



St. Catherine of Siena Catholic School

Room Parent Guidelines

2021 - 2022

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Introduction

Welcome! Thank you for taking on the very important role as Room Parent for your child's class. Your time and effort are a great act of stewardship that will benefit the teachers as well as the students. This is your opportunity to become an active part of the classroom! It is going to be a great year!

Job Description:

Your job as a room parent is to support your teacher by acting as a liaison between him/her and the other parents and PTO. You will provide information to the parents regarding your teacher's classroom needs and PTO news. Your teacher will inform you of any volunteer opportunities within the classroom. The PTO Executive Board will provide you with any information you need to communicate to other parents in your classroom.

DELTA Room Parents (Middle School Room Parents): Because our Middle Schoolers rotate classrooms throughout the day, our Room Parents for these grades are aligned with the final class of the day – also known as their “DELTA CLASS.” Middle School Room Parents are called “Delta Room Parents” and will have a mixture of grades within their Delta Class. Good communication and coordination are essential between Delta Room Parents. Please work closely with your Delta Teacher to figure out their preferences.

PTO Meetings - Regular PTO meetings will be held throughout the school year. If possible, please plan on attending to share and receive important information. For most classrooms, we have multiple Room Parents, so you can coordinate with the other Room Parents on what works best with your schedules (i.e. PTO meetings vs. helping in the classrooms vs. helping communicate with parents via email). We are very flexible and wish every parent the best possible experience for getting involved!

Meet Your Teacher:

If you haven't already done so, please introduce yourself to your teacher. We suggest that you all schedule a time to meet and discuss the classroom and volunteer needs, as well as the preferences and expectations for holiday parties.

Communication:

Discuss the preferred form of communication with your teacher. Ask your teacher if the classroom newsletter would be effective to communicate important upcoming dates. Let parents know we will be utilizing email (and newsletter, if the teacher allows).

Classroom Coordination (within Grades):

For students in K-5, if possible, please meet with the other Room Parents in your classroom and with the Room Parents for the other classroom in your child's grade. Most of our students are taught by both teachers within the same grade, so it makes sense to develop strong coordination across classrooms (i.e. Christmas Gifts for Teachers, Sponsoring of Teacher Luncheon by the 5th Grade, etc.) The more coordination between the classroom room parents and teachers, the better!

Classroom Parties & Events

A very important part of your job is to help teachers, **if and when** he/she would like to host a classroom party or event. During the first few weeks of school, please discuss with your teachers – what dates are appropriate for what parties or events.

✚ Classroom Party Guidelines:

When meeting with your teacher, discuss his/her preference for party planning. Your teacher will be able to inform you of any dietary restrictions and concerns. The teachers may have requests for special snacks. Your role as room parent is to facilitate the party and delegate the responsibilities to the other parents.

Please remember: No siblings are permitted at the party, this includes infants.

Time Management: Usually parties are 20-40 minutes in length. Please ask your teacher what works best for him/her.

Decorations: No over the top decorations. Decorating the classroom the night before or during the day of the party **will not be permitted.**

SignUp Genius: This is a great resource tool to find volunteers while still controlling the overall structure of the party. Try to be time sensitive when asking for volunteers. Giving two weeks' notice or more would be preferred. You can ask for the following to be donated: treats, class volunteers, themed napkins, themed paper plates, drinks, game, etc. **Please use the PTO Sign-Up Genius account, so we can track service volunteer hours for the school.** (User Name: pto@saintcatherinewichita.com Password: Saintsare#1)

Party Treat Guidelines:

- No cupcakes for K-3 grade. They tend to drop and get icing all over the floor. Cookies are best.
- Be sensitive to allergies in the classroom.
- Juice is acceptable as a drink.
- Please consider treats that are healthier (i.e. fruit, veggies etc).

Party Activities Ideas:

- Crafts are acceptable, but it is ideal to have ones that are simple and require little or no drying time (i.e., nothing with paint or glue). It might be a good idea to discuss the craft with the teacher beforehand and get their approval.
- Activities should be limited to something reasonable that can be done in the classroom.
- Christmas: Service Project (optional)

NOTE: There are many ways to celebrate these special events, and the kids are always excited for a "change of pace." Please do not feel that you have to spend a lot of time or money preparing for these classroom parties or events. The teachers will be able to guide you on the right level of effort needed.

Classroom Party Themes:

Listed below are a few suggestions for party themes. Please discuss these with your teachers to finalize which classroom party celebrations you will and will not have in your child's class this year.

All Hallows Eve Party

We are trying to move our focus of the Halloween Party away from the "commercialized" reason of Halloween and move it more towards our faith. All Hallows Eve is where the name Halloween comes from. A hallowed person is another name for a saint. We call October 31st All Hallows Eve because it is the eve of All Saints Day which is on November 1st. The mass that our church celebrates on November 1st is called Allhallowmas. Please make the focus of your party more on saints and less on costumes and the hype of trick or treating. You may still use Halloween themed plates etc.

Christmas Party

An **option** for the Christmas Party is to have your class(es) participate in a service project. You can be as creative as you would like as long as it benefits someone outside of St. Catherine of Siena Catholic School. We have had classes in the past make blessing bags for the homeless filled with toothpaste, toothbrushes, Kleenex, granola bars and water. We leave this up to your discretion. While the service project is completely optional, it does get the children excited about the opportunity to be involved in giving during the Christmas season. If you do decide to do a service project, it can be in addition to other party activities (games, snacks, craft, etc.)

St. Valentine's Day Party

K-5th grades will participate in a typical St. Valentine's Day Party with the exchange of Valentine cards, etc. Please work with your teachers to figure out how best to communicate with parents for class lists names, and other teacher preferences for this party.

NOTE: Throughout the year, there might be other parties or events that require your assistance in celebrating. Your teacher will reach out to you as these dates approach, and as needed.

First Reconciliation Reception (for 1st Grade Parents):

First grade parents are responsible for setting up and serving at the 2nd Grade First Reconciliation Receptions on designated dates. This reception involves setting up, providing/serving refreshments (usually cookies and punch), and cleaning up. More details will be provided to Room Parents, as the dates approach.

8TH Grade Promotion Reception (for 7th Grade Parents):

Seventh grade parents/students are responsible for setting up and serving at the 8th Grade Promotion Reception on designated dates. This reception involves setting up, providing/serving refreshments and cleaning up. More details will be provided to Room Parents, as the dates approach.

Teacher Appreciation

✿ **Teacher Appreciation Week:**

This special week is May 2 – May 6, 2022. Typically, the Staff Appreciation Committee will coordinate a week of showering the teachers, and entire school staff, with love. A general letter or email may be sent to all parents describing the events of the week. Room Parents will be responsible for coordinating one day of recognition for their teachers during this week. An example of something that could be done is a Sign-Up Genius with a few of his/her favorite things each day that parents could randomly volunteer to bring. If you would like to do something beyond that one day, that is within your discretion. A lunch is usually provided on Friday through class donations or potluck provided by the grades. For assistance or ideas, check with the PTO Executive Board.

✿ **Gift Giving for Teachers:**

Aside from Teacher Appreciation Week, there will be different opportunities to celebrate and reward your teachers/staff with gifts. Some of those include their Birthday (or ½ Birthday), Christmas, and Valentine's Day. Here are some ideas and guidelines for those times:

~If you decide to do a gift from the class, please do NOT ask your parents to contribute a specific amount to that gift. You can share the "opportunity" and ask them to give as they choose. If you are doing a class gift, all families should be included on the note whether or not they contributed. Likewise, it's best if you can coordinate with Room Parents for both classes in the same grade, so teachers receive similarly gifts.

~Each teacher has completed a "Favorite Things" List that can assist when coordinating gift giving. These will be located for each teacher on the St. Catherine of Siena website under the Parent Teacher Organization section.

~A small token of appreciation can mean a lot! Being remembered can be the greatest gift! Please don't feel that you need to provide an elaborate gift. Many parents have multiple siblings and a little here and there can add up, so be mindful of your goals in gift giving. Our teachers are amazing, and we just want them to know that we are thinking of them during these special days.

✿ **PRAY for your Teacher:**

Your child has been assigned to your teacher for the school year, therefore you have been assigned to your teacher for the year! Please pray for your teacher on a regular basis and seek to serve them, if needs arise that are out of the normal realm of classroom help (if the teacher gets sick, has a personal emergency, etc.). Remind your parents to pray as well. A Prayer Bouquet makes a wonderful and in-expensive Teacher Birthday Gift!

Monthly Teacher Appreciation Luncheon

On the first Friday of every month, we show a little gratitude towards our teachers for all their hard work throughout the year by providing them with lunch. This is a great way to get all parents involved in their stewardship towards the school!

Each month, the parents of a different grade level (both classes) will be responsible for coordinating the Teacher Luncheon. Most often, this is done through using Sign-Up Genius so all parents can contribute items for a potluck. Please coordinate with all of the Room Parents for both classes to coordinate the menu. Planning should start the month before your grade's First Friday. **Please use the PTO Sign-Up Genius account, so we can track service volunteer hours for the school.** (User Name: pto@saintcatherinewichita.com Password: Saintsare#1)

NOTE: Because some of the Middle School Delta Classes have students from different grades, those Delta Room Parents should discuss together the best approach to covering the dates assigned.

Guidelines for Luncheon:

1. Plan to feed 50 staff members.
2. Please be sensitive to allergies. We have some Gluten and Dairy Allergies, so offering options is always a good idea. If you need more information on specific allergies, please contact the PTO Exec Board.
3. Please have all food warmed and ready to go in the teachers' lounge no later than 10:45 a.m. The teachers eat while their students eat in the cafeteria, so timing is important.
4. Make sure one room parent is there to ensure all food has been delivered and set up.
5. All items (i.e. crockpots, dishes) must be removed Friday by the end of school.
6. For drinks, please do individual bottles or cans. It makes things a lot smoother and the teachers can take their drinks back to the classroom.
7. Please include plates, napkins and utensils on the SignUp Genius when asking for donations.

2021-2022 Teacher Luncheon Scheduled Dates

Teacher Luncheon Date	Host Grade
Friday, August 13, 2021	PTO
Friday, September 3, 2021	8th Grade Deltas (3)
Friday, October 1, 2021	7th Grade Deltas (6)
Friday, November 5, 2021	6th Grade Deltas (6)
Friday, December 3, 2021	5th Grade
Friday, January 7, 2022	4th Grade
Friday, February 4, 2022	3rd Grade
Friday, March 4, 2022	2nd Grade
Friday, April 1, 2022	1st Grade
Friday, May 6, 2022	Kindergarten

Parent Teacher Organization

All parents are invited to become active participants in the Parent Teacher Organization, but as a Room Parent you will serve as a direct liaison to ensure that your class is informed and has a voice in the decisions being made. It's an important role and we value your input.

If possible, please plan to attend all PTO meetings. If a conflict arises, we request attendance by at least one Room Parent at each PTO meeting, so please coordinate with fellow Room Parents.

Several items are discussed in the meeting including new fundraising ideas, service projects, upcoming social events, teacher grant applications, etc. All funds spent by the PTO, and many necessary decisions are voted on by the parents in attendance.

PTO Meeting Dates:

Date	Time	Location
September 14, 2021	7:00 p.m.	School Library
October 12, 2021	7:00 p.m.	School Library
November 9, 2021	7:00 p.m.	School Library
January 18, 2022	7:00 p.m.	School Library
March 22, 2022	7:00 p.m.	School Library
April 26, 2022	7:00 p.m.	School Library

PTO Contact Information:

Name	Position	E-Mail
Shanda Carney	President	shandacarney@gmail.com
Erin Madden	Vice-President	erin.wooten.madden@gmail.com
Elizabeth Haase	Treasurer	n.ehaase@gmail.com
Mindy Hunter	Secretary	mindyrhunter@gmail.com

E-Mail: pto@saintcatherinewichita.com

Thank you so much for serving as a Room Parent for this school year. It's a great way to meet other parents, get to know the teachers better, and most importantly, serve our community!

We want this to be a fantastic year! If you ever have any questions or concerns, or if you would like to become more involved in PTO, please let us know. Thank you!

- **St. Catherine of Siena PTO Executive Board**