

Coyote Ridge Elementary PTA Room Parent Guide

Welcome to Coyote Ridge Elementary! Coyote Ridge is fortunate enough to have a long tradition of volunteerism. The success of our students, teachers and community is in large part a reflection of the commitment of our volunteers.

The role of the PTA Classroom Parent/Co-Room Parent is one that's full of rewards. This is an invaluable opportunity to get to know the teacher and the students in your children's classrooms. You get a first hand view of what the teachers are doing and how the children respond. You are the link for the parents of your child's class, sharing information from the teacher, from the PTA and general activities taking place in the classroom. It is a fantastic way to meet new people and make lifelong friends. Your generosity, creativity, and energy will go a long way toward enhancing the experiences of every child in the class.

The goal of this guide is to provide a clear representation of the minimum duties and expectations of the Room Parent role as well as to give helpful tips for a successful year.

Responsibilities:

- ❖ Meet with your child's teacher to discuss their needs and your role
- ❖ Introduce yourself to the parents of the class with a letter of introduction and maintain communication
- ❖ Requesting *voluntary* donations
- ❖ Plan classroom celebrations (at teacher's discretion)
- ❖ Assist with classroom activities as requested by the teacher
- ❖ Organize gift giving, as needed (i.e. teacher's birthday or end of year gift)
- ❖ Inform the parents of Staff Appreciation Week details and designated adopted staff member
- ❖ Assist with communicating PTA events and activities, as needed

❖ **Meet with your child's teacher to discuss their needs for the school year and your role as Room Parent/Co-Room Parent**

- Each teacher will have their own preferences with regard to the scope of your role and participation. Some teachers will have definite ideas and plans in place, leaving the execution up to you. Others will leave the organizing and planning entirely up to you.
- Ask your teacher if they prefer to have you contact the parents directly or if they would rather distribute your communications for you. There are some families that choose to keep their contact information private from those unknown to them, but for the most part, teachers are able to share the contacts. If this is the case, ask for the email list of the classroom parents at this time.
- Ask your teacher if there is a limit to how many parents can be allowed at the classroom celebrations or if all are welcome.

❖ **Introduce yourself to the parents/Maintaining communication**

- Send an introduction letter to the parents of the class. Be sure to include your contact information. A sample letter will be attached to this guide.
- Create and maintain a classroom roster.
- Communication should be consistent. Follow up with the parents if they have questions. Oftentimes, they want to help and know what's taking place in their child's classroom.
- Send an email requesting volunteers for class parties or create a SignUp Genius for items you may need donated.

❖ **Monetary/donation collection**

- Please remember that all donations are voluntary. You must include this information with any request for donations that you send to your parents.
- Once you have met with your teacher and have an idea of what types of events you will be providing for, it is recommended that you devise a budget.
- Decide whether you will collect a flat donation for the entire year or whether you will request money at the time of each celebration.
 - Flat dollar donations - if you choose to set a flat dollar amount, be sure to specify what that money will provide for and whether there are specific events you will be collecting for in the future. For example, you may decide to collect a flat dollar amount for all the parties, but collect separately for the teacher's birthday gift or end of the year gift.

- If you choose to collect for each event independently, it may be helpful to provide your parents with a list of events and a tentative guideline as to when you may be requesting those donations. They need to have the ability to plan accordingly.
- However you choose to collect donations, communication is the key! It is important that you convey your message clearly in regards to donation requests so that the parents can financially prepare and not feel like they are constantly being asked for money.

❖ **Planning classroom celebrations**

- Each teacher will determine which season/holiday will be celebrated by their classroom.
- Be aware of allergies in the classroom! The health and safety of the students is always first and foremost. Acknowledgement of awareness to the parents whose child has a food allergy creates a feeling of safety for that family. If you decide to have a food related activity/center during a party, please plan accordingly for the students with food allergies.

❖ **Assisting with classroom activities**

- There may be times when your teacher will request assistance with organizing an impromptu classroom experience, such as a pizza/ice cream party as a reward for the students. Teachers may also present you with a wish list that they may ask you to share with the parents.

❖ **Gift giving**

- There is a Room Parent/Favorites List tab on our PTA website (wecarecoyoteridgepta.com) with favorites lists for all of our teachers and staff members. It includes birthdays, favorite treats and so much more information that you will find helpful regarding your teacher's interests. The parents typically appreciate when you share your teacher's favorite list at the beginning of the year.
- Teacher's birthdays - while recognizing it is an appropriate gesture, it is not a requirement. Some room parents enjoy planning for this day and you can make it as simple or as elaborate as you'd like. However you plan it, please remember that class time should be kept in consideration and to have your teacher's approval first.
- End of the year gift is also optional. If you would like to plan for one, remember that all donations are voluntary and to plan ahead for the parents to be able to contribute.

❖ **Staff Appreciation Week**

- This week is usually scheduled in the beginning of May. There is a Staff Appreciation committee that plans the theme and suggested daily tasks for each teacher and their adopted staff member.
- Your Room Parent Coordinators will share with you the flyer that depicts the Staff Appreciation Week theme and suggested daily tasks as soon as it is available. We encourage you to share this flyer with the parents and remind them of who the assigned adopted staff member is for your classroom. You could also share the favorites list of your teacher and adopted staff member for ideal gift ideas.
- Staff Appreciation Week windows! This is a fun tradition we like to encourage but it is not required. Decorating the windows is a sign of great appreciation and our teachers love to see what we come up with every year. Staff members also enjoy seeing their windows decorated as well, if possible. There are endless ideas on Pinterest! Please use only painters tape on the windows as it is easier for the custodian staff to clean.

❖ **Assisting the PTA**

- Throughout the year, the PTA relies heavily on volunteers for all of our events to be successful. From time to time, you may be asked to share with your parents flyers for these events to help ensure their success.
- If there are any events that you may be interested in getting involved with, please reach out to your Room Parent Coordinators for more information!