



ROOM PARENTS HANDBOOK 2021-2022

Thank you for volunteering to be a Room Parent for your child's class this year!

The Room Parents are a very important group of volunteers both to the teachers and to the school volunteer group. The responsibilities of the Room Parents vary from teacher to teacher. Some teachers have their Room Parents focus on planning class parties, while other teachers also have them put together the volunteer schedule, arrange for field trip volunteers, assist at special events, offer parent/student tutoring and more.

Reach out to your teacher and find out what they are hoping you can help them with.

**** Make sure you have turned in your volunteer form and you are cleared to volunteer in the classroom. Please remind all parents that if they plan to volunteer in the class during a party they need to be cleared by the district.**

Room Parents are vital. They are the link to the parents in the class for getting volunteers for school events. This handbook will outline the Room Parent responsibilities; provide sample communications to the parents and other necessary and helpful information. However, our biggest resource is each other! Please share ideas and helping hands with one another. Teamwork truly makes the dream work when it comes to room parents.

Room Parent Responsibilities

Room Parents are strongly urged to be Plantation Park Elementary PTA members. If you have not done so already, please purchase a membership. The cost is \$8.00 for an initial membership and \$6.00 for additional memberships and can be easily purchased online at ppepta.com. Room Parents are asked to communicate PTA news with their classroom parents. Staying informed of PTA news and events is essential.

In addition, Room Parents are encouraged to:

- Promote class involvement in school-wide spirit activities
- Create, distribute and maintain a voluntary classroom contact list
- Coordinate Teacher/Staff Holiday & Appreciation Week gifts and events
- Offer testing week assistance, i.e., test proctoring or student snack breaks
- Classroom mentoring and tutoring, i.e., sight word help, math flashcards

Class Parties:

A very important role of the Room Parents responsibilities includes planning the class parties. Once the teachers (school) informs you of the time and season/theme of the party, you should prepare a letter to communicate this information with the parents. (Sample letters are provided for you in this handbook.) Please keep the following in mind:

- a. ***Money is allowed to be collected to fund each party per child.*** The recommended amount is \$15.00-\$20.00 per child for the year. This money is to be used to purchase supplies and activities for the classroom. Keep all receipts. You may be asked to document your expenditures.
- b. ***The Broward County District food policy is that all food brought into the classroom must be store bought.*** Ask your teacher to provide you with a list of any children with specific food allergies.
- c. ***Food deliveries must be received in the front of school or picked up by a parent. No deliveries to the front office.*** Please make sure a parent is waiting outside to meet the delivery person. When ordering, please use your cell phone number, not the school's phone number. ** Some of our local pizza places offer great PPE discounts. Please check with experienced room parents, if you don't have a discount pizza option.

Gift Giving & Money Collection for Teachers

Room Parents may collect money for teacher's birthdays, holiday gifts, end of year, or other events. Collection of this money is optional and must be communicated as such. Teacher & Staff Appreciation Week is in May. Specific dates will be sent out via email. Room parents are encouraged to coordinate student involvement by planning a handmade gift, card, poem, letter, etc. Please see attached sample letter to parents.

Classroom Contact List

These lists are voluntary, but very useful. Parents and teachers use classroom contact lists to communicate with the class and individual parents. Distribution and maintenance of this list is important and should be done early in the year.

Sample Letters, checklists etc.

Attached are sample invitations and letters for class parties, checklists and other helpful resources. We encourage you to refer to these samples for formatting.

Teacher & Staff Favorites

Attached is a sample "Teacher Questionnaire" form that has been sent to teachers. If you have not received one filled out, we encourage you to e-mail this to your teacher and encourage them to fill one out to help coordinate gifts and other special celebrations.

QUESTIONS???

ROOM PARENTS: PLEASE CONTACT ROOM PARENT COORDINATOR

RACHEL DAVANT (rivyturner@yahoo.com)

AMANDA MENESES (secretary@ppepta.com)

ORGANIZING A CLASS PARTY

Before the party

Please talk to the teacher **before** you start planning your party or purchasing items. You may plan everything ahead of time and then come to find out that a student has an allergy or that certain decorations aren't allowed. Here are some good questions to start with:

"Do any children have food allergies?"

Usually the teacher will have been notified if any children have food allergies. But it wouldn't hurt to double check with the children's parents to be sure.

"Are there any children who cannot be photographed?"

Check with the teacher to find out if anyone in the class cannot be photographed.

"Are there any decorating restrictions?"

Most teachers recommend not bringing balloons because of possible safety issues, but if they are allowed - they make for quick and easy decorating! Keep in mind that many of our students do not celebrate specific holidays. It is recommended to "celebrate the season" and keep decor free of religious material.

"How long will I have to set up before the party and how long should the party be?"

The answer to these questions are really important. This will determine the type of party that you will have. If you have only a very short time, you will have to limit your decorations and serve easy and quick party foods, etc. Most of the time, the teachers will take 'entertain' the kids and allow you about 10-15 min. for setup. This is also a good time to make sure that you will have parent helpers!

"Are classroom supplies available to use for the party?"

If you need to use items like glue sticks, tape, or scissors for your party craft - don't assume that the teacher will let you use the class supply. Check with her/him first to see if that is okay. if not be sure to bring your own supplies.

Recruiting more help

Even though you are the designated room parent, you will still need other parent's help for the party. Often there is more than one room parent and other parents willing and able to help. So be sure to ask for volunteers to bring items, and to help you with the party itself. Be sure to send home reminders! Make a party plan including a schedule of what you want to do.

Purchase and prepare all supplies that are needed. If you are doing a craft, try pre-cutting and sorting the supplies into a zip lock bag for each child, and putting a basket with glue/scissors, etc into the middle of each table. It makes it much easier to pass out the craft supplies if they are already prepared in individual baggies! Assemble goodie bags or any take-home gifts ahead of time as well.

Setting up the party

Try to get to the school a little bit earlier than planned. The parking lot usually fills up fast on party days - so the earlier you are - the closer you get to park, and that makes a BIG difference when you are lugging all the party stuff around. Party supplies, crafts, food and juice boxes can be heavy and cumbersome - so bring along a rolling cart or a wagon to make the trip from the car to the classroom a breeze. ALWAYS go in and out the front office door to sign-in and sign-out! Do not prop open any doors while bringing items in and out for the party. Safety First! Most teachers take their students out of the room during your party set up - but be prepared if that doesn't happen. You can bring along themed coloring pages and markers or crayons, or have music or a movie playing. Just be prepared! Ask your parent helpers to be there early to help you set up. It is recommended to pass out all the food and drinks first - so when the kids come back in, they can sit down and start eating right away. Set up the rest of your activities and decorations. ****Be sure to make a plate for the teacher!!!**** This should be a relaxing and fun time for the kids and the teacher!

During the party

Class parties are fun and memorable for kids. Be sure to take pictures to catch those memories! The pictures can be shared with teachers or parents and submitted to the yearbook! Try to find music to go with the party. You can also use the music as a quick back-up game if needed (musical chairs, dance/freeze, etc.) Assign a parent helper to go around with a trash bag during the party to clean up and another parent to help with refills or

seconds. The kids should usually eat first, and then play a game (if planned). While the game is going on - you can clear the desks for a craft or activity if you have one set up. Make sure to write the child's name on the craft so they don't get theirs mixed up with their neighbor. If you want to do two things, but only have time for one activity (either a craft OR a game, but not both), then you can set up two stations and have half the class do the game while the other half does the craft; then have them switch. You are in charge of how things progress during the party and make sure that things move along. This should be a fun time for the teacher, but if there are discipline problems - please refer the student to the teacher and let the teacher take care of the problem. Party getting too loud or out of hand? Bring a book along with you that relates to the holiday or season. Try circle time and read a quick and interesting story to them. They'll quiet down pretty quickly, but will still be having fun! Check the reading list on class-parties.com for great book suggestions. Watch that clock! Make sure that you are finishing up on time. Most class parties take place during the end of the school day, so you will need to wrap up the party on time to allow students to get their backpacks ready and lined up for dismissal.

After the party

Make sure the children have their goody bags and/or take home projects as they leave to go home. Save any extra un-opened juice boxes for the next party. Wipe down desks, tables and clean up the floor. Takedown any decorations you brought. The teacher will appreciate if you put the classroom back the way it was before you got there (maybe a bit cleaner!). Be sure to send thank you notes to the parents who helped during the party.

PPE Room Parent Checklist suggestions for 2022-2023

____ Meet with your child's teacher to get room parent expectations and go over any questions you may have about the role of room parent.

____ Discuss and address any students with food allergies. Please refer to the guidelines mentioned in this handbook regarding food for school parties provided.

____ Have your child's teacher fill out the "favorites list". It will be distributed to teachers during the first few weeks of school. It's a good idea to share the "favorites list" with other volunteer parents.

____ Create a class directory. When you meet with your child's teacher get a list of all the parents and their contact information.

____ Make sure you have turned in your volunteer form and you are cleared to volunteer in the classroom. Please remind all parents that if they plan to volunteer in the class during a party they need to be cleared by the district.

____ Send email/letter to all parents introducing yourself and what they can expect this year.

____ Share with all parents the yearbook photo sharing website and contact person, Jamie Meredith. (yearbook@ppepta.com) Please encourage all parents to upload/email classroom photos throughout the year. Photos can also be sent to Jamie via text at 305-978-9291.

**** Be sure to include the grade, teacher's name and name of the event so pictures can be sorted correctly for the yearbook!**

Some Activity ideas to coordinate:

Please coordinate and plan these events using criteria determined by your teacher:

____ Fall Party

____ Winter/Holiday Celebration

____ Staff Appreciation Week

____ Yearbook Photos

____ Book Fair Help

____ Word Parade (PK/KG-1)

____ MSD Remembrance Day

____ End of the Year Party/Picnic

____ Teacher Assistance

Sample Letters/Forms

Introduction Letter/Class Party Collection Request

Dear Parents:

Welcome to _____'s Class, ____ Grade. I am writing this letter to introduce myself as this year's head Room Parent along with the other room parent team members. My name is _____. Many of you know me as _____ Mom/Dad. We have lots of wonderful things planned for our children this year! We're very excited!

During the course of the school year, I will be contacting you from time to time to ask for your help with class parties, events, and other requests from the teacher. To help get in touch with you, please fill out and return the bottom of this page with your contact information.

Instead of asking for a monetary donation for each event separately, we would like to collect a larger one-time donation to be used for all of the planned parties. **Please note: this is completely voluntary!**

(Insert requested amount and use of funds here) Please send it to the school in an envelope addressed to (Room parent name) to be brought home in (Child of designated room parent's name) backpack. If you would rather contribute supplies, (insert supply list or instructions here).

Thanks to all in advance for your help and support, I am looking forward to a great year for the kids. Please contact me with any questions or suggestions you may have. And please let me know if you are available to help in any other way.

Sincerely,

----- Cut across here please and return to Teacher or
send via email to (room parent email) -----

Student's Name: _____

Parent's Name: _____

Phone Number: _____ Email: _____

- ☐ I allow my child's name, phone number and email to be included on the Class Contact List.
- ☐ I allow my child to have their pictures taken during class events for Year Book.

Parent Signature: _____

Parents! We need your help with the upcoming Fall/Winter Party!!

Date: _____ **Time:** _____

Items Needed: _____

Donation Requested: _____

We also need parent helpers during the party, please let me know if you can lend a hand.

**Thank you,
Room Parents Contact Details**

Phone:

Email:

End of Year Celebration

Dear Parents,

We can't believe the year is almost over! We will have a small end of the year party in the classroom on (date). We are once again asking for your help to make the something to remember!

We would like to present a thank you card to (teacher's name) from each student to thank them for all of their hard work and dedication. Please send them in with your child on (date) so we can make (Teacher's name) know how their hard work will not be forgotten.

Thank you very much! Room Parent(s)

Teacher's Appreciation Week

Just a reminder that it is teacher appreciation week. Perhaps you and your child would like to make a card or other homemade gift for (Teacher's Name). Our PTA has many fun treats and surprises in store for our teachers, but your help making (Teacher's Name) feel extra special is appreciated. Your room parents will be keeping you posted as we shower out teacher with extra gratitude this week! Our teachers work hard and it is always nice to show our appreciation.

Thank you,
Room Parent's Contact Details

Room Party Checklist

Season/Holiday/Theme: _____

(This is a checklist to help plan your class party, list materials needed for party and who is signed up to bring them)

_____ Snacks/drinks (store bought):

_____ Paper Products:

_____ Craft #1

_____ Craft #2

_____ Activity/game:

_____ Goody bags:

_____ Decorations:

_____ Volunteers who are coming to help:

_____ Other materials needed (trash bags, scissors music, books etc.):

_____ Notes



Teacher + Staff Favorites Sheet

Teachers + Staff,

Please take a moment to fill-out this information sheet to help PPE room parents and volunteers get to know you a little bit better!

Name: _____

Favorite Food / Drink: _____

Favorite Music: _____

Hobbies: _____

Favorite Color: _____

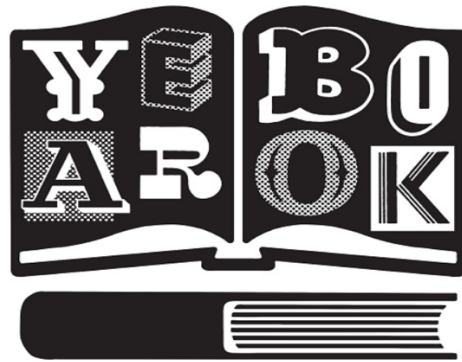
Favorite Leisure Time Activity: _____

Favorite Sports Team: _____

Favorite Restaurant: _____

Birthday (Month/Day): _____

Favorite Store/Mall:



PPE YEARBOOK NEEDS YOU!

Please remember to take tons of photos during class parties and other fun events at PPE for our 2022-2023 school yearbook.

Submit all of your photos to: Jamie Meredith via email or text!

email: yearbook@ppepta.com

text: 305-978-9291

Please include the grade, teacher's name and name of the event!

ICE CREAM WEDNESDAYS



AM
TICKET
SALES

65
CENTS

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

We need parents to help sell tickets at morning drop off AND/OR distribute ice cream during lunch.

Email volunteers@ppepta.com

DON'T HAVE CASH?

Make sure to add money to your student's myschoolbucks account