

Barrington PTO Room Parent Overview

Thank you for willingness to be a room parent for the 2024-2025 school year! Room Parents are a vital part of building a positive community at Barrington. The responsibilities of the Room Parent include classroom communication, coordination of classroom parties, facilitating optional money donations for teacher gifts, and purchasing of teacher gifts throughout the year. If there is more than one room parent in your classroom, please feel free to divide up the responsibilities as you'd like.

Classroom Communication:

The Room Parent connects the PTO and classroom families. Room Parents will send emails to communicate PTO events and help with finding volunteers for PTO events as requested by the PTO.

Please note that the class email list given to you should only be used for PTO sponsored or classroom specific activities. Personal emails should not be sent using the class email list. If there are questions about email list use, please contact the classroom teacher or the principal.

Classroom Parties:

The room parent is responsible for seeking volunteers and organizing the classroom parties for Fall, Winter, Valentine's Day and End of Year.

2024-2025 Party Dates:

- Fall Parade & Parties—Thursday, October 31st
- Winter Parties—Friday, December 20th
- Valentine's Day Parties— Friday, February 14th
- End of the Year Parties— TBD

Please note: all party dates are subject to change by the Barrington administration.

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The Barrington PTO wishes to share party guidelines set forth by the district with the goal that every school party is a safe and fun environment that includes all children in every party offering. The guidelines are as follows:

- Party Snacks: All food allergies, dietary concerns, and other special health needs as well as all religions and cultures are to be considered and respected. Please check with your classroom teacher and communicate this information to the parent party volunteers. It is suggested that all snacks be allergy free for safety purposes.
- Party Themes: It is important to keep party themes secular to promote inclusion for all children.
- Party Games: Those games which rely solely on chance such as BINGO are not permitted. The district suggests offering game/craft/activity stations so that no single activity feels compulsory.

Classroom Party Procedures:

While it is not required, many Room Parents create a Sign-Up Genius to recruit volunteers for and to coordinate classroom parties. Please coordinate volunteers in whatever way is easiest for you. If you need assistance with creating a Sign-Up Genius, please let me know. The Sign-Up Genius links can be shared via email to parents and can also be posted on a classroom Facebook page if you have one.

- It is a good idea for the Room Parent to contact the classroom teacher a few weeks prior to scheduled parties asking for any specific needs or requests for the upcoming party. If none exist, it is up to the parent volunteer to choose the snack and activities for the party based on the given party guidelines above and communication from the room parent.
- After the Room Parent has confirmed all details with the parent volunteers, they should then communicate this information to the teacher via email for their knowledge prior to the party date.
- Party volunteers will bring in requested items and help the room parent facilitate the party.

New Safety Procedures for Party Days:

The Barrington administration has implemented a new procedure for party days to ensure the safety of all students & staff. All volunteers must be entered into a volunteer spreadsheet (*to come at a later date*) so that name tags can be made for volunteers attending the specific parties. If your volunteers are not on the spreadsheet, they will not be able to enter the school on the day of the party. Volunteers must bring in an ID in order to receive their nametag at check-in. Please do not make any changes to the spreadsheet after the deadline as changes cause extra work for the office staff, which can be quite a busy time during a party week. Barrington would like one parent from all families to have the chance to attend at least one party this school year. With, each classroom may have a maximum of 8 total volunteers (6 is suggested) attending each party this school year. Keep in mind 20+ students, one or two teachers, and 6-8 volunteers can make a classroom very tight.

As the room parent, you can decide what is appropriate for your classroom. This number includes any Room Parent in attendance. If you have more than one room parent, please use your best judgement as to how many of you are in attendance on party days as to allow all families to attend at least one party (ex: if you have three room parents, all three of you shouldn't be at one party taking up three of your eight spots).

Please take this into account when recruiting party volunteers. It is the responsibility of the Room Parents to keep track of the volunteers in whatever way you choose. If all of your volunteer spots do not fill by the spreadsheet deadline, you may open it up to parents who may have already attended a party earlier in the year or another room parent may attend. Use your best judgement when handling this.

Donation of Money for Class Gifts:

The Room Parent will collect donations from families to be used for teacher gifts throughout the school year. A recommended donation amount is \$30 per family, but in no way are families obligated to donate. The money will be used for gifts for the classroom teacher on occasions such as birthdays, winter gifts, and end of

the year gifts. The money may also be used to buy the classroom teacher something during teacher appreciation week.

The PTO asks that your classroom consider a very small portion of the class funds to be used for Barrington specials teachers. Classes may allocate a portion of the total funds collected for the six specials teachers. If your classroom plans to do this, you will want to share that with the parents of the class. The suggested optional donation for specials teachers is \$20 from each classroom. You will send these fund to Sydney Kurz via Venmo @sydney-kurz-1 or drop them to Sydney's home at 2237 Oxford Road. Please note your classroom teacher with your Venmo transaction or leave a note with your classroom teacher with any specials funds dropped off.

Money collection and expenses/purchases should be tracked. There is a spreadsheet available on the PTO website for your use if you do not have a way to track. How you handle the collection of funds is up to you. Some room parents have chosen cash only, checks, or even Venmo as their way to collect funds from parents. In addition, the purchase of classroom gifts should be communicated by the Room Parent to classroom families at the appropriate time so that all parents know how their donations are being used throughout the school year.

Just to note, the PTO Co-Presidents take care of gifts for the principals, secretaries and custodial staff.

Teacher Appreciation Week:

A PTO committee coordinates a week to honor our teachers in the spring. There are daily activities in which the Room Parent will be asked to participate in and coordinate with parents if needed. The Room Parent will communicate information and details of Teacher Appreciation week to the classroom families at the appropriate time.

The class may buy or create something for their teacher. Some room parents have chosen to do something special for their classroom teacher each day of Teacher Appreciation Week to make the teacher feel extra special. This is completely optional. If you need any ideas, please let me know.

Again, thank you for your willingness to be a room parent for your child's classroom this year! If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to reach out to me.

Thank you,
Sydney Kurz
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2024-2025 Room Parent Chair

Disclaimer: Upper Arlington PTO Co-Presidents worked together to establish these basic guidelines for all Room Parents to ensure all Room Parents are informed of district-wide or school specific changes that have been made. These guidelines may be updated each year to reflect these changes.