion to share jokes if there's extra time so kids have one to share if asked while trick-or-treating.

Fifth Grade Promotion Ceremony and Reception

Promotion Ceremony in the Gym

Reception in the cafeteria immediately following Promotion Ceremony

The fifth grade room parents will meet to plan cooperatively with the classroom teachers for this special event. Room parents will coordinate the planning for refreshments and decorations. Grade Four room parents will be asked to assist with set-up, serving, and clean-up at the reception.

Yearbook:

Please find at least one Room Parent per class to be designated photographers for all parties, field trips, and class/grade related events. This Room Parent photographer will be responsible for taking pictures and sending the digital pictures to **Beth Gracie**, Yearbook Coordinator, after each event at bethgracie@hotmail.com. When sending photos, please send them in their original size and do not compress them. If you are sending more than 5 photos, email Beth and she will direct you where to send them.

Support Fundraising Efforts

Please beware of the school fundraising efforts and communicate them to fellow parents to create excitement and investment.

Additional Volunteer Opportunities

Feel free to go to the PTO website to check out information on volunteering for other fun events such as:

Black History Month

Book Fair

Brick Fundraising

Field Day

Helping Hands

International Night

Movie Night

Pancake Breakfast

Parent Connections

Staff Appreciation

Summer Send Off

Trivia Night

Yearbook