

**Highland View Elementary School**

**ROOM PARENT GUIDE**

**2017-2018**

Questions?

Contact your HVES Room Parent Coordinator:

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**YOU SIGNED UP TO BE A ROOM PARENT! NOW WHAT?**

As a Room Parent volunteer you will play a key role in organizing classroom activities, communicating important information and reminders to parents, and supporting your child’s teacher so that s/he can focus on providing our kids with the best possible educational experience. You will be a party-planning, donation-coordinating, folder-stuffing, volunteer-soliciting rock star. You’ll be playing an active role in your child’s school life, and providing critical backup to our HVES staff. You are greatly appreciated!

This guide is intended to serve as an overview of your role and responsibilities as a Room Parent. While we’ll cover the basics here, you MUST proactively partner with your classroom teacher to make sure his/her particular needs are being met. Check in often. Each class has at least two room parents so coordinate with each other on how to share responsibilities throughout the year. If you have questions along the way, reach out to your Room Parent Coordinator for help.

**ROOM PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES TIMELINE**

SEPTEMBER

* Create and distribute class contact list
* Check in with teacher for specific needs
* Attend Volunteer Training
* Confirm Thursday Folders volunteer schedule
* Circulate adopted staff and “Staff Favorites” info to class parents

OCTOBER

* Plan class Halloween Party (with input from teacher)

DECEMBER

* Coordinate holiday gifting for teacher and adopted staff

JANUARY/FEBRUARY

* Plan class Valentine’s Day Party (with input from teacher)

MAY

* Staff Appreciation Week
* Send communications as requested by Sunshine Committee
* Remind parents of adopted staff and “Staff Favorites”
* Check in with teacher on any end of year plans/celebrations and whether assistance is needed

JUNE

* Check in with teacher for specific end of year needs
* Coordinate end of year gifting

ALL YEAR

* Check in with your teacher & adopted staff periodically for updated needs
* Forward messages from the school and PTA as needed
* **Remember to recognize Birthdays for your teacher & adopted staff!**

**Note:**

This year’s Kindergarten parents will be responsible for next year’s Kiss and Cry (first day of school).

Fourth grade parents are responsible for Fifth grade promotion.

**CREATING A CLASS CONTACT LIST**

One of your first tasks as a Room Parent this year will be to compile a contact list for distribution to class parents. At Sneak Peek and a Back to School Night, parents visiting the classroom were asked to provide their contact information on a sheet that you should have received and can use to create your class list. Copies are kept in the Room Parent binder in the main office. Since not all parents make it to these events, there’s a page at the end of this guide that you can use if needed to send out via Thursday Folders to make sure everyone has a chance to get you their contact information. Once you’ve compiled everyone’s information into a master list, please email it out to all class parents.

**CHECKING IN WITH YOUR TEACHER**

Your primary role as a Room Parent is to support your classroom teacher so that they can better give their time and attention to instructing our students. It’s critical that you communicate with your teacher, checking in with them to find out what specific needs they have. Make sure to reach out as soon as possible at the beginning of the year to get a sense of how your teacher could use your help. Always check in before planning classroom parties. Remember to check in periodically to see if the classroom is running low on any supplies, if there are special projects you can help with, etc. Keep in mind that being a Room Parent does NOT mean you have to purchase or do everything yourself. Use your class contact list to reach out to class parents with requests for donations or help. For bigger requests, you can use the Wednesday Wishes process coordinated by Deb Levy (debklevy@gmail.com).

**THURSDAY FOLDERS**

Thursday Folders are an invaluable communication tool between home and school. A lot of information passes through them, and stuffing them takes time. We want to ensure that every one of our teachers has a volunteer to stuff Thursday folders for them each week. Typically, volunteers sign up to take on this responsibility for the year at Sneak Peek. If, however, your teacher needs more help, you can assist by reaching out to your class parents to solicit volunteers.

As a Room Parent, you may want to utilize Thursday Folders as a means of reaching class parents (not all use email). If you have a notice to put in Thursday Folders, please ensure that you have it translated (all PTA communications should be translated into Spanish by our translation team – accessible through the “Volunteer Resources” section of the PTA website) and that you have it copied and in your teacher’s mailbox by the start of lunches on Wednesday. The Room Parent Coordinator will email the room parents templates in both English and Spanish three weeks before class parties for your convenience.

**ADOPTED STAFF**

We appreciate ALL of our HVES staff! To ensure that we show that appreciation to non-classroom staff, we assign “adopted staff” to each class. As a Room Parent, you will be responsible for making sure your adopted staff have support if/when it is needed, and that they feel the HVES love – especially around the holidays, during Staff Appreciation Week, and at year end. And don’t forget your adopted staff birthdays! A copy of the adopted staff assignments will be emailed to you and available in the Room Parent binder in the main office.

**STAFF GIFTING**

Traditionally, families show teachers and staff their appreciation with gifts during the holiday season and at the end of the school year. Contributing toward class gifts is 100% OPTIONAL. As a Room Parent, you will coordinate the collection of donations and will purchase gifts on behalf of the class for your teacher and adopted staff. Send a note out to class parents via email and Thursday folders inviting them to contribute toward gifts if they choose. Keep in mind that, per MCPS regulations, the combined total for all gifts given to a single staff member in a calendar year cannot exceed $100 per family. No individual gift from a family to a staff member may exceed $20 in value.

**COLLECTING MONEY**

When collecting money from families, please keep documentation with the parent’s name and the amount donated. This can be done with an excel spreadsheet. This is not for school purposes, but for your own. A parent may ask how much was donated and what was purchased. You do not need to tell families specific donators, but this is for your own personal use.

**STAFF FAVORITES**

Imagine the joy on your child’s teacher’s face when you present them with a gift card from their favorite store, and a bouquet of her favorite flower, wrapped in a bow that’s his / her favorite color. How could you possibly have known to give such a perfect gift? You consulted the Staff Favorites sheet she filled out at the beginning of the year. Your Room Parent Coordinator collects a questionnaire from all staff at the start of school intended to help give Room Parents guidance when it comes time for gifting, Staff Appreciation and generally doing nice things for our staff. Completed Staff Favorites sheets are kept in the Room Parent binder in the main office. Copies will also be given to you along with your class contact list and party help signup sheets.

**CLASS PARTIES**

As a Room Parent you will help organize parties for your child’s class celebrating Halloween and Valentine’s Day. Here’s how to plan a classroom party, in 9 easy steps…

1. Touch base with your fellow Room Parents to decide who will plan and run the party
2. Talk to the Teacher to find out his/her preferences
3. Decide on games, crafts, activities, etc. for the party
4. Use your class email list to reach out to other parents for food\*, supplies and volunteer support
5. Print a party flyer for Thursday Folders inviting all to attend and help out (templates you can use will be emailed to you by your Room Parent Coordinator and available on the PTA website)
6. Check back in with the Teacher to finalize plans and coordinate a convenient time for set up
7. Arrive early to prepare and set up
8. Host the party! Some teachers are more involved than others so be sure to communicate about who will oversee games, etc.
9. Clean up! Leave the room cleaner than when you arrived. (Bring wipes and paper towels)

\*Try to keep snacks healthy (fruit, veggies, yogurt, etc.) and limit sweets to one item (cupcakes OR cookies, not both).

**STAFF APPRECIATION WEEK**

Every spring, HVES families dedicate an entire week to showing our teachers and staff just how much we appreciate all that they do. As a Room Parent, you can help by reminding class parents to take this opportunity to send in notes of thanks, have their children write notes or draw pictures, or otherwise show their appreciation for your teacher and adopted staff. Circulating Staff Favorites can be helpful at this time as well to give families ideas of more personalized ways to show their gratitude. You can find “Staff Favorites” in the Room Parent binder in the PTA drawer. Please make a copy of the sheet and put the original back in the binder.

**END OF YEAR**

In the home stretch, Room Parents keep going strong! As the school year comes to an end, check in with your child’s teacher to see how you can assist with any end of year celebrations, and if s/he has any other needs you or other class parents can help with. This is also a time to coordinate (optional) parent participation in giving gifts of appreciation to your classroom teacher and adopted staff.

**PHOTOCOPYING AND COPY ROOM BEST PRACTICES**

* Always give teachers and staff the right of way for copier use
* Have Spanish translation on the back with “Version en español al reverso” on the English side
* Use the PTA’s yellow paper (not the school’s paper) / You can use white paper for class parties, collecting money for gifting, etc.
* Allow one extra copy for teachers

**For School-Wide Notices:**

* Use “Youngest Only” copy numbers when possible / Make sure you have the youngest only list to guarantee everyone is receiving the correct paperwork.
* Place a copy of the event flyer in the staff mailboxes, including Mrs. Zolkower and Mrs. Fowleʼs, which are outside of their office doors
* Keep a copy in the PTA drawer in the folder labeled “PTA Related Flyers”
* Place extra copies on top of the counter, near mailboxes, above PTA drawer
* Hang a copy on the PTA bulletin board and staff board
* Use the PTA logo on all PTA flyers:



CLASS PARTY PLANNING IDEAS

Games/Activities

Themed variations on BINGO (GHOST/SWEET, etc.)

Math BINGO

Musical Math Squares

Themed word searches

How many words from SCARECROW/VALENTINE, etc.

Guess how many jellybeans are in the jar (anything of your choice)

Crafts

Decorate a treat bag

Make a mask

Decorate a mini pumpkin

Decorate valentine hearts

Healthy Snacks

Fruit and Veggies with Hummus

Yogurt parfaits (can be fun for kids to make their own)

Clementine “pumpkins”

Banana “ghosts”

Pretzels

Pita chips

Water

Get creative, try to incorporate what the kids are learning in class and make sure to partner with your teacher. Check Pinterest or do a Google search for more fun ideas!

**CONTACT INFORMATION REQUEST FORM**

Dear Parents:

Please provide your contact information so that your Room Parents can create and distribute a class list and keep you updated with important class-related information. This information is for class-use only. It is not intended for the PTA directory, or for any MCPS purpose. Thank You!

Name\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Email\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Phone\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Child’s Name\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Estimados Padres:

Por favor proporcione su información de contactopara que sus padres de aula pueden crear y distribuir una lista de clase y mantenerte informado con la información importante relacionada con la clase. Esta información es sólo para uso de la clase. No se pretende para el directorio de la PTA, o para cualquier propósito MCPS. ¡Gracias!

Nombre\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Email\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Número de teléfono\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_­­­­\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Nombre del niño\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_