

July 2010

Sample Agenda Initial Meeting Between CAT Leads and Teacher

Please schedule a meeting with your teacher and the CAT Leads (Class Parents) within the first few days of school. If you are going to be Co-Leads (2-3 parents leading the classroom volunteers), have the Team get together 15-20 minutes in advance of the meeting with the teacher to introduce yourselves and talk about how you'd like to collaborate this year so that you can use the teacher's time as efficiently as possible.

During the meeting, please discuss the topics with the teacher:

Understanding the Teacher's Philosophy

Start off by asking the teacher to tell the CAT Leads a little bit about him/herself and his/her preferred approach to working with Room Parents, including the best form of communication (ie: phone, e-mail, notes).

Communication

- How he/she would like to handle communication with the CAT Leads (i.e. channel all communication through one specific Lead versus dividing up responsibilities and having the teacher coordinate directly with the parent in charge of key activities).
- How the teacher would like to handle communication with parents. On what sorts of topics would the teacher like to channel communications through the Room Parents? Does he/she prefer these communications to occur through phone or email?

Parties/Classroom Projects

- What preferences does the teacher have for these parties (activities, types of snacks, number of parent volunteers, etc.)?

Classroom Volunteers

- In what other regularly scheduled areas would he/she like to use parent volunteers (e.g., reading, math, media center or art assistance)?
- When will these activities occur (date/time)? Gather information on when these activities occur.
- What other volunteer needs are likely to arise that are not on a regular schedule (donating supplies, coordinating book orders, helping clean-up in the classroom)?
- Once volunteers have signed-up to help, who will coordinate the schedule (teacher or CAT Leads)? Who will send confirmation of the schedule to the parents? (i.e. sending a monthly calendar to all parents and teacher for volunteer status through Thursday papers or email)
- How would the teacher like parent volunteers to handle cancellations (e.g., automatically finding their own substitute versus checking first with the teacher to see if a sub is needed)?

Other

Check with the teacher to be sure all important topics have been covered.

After the Meeting

Immediately after the meeting with the teacher, the CAT Leads should continue talking to decide how to divide up responsibilities for the class. To assist you in this process, here are a few ideas:

Option 1

Put each CAT Lead in charge of 1 to 2 planned classroom activities. Divide the remaining responsibilities, ensuring no individual becomes too overloaded.

Option 2

Put one parent in charge of parties, another in charge of field trips, another in charge of classroom volunteers, and another in charge of communication. Divide the remaining responsibilities, ensuring no individual becomes too overloaded.

Be sure to close the loop with the teacher and let him/her know how you've decided to divide up the work so he/she knows exactly whom to contact as needs and ideas arise.

SHORTCUT

Prior to your meeting with your teacher, please print out the "CAT Sign-Up Sheets" that are posted on the New Prospect PTA website (www.newprospectpta.com/main/cat-nips/). Take these sheets in to your meeting and use them as a guideline to decide what your teacher needs. Make amendments on these sheets as you speak with your teacher and then simply revise sheets on your computer, after your meeting. These sheets can be displayed, in the classroom, at Curriculum Night.