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# Role of the MLES Room Parent

Thank you for taking on this key role as a bridge between the PTO and the classroom, and especially as a support to the teachers, parents and students!

**Primary responsibilities:**

* **Plan /coordinate class parties (typically Halloween, Winter Party, Valentine’s Day, End of Year small celebration) with teacher’s input. Teachers often have a specific format in mind, may want to include a service project, and will set the time and date for the parties. Parties are typically 30-60 minutes long.**
* **Pass along PTO email communications to the parents of the students in the class (teacher can provide email list of parents).**
* **Help coordinate optional class teacher gifts before winter break and at the end of the year.**
* **Mini teacher birthday celebration (ask parents to have kids make cards, send in flowers, lunch for the teacher, cupcakes, etc.). Sue or Kim in the front office can tell you when your teacher’s birthday is.**
* **Some responsibilities can be taken care of during non-school hours (planning, email communications, etc.), and there will be some tasks requiring your (or a co-room parent’s) presence during the school day.**

*Guidelines for Class Parties:*

1. Three weeks before the holiday, **ask teacher for timing of the party and any parameters, details and requests.**
2. Coordinate with other room parents to come up with a plan and ask teacher for input on the game plan.
3. Usually, there are 3-4 activities. Rotations or stations work well in large classes as opposed to entire class activities, but ask for the teacher’s thoughts.
   1. Each station should take about 10-15 minutes, depending on the length of the party.
   2. We suggest: (1) service project/activity ; (2) STEM/enriching activity; (3) game; and (4) craft project or reading a book to class if time allows.
   3. We recommend simple crafts and activities, and games that do not require a lot of movement work best in classrooms, but check with the teacher.
   4. Having a Mad Lib sheet or other fun Word Find or a book to read to the class can fill up extra time if an activity goes more quickly than planned.
   5. Visit http://mlspto.org/volunteers/ for more resources and ideas for party planning.
4. Follow up with a SMALL SNACK (see #5 below for more details), limiting sweets and being mindful of classroom food allergies/sensitivities to keep things safe and inclusive.
5. Create a “Sign Up Genius” about 14-10 days before the party to ask parents to donate items for the party, to advertise party date and time, and to seek volunteers to help during the party.
   1. Details to include on the Sign Up are:
      1. A SMALL AND SIMPLE SNACK, generally asking parents to contribute a sweet treat (e.g., cookie, brownie, cupcake, etc.), a salty treat (e.g., popcorn or pretzels), fruit (e.g, kabobs, prepackaged items), waters, and paper goods. Please be aware of food allergies/sensitivities.
      2. SUPPLIES for activities, if needed, to be sent into classroom
      3. VOLUNTEERS (3-4 people) during the party
   2. Visit www.signupgenius.com to set up an account and feel free to ask Christina Keller, the PTO Volunteer Coordinator, for examples or assistance in creating a Sign Up.
6. Collect items 2 days before the party, prep, and have fun!
7. NOTE: As a room parent, you are a coordinator and should NOT feel obligated to buy and provide items for parties. This is a joint effort!

*Teacher Gifts:*

While totally optional, teacher sometimes appreciate a gift card (VISA gift cards, Barracks Road gift cards, Stonefield Shopping Center gift cards, Amazon, etc.) as opposed to lots of little things. Room parents can secretly ask parents via email if they wish to contribute to a class gift (**any amount appreciated**), contributions to be sent via backpack mail or PAYPAL to you by a certain date, and then to be presented to teacher on last day before break or end-of-school. Typically, teacher assistants receive a smaller gift card as well. Some room parents opt to only collect for end-of-year gift.

Questions? Please contact Christina Keller, the Volunteer Coordinator, at christinaminglekeller@gmail.com.

Thanks again so much for your time, energy, and effort!

SAMPLE EMAIL

Hello, Franco parents --

This is a busy time of year, and if you would like to simplify by contributing money toward class holiday gift cards for Mrs. Franco and Ms. Cook, please send cash or check to me (Christina Keller) via Timothy K.'s backpack or via PayPal (insert account name).

Any amount is welcome, and participation is totally optional! Please send your contributions by Friday, December 15.

Thanks,

Christina