

AGENDA FOR INITIAL MEETING BETWEEN TEACHER AND ROOM PARENTS

Please schedule a meeting with your teacher and the room parent team within the first few days of school. In addition to getting to know one another and developing plans for the school year, this meeting is a **MUST** to prepare for back to school night (BTSN) on Thursday, September 1st. If possible, have the room parent team get together 15 or 20 minutes in advance of the meeting with the teacher to introduce yourselves and talk about how you'd like to collaborate this year so that you can use the teacher's time as efficiently as possible.

During the meeting, please discuss the following topics with the teacher:

Understanding the Teacher's Philosophy

Start off by asking the teacher to tell the room parent team a little bit about him/herself and his/her preferred approach to working with room parents. Then, especially for teachers new to Oak Knoll, walking through the following agenda should help them understand the room parent program.

Communication

- How he/she would like to handle communication with the room parent team:
 - a) Channel all communication through lead room parent, or
 - b) Divide up responsibilities and have the teacher coordinate directly with the room parent in charge of each activity
- How the teacher would like to handle communication with parents:
 - a) On what sorts of topics would the teacher like to channel communications through the room parents?
 - b) Does he/she prefer these communications to occur through phone or email?
- Would the teacher like assistance with setting up a group email list for all the parents in the class once email addresses have been collected at Back to School Night (see the Family Information Sheet)?

Field Trips

- What field trips are currently planned?
- What are the dates/times?
- How many chaperones are needed for each trip?
- Who will notify parents of upcoming field trips? Who will collect money and/or manage permission slips?

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Parties

- What parties would he/she like to have this year (Halloween, winter/holiday, Valentine's Day, St. Patrick's Day, end of year)?
- What date/time would the teacher like to hold these events?
- What preferences does the teacher have for these parties (activities, types of snacks, number of parent volunteers, etc.)?
- What are the teacher's expectations regarding the end of the year (i.e., will the class participate in an end of year grade level event/field day and/or have a in-class party to celebrate the end of the year)?

Classroom Volunteers

- In what other regularly scheduled areas would he/she like to use parent volunteers (e.g., reading, math)?
- When will these activities occur (date or day(s) of the week and time)?
- What other volunteer needs are likely to arise that are not on a regular schedule (donating supplies, coordinating book orders, helping clean-up in the classroom)?
- Would the teacher like the room parents to handle volunteer sign-ups at back to school night (as is usually the case)?
- Once volunteers have signed-up to help, who will coordinate the schedule (teacher or room parents)? Who will send confirmation of the schedule to the parents?
- Would the teacher like the room parents to confirm volunteers (via phone or email) before each shift?
- How would the teacher like parent volunteers to handle cancellations (e.g., automatically finding their own substitute versus checking first with the teacher to see if a sub is needed)?

Book Orders

Determine how the teacher would like to manage book orders for the class and how the room parents can help (managing it themselves, identifying a parent volunteer, etc.).

Back to School Night (BTSN)

Understand the teacher's basic gameplan for BTSN. Provide him/her with overview of what information lead room parent will present (should require no more than 3 to 5 minutes). Confirm what information will be included on volunteer sign-up sheets.

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Teacher Birthday/Gift

Ask teacher what preferences he/she has for birthdays and gifts. This information is helpful throughout the year as opportunities arise to acknowledge the teacher and/or parents ask for suggestions (e.g., at holiday time). Ask what items the teacher has placed in his/her wish list in the office (and/or look up this information yourselves).

Other

Check with the teacher to be sure all important topics have been covered.

After the Meeting

Immediately after the meeting with the teacher, the room parents should continue talking to decide how to divide up responsibilities for the class. To assist you in this process, here are a few ideas:

Option 1

Put each room parent in charge of 1 to 2 parties and 1 to 2 field trips. Divide up the remaining responsibilities as needed, making sure that no individual becomes too overloaded.

Option 2

Put one parent in charge of parties, another in charge of field trips, another in charge of classroom volunteers, and another in charge of communication (this should be the Lead Room Parent). Divide up the remaining responsibilities as needed, making sure that no individual becomes too overloaded.

Be sure to close the loop with the teacher and let him/her know how you've decided to divide up the work so he/she knows exactly whom to contact as needs and ideas arise.