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# FSAPS/MSO Room Parent Handbook

## Revised for 2022-23

### Welcome

Thank you for volunteering to support the Fulton Science Academy Private School community by participating as Room Parent for the 2022-2023 school year. Your involvement strengthens the important bond between families and school that is essential to establishing a thriving educational environment for our students. This document will serve you throughout the year; if you have other questions not answered in this guide, please contact the MSO Vice President of Parent Engagement via [vpengagement@fsamso.org](mailto:vpengagement@fsamso.org).

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## Overview

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### Room Parent Classroom Responsibilities

- Coordinate responsibilities with your co-room parent.
- Create, distribute, and manage volunteers for grade-level and classroom events
- Aid the teacher in organizing classroom parties and events
- Be a classroom liaison for the MSO.

\*All classroom events and related communication should be approved by the homeroom teacher.

### Room Parent MSO activities

- Promote MSO initiatives, such as participation in MSO events, supporting the monthly teacher luncheons, and contributing to the MSO gift campaigns.
- Attend MSO general meetings. These are only held ~2 times per year, but your input and ideas are invaluable to help steer and support the MSO projects and efforts.

## Getting Started

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### Communicate with your teachers

- Introduce yourself to your teachers as their Room Parent and set up an initial meeting to understand your teacher's specific needs. Strive to create a good relationship with your teacher and maintain open communication throughout the school year. Find out if there are any specific expectations or guidelines for their classroom, and any special needs your teacher may have such as recurring tasks.
- Ask the teacher about allergies in the classroom. The information about allergies must be communicated to the parents and the MSO Board. This is an area that is a huge assistance as teachers are often put in an awkward position of having to withhold a snack that is sent in because another child is highly allergic.

### Communicate with your parents

- Send an introductory email to all the parents in your class as soon as possible. A template for the email has been included but feel free to edit as appropriate. As the primary liaison with your classroom parents, you are a key advocate for our school. We encourage you to develop relationships with the parents in your class, and to keep open communication all year.

### Gather resources, calendars & prepare contact lists.

- Please contact your teacher for the most up-to-date contact information for your classroom. Check back through the year to see if any changes are needed.
- The MSO Board will send out your "Teacher's Favorite" list. Please check that this list is current. This list will be helpful for you and other parents for gifting opportunities throughout the year.
- Secure a list of parent volunteers to help with classroom and MSO events throughout the school year.

## MSO Traditions

### What is the monthly teacher appreciation luncheon?

FSA's tradition of the monthly teacher luncheon is so appreciated by the faculty! Each grade is assigned one day per year to sponsor a luncheon for the entire FSA staff. Lunch is currently set for the 2nd Wednesday of every month school is in session. We adjust, if necessary.

The MSO board will supply 2-3 proteins or main items. The school will provide water and has asked us to not bring any additional drinks to set an example to the students.

Room coordinators of the grade should collaborate to coordinate the following:

- Theme and decorations - flowers, balloons, appreciation banners - this is completely up to the grade selected to decide what to provide.
- Starters, sides, and desserts for 100 -120 faculty/staff. These can be homemade or store bought. Room coordinators can also collect cash from parents that don't have time to make or buy products and then supplement what parents can provide.
- Volunteers to set up, execute, and cleanup the luncheon
  - Note that if dishes are homemade, they should be labeled with ingredients. Remember, no nuts!!
  - Halal and Kosher are always appreciated but not required.

When planning your grades' contributions, reach out to the VP Parent Engagement for any support or suggestions! This event is GREATLY appreciated by the staff and another way to show our appreciation for all they do for our children.

### Tentative schedule for 2022-2023

Month	October	November	December	January	February	March	April	May
Host	5th grade	11&12	9&10	Middle	4th grade	2nd & 3rd Grades	1st grade, Kinder & Pre-K	MSO (Teacher appreciation week)

### What is the MSO gift campaign?

Twice a year, the MSO will campaign to collect a suggested amount of \$50/child to go into a general fund to purchase a common gift for all teachers and staff. This method distributes a gift to many faculty and staff that may otherwise be excluded from direct gifts because they teach specials once a week or support the school behind the scenes. Participation is completely optional. Your job is to encourage parents to donate.

## **What is the MSO Teacher Appreciation Week?**

In the spring, MSO organizes a week-long faculty and staff appreciation event for all FSAPS employees. Past appreciation weeks have included gift bags, trophies, lunches, massage services, and gift cards. Your job is to encourage parents to participate in the events this week and to communicate any classroom initiatives to parents. During appreciation week, ***please do not request monetary donations.***

These ideas have made for memorable appreciation initiatives. Have students and families

- Write a thank you note or draw a picture of a favorite classroom activity.
- Design an award for your teacher celebrating their best quality!
- Donate books or needed classroom supplies
- Bring in a single stem to contribute to a class bouquet
- Compile donations into a “favorite things” basket

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## Classroom Traditions

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### Coordinate Teachers' Birthday Celebrations

You will receive your teacher's birthday, and we ask you to acknowledge his or her birthday in a simple yet thoughtful way. A popular way to acknowledge their birthday is to have each child bring in a flower and homemade card, and the room parent can bring in a vase to arrange the flowers that are brought in. You may want to refer to your teacher's "favorites" list to make the celebration more personal. Please feel free to be as creative as you want, but we ask that you keep it simple for consistency as well as for minimal classroom disruption.

Once you have decided how you would like to celebrate the birthday, please contact parents in advance and let them know what they need to do. Remember it is always good to send a reminder a few days before the due date. If your teacher has a summer birthday, consider a half birthday celebration. ***Please do not request monetary donations for teacher birthday celebrations.***

### Classroom Parties

Classroom parties make exciting memories for the students twice a year - before winter holiday and before summer break. You and your co-room parent are the central liaison with your teacher in establishing party guidelines and executing on parties so the teacher can focus on teaching our children.

Universal guidelines for classroom parties in the elementary school are:

- limit parties to 3 hours' time (this includes setup, party, and cleanup)
- include the Food Allergy Policy and Nut-Free Snack List in parent communication for parties and school events where food will be served.
- All requests for the contribution of funds or party items such as plates, napkins, decorations, food, etc., must note that ***contributions are voluntary and not required.***
- requests for additional parent contributions to support purchasing party supplies/food may be no greater than \$10/student for each event.
- event photos may not be shared on social media and can only be distributed via the teacher
- themes must be inclusive during the winter celebrations (for this, "winter" is an inclusive theme)

For each class party, ensure you have communicated with the teacher to understand the expectations and needs. A few items to clarify include:

- Will food be served and how can parents help with food/treats? When can these be brought in?
- Can someone take photos? Is there a way to share photos with the parents?
- How many parents are allowed to attend?

- Does your teacher want help decorating the room? Many teachers like valentines and/or Holiday Decorations to be up earlier in the month and not just immediately before the party.

These ideas have made for successful classroom parties:

- organize 4 or 5 stations led by parent volunteers for students to enjoy during the party
- consider a game with multiple winners like Bingo, and celebrate with praise rather than prizes
- send a list of needed items to the parents for a party or other class events. Sign Up Genius is the best way to manage these requests.
- Notify parents of the party a few weeks in advance, allow them time to send in needed items, send reminder emails as the event approaches to ensure their contribution hasn't been overlooked.

After the party, if appropriate, follow up to ensure that the photos have been delivered. Also, please get feedback from the teacher! It is always good to hear praise but also to learn how we can improve for the next event.

## Seasonal Reminders

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### Fall

- In September, complete getting started activities.
- Periodically, your teacher may need additional supplies - you can facilitate meeting his/her needs with parent donations, etc.
- In November, volunteers to participate in the MSO Book Fair. \*
- In November, volunteers to facilitate in the schoolwide Thanksgiving celebration.\*
- In November, begin preparations for December's classroom celebration. \*

### Winter

- Distribute the "Teachers Favorites" document to the parents so they may get to know the teachers a little better if they choose to recognize the teacher in their own way.
- Promote the MSO teacher holiday gift collection.
- Check in with your teacher. Periodically, your teacher may need additional supplies - you can facilitate

meeting his/her needs with parent donations, etc.

## Spring

- Check in with your teacher. Periodically, your teacher may need additional supplies - you can facilitate meeting his/her needs with parent donations, etc.
- In March, recruit volunteers to facilitate the MSO teacher appreciation events. \*
- In April, begin preparations for May's end-of-year classroom celebration.
- Re-distribute the "Teachers Favorites" to the parents so they may get to know the teachers a little better if they choose to recognize the teacher in their own way.
  
- Promote MSO Teacher Gift. The MSO will campaign to collect a suggested amount of \$50/child to go into a general fund to purchase a common end-of-the-year gift for all teachers and staff. This method distributes a gift to many faculty and staff that may otherwise be excluded from direct gifts because they teach specials once a week or support the school behind the scenes. Participation is completely optional. Your job is to encourage parents to donate.

## Helpful Resources

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**Email** [Board@FSAMSO.org](mailto:Board@FSAMSO.org)

### Sign Up Genius

Sign Up Genius has some very beneficial capabilities that we think everyone will like. If you haven't yet, please take some time to familiarize yourself with the online tool and let us know if you have any questions or concerns.

**Teachers' Birthday & Favorites List**

[Teacher's Favorites Google Doc](#)

**Sample Room Parent Introduction Letter** *\*This is just a sample letter. Feel free to make changes as you see fit.*



Hello Second-Grade Parents!

We would like to introduce ourselves as the Room Parents for Ms. Thompson's second grade class. Our names are XXX and YYY, and we are excited to support our wonderful teacher this year. Together, we can make this a memorable year for the students!

Throughout the year, we will communicate important information to you about any assistance our teacher and the class may need for classroom events and parties. We will also communicate with you about the Fulton Science Academy Mustang Support Organization events and opportunities that involve our grade. Parent volunteers like you make the class run much more smoothly; so, thank you in advance for being involved this year!

If you have any questions, please reach out. We are here to help make this a great year!

Warmly,

XXXX ( \_\_\_\_\_ 's mom) Phone number, Email address

YYYY ( \_\_\_\_\_ 's dad) Phone number, Email address