



Portola Springs Elementary PTA

ROOM PARENT GUIDELINES

ROLE OVERVIEW

Room Parents serve as a liaison between the teacher and classroom families.

Your main responsibilities:

- Support the teacher's needs and preferences.
- Coordinate class events, parties, and teacher gifts.
- Communicate PTA news and recruit volunteers as needed.
- Manage class donations and report finances transparently.
- Ensure confidentiality and inclusivity.

ROOM PARENT ROLES

Room Parent Coordinator (PTA representative)

- Provide guidelines and support for all room parents.
- Ensure consistency across classes.
- Liaison between PTA and Room Parents.

Classroom Room Parent & Co-Room Parent(s)

- Liaison between teacher and classroom families.
- Organize and communicate classroom events and activities.
- Manage class donations and budgets.
- Communicate information on behalf of PTA.

ROOM PARENT EXPECTATIONS

Support the Teacher First	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Always check with the teacher before planning or communicating about classroom activities.• Respect their preferences, classroom schedule, and boundaries.
Communicate Clearly and Often	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Serve as the main liaison between the teacher, families, and the PTA.• Share information in a timely, concise, and inclusive way.• Keep communication neutral and focused on class needs.
Respect Privacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Keep family and student information and donation amounts confidential.• Never share student or family details including email addresses, phone numbers, etc.
Encourage Participation, Don't Pressure	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Invite all families to contribute time, money, or supplies. Be clear that participation is optional.• Celebrate contributions of all sizes and types.
Be Inclusive	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Plan activities and events that reflect the diversity of the classroom.• Be mindful of different cultures, dietary needs, and family circumstances.

Stay Organized and Reliable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Track donations, volunteer sign-ups, and deadlines carefully. • Follow through on commitments and ask for help if needed.
Work with the PTA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote PTA events and share information as requested. • Serve as a bridge between the classroom and the wider school community.
Keep a Positive Spirit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Model kindness, cooperation, and gratitude. • Help create a welcoming, supportive classroom community for students and parents.

ROOM PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Manage Classroom Budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collect, oversee, and account for all funds collected from families for classroom parties, supplies and teacher gifts. • <u>Required</u> to provide financial updates to families and the Room Parent Coordinator twice a year itemizing transaction of monies collected, and monies spent. Submissions are requested in December, and the end of the school year beginning in June. The Room Parent Coordinator will provide more guidance during those times.
Class Parties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with your teacher to schedule parties. • Communicate details and recruit volunteers. • Budget expenses accordingly to cover all events.
Teacher Gifts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine gifts for the teacher throughout the year (ex: birthday, holiday(s), and Teacher and Staff Appreciation Week). • Use the Getting to Know You Survey (provided by the Room Parent Coordinator) to inspire ideas for gifts. • Notify families in advance what will be purchased and when it will be presented to the teacher, include them where possible. • Gifts should represent the entire class; all students sign the card. • Note: It is encouraged to share teacher's favorites with families should they choose to gift their teacher separately.
Communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Always have teacher approval before sending class-wide messages via email. • Include parent email addresses in the BCC: line and the teacher on the CC: line. • Give families plenty of notice for volunteer requests. • Review Room Parent Coordinator updates and share with families.

NEXT STEPS

1. Meet with your teacher as soon as possible to determine their specific needs and expectations. Each teacher has his/her individual preferences on how they will work with their room parent(s). Here is a list of topics to discuss:
 - Teachers' preferences and needs
 - Proposed classroom celebrations and dates
 - Preferred method of communication
 - Obtain a classroom roster
 - Food allergies or restrictions for students
2. Create a **Welcome Letter** for the families in your class. Include introductory information about yourself, your plan for the year, and your donation request. There is a sample welcome letter on the Room Parent link on the PTA website.
3. Keep track on a spreadsheet of which families have donated and the donation amount. It is recommended to notify the parent when their donation is received.

Q&A

How much should I ask the families in our class for a donation?

This amount is determined by the Principal and is shared by the Room Parent Coordinator. For the 2025-2026 year, a suggested donation amount to ask families is \$40. Please do not deviate from this request so that all classes are consistently being approached the same.

What if I don't have enough funds for the year?

We know families receive many requests at the start of the school year, and everyone's circumstances are different. If donations don't come in right away, you can gently remind families later in the Fall or when sharing the December financial update. You may also reach out mid-year if additional support is needed to cover classroom activities.

The most important thing is thoughtful planning—keep your teacher updated on the budget and work with your grade-level Room Parent team to make the most of the funds available. If you need assistance navigating through your budget, reach out to the Room Parent Coordinator.

What's the best way to work with Co-Room Parents?

At the start of the year, it is helpful to set clear expectations with your Co-Room Parent(s). Decide together how to divide responsibilities—for example, one person can take the lead on family communications while another manages and tracks class funds. Share any teacher updates with one another to keep everyone in the loop. Aim to divide the work fairly, value each other's ideas, and support one another throughout the year. If questions come up, the Room Parent Coordinator is always available to assist.

What's the best way to work with grade level Room Parents?

Grade-level parties are often held together, with students rotating through different activities. This usually requires collaboration among all Room Parents in the grade. Each Room Parent has an equal role in planning and execution, so be sure to include everyone's ideas and give all Room Parents a chance to participate.

To streamline communication, choose one Room Parent to connect with the teachers, share the party proposal, and get teacher approval before moving forward. Party expenses should be split equally across all classes. If you have any questions, the Room Parent Coordinator is happy to help.

A family asked me to share classroom emails so they can send a birthday invitation. Can I do this?

No. Room Parents must always maintain confidentiality, which includes protecting family contact information. Email addresses and anything you see or hear in the classroom are private. Please do not share student or family information.

Instead, you can suggest the family provide paper invitations for students and work with the teacher on the best way to distribute.

Can I create a text group or use social media to communicate with families?

No. Not all families use these platforms, and we want to keep communication consistent and inclusive. All class communication between Room Parents, the teacher, and families should be done by email only.

What if there's money left over at the end of the year?

Remaining funds can be used for a small class treat or a teacher gift. Room Parents should never keep or withhold money for personal use.