



Randolph Elementary PTO

Room Parent Guidelines

Congratulations and thank you for volunteering to be a room parent! You have taken the initiative to become a tremendous asset to your child's teacher and classroom.

Introductions:

- 1) **Meet with your teacher** so that you understand their expectations and needs. You will often act as a liaison between parents and your teacher so it's important that you're "on the same page".
- 2) **Your first step is to introduce yourself!** One of your most important roles as a room parent will be to build strong relationships with the parents in your child's class. Don't forget about newcomers! When new students arrive mid-year, make sure that they are added to the class roster and that their parents know how to contact you.

Classroom Responsibilities:

The teacher determines a room parent's role in the classroom. Responsibilities vary depending on each teacher's needs. Some teachers prefer minimal assistance while others may utilize their room parent for some or all of the following:

- 1) **Volunteer Coordinator:** Assists in finding parent volunteers for various classroom tasks and activities.
 - a) Delegate! Don't try to do everything yourself.
 - b) Break up big jobs into small tasks so that more parents can help.
 - c) Try to give everyone who is willing an opportunity to volunteer. RES is full of enthusiastic parents who are ready to help and we don't want people feeling left out or, worse, overworked.
- 2) **Classroom Party Organizer:** Your teacher may ask for assistance in planning and coordinating classroom parties.
 - a) Meet with your teacher before beginning the planning process and keep your teacher informed about party plans.
 - b) Three school parties are celebrated: Winter Holiday, Valentine's Day and the Last Day of School. Please discuss what your teacher's preferences are for parties and parent involvement.
 - c) Ensure that all food offered at classroom events is free of tree nuts and peanuts. Ask your teacher if there are any additional food allergies (dairy, gluten, eggs, etc.) in your class.
 - d) Party activities should not be disruptive to regular class instructions.

- 3) **Class Gifts:** Room parents can choose to take on the role of coordinating class gifts for the teacher. This is an optional task.
- a) Participation in a class gift is voluntary. Be aware that some families may choose not to participate.
 - b) Room parents can choose to collect monetary donations to purchase a class gift. A "ROOM PARENT MAIL" folder will be placed in each classroom for gathering donations.
 - c) DO NOT specify an amount of contribution. Graciously accept any amount a family is willing to contribute for a teacher gift. You may suggest an amount, but be sensitive to a family's budget when asking for a contribution.
 - d) Utilize the "All About Me" form the teacher completed when selecting a gift. Gift certificates to their favorite place are usually a good choice.
 - e) Inform parents how their contribution was spent and thank them for their contribution.
 - f) All funds collected must be used for its intended purpose. Unused funds or items should be returned to the contributing parents.
 - g) Every child's name should be included when a gift is given (i.e., on the card) regardless of whether or not parents contributed.
 - h) Teacher Appreciation Week in May: We encourage children and parents to give teachers a gift directly, rather than contribute to a class gift. A card, drawing or small gift from students is always appreciated. Room parents should provide class parents with the teacher's "All About Me" sheet for gift giving ideas. The room parent coordinator will provide room parents with "All About Me" sheets for the PE and CLAMS teachers. The PTO also hosts several events during this week to honor our teachers.
 - i) If the teacher experiences a significant event including: the death of an immediate family member, marriage, or birth of a child, the PTO will contribute matching funds up to \$25.00 towards flowers or a gift. Please contact the PTO room parent coordinator to make arrangements.
 - j) Some teachers prefer that personal events such as birthdays or weddings are not celebrated in the classroom; check with your teacher first before making plans.

PTO Liaison Responsibilities:

The Randolph PTO will ask room parents for assistance with PTO sponsored activities throughout the school year. The room parent coordinator will send detailed information on specific needs.

- 1) **Fundraisers:** Occasionally the PTO will ask each class to gather donations for a fundraising event.
- a) **Gift Baskets:** Room parents will be asked to coordinate donations for a themed gift basket to be auctioned off at a PTO fundraising event such as Turkey Bingo. Each class will be given a theme and room parents will request donations from parents to complete their themed basket. A party will be awarded to the class whose basket raises the most funds.

- 2) **Volunteers:** Room parents will be asked to coordinate volunteers and food donations for luncheons and teacher appreciation week. The PTO sunshine committee chair will provide more information.
 - a) Participation in all PTO events is voluntary. Be aware that some families may choose not to participate.
- 3) **Yearbook:** Each class will have a page in the RES yearbook with photos of the class throughout the year. Room parents will be asked to contribute photos, so be on the lookout for opportunities and encourage parents to send you all of their great shots.

Communication:

1. **Communicating with Teachers:** Ask your teacher about their needs and expectations. Find out if they prefer to be contacted via email, text or phone and what times of the day they are available.
2. **Communicating with Co-Room Parents:** Some classes may have more than one room parent. All room parents should work as a team to support their teacher and PTO.
3. **Communicating with Classroom Parents:** Room parents are responsible for maintaining a class roster.
 - a. Teachers may provide room parents with their parent contact list.
 - b. If the teacher's contact list is not available, a form letter is provided to request information directly from each parent.
 - c. Ensure that new students are added to the class roster promptly throughout the year.
 - d. Inform ALL PARENTS about volunteer opportunities.
 - e. Consider using text messages or online volunteer sign-up sites such as Sign-Up Genius to inform parents about volunteer opportunities and donation needs.
 - f. All hard copy letters that are sent home to parents need to be approved. Preapproved, standardized letters are available through the room parent coordinator or they can be downloaded from <http://randolphpto.org>. Emails do not need to be preapproved.
 - g. The RES workroom is available for making copies to be distributed to class parents. Room parents must received workroom training before using equipment. Contact the PTO room parent coordinator or volunteer coordinator for more information.
 - h. Class lists should be used for classroom business only. Families provide their email addresses specifically for the purpose of classroom communications. Please do not use parent contact information for non-school-related issues.
 - i. Encourage parents to participate in programs that support RES. Box Tops for Education collections and the Accelerated Reader Program both offer incentives for class participation.
4. **Communicating with the PTO Room Parent Coordinator:** The room parent coordinator acts as a liaison between the PTO, school administration and individual room parents. They are available to assist and advise room parents throughout the school year.

School Guidelines

1. All volunteers must complete a background check before volunteering. Background check forms are available through the room parent coordinator or they can be downloaded from <http://randolphpto.org>.
2. Room parents will be provided a PTO badge once their background check has been completed. Badges should be worn on campus at all times. It is not necessary to get a name tag from the office when wearing your PTO badge.
3. Parent volunteers must get a name tag from the school office each time they volunteer on campus.
4. All volunteer time should be logged in the volunteer logbook located in the front office.
5. Room parents should inform all parent volunteers in their classroom to follow school guidelines when volunteering.

For questions regarding Randolph Elementary PTO's Room Parent Guidelines,

Email: room-parent-coordinator@randolphPTO.org