

2021-2022 PTO ROOM PARENT COORDINATOR HANDBOOK

INTRODUCTION

Congratulations and thank you for volunteering. Butler strives for academic excellence but it takes an active, supportive community to provide the extracurricular activities that are essential for a well-rounded education. Your service in your child's classroom is a great step in mentoring children by example.

We hope you find the information in this handbook helpful in assisting you as you organize classroom and PTO-related events. The three types of volunteer positions possible for each class and a summary of their respective responsibilities are as follows:

1. Head Room Parent Coordinator (HRPC) – one per classroom.

- Organizes the volunteers, activities, and food for three classroom parties throughout the school year with the help of the Party Planner, ensuring as many parents participate as possible by sending volunteer requests to the entire classroom before each event. HRPC's are not required to attend every event.
- Establishes a classroom activity fund by collecting no more than \$8.00 per child for supplies.
 - The HRPC should provide a budget for each party planner and approve purchases prior to the party to ensure the classroom funds are used appropriately and can cover all three parties and any expenses necessary for the Spring Fair Basket.
 - Class funds are to be used for the three parties and Spring Fair Basket, if needed, after parent donations. Remaining funds can be used for classroom items, including a teacher gift if that gift is for classroom use.
- Serves as the primary contact between the parents and teacher or the school administration (principal, etc.), for all Butler-related communication. Only one person serves as this primary contact, in order to avoid confusion or overlap.
- Forwards PTO information to class parents as per request
- Spring Fair Responsibilities: solicit parent volunteers (minimum 10 per class) to staff Spring Fair games and activities, collect items and create a Spring Fair Basket and Fun Jar

2. Party Planners – each classroom will have three.

- Each Party Planner volunteer will organize activities and food, and run their designated party (Halloween/Harvest, Winter, or End of Year) during the school year with the help of the HRPC and any interested Room Parents.
- The Winter Party is a seasonal party, not a Christmas party. Activities must reflect the Winter theme.

3. **Room Parents** – all parents are considered Room Parents.

- Room Parents volunteer their time to assist with classroom activities, parties and PTO events. Room Parents will volunteer for individual activities or offer to provide supplies as needed throughout the year. The HRPC and teacher will reach out to Room Parent volunteers throughout the year before each event/party when help is needed.

GUIDELINES for HRPC

1. **Organize Classroom Events.** The Head Room Parent and Party Planner will organize parties with the help of any interested Room Parents. Following teacher guidelines, you must organize the food, supplies, and activities (crafts, games). An **email** and a **notice in the Wednesday Folder** should be sent to the **entire class** for needed volunteers and supplies. (See below *)

Please share a budget with each Party Planner as they prepare to plan the party. Ask the Party Planner to share with you the party agenda and expected expenses prior to any purchases. Reusable items or games that are reimbursed become the property of the classroom. The party agenda must be approved by the classroom teacher.

SignUpGenius is a great way to reach out to the class to get party donations. The teacher must approve all outgoing letters and emails. The teacher has final say and approval on all planned activities and food, especially since they know their students best.

Important information, please read:

For the safety and security of our children, Butler allows **3 volunteers** at each class party. Exception is the End of Year Party--if held outside-- all parents are welcome.

Volunteer # 1: The Head Room Parent (if she/he chooses to attend).

Head Room Parents can attend all parties, but are not required to attend every event.

Volunteer #2: The Party Planner for the current party.

Party Planners should only attend the party they coordinate and should not be a Party Planner for more than one party or chosen as a Room Parent for another party unless no other parent volunteers or classroom needs allow.

Volunteer #3: Room Parents.

Room Parents should be chosen for only one party a year unless the number of volunteers is limited. For each party (Halloween/Harvest, Winter/Holiday, End of Year) new Room Parents should be chosen. The HRPC will send a notice out to the **ENTIRE** class before **EACH** event.

If for some reason the HRPC or the Party Planner is unable to attend the event more Room Parent volunteers can be included. **The total number of volunteers is 3.**

If there is a student with an extreme allergy, that parent may also be allowed to attend (in addition to the 3), if they choose.

***Three times** during the school year the Head Room Parent will send home an **email** and a **notice in the Wednesday Folder** before each party (Halloween/Harvest, Winter/Holiday, End of Year) asking all Room Parents (entire class) if they are interested in attending and helping at a classroom party. Room Parents may not know of their availability to help too far in advance so **please send home volunteer requests before each party and not just in the beginning of the year.**

All replies regarding party availability will be given to the **teacher** who will **conduct a lottery pulling the names of interested parents out of a hat.** If the HRPC and the Party Planner are attending the party the teacher will normally be pulling the name of one Room Parent volunteer at random from a hat for each party – Halloween/Harvest, Winter, End of Year.

The HRPC **will not be selecting the volunteers that attend parties.** The **teacher** will conduct a lottery.

Please remember that every classroom has different volunteer needs. Duplication of Room Parents at parties during the year will not occur unless the number of available and interested parents is limited. This gives each parent a fair opportunity to attend and help at a school party.

Do you have more than one child at Butler?

- Parents can only be a HRPC for one classroom.
- Parents may be a Party Planner and a Room Parent Volunteer in multiple children's classrooms.

Other important information:

- Following the health and safety protocol, which is a fluid document, masks will be mandatory for volunteers. You will be notified if the protocols change.
- Food will be allowed for classroom parties
- Please refrain from taking pictures of students and uploading to social media from individual's personal accounts. Volunteers may take pictures of their own child and party decorations, etc.

2. Meet the teacher. The HRPC should establish a time to talk with the teacher. If possible, this should be done prior to the Room Parent Tea so that at the tea you can share ideas with your class using the teacher's guidelines.

At your meeting, you should discuss the following:

- The particular parties and other classroom events that you will be responsible for, including dates and times if they have been determined.
- The types and numbers of activities (games, crafts) for which you should prepare.

- The types of food preferred by the teacher (they have experience with what works) and any class allergies.
- Any ideas you may have for the upcoming year.
- Whether or not other (young) children are welcome at class events.
- The best way to communicate with the teacher and class families.

The teacher will inform you of his or her expectations and ground rules for all activities. Maintaining open and consistent communication with your child's teacher throughout the year is the key to successful events.

- 3. Maintain Confidentiality.** All parent volunteers must agree to respect students and families. As a Butler volunteer, you may be privy to information about your children's classmates and their families. Under no circumstances, should you share private information with anyone about children other than your own. Violations of this policy will result in you being asked, by the principal or PTO, to step down from your volunteer position. In addition, you are not permitted to post pictures of children, other than your own, on your personal social media sites, including pictures from classroom parties and other Butler events.
- 4. Attend the Room Parent Tea.** The Tea is the first opportunity to meet your classroom team, communicate the teacher's expectations, and discuss ideas for the coming year. **Note:** Not all parents may be able to attend the tea.
- 5. Send an Introductory Letter and Establish a Classroom Activity Fund.** Prepare a letter to distribute to all the parents/guardians of students in your class. In this document you should introduce yourself, explain your role, ask for contact information, and request a donation for the classroom activity fund (which covers arts, crafts, games, and party supplies). No more than \$8.00 should be collected per student. This letter should go to the entire class. You can have these sent home thru the teacher in the Wednesday Folders. Only a few courteous reminders should be sent to parents about submitting the requested donation.

Ideally you will have all students return the requested information so you can communicate with parents via email. If not, ask the teacher if he/she can ask the parent to share the email with you or the teacher can forward the email to the parent/s.

As per your preference, parents can send the class donation to you as cash, a check made payable to "cash" or another electronic means that does not include a service charge. You decide the method/methods best for you. If using an electronic method, please keep accurate records to ensure all funds are used by the end of the school year.

Please note: the teacher must approve all communications to the class.

- 6. Organize Spring Fair Volunteers, Theme Basket and Class Fun Jar.** Everyone should help with the Spring Fair! It is Butler's biggest fundraiser and a school-wide event. Each class is responsible for providing volunteers at the Spring Fair and donating items to a "Theme Basket" and "Fun Jar" to be raffled off at the Fair. Each homeroom will choose a Basket and Fun Jar theme from a specific list, which will be provided a few months prior to the fair. Parents donate items for this Basket. If you need additional items, then class funds can be used if available.

The Spring Fair Volunteer Coordinator will contact you sometime during late winter, informing you about how the volunteer sign-ups will happen. You will need to contact the families in your class letting them know of the procedure. If the sign-ups are electronic, an email will be sent to the family reminding them of their commitment. However, if the sign-ups are not electronic, it is the HRPC's responsibility to send volunteers a reminder. Other options may be available for families unable to volunteer at the Fair. Contact the Spring Fair Volunteer Coordinator for these options.

7. **Support PTO Sponsored Events.** Throughout the school year, a PTO chairperson may contact you for volunteers needed for special events (i.e. Ag Lab). Volunteers are obtained by contacting your Room Parents (entire class.)
8. **Other Classroom Events.** There may be times when teachers want to do something extra for the children in their class. This could include Thanksgiving dinner for the Kindergarten students, arranging snacks for 3rd through 6th grade students during PSSAs, or some other extra holiday fun. Teachers will make you aware of these extra events. The HRPC will send requests for volunteers and/or food in Wednesday Folders and emails to Room Parents (entire class).

SCHOOL POLICIES

1. Please remember that **three** adult helpers will be able to attend parties.
2. For the safety of the Butler children, no parent is permitted to enter the school and walk in the halls without permission and a visitor's pass from the office. Only adults with permission will be permitted to access the building. Teachers and staff will submit a list of expected visitors. Only those on the list will be permitted to leave the office and enter the main building. Visitors must present their license and sign in at the main office. You will be given a visitor's badge to be worn while at Butler. At the end of your time, please return to the office to leave your badge and sign out.

All volunteers must have their clearances completed. The final list of volunteers who will be attending parties should be completed a week before the event so clearances can be checked and confirmed. Please ask your teacher if they will forward this list of parent volunteers to the office or if you as HRPC can assist. This list is sent to the attention of Erin McCreary (emccreary@cbsd.org) and labeled party volunteers.

3. Contributions to purchase a class gift for teachers are appropriate, but all donations should always be voluntary and at the discretion of each family. Please be considerate when sending emails to your class to ask for contributions. There should be no mentioning of names or sending information regarding how many families did or did not contribute to the gift. No actions should make others feel pressured or uncomfortable. Keep in mind some families will purchase a gift on their own and some families might be having a difficult time this year financially. Remember that when presenting the gift to the teacher that it is from the class. The students should feel included whether or not the parents decided to participate in the group gift.
4. Remaining classroom party funds can be used to purchase items for the Spring Fair Basket, for the students or classroom, including games for indoor recess, outdoor recess equipment, or books for the class.

5. No outside food orders other than Aramark are permitted during lunch hours.

The following are sample letters. Feel free to use these documents or customize as appropriate. Remember to seek the approval of the teacher before sending out letters to the families.

SAMPLE INTRODUCTION LETTER:

Dear Parents of Mrs. Smith's Morning Kindergarten,

September 20, 2018

Fall Greetings! My name is Sue Evans (Bobby's mom). I am the Head Room Parent Coordinator for Mrs. Smith's class. I will be the primary contact between the teacher and the parents. Throughout the year I will be reaching out to you for assistance with various Butler activities such as classroom parties, Spring Fair, and items for our class Spring Fair Basket and Fun Jar.

This year, we will be organizing the parties with the help of our party planners and room parents. As per district policy this school year, we can have 3 parent volunteers at each party – the homeroom coordinator, the party planner, and 1 homeroom parent. Before each party you will receive an email and a notice in the Wednesday folder asking if you would like to volunteer for the party. Mrs. Smith will then draw the names from a hat, similar to the way field trip chaperones are selected.

There will be three classroom parties:

Halloween Party—Tuesday, October 31 time TBD

Winter Party-TBD

End of the year Party-TBD

Although I will be asking you for food and drink donations for parties, we also request an **\$8.00 donation** to help with the cost of craft materials and extra expenses for our parties throughout the year.

Please return the bottom portion of this form and your **\$8.00** to Mrs. Smith's class in an envelope by Wednesday, October 17th. You may enclose cash or write a check made payable to "Cash". Don't forget to write down any food allergies your child may have.

I will be contacting you soon with a SignupGenius link to get ready for our first event, the **Halloween Party**. Please call or email if you have any questions. I look forward to working with you throughout the year!

Thanks so much, *Sue*

Evans

sevans@gmail.com; 267.555.4321

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**Please print*

Parent Name: _____ Phone _____

Email address _____ *

Email addresses will be used strictly for PTO & classroom activities only.

Enclosed is my **\$8.00** Donation for: Child's Name _____

Any Food Allergies? _____

SAMPLE PARTY LETTER:

Dear Parents of Mrs. Smith's Morning Kindergarten,

Our Halloween Party is scheduled for Wednesday, October 31 from 12 -1:00pm. If you would like to help at this party, please email me by Monday, 10.22.18. Mrs. Smith will pull names of interested volunteers out of a hat and will let you know if you are a lucky winner!! We are allowed 3 volunteers per classroom party (head homeroom parent, party planner and 1 room parent). This party is just for the kindergarteners, no siblings, please. A reminder that all volunteers need to have their clearances as per district policy.

Look for an email with the SignUpGenius link for food and drink donations. Let me know if you have any questions.

Cheers, *Sue*

Evans

sevens@gmail.com; 267.555.4321