

# Mendham Township Elementary School

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## Room Parent Overview



WELCOME!

Room Parents are an invaluable resource at Mendham Township Elementary School (MTES). In this role, you are an important enabler of many of the activities, events, and programs that make our school such a special place! Your help is greatly appreciated by the entire MTES community.

The primary role of a Room Parent is to provide support and assistance to the teacher. Room Parents should talk with the teacher about how she/he would like to work with them and parent volunteers and what other specific classroom help they would like. Using that information, the Room Parents can develop a plan for the year that directly addresses the teacher's unique needs and preferences.

Room Parents are also viewed as a key conduit of information from the Home and School Association (H.S.A.) to all parents. Room Parents must be a member of the H.S.A. Also, Room Parents are strongly encouraged to attend H.S.A. meetings. Parents are more likely to read your emails than what may be perceived as a "general" e-blast, so it is important that at least one Room Parent from your class attend each H.S.A. meeting so that they may pass on the important information from the meeting to the rest of their class.

Additionally, it is a wonderful way to interact with other parents and to stay informed on MTSD and H.S.A. issues and activities. You will have the opportunity to hear updates from the superintendent (Dr. Sal Constantino), the school principals (Dr. Ciccone and Ms. Kotcho), various other school administrators, as well as the H.S.A. Board and Committee chairs. The meetings take place in the MTES Staff Development Room. Coffee and refreshments are served at 9:15 am with the meeting beginning promptly at 9:30 am. Dates are to be determined and will be posted online as well as communicated in the weekly eblast.

## **Roles of the Room Parents**

1. **To provide continued support to the teacher according to her/his requests by helping to ensure clear, timely communication between the teacher and parents regarding activities, events, and needs in the classroom.**
2. **To help create a fair environment where all willing parents are given equal opportunities to participate.**
3. **To coordinate needed items for classroom activities.** Please use Signup Genius ([www.signupgenius.com](http://www.signupgenius.com)) to ask for requested items. Signup Genius lets you ask for the quantity of the item needed and it sends reminder emails to volunteers usually 2 days ahead of the event. Please DO NOT use Signup Genius to ask for volunteers or chaperones.
4. **To communicate all final details related to volunteers for events with the teacher.**
5. **To coordinate volunteers and chaperones.** When asking for volunteers, whether it be for a classroom activity or for a chaperone for a field trip, please do so in the following way so that it is fair and consistent throughout the year, giving each parent who may want to help out a chance. When asking for volunteers, send out an email stating the fact that you need a volunteer for a certain event, specifying the date and time of the event and how many volunteers you will need. Tell your parents that they have a week to respond to you if they would like to volunteer. Then after that week, from the names you have received, randomly select the number of volunteers you need. Make it clear that the subsequent times you ask for volunteers, no person will get a second chance to help out before people who want to help have a first chance.
6. **To plan, to communicate, and to facilitate all teacher appreciation activities.** (e.g. holiday gift, Teacher Appreciation Week, end of year gift)
7. **To organize a social outside of the classroom.** Room Parents can coordinate fun social events for the classroom families beyond those held in the classroom (e.g. parent coffee, a fall picnic or after school/day off of school park outing). These activities may be well received and families (especially new families or those of young children) often look forward to these opportunities to meet other parents.

**\*\*\*\*PLEASE REMIND PARENTS TO BE AWARE AND SENSITIVE TO ANY ALLERGIES OR SPECIAL NEEDS OF THE CHILDREN IN CLASS, PARTICULARLY WHEN SUPPLYING SNACKS FOR THE CLASS.\*\*\*\***

**\*\*\*\*EXACT RESPONSIBILITIES MAY VARY BY TEACHER.\*\*\*\***

### GETTING STARTED

1. Email your teacher and introduce yourselves and find out how she/he would like to discuss her/his needs for the year. Some teachers may want to meet; others will use email. Discuss how you will work together.
2. Determine with your fellow Room Parent how you will work together to share responsibilities. Some teachers might like to be informed about what you have determined so that there is no confusion about who will be doing what tasks (e.g. month-by-month, request-by-request).
3. Ask your teacher for the emails of parents in your class. **Be aware of any parents that are not using email** and ask your teacher how it is best to communicate with the parents. Email parents to introduce yourselves as Room Parents, include relevant information regarding upcoming H.S.A. events/dates and programs. Let parents know that you will be using Signup Genius for any items needed but that you will be sending separate emails to ask for volunteers and chaperones.

### PLEASE REMEMBER

1. When asking parents to contribute for a gift, you may NOT request a specific dollar amount. Any contribution is completely optional. Please make this clear.
2. You can check in with your teacher if you have not heard from her/him in some time. She/he is probably very busy with our children and your check-in may help!
3. Please forward any information that Elizabeth Owens asks you to in a timely manner!
4. Share your thoughts and ideas! We can be reached at:

Elizabeth Owens – [elizabethmowens@gmail.com](mailto:elizabethmowens@gmail.com) or cell 224-430-6637

Peggy Colucci – [ptcolucci@gmail.com](mailto:ptcolucci@gmail.com) or cell 630-306-5757

## **Sample: Room Parent Welcome Letter to Class Parents**

Welcome to the new school year and to the **[TEACHER'S NAME]** Class!

I'm **NAME**, one of your Room Parents along with **NAME**, and we are looking forward to working with you this year so **TEACHER'S NAME** and our kids have the best possible year. During the school year, there will be opportunities to help out with class activities. As Room Parents, we will work hard to give everyone an opportunity to help out whenever and however possible. We are excited to get started and are happy to answer any questions that you may have as it relates to our class activities or the H.S.A.

### **Here are some important details and dates:**

- > Teacher name and contact information
- > Your names and contact information
- > Schedule of upcoming class parties, events and field trips (if you have them)

Thank you! Together, we're going to have a great year!