



## **Room Parent Volunteer Handbook**

2018-2019

In addition to the practical help provided by parent volunteers, one of the greatest benefits is the positive message volunteering sends our children. When children see their parents investing time and effort on their behalf, it helps them understand that adults in their lives share a common goal and education is important.

In our efforts to prepare students for the future, it is important to step back and enjoy the journey. It is our hope that volunteering on campus gives you precisely such an opportunity.

Thank you for the time you spend supporting our students.

**Here are a few practical bits of advice on being a room parent:**

- In your position as a Room Parent, you are responsible for helping the teacher with many classroom activities and serving as a liaison to your class parents. You will assist in communicating and coordinating classroom activities and programs that require parent participation. In order to maintain consistency and fairness at The Rhoades School, we ask that the Room Parent follow directions from the teachers and administration.
- Room parents are respectfully asked to defer to the teacher's guidance regarding events, parties, snacks, and overall class needs. Teachers have access to information that allows classroom and grade level activities to be effectively coordinated and balanced with academic lessons.
- Please ensure that students treat one another and the adults respectfully. Discipline is handled by teaching students to balance their own rights and needs with the needs of others. Our school uses a positive approach to discipline and we follow the Four Steps of Friendship and the pillars of Character Counts. Holding students to these standards helps them gain the skills that lead to greater confidence, autonomy, and success. If a disciplinary situation occurs, please ask a teacher or administrator for guidance.
- It is impossible to list all situations that might be encountered. Promoting the "Golden Rule", exercising discretion, and diligently looking out for the overall welfare of students and participating adults will cover more situations than pages of rules. The main thing to remember is to always err on the conservative side when it comes to safety and constructive behavior.
- Confidentiality and constructive use of information is very important to our teachers, students, and families. Volunteers are sometimes in a position to make observations about our students' social skills, academic work, and other interactions. It is important to keep such insights and observations confidential. As always, parents are strongly encouraged to communicate any concerns with teachers or administration.
- Students must be supervised at all times.
- All adults should use the faculty bathrooms.
- All art materials need to be non-toxic and safe for children. Be aware of potential allergies. All teachers have a list of student allergies/medical conditions. Peanuts and latex are notorious offenders. Each staff member knows where to locate and how to use emergency medications/first aid supplies and know how to perform C.P.R.

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- Please consult with the homeroom teacher to reserve any needed facilities or equipment or if any activity might affect the master schedule.
- To minimize work and expense for class performances, please check for costumes and props we have on hand. There is a large supply of well-made, versatile costumes and props in the stage closet. Our storage space for such items is minimal, so many costumes, props, and scenery need to be discarded or donated after each class performance.
- Please use only blue masking tape to attach things to walls or other surfaces. Tape of any type may not be used on the railings because it will remove the paint. Please follow all rules posted on the ladder when setting up for plays.

## **The Rhoades School Room Parent Handbook Policies**

As a Room Parent, you must follow guidelines and procedures of The Rhoades School Room Parent Handbook. Your role is to respect and practice the policies of The Rhoades School. The primary responsibility of the Room Parent is to recruit and organize volunteers for class activities.

### **General Guidelines**

#### Email Communication

We highly encourage the use of email to communicate with your class parents. Use email as your first line of communication and use phone calls as a backup.

#### Calendar

Please refer to The Rhoades School website for a current calendar as dates are subject to change.

### **Classroom Guidelines**

#### Room Parent/Teacher Meeting

Please schedule a meeting with the teacher and other volunteers in your grade in early September. For consistency and efficiency, both Room Parents and both grade level teachers should meet together at this initial meeting. The meeting agenda should include discussions for all the activities for the school year.

#### Sign-up Sheets via Sign Up Genius or Volunteer Spot

Sign-up sheets had been created in the past for each grade based upon the events scheduled for the school year. We have eliminated the use of paper sign-up sheets and instead will be utilizing a web based version called "Sign Up Genius" or "Volunteer Spot". During the course of the school year, your teacher may request that you disseminate additional information via Sign Up Genius, Volunteer Spot or email. Speak with your teacher to get more information about how to use Sign Up Genius to invite and track volunteers.

### Parent Coffee and Get-Together for Adults

Schedule a class Parent Coffee and Get-Together for Adults to be held in the first few weeks of school. Announce the date and time of the Parent Coffee and Get-Together at Back-to-School Night. The Parent Coffee and Get-Together can be held at a local restaurant or in your home. Room Parents are not expected to pay for food for the group. The Parent Coffee and Get-Together is a great way for parents to get to know each other and this is another opportunity to recruit more volunteers if there are still unfilled slots.

### Reminder emails and phone calls

Remember to email and/or call volunteers several days before an event to remind them of what they signed up for. You will generally be using Sign Up Genius or Volunteer Spot, so the reminders will be generated for you. Remember to have parents respond to confirmation emails. You do not need to attend every event, but just need to ensure that each event is handled appropriately.

### Volunteer check-in

Anyone volunteering with The Rhoades School is expected to sign-in and sign-out. To sign in and sign out, stop by the front desk and fill out the "Visitor" sheet. Volunteers will receive a badge after they sign in. When volunteers have signed out, badges must be returned to the front desk. The Rhoades School has this policy so that administration will know and can monitor who is on campus at all times.

### Classroom parties

Room Parents have the responsibility of getting volunteers to donate snacks and supplies for class parties.

The following are the class parties permitted per The Rhoades School Administration. The parties are limited to 30 minutes and will be held during snack, lunch, or the last 30 minutes of class as determined by the teacher. A small snack, such as a themed cookie or drink, can be served. Healthy snacks are appreciated.

List of classroom parties:

Halloween Party

Winter Party

Valentine's Party

End of the Year Party

Nut/food allergies

There are many children at The Rhoades School who have life-threatening nut allergies and/or other allergies. Please inform all parents when food is being served (class parties, etc.) and what is being served. Even if there are no children in your classroom with nut or food allergies, please ensure that only nut-free products are provided. Coordinate with the other class volunteers and teachers whenever your classroom is doing joint activities with food (field trips, etc.), to make sure that the parents of any children with this condition are informed well in advance.

Teacher and staff appreciation luncheons

Teacher and staff appreciation luncheons are hosted by The Rhoades School Foundation.

The Foundation also funds The Rhoades School Faculty Holiday Party.

## The Rhoades School Events involving Room Parents

Spring Parent Social and Auction (sponsored by the [Rhoades Foundation](#)) – April 6, 2019

Each class provides a class basket that will be auctioned off at the Family Fun Day in the spring. Room Parents will solicit volunteers to put together the basket. The Room Parent helps to gather items from class parents for the basket.

### Room Parent/Teacher Meeting Guide

Teacher/Room Parent Meeting: DATE TBD

Teacher:

Specialty Teacher(s):

Birthdays of Teacher and Specialty Teacher(s):

Agenda items for meeting with the teacher(s) and other Room Parents:

1. Review all sign-up sheets with the teacher(s) and note any changes. *Make sure you email any updated info (other than dates) to all the volunteers.*
2. Note as many dates as possible for upcoming events (field trips, class parties, etc.).
3. Discuss the budget for each event. If Rhoades School Foundation class funds are being used, the classroom teacher must approve use of these funds.
4. Discuss how the teacher and specialty teacher would like their birthdays acknowledged in class.
5. Review The Rhoades School policy regarding children's birthdays and class parties.

### Room Parent Checklist

Tasks to complete with other parent volunteers:

- Choose a date and location for your class coffee
- Discuss division of responsibilities
- Discuss Sign Up Genius