

Due West Elementary Room Parent Guidelines

Thank you for volunteering to serve as a Room Parent for your child's class this school year! Serving as a Room Parent is a great opportunity to get involved and to contribute to the success of Due West Elementary. Your time, talent, and dedication are greatly appreciated!

Room Parent Responsibilities:

Includes but not limited to:

1. Act as a liaison between the PTA and classroom parents.
 - a. It is helpful to attend PTA general meetings when possible. You will also occasionally be provided information via email that you are asked to distribute to classroom families, preferably within 48 hours.
 - b. Compile contact information for classroom parents by sending home a paper "Room Parent Letter" with each child. (Details in next section.) *Do NOT ask your teacher for a master email list* as they are not allowed to provide it for PTA purposes.
2. Act as the activity coordinator for all celebrations, projects, and special events in the classroom and relay activity information between the teacher and classroom parents. Assist the teacher with planning and implementing the activities, according to the teacher's wishes and per the guidelines of DWE and the PTA. This includes obtaining donations and coordinating volunteers, as needed.
3. Assist the teacher in the classroom or at home on special projects and tasks like material preparation as needed, or arrange other parent volunteers to do so.
4. Recruit volunteers for PTA events, as needed. Information about these events will be sent to you from the PTA and should be forwarded along to your classroom parents.

Getting Started:

1. The most important first step to a successful year is to send the form letter "Room Parent Letter" to each child in your class. *This should be done ASAP!* The letter can be found on the PTA website (link at the bottom of this page also).
 - a. This letter should be sent in paper form so each parent can supply his/her contact information. *Do NOT ask your teacher for a master email list* as they are not allowed to provide it for PTA purposes.
 - b. Download the form letter, fill in your information, and print the form. Make copies using BLUE paper from the PTA room. The PTA room is down the K/1/2 hallway across from Mr. Duff's music room and has an apple on the door that says PTA. The blue paper is in the top cabinet on the right labeled "paper." Copies can be made in the mail room next to the clinic (across from the principal's office). The copy machine is on the right as soon as you enter.
 - c. Deliver the letters to your child's teacher as soon as possible so they can be sent home in the Thursday folders.
 - d. When received back by the teacher, she will send them home in your child's folder so you can compile a class contact list and be aware of any child needing paper communication.
2. Next, reach out to your teacher and set up a meeting to discuss their expectations of you as RP. Most teachers have a clear vision for the activities/events in their classroom but others may want more help planning.

Communicating with Classroom Parents:

- The room parent is to provide ongoing communication to all parents in the class.
- Only use the class email list for school or classroom related business.
- If a parent in your class has requested paper communication only, be sure to utilize the form letters “Special Treat Day Letter” and “Teacher Gift Letter” on the PTA website and send them home with that particular student.
- All communication sent home through Thursday folders must be approved. If you encounter a situation where one of the form letters will not suit your communication needs, please send a draft of the letter you would like to send out to the room parent coordinator first so approval can be obtained from the school administration.

Donations for Classroom Events:

- The PTA does not cover the cost of food or supplies used in classroom activities.
- Donations can be requested for each individual event/project separately – monetary or actual items. Please be clear that all classroom donations are suggested and appreciated, but NOT mandatory. It is helpful to make a signup with the teacher’s requests to ensure all supplies are received. (Signup Genius is a great, free resource!)
- *You may NOT ask for money (lump sum) at the beginning of the year to be used all year.*
- Monetary donations may also be requested for group gifts for the teacher if desired (holidays, teacher appreciation week, end of year, etc.).
- For any monetary donations requested, you must be clear on the intended purpose and maintain a record of funds received and how they were used.

Volunteers for Events and Fieldtrips:

- Encouraging class parents to get involved is key to a successful year! Be sure to give all parents the opportunity to participate. Remember that you as the RP are not required (though welcome!) to be at every event, activity, or fieldtrip- just coordinate the volunteers.
- It is helpful to give parents a minimum of two weeks’ notice to plan ahead if possible.
- Please remind parents to adhere to DWE’s Visitor Policy.
 - Sign-in at the office upon entering the building. Go directly to and from the classroom or other location you are volunteering and do not “visit” other areas of the building.
- Remind parents that if they sign up to “volunteer” for an event/fieldtrip, they should NOT bring younger siblings with them. Volunteers need to be able to provide their undivided attention to the tasks at hand.
 - Many events/activities are open for all parents to come observe and, if okay with your teacher, younger siblings can come observe as well.
- Lastly, remember that being a RP does not allow you anytime access into your child’s classroom. You need permission from your teacher to have a purpose in the classroom.

Food in the Classrooms:

- Be sure you have a clear understanding of any students with allergies in your class. If you do have allergies, it is imperative that you take this into consideration and monitor closely what food is being donated to the classroom. When asking for donations, ALWAYS specify there is an allergy even if the allergy is not applicable to the food item being donated.

- When planning food for events, try to choose healthy, well balanced snacks and beverages. Most teachers are okay with a small treat, but please be sure to discuss this with them in advance to ensure whether or not they will allow it.

Staff Favorites List:

All staff members have been asked to complete/update a “favorite things” form. They are available for viewing on the PTA website. Be sure to remind your classroom parents that this information is available as it will help tremendously when planning gifts or surprises for the teacher or other staff members.

Teacher Birthdays:

Children love to celebrate their teacher’s birthday! Feel free to coordinate a group gift, treat, etc. You could also send out an email to all classroom parents informing them of the teacher’s birthday so that all the children are aware and have an opportunity to say “Happy Birthday.”

Student Birthdays:

Your teacher may already have a policy regarding what is allowed to be brought in for a child’s birthday. Please find out how your teacher wants to handle birthday celebrations and communicate this to the entire class.

PTA Activities and Events:

- To ensure the PTA activities and events are a success, room parents may be asked to help recruit classroom parents to volunteer and/or donate items. The PTA committee chair in charge of each event will contact you through the Room Parent Coordinator.
 - Examples of events/activities include: Teacher Appreciation Week, Book Fair, Science Fair, Reflections, School Store, Garden Club, Holiday Elves, Bingo Night, Family Dance, Spring Fling, Custodians Day, Bus Driver Breakfast, Staff Holiday Luncheon, etc.

Thank you again for volunteering to serve as a Room Parent! You are an integral part of the success of Due West Elementary. If you ever have any questions, please contact me at roomparent@duewestpta.org.

PTA website: www.duwestpta.org

Room Parent Letter: <https://www.duwestpta.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/Room-Parent-letter.pdf>

Special Treat Day Letter: <https://www.duwestpta.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/Special-Treat-Day-Letter.pdf>

Teacher Gift Letter: <https://www.duwestpta.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/TeacherGiftlettertemplate.pdf>