

Room Parent FAQs

As a room parent your responsibility is to act as a liaison between the teacher and the classroom parents. In this position you may: recruit and coordinate volunteers for field trips, class parties, the benefit class gift and other classroom activities, manage the collection and disbursement of class funds, and facilitate communication between the teacher and classroom parents. You do NOT need to cover all (any!) volunteer opportunities or attend all (any!) classroom celebrations or field trips.

Any forms you will need to print and put out in the classroom on Curriculum Night can be found on our PTA website: <https://www.lyonprpta.org/room-parents> This link should take you right to Room Parents.

Q: Do I need to give a speech on Curriculum Night?

A: No speech needed. Just allow the classroom teacher to introduce you and then do the following:

Let parents know there is one contact/sign-up sheet on which they add their contact information for easy classroom communication. They will indicate if they are interested in volunteering on this form.

As your teacher contacts you with needs, email those volunteers on the contact/sign-up sheet and let them know what and when the opportunity is and how many people the teacher needs. Keep track of which volunteers helped so everyone gets a turn.

Some families may not come to Curriculum Night. In order to add their contact information, you may email them if you have their information from last year's directory. Or you may send a note home to the family asking for this information via their backpacks.

Pass out the "request for funds" letter and self-addressed return envelope to each family. You can find a copy of the letter at the link above. It is called "Class Fund Letter to Parents."

***Make sure you add your names, teacher's name and change the date on the letter before printing copies.** If the parents are not at Curriculum Night, give it to the teacher to distribute to the children who will take it home.

In the past, some room parents have emailed this letter to families they can find in previous year's directories prior to Curriculum Night. You'll still need to hand it out that night.

Q: Speaking of the “request for funds” letter...can we ask for another amount, or should we stick to the \$25 that’s already on the sample letter?

A: Good question. \$25 seems to work well. Of course, if a family only returns \$5 or \$10, that’s just fine. It’s important to note that these donations are totally and completely voluntary. The room parent program is strictly a PTA endeavor. We can’t stress this enough.

Families should not feel forced to contribute to a classroom fund. You can send a reminder email to ALL families if you’re not getting responses. Simply thank everyone who has made a contribution and say if you’re planning to contribute, but haven’t yet, please send your envelope back to school with your child so it can be sent home with [designated room parent’s child].

Q: What if we don’t collect enough money to cover parties and a teacher gift?

A: That can be frustrating! The money is typically used for four things: 1) offsetting costs associated with classroom celebrations, 2) offsetting some of the cost associated with the classroom benefit gift to be auctioned off at the PTA’s legendary benefit, 3) an end of the year gift for your teacher. 4) you will be asked to give a donation to the general fund for Staff appreciation week. This is usually in April and this is divided amongst the non-teaching staff at LY & PR. If you’re short on funds, it means you will have to rely on volunteers to provide food, crafts, etc... for parties without asking to be reimbursed. This is typically the way it goes anyway. You can certainly mention that funds are low when you’re designating responsibilities for parties. If you’re really struggling to make it through the year, please contact Whitney or Jessica for suggestions.

Q: You keep mentioning an end of year teacher gift. What about a holiday gift for the teacher?

A: District 34 prohibits PTA funds from being used to purchase holiday gifts for teachers. You may want to send a message to the classroom population to let them know that there is not a class gift being given for the holidays. It’s perfectly appropriate for individual families to give their teacher a gift at the holiday, but no classroom funds can be used for a group gift.

Letting the families know this prior to winter break gives them the opportunity to purchase an individual gift *if they so choose*.

Q: What happens after Curriculum Night?

A: After Curriculum Night, all you need to do is collect the volunteer sign-up sheet and contact info sheet.

Type it up and send it out to the class since the directory does not come out until late October and only those that join the PTA get a copy of the directory.

Q: What kind of foods can we bring to classroom parties?

A: Please refer to the District 34 Food Guidelines for a complete list of what foods are on the approved list. You can review the specifics by going to the room parents' tab at <https://www.lyonprpta.org/room-parents>. Please be sure to ask the teacher if there are any food allergies in the classroom so that the food provided for parties is safe for all the children.

Q: A message from the Green Team:

A: For classroom parties, the Green Team would appreciate your using earth friendly options (reusable party supplies, paper products, and/or recyclables) so as to help minimize waste (especially plastic). At the end of each party, please use the blue recycling containers located in each classroom for any paper, glass and plastic waste labeled #1 - 5.

Questions?

If you have a comment, question, or an issue regarding your role as a room parent, please don't hesitate to call or email one of us. We're here to support your endeavors all year and we want to hear from you!

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