



Dale Street PTO
Room Parent Handbook
2018 -2019

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CONTACT INFORMATION:

TOWN WIDE ROOM PARENT COORDINATOR

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MEMORIAL

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TOWN WIDE ROOM PARENT COORDINATOR – Position held for 5 years

Responsibilities of the Town Wide Room Parent Coordinator

1. Oversee the selection of the Room Parent Coordinators and assist in any issues that arise throughout the year
2. Track all parents who submit a request to be a room parent and present the requests to all Room Parent Coordinators at the Room Parent Lottery
3. Oversee the Room Parent Lottery and ensure that all rules and regulations are followed
4. Contact Principals and coordinate the Room Parent Teas for Memorial, Wheelock, and Dale
5. Oversee all Room Parent Teas

ROOM PARENT COORDINATOR – Position held for 2 years

Responsibilities of Room Parent Coordinators

1. Act as a liaison between your grade's room parents and the Town Wide Room Parent Coordinator
2. Act as a resource for the Room Parents
3. Plan and organize initial meeting with Room Parents well before Halloween celebrations.
4. School specific responsibilities – Memorial: Organize Field Day.
Memorial/Wheelock/Dale: assist with Winter Carnival Booth staffing
5. Handle the lottery to select Room Parents and choose Head Room Parents

*** Room Parent Coordinators may bypass the Lottery and place their names at the top of the list as Room Parent for their child's classroom if they wish to be a Room Parent in addition to being a Room Parent Coordinator***

If more than two (2) parents volunteer to be a Room Parent in any one classroom, the Room Parent Coordinators will conduct a lottery. (See Lottery Guidelines) The Coordinators will notify each teacher of the Room Parents selected before the parents are notified. A Head Room Parent will be assigned after which time those chosen by lottery will be called to confirm their assignment. An e-mail should notify those selected and not selected through the lottery. Here are the emails to be sent:

Lottery Guidelines

- Those interested in being a Room Parent volunteer must complete the PTO Volunteer Form online by the established deadline.
- Parents may only be a Room Parent in ONE class per year.
- Those who have never been a Room Parent before are pulled first in the lottery. If all those names are picked and there is still a need for additional Room Parents, names can be pulled from the list of parents who have previously been a Room Parent, including those who have previously been a Room Parent for another child.
 - Two names will be pulled by lottery for each classroom.
 - Coordinators will notify teacher of these names before the parents are notified.

- o A Head Room Parent will be assigned by Room Parent Coordinator if one of the Room Parents did not choose to be Head Room Parent.
- o Those chosen by lottery will be emailed the below to confirm their assignment:

Congratulations, you have been selected to be the Room Parents for <insert teacher's name> class this year. PTO Room Parent Coordinators held a meeting on, <insert date of Room Parent Lottery>, to select Room Parents for grades K-5 using the online form stating your preferences. We did our best to give everyone their first choice, but did have to resort to the lottery system for some class rooms. Thank you so much for volunteering. Please respond back to this email to let me know that you accept your new position.

<insert selected name> <insert selected email>
Head Room Parent

<insert selected name> <insert selected email>
Team Room Parent

Each classroom has two Room Parents to provide party planning and facilitating. The Head Room Parent should work directly with your teacher to support what works best in their classroom. There are several celebrations throughout the school year. Feel free to solicit assistance from additional classroom parents to help out with food donations or to volunteer during the parties. I recommend contacting your teacher ASAP to introduce yourself and to see how they would like things to work.

We have scheduled a Room Parent Tea at Dale Street School on **Thursday, September 27 at 9:30 am.** There, you will be giving all the information you need.

We look forward to seeing you there.

<insert Room Parent Coordinator's Name>
<insert Room Parent Coordinator's Title>

- o Those volunteers NOT chosen in the lottery should be sent the below email by Room Parent Coordinator:

Thank you for volunteering to be a <insert grade> Room Parent this year. Unfortunately, your child's classroom had multiple candidates and, using a lottery method, you were not selected. But, the room parents who were selected for your classroom were given your names as potential volunteers for the parties. Please feel free to reach out to the room parents to volunteer if you do not hear from them.

Thanks again for volunteering and please try again next year.

<insert Room Parent Coordinator's Name>

<insert Room Parent Coordinator's Title>

- o It is imperative that fairness and honesty are used during the Lottery.

ROOM PARENTS

- **Please note that Room Parents are free to distribute the below responsibilities between their positions as they feel fit.**

Head Room Parent Responsibilities

1. Act as a team leader in coordinating Team Room Parent activities.
 - a. Meets/speaks with classroom teacher to confirm celebration dates/times and discuss celebration guidelines.
 - b. Coordinates meetings with Team Room Parents to plan/organize activities/snacks for class celebrations.
 - c. Distributes Celebration Money, which is given to the Head Room Parent by the PTO treasurer of their school, to reimburse Team Room Parents for craft supplies purchased.

This amount is approximately \$7/student/year per PTO vote. This money may NOT be used for teacher gifts

- d. Contact all parents in classroom through Sign-Up Genius asking who is interested in donating food and/or craft supplies for class celebrations.
 - e. See addendum for school specific responsibilities, if any.
2. Act as contact person for the Team Room Parents with the classroom teacher and Room Parent Coordinators.
3. Distribute the class directories once they are completed by the Town Wide Room Parent Coordinator.

Team Room Parent Responsibilities

1. Plans and organizes celebration activities WITH TEACHER APPROVAL.
 - a. Coordination of donations of paper goods and drinks.
 - b. Sets up for celebration and cleans up afterward.
 - c. Handles calls/emails for classroom donations. (Be sure to run celebration plans by teacher before each celebration so he/she can plan accordingly, prepare the students and make any necessary suggestions, such as allergy-friendly snacks.)
2. Assists in soliciting parental support for activities and fundraising events (Winter Carnival and 5th grade: taking pictures at classroom celebrations for DVD/yearbook).

3. If desired, coordinates class gift for teacher(s). It is recommended that contributions for teacher gifts, which are always optional, are collected once a year and used for a holiday gift and end of year gift. An amount of \$10-\$20 per student may be suggested and used for the teacher and assistant teacher. Lists of those who contributed should not be made.

If a Room Parent runs into any problems or needs assistance, she/he should contact her/his Coordinator.

SCHOOL CELEBRATIONS AND EVENTS

Please read the below carefully. Dale Street Room Parents have different responsibilities than at Memorial and Wheelock.

Class Celebrations

No Halloween Parade

Halloween Celebration (Wednesday, October 31) – Coordinate snacks only (drop off at the school office with teacher's name attached).

Winter Holiday Celebration (Friday, December 21) – Planned and led by Room Parents in consultation with the classroom teacher.

Valentine's Day Celebration (Thursday, February 14) – Coordinate snacks only (dropped off at the school office with teacher's name attached).

Grade 5 End of Year Celebration (Tuesday, June 11 if there are no snow days) – Coordinate snacks for the Class Reception following the Grade 5 Celebration.

Grade 4 End of Year Celebration (June date TBD) – Watermelon and popsicles provided by the PTO

PLEASE NOTE: Siblings are NOT allowed to attend school celebrations. These celebrations are strictly for your student and their class. Thank you in advance for your understanding and cooperation. Please contact your teacher directly to determine what time your class celebrations will be.

Recommended Planning

Several weeks before the celebration, the Head Room Parent should contact the classroom teacher to ask if he/she has any specific suggestions or restrictions for the celebration and what time they would like to hold the celebration. Remember to ask about any special dietary and/or religious restrictions, particularly food allergies.

Coordinate with the other Room Parent to plan a game or activity and a simple craft. Divide responsibilities among the Room Parents for purchasing supplies and making any necessary emails for donations. Arrange to have the food left at the school office on the day of the celebration, identified with the teacher's name, grade and person donating the treat. Use funds given out at the beginning of the year by the PTO to pay/reimburse for donations purchased for celebration.

Celebration Tips

1. Use the list of classroom emails for donations. This gives others the opportunity to contribute to the child's classroom. We ask that there be one sweet treat provided and other treats be healthy snacks. (Ex. Popcorn, fruit, veggies with dip). No HOT drinks.
2. Room Parents (NOT the Coordinators) are responsible for collecting donations from parents and/or supplying (using the allocated celebration money) napkins, cups, tablecloths etc. for each celebration.
3. Celebration Bags/"Loot" bags are PROHIBITED. Such items can create hurt feelings for those who do not receive them at their classroom celebrations.
4. Three parents can assist with each celebration. Those parents bringing snacks for the celebration should not stay through the celebration. Only those adults involved in running the celebration should be in the classroom during the celebration. If there was a parent that volunteered to be a Room Parent but was not chosen, invite he/she to a classroom celebration. Room Parent coordinators will have notified you if this was the case. Rotate parents at each celebration to ensure that as many parents that would like to have the opportunity to come in can.
5. Please follow classroom teachers' wishes as to when the celebration should start and end.
6. Keep in mind that the kids just want to visit and relax. Keeping things calm and unrushed helps them achieve this. Try not to overload them with too many celebration activities.
7. Respect the various cultural and religious backgrounds of the children in the class by engaging in non-secular activities, stories and songs. Instead, try focusing on the season.
8. When the celebration is over, please clean up the classroom to the teachers' satisfaction.

Celebration Crafts, Activities, and Games

1. Keep it simple!! NO GLUE or HOT GLUE GUNS
2. Offer one activity and/or game. Time runs out quickly and children are disappointed if they can't get everything done.
3. Celebration ideas: Decorate a Cupcake/Cookie, Bingo (holiday related), Guess the Number (candy corn, candy canes, hearts, etc.), Simon Says, Paper Snowflakes, Heart shaped Puzzle, etc.
4. Prepare supplies and practice crafts and game ahead so that you are ready at celebration time.
5. Glue does not dry in time!! If there is a craft planned, please keep in mind that glitter and glue do not hold up well on the way home.

6. The Room Parents must clean up whatever mess is created during the celebration.

Winter Carnival:

Someone from the Winter Carnival Booth Committee will be in touch with each Head Room Parent in January with instructions for finding volunteers to staff your class booth. The date for this year's Winter Carnival is TBD.

Class Directory

New this year, the class directory will be collected using a Google Form. The Town Wide Room Parent Coordinator will put together each class's directory and email it to the Head Room Parent as soon as the directories are completed. Each class directory will only include the children in that specific class. Any parent who has not filled out the Google Form will not be included in their class directory.

CLASS GIFTS

Sometimes the Room Parents will organize a class gift for the teacher and classroom aide during the holiday season and/or end of the year. There are guidelines regarding gift giving that are important to follow so that we don't put our teachers in a position of having to refuse a lovely gift. These guidelines are dictated by the teachers' contracts and the Massachusetts Department of Education. Please see the following information regarding Gift Giving policies.

Gift Giving Policy Guidelines

- By law, the amount that a school staff member can receive at any one-time from any one individual cannot exceed \$50. Class gifts to a teacher may be up to \$150. Names of those who contributed should not be disclosed and those who contributed should not also give the teacher and individual gift. (see below for Dept. of Ed specifics)
- Ignoring this law violates the teacher's contract and puts them in an uncomfortable situation.
- Giving such a gift could be interpreted as a condition for a grade or favor on behalf of a child.
- Instead of giving personal gifts, consider giving a gift that can be used by the teacher in the classroom.
- Money can be given to the teacher via the Teacher Thank You Gift Fund in any dollar amount.
- Consider honoring a teacher with the Gift Books program.
- Consider collecting \$20 per student (with a one-time solicitation) and using that money for holiday gift and end of year gift.

From: www.mass.gov/ethics/education-and-training-resources:

Public employees, including teachers, are prohibited by §§ 3 and 23(b)(2) of the conflict of interest law from accepting gifts worth \$50 or more that are given to them because of the

position they hold, or because of some action they could take or have taken in their position. Teachers and other public employees may accept gifts that are worth less than \$50, but they have to disclose in writing the fact that they have done so if, based on the circumstances, a reasonable person would think that the teacher might unduly show favor to the giver or the giver's child because of the gift. G.L. c. 268A, § 23(b)(3). Therefore, whether you may accept the gift depends on its value, and whether you must disclose a gift you are allowed to accept depends on the circumstances.

A teacher who is offered an end-of-the-year gift worth \$50 or more should not accept it, unless it is a permissible class gift. The Commission created an exemption in its regulations at 930 CMR 5.08(14) to permit class gifts to teachers in certain circumstances. Under the exemption, the parents and students of a class, acting together, may give a gift worth up to \$150 to a teacher, provided that the gift is identified only as being from the class, and the names of the givers and the amounts given are not identified to the teacher. A single class gift worth up to \$150, or several class gifts during the school year with a total value up to \$150, may be given. A teacher may not accept any other gift from someone who has contributed to a class gift. Therefore, if an individual gift is offered, before accepting it, the teacher must confirm that the giver did not contribute to the class gift.

A gift given to a teacher to use solely in the classroom or to buy classroom supplies is not considered a gift to the teacher personally, and is, therefore, not subject to the \$50 limit on personal gifts to teachers. Parents may give gifts to the classroom or the school in accordance with the rules of the school district. A teacher who receives such a gift must keep receipts documenting that the money was used for classroom supplies.

IMPORTANT THINGS TO REMEMBER – A MESSAGE FROM THE SCHOOL NURSES

Please check with the school nurse, Kathy Thompson, about existing food allergies and sensitivities.

Holiday Celebrations Food is allowed for few yearly school celebrations. The holiday celebration is usually consistent throughout the school. To remain sensitive to food allergies and health regulations, we encourage healthy options for your celebrations. Room Parents are encouraged to contact our school nurse if they have questions about snacks related to student allergies. No sugared drinks are permitted and only one "sweet" treat is allowed among other offerings. Teachers will contact room parents to arrange for treats as needed. **No candy** is permitted at any school sponsored celebration held during regular school hours. Please do not send in snacks unless you were contacted to do so.

ALLERGY INFORMATION – A MESSAGE FROM THE SCHOOL NURSES

All Medfield Schools are allergy aware. Teachers and classroom aids have been trained in the signs and symptoms of an allergic reaction and how to administer an Epi-Pen.

We have many students in each building diagnosed with life threatening food allergies. Food allergies affect 15 million people in the US and 1 in 13 children. Food allergy symptoms send someone to the emergency room every three minutes. The top 8 foods that account for 90% of all food allergy reactions are: eggs, peanuts, tree nuts, milk, shellfish, fish, soy, and wheat. In addition to allergies, we also have several students who cannot tolerate lactose or gluten in their diets.

Some General Guidelines for Celebrations:

Please check with the nurse (either email or call) prior to the celebration/event to determine what allergies you need to be aware of. Unfortunately, due to privacy laws, we cannot give out student names. Therefore, we want to serve items that everyone in the class can enjoy.

For safety reasons: Please refrain from: hot liquids, chocolate fountains, or items with sticks.

If you are cutting up fruit, please be mindful of cross contamination with utensils that may have been used with other foods, such as peanut butter.

Serving foods with labels is safer. Please contact the nurse if you need help deciphering ingredients.

Some snack choices that most students can have:

Popsicle brand popsicles (do not contain whey, which is a milk protein) Please buy boxes that include some flavors without red food dye.

Skinny Pop Popcorn: Original (peanut/nut, gluten, dairy and MSG free)

Bachman Pretzel Sticks (made in a facility that does NOT process nuts/peanuts)

Lays Potato Chips/original (does not contain milk protein)

*Donut Express Bakery in Medfield is a nut/peanut free facility.

Thank you for helping to keep all of our students safe!!

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Wheelock School Nancy Schiemer 508-242-8577 or nschiemer@email.medfield.net

Dale Street School Kathy Thompson 508-242-8573 or kthompson@email.medfield.net