



Class Parents Guidelines

2019 - 2020

Welcome Class Parents!

Thank You!

Thank you for volunteering to be a Class Parent! We appreciate the time, energy, and effort that you are committing to your child's class and to the school as a whole. You are playing a critical role in facilitating communication between the parents, teachers and the school administration that will enrich the school experience for the entire school community.

We hope that this basic Class Parent Guide will help you navigate through the school year. Please note that this is a "guide" and not a policy. Expectations, processes, projects and events may vary from grade to grade. At any time, if you need guidance, please reach out to Melissa Cruz, your Class Parent Coordinator.

Email: melissa_c@pa101.org

Phone: (718) 637-47471

Number of Class Parents

The PA recommends that each class have between 2 and 6 Class Parents. If there is more than one Class Parent, each Class Parent should have a specific role. For example, if there are four (4) Class Parents, each Class Parent could be assigned one of the following roles:

- **Teacher Liaison and Communications**
- **Parents As Learning Partners (PALP) Coordinator**
- **Class Fund & Teacher Gift Coordinator¹**
- **Class Event & Party Coordinator**

Class Parent Roles & Responsibilities

Please see a description of each role and their suggested responsibilities below:

- **TEACHER LIAISON & COMMUNICATIONS:** Class Parents are key! You are the link between teachers, parents and PA. One of the most important responsibilities that Class Parents perform is the creation of a **class list**.
 - The PA provides Class Parents with a class list. The class list will contain the names of the children in the class. Class Parents should try and collect any missing contact information (email addresses) from families so that you can communicate with all parents in your class.
 - Once a Class Parent has attempted to collect all contact information, the Class Parent will create an email distribution list for communication with all parents in your class.
 - Class Parents are permitted to distribute the email distribution list to all parents within the class. Distribution is typically done via the children's backpacks.
 - School & PA Email List: Class Parents should encourage all parents to subscribe to the School and PA's email list. Both the school and PA communicate important information via this email system. For any parent not on the list or If a new child joins the class mid-year, Class Parents should ask that they sign up at: <http://pa101.org/joinemail>.

E-mail Communication: Since not all families use social media, email is to be used exclusively for written communication for Class Parents to share or communicate any school-related activities/events with the other parents in your class. Any social media websites are not permitted for any class communication. Class Parents cannot use Facebook as a means to communicate or share pictures unless it is confirmed that every single parent in the class is on Facebook, as well as the teachers.

Please see "Classroom Communications & Photo Sharing"

¹ Any requests for contributions for Class Funds or Teacher Gifts are 100% voluntary and not required.

- **Marketing:** As you know the PA provides a wonderful array of programs during the school year and we do our very best to keep our 101 families informed when a residency program is rolling out. These communications are distributed through our PA and School weekly emails, flyers, and as reminders that you in turn distribute to our parents. In this regard, before forwarding any emails to parents regarding class offerings or programs, be sure they are either from a PA or school source. If ever in doubt, please contact the Class Parent Coordinator. But as a rule of thumb, if you didn't hear it from the PA or the school via any of the aforementioned communication channels, then it's not one of ours. We ask that you please not circulate marketing, advertisement, or promotional emails on behalf of external entities using our class email list.

➤ **PARENTS AS LEARNING PARTNERS (PALP) COORDINATOR**

The PALP program provides PS101 parents and their children with a special opportunity each month. Parents are invited into the classroom on the first Friday of the month, during first period, to teach the class.

- Class Parents should ensure that a parent participates in PALP each month. PALP dates can be found on the school calendar: <http://pa101.org/calendar>
- At the beginning of the school year, we recommend that Class Parents provide all the PALP dates to their parents and request parents to sign up for specific dates.
- Parents can either prepare a unique lesson plan or activity or request a PALP lesson plan from their teacher which typically comes from the Positive Action curriculum.

➤ **CLASS FUNDS & TEACHER GIFT COORDINATOR**

Class Parents are encouraged to establish a Class Fund. Suggested contributions are collected and managed by Class Parents². *Neither the teachers, the PA nor the administration may hold any money collected.* The Class Fund can be used for class parties or events. Teachers may also request specific items for the class which the Class Parents can either purchase or reimburse the teacher.

- **Use of Class Funds:** Class Funds may be used for class parties, events, special projects and activities during the school year or to help cover miscellaneous expenses such as tips and tolls for class trips. Teachers may also have needs for their classrooms. Most standard classroom supplies can be replenished through the school so please check with the office before using Class Funds for basic classroom supplies.
- **Asking For Voluntary Contributions:** Any request for a donation to a Class Fund is voluntary. All donations should be kept confidential. Please be understanding of families who may choose not to donate for various reasons.
 - The suggested range for a Class Fund donation is \$25-\$35.
 - Any money collected should benefit the entire class equally.

² Any requests for contributions for Class Funds or Teacher Gifts are 100% voluntary and not required.

- **Class Fund Amount:** Class Parents should communicate to their classes the amount collected, how much was spent recently, upcoming expenses, and the remaining Class Fund balance. An example of information for an email is on the following page:
 - *Class Fund Donations: \$350.00*
 - *Class Fund Expenditures: \$150.00*
 - *Recent Expenses: \$50.00 for Halloween Class Party*
 - *Class Fund Balance: \$200.00*

- **Teacher Gifts:** Class Parents traditionally coordinate a monetary class gift for teachers, aides & paras and cluster teachers in December and June of each school year. Like Class Funds, teacher gifts are voluntary and the same rules for collecting donations for the Class Fund apply to teacher gifts (see above). Cards on any teacher gift should state it is from the entire class and not any individual parent or group of parents. When collecting and distributing teacher gifts, please remember and consider including the cluster teachers. We recommend each class give \$20 to each cluster teacher.

➤ **CLASS EVENTS & PARTY COORDINATOR**

Class Parents are responsible for organizing class events, including class parties and community service events. Teachers and the administration encourage Class Parents to plan class wide activities (crafts, games, community service projects) in lieu of food-centered class parties.

Class Party Guidelines

- The Principal, PA and the administration determine the date(s) of class parties. Class party dates can be found on the school calendar: <http://pa101.org/calendar>
- Teachers will decide the exact time of each party and whether the parties are open to parents. Please always be respectful of your teacher’s wishes. If there is a conflict, please contact the Class Parent Program Coordinator at melissa_c@pa101.org for guidance.
- Class Parents should communicate with their teacher before sending out any information on class parties. Individual teachers may have different party policies and different grades may have different policies as well.
- Examples of memos related to class parties can be found at: <http://pa101.org/pa/get-involved/class-parents/>

Planning A Successful Party

- Plan ahead. We recommend starting about 2 weeks in advance.
- Discuss the time, duration, and theme with your teacher to ensure they approve of the plan.
- Create a party sign up list via email and ask parents to sign up to bring specific items including paper goods, drinks and healthy snacks. Email parents and verify that they will be sending in the items they’ve indicated.

- If required, ensure adequate volunteers are on hand to set up, attend and clean up the party.

Food & Allergy Concerns

The prevalence of food allergies in the U.S. has increased dramatically in recent years. There may be a child in your class with potentially life-threatening food allergies. Class Parents should attempt to learn about any food allergies or concerns in their classroom and communicate this information to other class members. There are certain things we can do to keep these students safe and able to learn, as well as keep them from feeling excluded. Children frequently touch their lips, eyes, and nose, and life-threatening reactions can result with exposure to even tiny amounts of food residue on desks, supplies, other students' hands, etc. Our goal is to ensure that every student in our school can learn in a safe, supportive environment.

Please see “Food Allergies & Planning Classroom Events”

PA Meeting Attendance

Class Parents are *strongly encouraged* to attend the PA meetings once a month. Class Parents should be able to update other parents when they can't attend a meeting and/or have unanswered questions, and also be present to communicate any school or class wide concerns to the PA.

Classroom Concerns

If many parents in your child's class are experiencing the same difficulty or have an overall concern, the Class Parent should bring it to the attention of (in the following-order of escalation) the teacher, Assistant Principal, Parent Coordinator and Principal. Any parent is welcome to join in regularly scheduled monthly PA Executive Board or General Assembly meetings in order to discuss an issue.

If the concern is related to an individual child, Class Parents should guide the parent to appropriate assistance. Parents with a concern about their child should first contact the teacher. If the concern is unresolved, they should contact our Parent Coordinator and then the Assistant Principal and Principal.

Recruiting Volunteers

There are many opportunities to be involved as volunteers throughout the year. Class Parents are often called upon to rally and recruit volunteers by letting parents know how important it is to participate in the various school events. As a class parent, you can help identify the parents in your class who would be willing to help, but aren't always sure how to get involved. The more parents we have involved, the better school events will be. Class Parents should serve as ambassadors to the school, to reach out to parents and welcome them into our community.

- Class Trip Chaperones ▪ Head Check Team ▪ Recess Volunteers ▪ Graduation & Year-End Events
- Event Chairs & General volunteers (*i.e., Picture Day, Monster Mash, Book Fair, Bake Sales, Talent Show, Movie Nights, Fun run, International Dinner and more.*)

Promote Positive Values

Be:

- Respectful
- Encouraging and supportive in your words and actions
- Positive and helpful
- Considerate and thankful
- Inclusive... and be a team player

CLASSROOM COMMUNICATION & PHOTO SHARING GUIDELINES FOR CLASS PARENTS

Purpose for Classroom Communication & Photo Sharing Guidelines

The P.S. 101Qs Parents' Association recognizes and supports the importance of effective communication among class parents, parents, and teachers. We also recognize that in these digital times there are a variety of tools available to communicate and share information including email, social media, texting, and various forms of sharing photos and images. Each of these tools has its own particular purpose and many of us use them for personal communication, sharing, and networking.

We have established certain guidelines to simplify and standardize communications, provide easy access to all parents in the class, and comply with our partnership with School Administration. In this regard, email will be used exclusively for written communication and Shutterfly will be the exclusive platform for sharing photos and images. Below are more specifics regarding the use of these platforms and also other information related to distribution lists, setting up and using Shutterfly, and some helpful Do's and Don'ts to keep in mind as we communicate with one another.

We want to thank you for all that you do to serve our children and make our school better and we hope that you accept these guidelines in the spirit in which they are intended . . . to take advantage of tools available to us, simplify our roles, and maintain an association known for its teamwork and respect of each other.

Electronic Communication

Since not all families use social media, email is to be used exclusively for written communication for Class Parents to share or communicate any school-related activities/events with the other parents in your class. Any social media³ websites is not permitted⁴ for any class communication. Class Parents cannot use Facebook as a means to communicate or share pictures unless it is confirmed that every single parent in the class is on Facebook, as well as the teachers.

Establishing Distribution List: At the beginning of the school year, class parents will be provided with a class list with the names of the children in your class. Class Parents should try to collect contact information (email addresses) for the parents in the class. Once a Class Parent has attempted to collect all contact information, the Class Parent will create an email distribution list for communication with all parents in your class. Class Parents are permitted to distribute the email distribution list to all parents within the class.

Communication among your fellow Class Parents: Class Parents should also communicate with each other via email to coordinate any class related communications, events, or any other class related activities. In addition, try to the best of their ability, to keep each other equally apprised and informed, by copying fellow class parents in all email correspondence.

School & PA Email List: Class Parents should encourage all parents to subscribe to the School and PA's email list. Both the school and PA communicate important information via this email system. For any parent not on the list or If a new child joins the class mid-year, Class Parents should ask that they sign up at: <http://pa101.org/joinemail>

³ Social media include, but are not limited to: Social Networking sites (Facebook, Ning, MySpace, YouTube, LinkedIn, etc.) • Blogs (Blogger, WordPress, etc.) • Wikis (Wikispaces, Google Sites, etc.) • Photo and Video Sharing sites (YouTube, Flickr, etc.) • Social Bookmarking (Diigo, Delicious) • Podcasting and Vodcastin • Instant messaging

⁴ Class Parent who does not abide by these guidelines may lose their opportunity to continue role as Class Parent

Photo Sharing

Shutterfly is the exclusive platform for sharing school related photos/images and by which Class parents may share with the other parents in the class. Photo sharing on all other social media⁵ platforms is not permitted⁶. If a Class Parent sees any photos of students on any social platform, she / he should notify the poster, if possible, delete the photos.

Setting Up Shutterfly for photo sharing

1. Check with the classroom teacher(s) before setting up a Shutterfly account or prior to your initial photo sharing. Setting up a Shutterfly Classroom account may not be deemed necessary, as many teachers share photos of classroom activities via the Remind application. A decision must be made among class parents and the teacher on whether a Shutterfly may be deemed appropriate/beneficial to the class.
2. All parents in the class will need to sign a photo release form for the student and return such form to the classroom teacher. Class Parents must check-in with the teacher for any students whose parents declined consent. If there is a child that does not have consent for photography, then it is the class parents' imperative responsibility to ensure not to share or post photos of said child(ren).
3. After consulting the teacher and if you wish to set up a Shutterfly Class account, email the parents in your class to inform them of your intention to set up a Shutterfly account. Be sure to clearly state the benefits/reasons for setting up such account (i.e., share class party & field trip photos).
4. Provide parents access to the registration link, instructions, and their choice to register with Shutterfly in order to view the photos. Parents have the right to accept or decline their participation to Shutterfly, email address sharing, and/or opt out of any email correspondence.
5. Please remember, PRIOR consent is required before posting any photographs or videos of any children in the class.

⁵ Social media include, but are not limited to: Social Networking sites (Facebook, Ning, MySpace, YouTube, LinkedIn, etc.) • Blogs (Blogger, WordPress, etc.) • Wikis (Wikispaces, Google Sites, etc.) • Photo and Video Sharing sites (YouTube, Flickr, etc.) • Social Bookmarking (Diigo, Delicious) • Podcasting and Vodcastin • Instant messaging

⁶ Class Parent who does not abide by these guidelines may lose their opportunity to continue role as Class Parent

Do's and Don'ts


Do

- All communications should be used to facilitate communication between the parents, teachers and the school administration.
- Communication is used to inform and remind parents of important dates and events that will happen in the near future (for example, field trips, school events such as Assembly, Holiday party, Monster Mash, etc.)
- Positively express ideas and opinions in a respectful manner and in the spirit of our PS 101 Core Values: Be Respectful, Collaborative, and Kind.
- Build trust and responsibility in your relationships with the other parents in your class.
- Respect the privacy and the feelings of others and consider carefully what you say through email, comments and photos.

Don'ts

- Do not share or post photographs of any children other than your own on your personal social media⁷ accounts, unless you have explicit consent from the child's parent(s). If you have any questions about posting a particular photo, speak directly with the parent before posting a photo.
- Class Parents should not distribute or post any information that might be deemed personal about any other student and that is understood as confidential.
- It is inappropriate to use e-mail, text messaging, instant messaging or social networking sites to discuss or share any student matters that does not pertain to school-related activities. Appropriate discussions would include students' homework, class activity, school sport or club or other school-sponsored activity.
- Do not denigrate or insult others, including parents, students, staff, administrators, or other school districts.
- Do not make any e-mail or online threats. Threats will be taken seriously.

⁷ Social media include, but are not limited to: Social Networking sites (Facebook, Ning, MySpace, YouTube, LinkedIn, etc.) • Blogs (Blogger, WordPress, etc.) • Wikis (Wikispaces, Google Sites, etc.) • Photo and Video Sharing sites (YouTube, Flickr, etc.) • Social Bookmarking (Diigo, Delicious) • Podcasting and Vodcastin • Instant messaging



Class Parent - Sample
Welcome/Introduction Letter



2019 - 2020

*The below is a sample only. Feel free to make your own modifications but we ask that the general content and subjects which is **bolded** is included in some way. This should be sent home through your teacher in paper form in each student's backpack in the class. Once the Class Lists have been compiled and emails collected, you can communicate via email going forward.*

Hello Parents!

We are your Class Parents for the year. We are *[include names and roles if assigned]*. Our goal is help our teacher(s) feel supported and have the resources they need to succeed in the classroom.

In order to do this, we need your help.

Class Fund: Please consider making a voluntary donation to the Class Fund. *[We are accepting a suggested voluntary contribution of \$xx.xx **OR** The amount you donate is up to you. **OR** You will hear from us shortly about the Class Fund.]* All donations are voluntary, but any amount helps. The class fund helps supplement classroom supplies, including art supplies, celebrations, prizes, miscellaneous class trip expenses and community projects. We will maintain the monies we collect now to cover these expenses for the school year.

Teacher Gifts: We do expect to have 2 additional requests for voluntary donations for teacher gifts. One in December and one at the end of the school year.

Parents As Learning Partners: One Friday of every month, our school hosts PALP. PALP is a great way to participate in the classroom. Teachers invite parent(s) into the classroom to teach for the first period which is from 8:00am to 8:50am. We need volunteers for each PALP date below:

October - No PALP

Friday, November 8th, 8:10am

Friday, December 6th, 8:10am

Friday, January 10th, 8:10am

Friday, February 7th, 8:10am

Friday, March 6th, 8:10am

Wednesday, April 22nd: class activity for Earth Day in lieu of PALP

Friday, May 8th, 8:10am

June - No PALP

Class List: Let's all stay connected. We will be sending out a Class Directory with every student's name and related parent contact information. Help us make this information complete. When you receive this Directory, please send it back to us if your information is not complete or is missing.

School and PA Email Lists: If you want to receive timely emails regarding your child's grade or school level events and issues, be sure to join our email list at: pa101.org/joinemail. Also follow the PA on Twitter: @pa101q

PA Meetings: We encourage all parents to attend the PA meeting. Be sure to check out and subscribe to the calendar: [PS 101 Calendar](#)

Lots of Valuable Information is at www.pa101.org and www.ps101q.org.

We look forward to a great year of learning and growing for our children, and a community- building experience for us all.

Your Class Parents, *[Names & Contact Details]*



Food Allergies & Planning Classroom Events



2019 - 2020

Food Allergies & Planning Classroom Events

It is important to consider Food Allergies when planning your classroom events and celebrations. One of our primary goals as parents is to protect our children; therefore, we must take in to account what foods are of concern to avoid putting any children at risk of a serious allergic reaction.

Here are a few simple steps that will assist you in your planning process and ensure your party is **safe** for **everyone** to enjoy:

1. Confirm with your classroom teacher what Food Allergies are present in your class. You will then be able to make sure those foods are not a part of your celebration.
2. Always give your teacher sufficient notice before bringing food into the classroom. Providing notice gives the teacher time to reach out to those parents who have a child with a Food Allergy. Their parents can then plan ahead and send a safe treat in for their child to enjoy along with their class when necessary. Avoid impromptu parties, as not all parents can send something in at a moment's notice.
3. Avoid bringing in home baked goods. Parents and teachers need to make informed decisions. Prepackaged treats where ingredients are clearly labeled is the best route.

We all volunteer with the purpose of being a part of our children's school experience. They grow up so fast and it is important to enjoy as many of their childhood moments as possible. We all share the same frame of mind when we want to see our children at their happiest and it is even more rewarding when you get to play a pivotal role in making that happen. Anytime we spend planning for a classroom event, we are doing it for the class. Every child deserves to take part in their classroom festivities. If we work together we can make sure no child is put at risk, no child is excluded, and every child is thought of.

Social Media Guidelines

Social media can be a valuable way to keep in touch with other parents and foster a sense of community around our school. The Parents' Association maintains a Facebook group that mainly echoes all of our official email communications. While there are no "official" Facebook pages for individual grades or classes at PS101, we realize that parents have created various Facebook groups to help discuss class issues, organize, and generally stay informed. We have put together guidelines to help anyone who is currently involved in a Facebook group related to PS101, or for those thinking about starting such a group. We recommend posting these guidelines on any Facebook page or group description.

PS101Q PA Facebook Group

1. **RESPECT:** One of the core values that PS101 is trying to instill in our children is respect. That culture should naturally follow through to any forum related to our school community. All conversations, whether online or off, should remain civil. Members of this Facebook group should quickly point out and report disrespectful speech and do everything they can to curtail it. All sides should always be heard, and disagreements sometimes occur, but there should be a zero-tolerance policy for disrespect, discrimination of any sort, and bullying.
2. **PHOTOS:** No photos of children should be posted here at any time.
3. **NOT AN OFFICIAL COMMUNICATION CHANNEL:** Nothing that is posted on Facebook is considered an "official" communication from either the school or the Parents' Association. This is true even if a PA member posts something in a group. Official communication from the school or the PA will come via an email, a phone call, or a note sent home with the children. There will never be any official news posted in this group without it coming through an official communication channel first. If you're not getting email from the PA, please sign up at <http://pa101.org/pa/get-involved/join-the-pa-email-list/>
4. **CONFIDENTIALITY:** Do not assume that anything that is posted on any online forum is confidential. Even in a closed, closely monitored group, "screen shots" can be taken and shared. Do not post anything that you wouldn't feel comfortable with the whole school seeing.
5. **CLASS ISSUES:** Any issue with the class, classroom, another student, or anything else that relates to school, should be brought up with the teacher or the appropriate school official. Here-say and rumors tend to sprout in online forums. The vast majority of the time, an issue can be solved relatively quick by bringing it up to the teacher.
6. **COMMERCIAL POSTS ARE NOT ALLOWED:** Please do not post any local businesses unless they are part of a school fundraiser or are directly related to the school community. Facebook's official goal is "To give people the power to build community and bring the world closer together". It can be an indispensable tool for doing that. We all need to be extra cautious when using this tool to talk about our children, other people's children, and the school community in general.