

PTO Room Parent Coordinator Job Description

Purpose: The purposes of the PTO Room Parent Coordinator are to 1) recruit volunteers to serve as room parents for all classroom teachers, 2) communicate to volunteers specific information about the role of a room parents, and 3) serve as a liaison between room parents, teachers, and PTO.

Recruit Volunteers:

- Edit and prepare recruitment letter at the end of the school year so it is ready to be sent with summer mailings to Hardy families announcing teacher/classroom assignment.
- Accept emails from volunteers before the start of school and ensure all teachers have 2 room parents. If needed, classes with more than 2 volunteers will have blind drawing to select only 2. If some classes do not get any volunteers communicate directly with the teachers about how to help get some (personally ask those the teacher suggests, send emails to class on teacher's behalf, posting in PTO post or on website the current vacancies, etc...)
- When 2 volunteers are chosen email them and cc the teacher so everyone is aware of who is serving as the room parent. It may also be a good idea to cc the specific grade level VP as well. (Sample following)

Communicate Room Parent Specific Info:

- Email all room parents a welcome email with more details about specific duties they do during the year, who the PTO VPs are, and info about the role of the PTO Room Parent Coordinator. (Sample following.) Include Teacher Questionnaire (attached) for room parents to give to teachers in order to get to know teachers better.
- Around the time of December 1st, email follow up to check in on all room parents and remind them of Holiday gift collection tradition (Sample following)
- As needed throughout the school year email important PTO or school info. PTO VPs should be encouraged to handle this on a per-grade level basis, but there are times it may be asked of you. Example of Teacher Appreciation Week communication is attached.
- Send final end of year follow up and thank you to all room parents (Sample following)

Serve as liaison between room parents, teachers, and PTO

- As noted above as needed email room parents PTO info
- Be willing to help teachers communicate with their room parents as needed

- Email PTO Secretary, Sarah Evans, or Hardy webmaster (currently Aimee Miller) with the names and emails of the room parents as they will be posted on the PTO webpage.
- Recruit new PTO Room Parent Coordinator from PTO as early as April so that the summer mailing can take place.

Teacher Questionnaire from Room Parents

Dear _____,

This is a form we'd love to have your input on so that we can best tailor and personalize our year with you! Please take a few minutes to answer the following questions and return to one of us as soon as possible. We look forward to supporting you in the classroom this year! Thanks so much!

Your Room Parents,

1. Your birthday day and month _____

2. How many years at Hardy? _____

3. Your favorite color(s) _____

4. Your favorite day of the week and
why: _____

5. Your favorite restaurant _____

6. Your favorite meal of the day and what you like to eat
then _____

7. Your favorite weekend activity

8. Your favorite music/band/
singer _____

9. Your favorite kind of flowers _____
10. Your favorite dessert _____
11. Coffee or tea? _____ Cream, sugar, lemon??

12. Your favorite Snack

13. What is one wish list item you'd love for your classroom this year?

_____.
14. What are the ways we as Room Parents can support you this year?

_____.
15. Is there anything else you might like us to know?

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Sample Emails:

Introductions and Acceptance of Room Parent Role:

Hi Patsy and Roslyn,

Thank you both for volunteering to Room Parent for Ms. Pielech's class. It turns out to be that you 2 were the only volunteers for her class so that means the job is yours! I will be sending out a "Next steps" email later in this week to help you get started in this role. I've already informed Ms. Pielech that you will be her room parents and she's looking forward to working with you both. I don't know if you know each other yet, but Patsy is Tessie's Mom and Roslyn is Alex's Mom. I hope you can meet each other soon if you haven't already.

If you have any questions AT ALL regarding room parenting throughout this year please don't hesitate to contact me. But again I will be in touch later this week with more information on what to do now.

Thanks!

Katie Garrett

(footnote: In hindsight I wished I had included the PTO VPs and teachers to the above email rather than emailing everyone separately!)

Room Parent Next Steps: (sent about a week after the room parents were chosen)
Hello Room Parents,

Thank you again for volunteering to help in your child's class by becoming a room parent! I'm sure that most of you have already read about your overall job description, but I am *attaching* the handout again to this email if you need to review it. I wanted to follow up with you regarding what to do now to help you get started!

Some of your next steps include the following:

- Meet your co-room parent, if you haven't already. This is a great time to review the job description and discuss what parts each of you want to do. For example, who will send emails, who will collect money for teacher gifts, etc.
- Have an initial meeting with your classroom teacher - this can be done via email, phone, or in person. The purpose of this meeting is to introduce yourself to the teacher and begin to inquire what they might ask of you for this year.
- Have your teacher fill out the Teacher Questionnaire (*Attached*). This is a great way to get to know your teacher a little better in order to tailor your support directly to them.
- Gather a class email list. Your teacher may already have one that you can get, or you may need to go about getting one yourselves. One way would be to send home a backpack flyer (maybe 1/2 size sheet of paper) asking parents for their emails (see *Attached Sample*).
- Send an introductory email to the class letting them know who you are and generally what your role will be OR if you are sending home the above flyer to gather emails you can introduce yourself/role on that form as well. This is also an opportunity for those of you who do not have a co-room parent yet to ask if anyone else would be willing to serve with you! (Back-to-School Night is another good opportunity to enlist help.)
- Connect with your Grade Level PTO VP - each grade level (except 3rd, which is still vacant) has 1 or 2 people serving as VPs on the PTO. They are there to also assist you and help you get pertinent grade and class information out to the families. A list of all of the VPs and their emails are noted at the end of this email.
- Attend PTO meetings, if possible. The next one is Tuesday, September 13th, 6:30-8pm in the Hardy Library and subsequent ones are typically on the first Tuesday of the month. This is a great way to get first-hand information that may need to be shared with class families. If neither you nor your co-room parent can attend the PTO meetings please make an extra effort to connect with your Grade-

level VP the week after the meeting to get any needed info. The VPs will also be asked to connect with their room parents after the meetings.

If you ever feel that you need some support or guidance in your roles as room parents, please don't hesitate to reach out to the grade-level VPs or to me. I will be in touch a few times during the year to check in with you and to see if you need anything as well.

One more thing...if you do not have a co-room parent and want one and do not get one by asking the class, please let me know ASAP. I will work to have some special handouts available to the class at Back to School Night.

Thank you!

Katie Garrett
Hardy PTO Room Parent Coordinator
ksgarrett@gmail.com

2016-2017 PTO Grade Level VPs

Kindergarten: Michelle Marshall (micki2174@gmail.com)

1st: Terry Holt (terry@mothermirth.com) and Patsy O'Brien (patsy@avalon-ventures.com)

2nd: Bonnie Walsh (arlingtonwalsh@comcast.net)

3rd: TBD

4th: Pete Gast (petegast@gmail.com)

5th: Melissa Jacobs (majacobstm@hotmail.com) and Katie Garrett (ksgarrett@gmail.com)

December Check in and Teacher Gift Guidelines:

Dear Hardy Room Parents,

I hope your year as Room Parent is off to a great start. I'm sure many of you have already begun to do some duties of room parenting such as sending emails, planning holiday parties, or supporting the teacher in other ways.

Many of you have had some **questions about teacher gifts** and how/when to do these so I thought sending a message to everyone could be helpful. ***If you don't need any advice on this feel free to skip to the last paragraph!*** But, if helpful, I'd like to provide some general ideas on how I've experienced things happen around Hardy over the past 10 years I've been here. Please, however, feel free to manage gift giving in your own way, even if it's a new way. (If you choose a new or different way I'd love to hear about it so that we can have other ideas to pass on to future room parents!)

Generally classes collect money 2-3 times a year for teacher gifts. The first time is now, for the winter holidays. Typically a suggested donation amount is offered to the class and a period of 2 weeks is given for collections. Classes with TAs typically provide a gift for them as well, which is usually a lesser amount than the main teacher. If your class has a TA you might consider a higher suggested donation amount from the class. Most times gifts are in the forms of gift cards (places like Amazon or Target are popular as well as VISA cards.) If you had your teacher fill out the questionnaire at the beginning of the year you might get additional, more personalized, ideas from that. In my years at Hardy the suggested donation has been around \$10 per family. I've also seen some gifts when everyone in the class writes a note of thanks/does a picture for the teacher and the pages are made into a little booklet keepsake for the teacher. Feel free to be creative and don't be afraid to come up with new ideas!

The second time of year collections are done is at the end of the year. Again, teachers and TAs are often gifted gift cards or other keepsakes in the same manner as the winter holiday gift.

The third, optional collection, takes place in the spring during Teacher Appreciation Week. This week is primarily funded through donations to the PTO, however, because the week is geared toward lunches/flowers, etc, for ALL Hardy teachers and staff, room parents are encouraged to find a way to honor their specific teacher. There are many inexpensive ways to do this and ideas are provided in the spring. I've also been part of small collections (\$5 per family) for classroom supplies and small gifts for the teachers. Some room parents request higher donations in December and save some of the money for Teacher Appreciation Week so they do not need to collect more than twice a year.

Some important things to remember though are that the gift should be "from the class". No individual names should be listed or given to the teacher. You may have some families that can't contribute each time, which is fine, and there are also families who feel compelled to give a little more. It always balances out and the teachers receive a wonderful gift. Also, I'd really encourage you to communicate well what your collection will be used for - mention the specific gift card or gift or plans for the money. If you're collecting for 2 occasions (i.e. you want to collect for holiday and end-of-year gifts all at one time) please make that clear to the families. Finally, it's also a good idea to send a follow up message to the class after you give the gift stating that you gave it. If it's a gift that's not a gift card even attaching a photo of the completed/wrapped gift is a nice thing for the families to see.

If you have any additional questions please feel free to email me. Again, these are just ideas to guide you and you are welcome to do things in your own way! You can also find some info [here](#) about gifts to teachers.

Don't forget to attend **PTO meetings** to learn more about what's happening at Hardy! The next one is **Tuesday, January 12th, 2016, 6:30-8pm** in the Library. And, thank you again for being a room parent!

Best,
Katie Garrett
Hardy PTO Room Parent Coordinator

ROOM Parent Teacher Appreciation Week Email:

Hi Room Parents,

It's just about time to start planning for **Teacher Appreciation Week, March 28-April 1st**. This is a special week at Hardy when we honor all of the staff and especially the teachers! This email contains important information regarding your role in the week so please read it carefully.

The Teacher Appreciation Planning Committee would like to encourage ALL room parents to continue in the annual beloved teacher **door decoration** tradition that began a few years ago. Here are all the details:

What is it all about? All doors in the Hardy halls are decorated with a thank you theme in honor of Teacher Appreciation Week.

Which doors do I decorate? Room parents should decorate their teacher's classroom door **AND** one additional door of a specialist or administrator. You can find your assigned second door on [this](#) spreadsheet or use the attached Excel sheet.

Who does the decorating? Room Parents can choose to do the decorating themselves or seek out a different volunteer(s) from their class.

Where do I get the supplies? Room Parents or volunteers are responsible for all of their own supplies. Michael's or Play Time are great options for where to purchase needed supplies such as bulletin board paper or lettering.

When does this get done? Please try to have your doors decorated as close to the start of Teacher Appreciation Week as possible. You can come after school (until 6pm) or before school (doors open at 7am!) on any school day. Please note that the **Friday before, March 25th, is a no-school day and the building will be closed that day.** If you cannot complete the doors before **the 28th** as soon as possible that week will be fine.

How elaborate does this need to be? As elaborate as you'd like! If you google "teacher appreciation door decorations" you'll get loads of ideas. But, you can always keep things very simple and use a poster board sized paper as well. It's the thought that counts here and not how extensive the project is. For example, a few years ago the ELL (English Language Learner) office door was decorated with a yellow poster board with "thank you" nicely written in many different languages. It was simple yet colorful and gave off the right amount of appreciation! You can also include drawings/pictures/hand prints, etc. of the students in the class. Be creative!

In addition to the Door Decoration project we'd like to encourage ALL room parents to **honor their classroom teacher in a special, personal way during the week.** This can be in any form you'd like. This honoring can be simple, such as having the kids wear the teacher's favorite color or asking families for a small donation (\$2-\$5 each) to purchase a gift for the teacher or to bring in a bouquet of their favorite flowers. Remember the questionnaire you had your teacher fill out at the beginning of the year with all of their favorite things? This is a great time to put that list to use to help figure out what to do/get for your teacher! In case you'd like some low cost ideas please see the attached Word document for a few. Don't forget any teacher assistants your classroom has! But, this is ONLY for your classroom teachers and does not include the specialist whose door you decorated.

The Hardy PTO will be giving treats to the teachers and staff during the whole week from flowers to apples to catered lunch! Further information about this will be coming soon to the community at large, but this is the needed info specific to the room parents. I'll be sending only one reminder email in a couple weeks. If you have any questions feel free to email **me or Patsy O'Brien (patsy@avalon-ventures.com).**

Thank you, thank you, thank you!

Katie Garrett
Hardy PTO Room Parent Coordinator

(Footnote - I sent the above email b/c I was both the Room Parent Coordinator AND Teacher Appreciation Coordinator. In future years this email might come directly from TA Coordinator. For 2016-2017 that will be Patsy O'Brien.)

Thank you and final email follow up: (sent last week of school)

Dear Room Parents,

Thank you all so very much for serving your child's classroom by being a Room Parent this year! I hope that it was a rewarding experience for you! With these final days of school left I know many of you are busy coordinating one last end of year thank you gift for your teachers, but I wanted to take a moment to thank all of YOU, too. Of course I am biased in this, but I think you all are a great bunch of room parents and communication throughout the school seemed to flow more smoothly this year. I also felt that you all totally went above and beyond during Teacher Appreciation Week with all of the door decorations and the surprises for your teachers! What an awesome week!

This was the **first** year we (the PTO) worked on behalf of the teachers to recruit room parents for them at the beginning of the year and the feedback received from the teachers was this new method worked extremely well for them. **Beginning next year** all room parents will be recruited *before* the start of school! That way from day one there is someone working to help the teacher and the families get started on the right path of communication and information!

I really enjoyed **serving as the first ever** Hardy Room Parent Coordinator and it was made much easier with all of you being so responsive and thoughtful. I'm sad to say I **can't do it again next year as my family is moving to Winchester and thus we say good-bye to Hardy School. But, I leave this role in good hands! Next year, Katie Garrett will be Room Parent Coordinator and I'm sure she'd love to hear from you in late August after those recruitment letters go out in the mail!**

Thank you all again very much for all of your hard work as Room Parents!

Jill Swilling

Hardy PTO Room Parent Coordinator