



Greetings Parents and Welcome Back!

Thank you so much for volunteering to be a Room Parent for the 2016-2017 academic year! This is a wonderful gift of your time and talent which benefits our entire OLF school community of administrators, HSA board members, faculty, staff, parents and of course, our students. I believe you will find this service both fun and rewarding. As the Room Parent Coordinator, I thought it would be helpful to provide you with a general overview of your responsibilities, as well as some basic guidelines and tips to make the year run smoothly, as well as to guarantee that we all share the same vision and understanding of our roles.

The first step is to make an appointment to meet with your respective teacher. Please review with them any proposed dates for class parties or special celebrations. You may also begin to collect the class dues, The dues should be handed in to the office and placed in the HSA inbox.

St. Teresa of Avila called us to be the hands and feet of Christ on Earth. In a broad sense, you are the hands and feet of the HSA in our OLF school community. I hope you will champion OLF's commitment to Respect, Knowledge and Faith in all you do and say.

I am grateful for your time and service and look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,
Laurie Vallerie
Room Parent Coordinator
Laurie.Vallerie@gmail.com



Room Parent Guidelines 2016-2017

1. Your Responsibilities

As a Room Parent, you will serve as the communication link between the HSA and your class, as well as between your teacher and the other class parents for class activities and school functions. Ideally, you should meet with your teacher before Open House to become better acquainted, offer assistance and discuss the scheduled events, class dues and classroom coverage needs for the year.

At Open House you may want to prepare flyers and sign-up sheets for class-room events so that you can begin to receive commitments from the class parents. You may also want to collect class dues at this time.

While Room Parents are the primary points of contact and the coordinator of class celebrations, this does not mean that you are the only parent responsible for the execution of the parties. No one should feel overwhelmed and getting everyone involved will provide for a fulfilling and enjoyable year. In addition, you will help to organize parents to support HSA events throughout the year.

If you have a new family in your grade this year, consider a personal phone call to make parents feel more welcome and perhaps, more inclined to become involved.

The HSA will ask for assistance, support and attendance from you and your class parents with various events throughout the year. The Room Parent Coordinators will contact you as needs arise.

2. Not Your Responsibilities

The administrators, faculty and staff at Our Lady of Fatima work very hard through the year to provide a challenging, innovative, insightful and rewarding curriculum. Should a parent in your class have a question or concern regarding the academics of your grade (school work, homework, projects, papers or tests) or disciplinary or behavioral issues in the classroom, they should contact your teacher to make an appointment individually. If need be, they should contact

Mr. Steele to discuss any questions, concerns or issues. Room Parents should not serve as the liaison between parents, teachers or the administrators on any academic or classroom related matters.

Likewise, the members of the HSA and Advisory Boards work very hard to manage the fundraising contributions for our stipend and enrichment opportunities. The Boards look forward to each parent volunteering their skills, time and talent to enrich our students' education at Our Lady of Fatima. Should one of your parents have a question, concern or issue regarding an HSA policy or event, they should contact the HSA Presidents, Adrian Salageanu or Michael Paige directly. Room Parents should not serve as the liaison between parents and the HSA and Advisory Boards on any HSA related matters. The HSA conducts monthly General Meetings and parents are encouraged to attend. [View the school website](#) for a schedule of events and meetings.

Should any of your class parents wish to speak to a teacher, Mr. Steele or the HSA Board Presidents, it is highly encouraged that they email for an appointment to ensure that they are allowed enough time for a meaningful conversation and to avoid taking valuable morning classroom time away from the teachers and students. If the Room Parents feels that they are being approached with anything they are not comfortable addressing, they should contact Mr. Steele or the HSA presidents immediately.

3. Communication Guidelines

In the ever hectic world we live in, strong communication is vitally important. However, it is also crucial that communication is effective and appropriate. Emails are very important and need to be used wisely and within certain parameters. There are two different kinds of email used by Room Parents - Broadcast and Reminders. They each have their own set of guidelines.

Broadcast Emails

Broadcast emails include any communication which impacts the entire school. This includes, but is not limited to emails regarding fundraising and social events. If you are going to send a Broadcast email to your class, it must be read and approved by Mr. Steele before you can send it out. You should "cc:" your teacher and Mr. Steele, on these emails. There are many emails going out to our parents and this will insure that your message is not redundant to something already being sent school wide through the office or HSA Board.

Reminder Emails

Reminder emails include any communication which impacts only your grade. This includes, but is not limited to emails regarding updates from your teacher, uniform information or party reminders. If you are going to send a reminder email to your class, you must "cc:" your teacher on the email. In addition, please convey to your class parents that the "Reply All" email function

should be used sparingly and only when absolutely necessary. **Please ask your parents to review the distribution list before using “Reply All” to ensure that emails regarding play-dates, social events outside of school and other non-school related subjects do not go to anyone outside of the people they are intended for.** There are many emails going out to our parents and this will insure that we are respectful to our parents’ and teachers’ time, attention and inboxes.

4. Class Dues, Hospitality Fridays, Virtus Trained and Something Special

Class Dues

Class dues are set at the beginning of the school year; amount is set per student. These funds will cover any class parties and celebrations scheduled for your grade. Dues are collected and remitted to the HSA treasurer, Chris Isaacs. You can submit the dues to the office in the HSA inbox. Check should be made payable to OLF HSA. When you require reimbursement forms are available on the website and will be processed by the HSA. Your dues do not cover any anticipated cost of field trips, special events and teacher gifts. Field trips and special events will be administered by the faculty and class teacher gifts are at the discretion of each class and should be done on a voluntary basis through a separate collection. Should a family have a financial concern regarding their dues, they should speak directly to Mr. Steele.

Hospitality Fridays

The First Friday of every month will be a “Hospitality Friday.” Each grade will be assigned one First Friday this year to host a gathering for parents and parishioners after the First Friday Mass (mass ends around 9:45 and cleanup is usually 10:30). The Room Parents, with their class parents, will provide the drinks and snacks and the students in the assigned grade will welcome and serve those attending. This is a wonderful way for parents and parishioners alike to experience the facility, love and mission of our school community, while providing an excellent opportunity to interact with our students and each other.

Room Parents coordinate the following to be dropped off and set up in the Parish Center following First Friday Mass which begins at 9am:

- Coffee: Regular & decaf
- Tea: Regular & decaf
- Apple and orange juice
- Bagels, donuts, muffins
- Butter and cream cheese
- Paper goods and utensils

Additionally, coordinate one or two parents to help with set up and clean up, and set up of tables and chairs which are available in the Parish Center.

Coffee urns can be arranged with advance notice thru the Parish Center.

Virtus Trained

Any parent/family member, friend that wishes to volunteer at the school in any capacity including, but not limited to Mystery reader, Parent craft, Birthday, Lunch, Recess help, Field trips, Class parts, etc. must be Virtus Trained. You can register for training at www.virtus.org, click on Registration and select Bridgeport, CT in the drop down list. Once the class is taken you will receive a certificate, this along with any paperwork should be returned to the main office. The class only needs to be taken once, and after 5 years, a renewal is required. Information about renewal can be found in the office. Please communicate this to all class parents.

Something Special

Something Special contributes \$20,000 cash each year to OLF as well as providing funding for specific gifts/improvements from time to time. OLF is the only beneficiary of Something Special and receives 100% of its net proceeds. The only request to OLF is that as a parent body, we collectively help staff the store during its hours of operation during the school year and July. Specifically, we should have 1-2 people available from 12:30- 4:30 pm each Saturday and Sunday. Historically, the HSA has covered the month of September, and we have allocated each of the remaining 10 months to a grade, relying upon the parents to fill 1 slot per child that they have enrolled in the school.

Unfortunately, we have not consistently met our responsibility to the program.

As a result, we are changing the program this year and wanted to share how this will benefit all of us.

1. WHO DOES WHAT, WHEN? This year, your grade is not restricted to one month. We are opening up all 10 months to the community and each parent can select what day or days (depending on how many students you have at the school) are best for you. Parents must select and make a HSA Something special commitment by 10/15/2016. We understand that there are changes, this year's new sign up system allows for parents to swap with another person in case of a scheduling conflict or emergency.
2. COUNT ME IN! This year we're using SignUp.com to organize and staff Something Special and more effectively track who has fulfilled his or her HSA commitment. Here's how it works in 3 easy steps:

- Click this link to see our SignUp on SignUp.com: <http://signup.com/go/w153Ap>
 - Review the options listed and choose the spot(s) you like.
 - Sign up! It's Easy - you will NOT need to register an account or keep a password on SignUp.com.
3. STUDENTS PARTICIPATE: Also new this year the 6th, 7th and 8th graders can earn service hours by accompanying their parent when fulfilling the commitment to Something Special. Please note, all parents will still be asked to fulfill his/her slots.
 4. TIME, TIME, TIME: We appreciate that for many the most limiting aspect is the ability to commit time. For those who struggle with this year the HSA is offering an “opt out” if a suggested contribution of \$300 is given to the HSA. In turn, the HSA will provide someone to cover your commitment. With this in mind we are seeking individuals who would be willing to volunteer additional time to ensure we are always capable of fulfilling OLF’s commitment to Something Special.

We believe this is a creative solution that will (1) fulfill our HSA commitment to Something Special, (2) offer flexibility in how we each support OLF while maintaining a sense of equity and fairness, (3) provide our 6th, 7th and 8th graders a fun way to fulfill their service hours and (4) benefit all of our kids!

As Room Parents, we ask that you continue to manage your class parents’ HSA Something Special time commitment. Following open house, please send out the SignUp.com link (<http://signup.com/go/w153A>) and remind the parents that the deadline for sign up is 10/15. Each parent is expected to sign up for one slot per student enrolled in the school. For those of you who are Room Parents for 6th, 7th and 8th graders, we’ll be working with your teacher to schedule a time to come and speak with the students.

Using Signup.com we can easily provide you with a list of your grade's parents who have and have not signed up so they can personally approach those that still need to make a commitment.

Please feel free to contact Brent at (214) 929-7882 or Courtney at (203) 803-3295 should you have any questions. Brent specifically is also available for those who prefer to opt out of the time commitment to Something Special.

Hospitality Fridays 2016-2017

September 9th – HSA

October 7th – 4th and 6th grade

November 4th – Student Council

December 2th – 7th grade

January 6th – 8th grade

February 3th – HSA, Grandparents/Special Friends day (in the GYM)

March 3 – PreK and Kindergarten

April 7 – 5th grade

May 5 – 2nd grade

June 2 – 1st & 3th grade (in the GYM)