



LONGFELLOW ELEMENTARY PTA
ROOM PARENT/GUARDIAN
RESPONSIBILITIES AND GUIDELINES

Nothing is stronger than the heart of a volunteer...

Dear Room Parent/Guardian:

Thank you for volunteering your gift of time and talent to serve as a Room Parent/Guardian/Guardian for your child's class. The teacher and students greatly benefit from your dedicated assistance throughout the school year.

As a Room Parent/Guardian, you are the PTA's representative in the classroom. Your main responsibility as a Room Parent/Guardian is to coordinate and facilitate classroom support for your teacher. **Please make time to meet your child's teacher early in the year to find out what his/her needs and expectations are for the coming year.**

Though membership in the PTA is not required to be a Room Parent/Guardian, please consider joining and encouraging other parents/guardians in your classroom to join as well. Even if other parents/guardians don't have time to volunteer they can still join the PTA and help support our wonderful school through their membership. To become a member, simply visit www.joinpta.org.



Every Room Parent/Guardian must [register online](#) to be a [VIPS: Volunteer in Public Schools](#). Once completed, you will need to take your government issued Photo ID to the front desk so a criminal background check can be performed. This can take **up to 2-3 weeks** so please have this done in the first days of the school year to avoid any delay in your volunteerism. Even if you signed up last year and presented your ID, you must take your ID to the front desk again for the current school year. Mandatory background checks are done annually. Also, encourage other parents/guardians to complete/renew the VIPS process if they want to volunteer in the classroom or chaperone on field trips. Please visit the [HISD website](#) for more information.

- [Volunteers in Public Schools brochure](#) (.pdf)
- [Volunteers in Public Schools brochure](#) (En español, .pdf)
- [Volunteers in Public Schools brochure](#) (Vietnamese, .pdf)
- [Background Check Procedures](#) (.pdf)
- [Background Check Procedures](#) (En español, .pdf)
- [Background Check Procedures](#) (Vietnamese, .pdf)

Room Parent/Guardian Duties:

Basic Responsibilities

A room parent's basic responsibility is to help out in the classroom, as determined by the teacher. Check with your teacher early in the year to find out how he/she views your role. When in the classroom, please pay attention to all the students, so each one feels included. Being a room parent is a great way to get to know your child's teacher and classmates. If more than one parent wants to volunteer, we encourage Team Room Parenting. We have a great group of parents/guardians here at Longfellow. Most are more than willing to help if they are asked and given sufficient time. Involving more parents/guardians makes your job easier. More hands make lighter work. However, for organizational purposes, please select one parent to be the lead Room Parent/Guardian.

Classroom Email List (optional)

Your teacher should be able to provide you with a list of emails of each parent/guardian in your classroom. Please **DO NOT** share this contact information with anyone without consent of the person(s). Once you have your parent/guardian email list, you can BCC (so no one but you can view the email addresses) all the parents/guardians in your class to see if they would like to be on a shared classroom email list. Please use wording similar to the following:

“Dear Parents/Guardians in [Teacher’s Name] Class,

I received your email address from [Teacher’s Name] and I am contacting you today to get your consent to share it with other parents/guardians in our class. Many of us would like to get in touch with each other, so to make communicating a little easier, I will set up a class email list. Please respond to me by [desired date], if you consent to sharing your email address with other parents/guardians in [Teacher’s Name]’s class. If I do not hear from you by that date, I will assume you do not want your email address shared and will send out the list without it.

*Thanks,
Your Room Parent/Guardian”*

Once you have been contacted by consenting parents/guardians you can CC (so that everyone can see emails) a class email list to the parents/guardians who are interested in being included.

Classroom Party in the Park Day (optional) *(Recommend Saturdays in the Fall)*

A classroom get together at the park is a great way for the parents/guardians to meet and mingle with other families in their child's class. Find a free park (Linkwood Park is next to the school and Karl Young Park is on Stella Link) and schedule a two (2) hour play date for the class to gather. Parents/Guardians must accompany children (no drop-offs!) and it's up to the Room Parents/Guardians to decide whether to provide snacks or B.Y.O.S. *(bring-your-own-snacks)*

Classroom Parties (Winter Party and End of the Year Party)

A few weeks before a party or function, talk with your teacher to find out what s/he wants. Then send a note to all parents/guardians or have the teacher prepare one to send home in the Thursday Communication Folder, stating the purpose of the party and what they need to bring. The Winter Party is before the Winter Break and the End of the Year Party is the week before or on the last week of school. The parties usually involve food and some form of entertainment (i.e. crafts, activities or games). Generally, the sign up sheets should include 2-3 healthy snacks (crackers & cheese, fruit slices, veggies, etc), juice, paper plates, cups, napkins and a limited amount of treats (cookies, candy, brownies, etc). Be sure to include the quantity needed and note any food allergies. Remind people of the allergies and quantities needed when you contact them before the parties. Room Parents/Guardians and other parents/guardians who have signed up to help will also assist with setup, serving and clean up after the party.

PTA Duties and Responsibilities

As a Room Parent/Guardian, you are an important link between the PTA and parents/guardians in your classroom. You may be called upon from time to time to enlist the assistance of other parents/guardians in your class for help in PTA or school activities. The PTA sponsor events such as Fall Festival, Field Day, Book Fair, the Discovery Garden, Valentine's Dance and Teacher Appreciation Week. The PTA also encourages you to attend monthly General Board Meetings which last approximately an hour and provide insight and discussion about what's going on in education at the local, city, state and national levels. The PTA's mission involves .

Teacher Gifts

The PTA has developed guidelines for Room Parents/Guardians when collecting for Teacher Appreciation Gifts. We ask that Room Parents/Guardians take only one collection for a teacher gift and that it be at the end of the year. As always, parents/guardians and students are welcome to thank teachers at holiday time individually if they choose to. Remembering the teacher's birthday is always a nice gesture. A small token gift, such as a card signed by the children, is fine. (Please ask the teacher for the date, not year, in September).

Please adhere to the following guidelines when coordinating an end-of-the-year gift for a teacher and/or teacher aide(s).

- Be clear when communicating to parents/guardians that any donation is **strictly voluntary**. You can suggest a dollar amount but keep it minimum. Please work with what parents/guardians send in. However, you can say "If you'd like to contribute more..."
- Make it clear that all students will be included in the gift, regardless of whether they contribute monetarily.
- Structure your collection so that students are not aware of who has and how much is donated, so that all children feel they have contributed equally to the gift.
- Please make the gift or part of the gift "personalized" by the students. It does not have to be expensive, but it should represent the class by having each child's signature or artwork on it. Examples include an apron, large flower pot, notepad, tote bag, or t-shirt,

all signed by the children. Some classes could coordinate a scrap book with a picture and sentence from each child. Talk to other Room Parents/Guardians for ideas and recruit the help of any talented/crafty parents/guardians in your class.

Thank you for taking an interest in helping our children thrive at Longfellow Elementary. If you have any questions, concerns or suggestions, please email outreach@longfellowhisdpta.org or members@longfellowhisdpta.org.

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Please [join the PTA](#) to receive information and reminders on upcoming events throughout the school year and take advantage of the [member benefits offered by sponsors of the Texas PTA](#). PTA is focused on making every child's potential a reality by strengthening education and taking a comprehensive approach to community success. And we know there is no commYOUinity without YOU – our members, our business leaders, our decision-makers. Visit the [Longfellow Elementary PTA Website](#) or our school's website at www.longfellowhisd.com.

Once again, your contribution and volunteerism is essential in creating a successful year for your child, the teacher, and the school. Thank you in advance for your service and we look forward to a terrific school year!

Sincerely,



[Longfellow Elementary PTA](#)