

## Room Parent FAQs

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As a room parent you'll help build community with classroom families and collaborate with your teacher to organize class celebrations. 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 the Room Parent page.

### **Q: What happens on Curriculum Night?**

A: Ask the classroom teacher to introduce you and then do the following:

Let parents know there is a sign-up sheet to which they can 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 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 with the student asking for this information.

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. That is fine to do but you'll still need to hand it out that evening.

**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 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] or share your Venmo/Zelle information.

**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) staff appreciation & end of the year gifts for your teacher, 3) offsetting some of the cost associated with the classroom benefit gift to be auctioned off at the PTA’s benefit, and 4) potentially a donation to the general fund for school staff at the end of the year. If you’re short on funds, it means you will have to rely on volunteers to provide supplies for parties. 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 the Room Parent coordinators for suggestions ([LYPRroomparents@gmail.com](mailto:LYPRroomparents@gmail.com)).

**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’ll want to send a message to the classroom families in early December 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 holidays, but classroom funds can not be used for a group gift.

**Q: What happens after Curriculum Night?**

A: After Curriculum Night, all you need to do is collect the contact info sheet. Type it up and send it out to the class so that families can contact each other.

You’ll also start collaborating with your teacher to plan class celebrations (Halloween is usually the first one) and other volunteer opportunities. We’re hoping that parents will be allowed back in the building without restrictions this year but it still needs to be confirmed by the administration. Communicate with your teacher throughout the year about how you can help them organize classroom events and coordinate volunteers.

You'll hear from us (the Room Parent coordinators) throughout the year with requests to forward PTA communications to your class families.

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

A: We have not heard yet if food will be allowed in classrooms. Please refer to the District 34 Food Guidelines for a complete list of what foods are on the approved list. Please be sure to ask your teacher if there are any food allergies in the classroom so that the food provided for parties is safe for all children.

For classroom parties, the Green Team would appreciate you 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.

**Q: When's the PTA benefit and what's a benefit class gift?**

A: The LY/PR PTA Benefit is the PTA's biggest fundraising effort of the year. It's a lot of fun, a great community builder, and the best way for us to raise funds for all of the programs that the PTA supports. It usually happens in February or March but this year's date has not yet been determined.

One of the fundraising efforts at the benefit is a silent auction. All of the items in the auction are donated by community members or local businesses. In past years, we have asked each class to create a themed basket (using donations from classroom families) to be included in the silent auction. It's a fun and creative way to get classroom families involved and excited about the benefit. Depending on the plans for the benefit this year, we may ask Room Parents to find a volunteer from the class to coordinate this basket.

**Q: What do I need to do for Teacher Appreciation Week?**

A: We have Teacher Appreciation Week Chairs who do an amazing job coming up with creative ways to show our gratitude to the teachers and staff during Teacher Appreciation Week. The schoolwide programming for the week will cover all of the teachers BUT it's also really nice for the Room Parents to plan some fun things and/or a gift for their classroom teacher. It's a great opportunity to get parents and students involved. You are allowed to use class funds to purchase a gift for your teacher. If you have any questions or want some ideas about what people have done in the past, please reach out to us.

Questions?

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

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