



SCJ PARENT ASSOCIATION

St. Cyril of Jerusalem School Room Parent Guide 2026 - 2027

THE ROLE OF A ROOM PARENT

As a Room Parent, your primary role is to support your classroom teacher and help foster strong communication between parents, the teacher, and the PA (Parent Association). Each teacher may have unique needs, and your responsibilities may include

- Providing general support to the teacher as needed
- Sharing important updates and information with parents on behalf of the teacher
- Communicating messages from the Parent Association to classroom families
- Planning and coordinating classroom parties and special events
- Recruiting parent volunteers for school-wide activities and events

Your support plays a vital role in creating a connected, well-informed classroom community, and it truly enhances the overall experience for students, parents, and staff.

FIRST STEPS: DO THIS TWO WEEKS BEFORE SCHOOL STARTS

1. SCHEDULE AN INTRODUCTION WITH YOUR TEACHER

Reach out to your teacher before school begins—whether in person, by phone, or via email. This initial meeting will give you a clear overview of their needs for the year. You're welcome to share ideas on how you can help, but please keep in mind that the teacher always has the final say. Consider also connecting with the previous Room Parent for your grade—they often have helpful insights and tips to share.

For Incoming New Families

During this meeting, ask your teacher if there are any new families joining your class this year (this does not apply to Preschool, as all families are new at that point). If so, request their names and email addresses so you can send them a welcome message.

2. CHECK IN ABOUT HOW YOU CAN HELP

Ask your teacher about their priorities for the upcoming school year. This will give you a better understanding of how and where you can offer support. Remember, your primary role is to assist your teacher in whatever way they need.

3. ASK YOUR TEACHER TO COMPLETE THE “My Favorite Things” FORM

Please have your teacher fill out the attached “Favorite Things” form, which includes preferences, birthday info, and more. Once it's complete, share it with your class within the first couple of weeks of school.

4. REQUEST AN AMAZON WISHLIST

Encourage your teacher to create an Amazon Wish List with items they'd love for the classroom. Once you have the link, share it with your class and encourage families to contribute as they're able.

5. SEND A WELCOME EMAIL TO YOUR CLASS

About a week before school begins, send a warm welcome email to your class. This message should include key dates and important information for the start of the year. Your welcome message should include the following:

- A brief introduction of yourself (and co-room parent, if applicable)
- A list of important upcoming dates and reminders including supply drop-off dates and orientation date/time (if applicable)
- A link to the class supply list
- Reminder about required summer reading (if any)
- Reminder about Khan Academy expectations (if any)
- Link to your teacher's Amazon Wishlist
- Details about the Back to School Mass and Ice Cream Social—and a warm invitation to attend
- A reminder to stop by the Hall after the morning assembly on the first day of school for the Parent Welcome Back Breakfast
- Any additional details specific to your class

GENERAL INFORMATION

WELCOME BACK PARENT BREAKFAST

As in previous years, each class will be assigned a table in the Hall immediately following the morning assembly on the first day of school. The Welcome Committee will provide light decorations for all tables, including standard white tablecloths and small centerpieces. You're encouraged and welcome to add your own personal touch or decorations to your class table, but please note that decorating is entirely optional. Some parents like to go all out, while others prefer something simple, like a bowl of candy. The theme and level of decoration are completely up to you—feel free to keep it as elaborate or as minimal as you'd like. **The PA will provide all sign-up sheets on your tables during the breakfast to help gather volunteers for events and activities throughout the school year.**

CLASS ROSTER

You may begin collecting your class roster at the Back-to-School Breakfast right after drop-off on the first day of school. Please gather contact information for each parent, including email and cell phone. Be sure to inform parents that sharing their information for the class roster is completely optional. All parents will continue to receive school-related communications as long as the school office has their email on file. Also, please remind everyone that this roster is strictly for internal use within the class—no solicitation is allowed. Once you have compiled the contact list, please prepare a typed version and share it with all parents via GradeLink.

GRADELINK

All class communications are sent through [Gradelink](#). You will receive access to your class list and be able to send emails to parents directly via the [Gradelink platform](#). Occasionally, you may receive messages from either your teacher or the PA that need to be forwarded to your class. In some cases, you'll be asked to copy and paste updates into GradeLink emails as needed. Training on how to use GradeLink will be provided at the start of the school year to those who need it.

EMAILS

You will send emails to your class through GradeLink on an as-needed basis. Please remember to always use GradeLink for all class communications—not your personal email account. Most information is shared weekly through the school's [Family Letter](#) as well as the [PA Weekly Communication](#). When there are specific requests from your teacher or the PA, you will be

responsible for sending those targeted emails to your classroom. Sometimes, the teacher may send emails directly via GradeLink; however, it's important to coordinate with them so you can provide any necessary follow-up or reminders. The PA will handle event flyers and larger announcements.

Important: Please **always include YOUR TEACHER** in every email you send to ensure that your teacher stays informed.

CLASS GROUPME TEXT CHAT

Strongly encourage all parents to join your class GroupMe chat. It's proven to be a convenient tool for sharing last-minute reminders and asking quick questions—whether it's about homework, upcoming events, or general class information. If your class does not have an active account, please create one and share it with all parents in your grade.

Please note: this group chat is intended for **parents only**—both moms and dads are welcome to join, but we kindly ask that students not be included.

Participation in the GroupMe chat is completely optional. If a parent chooses not to join, rest assured that they will still receive all important school communications through Gradelink.

STUDENT ACTIVITY FEE (AKA CLASS FUNDS)

Please note: Class funds are strictly designated for student-related, on-campus events and may not be used for gifts for teachers or aides under any circumstances.

This fee covers extra teacher supplies, class parties, student educational opportunities/programs & cultural events. It is used to buy food/supplies for class parties and school supplies for the classroom teacher. Each room parent will receive a class fund amount depending on how many students are in their class. It will have a breakdown of recommended amounts to spend on parties & supplies but can be used however the Room Parent(s) decide. Any amount over the allocated amount would need to be pre-approved for reimbursement. Any money that is left at the end of the year will follow the class to the next grade year.

Please Note: The Student Activity Fee does not cover and should not be used for gifts for teachers or teacher aides. The Parent Association (PA) provides gifts on behalf of all classes during major occasions such as:

- Christmas
- Teacher Appreciation Week
- End-of-Year

- Small token for birthday

These are covered separately by the PA and do not require additional contributions from your class. You are NOT allowed to pull funds for any additional teacher gifts. Class funds, which come from the Student Activity Fee, are designated exclusively for student use - such as classroom celebrations, activities, and supplies.

The only time you will need to independently organize and collect voluntary contributions from families is for your teacher's birthday gift. As your teacher's birthday nears, please send an email to your class requesting donations of any amount and use all collected funds to purchase a gift card for the teacher. All birthday gifts must be gift cards—no cash gifts are allowed. Be sure to check with your teacher beforehand to find out their preferred store or vendor for the gift card. Room Parents should continuously provide updates to their class detailing how much was raised and how the funds will be used.

GIFT CARDS

We know many families choose to show their appreciation to teachers and staff throughout the year with gift cards. Please be aware that there have been **multiple instances of gift card fraud involving purchases made through third-party vendors**. In these cases, cards ended up with a \$0 balance, resulting in both financial loss for families and disappointment for staff.

To help prevent this, we strongly recommend purchasing gift cards **online or directly from the official retailer**. Fraud has most commonly occurred with cards bought at third-party locations such as CVS, convenience stores, grocery stores, and similar outlets.

Please note: there will be no reimbursements for lost or empty gift cards. Neither the PA nor the school has the capacity to provide reimbursement.

CLASS PARTIES

As the Room Parent, you are responsible for coordinating, planning, and overseeing all class parties for your grade. This doesn't mean you need to be physically present at every event, but you will manage the overall coordination. Start by checking with your teacher to confirm preferred dates and the type of parties they envision—some teachers like larger celebrations than others.

You'll then organize volunteers (make sure to line up plenty, especially if you can't attend yourself), arrange for any food pick up and/or donations, plan activities for the students, and gather any necessary supplies. **A portion of the "Student Activity Fee" can be used to purchase**

party items, but please be mindful of your budget since this fund is intended to last the entire year. It's wise to plan carefully and conserve funds where possible. The PA has many items, decor and supplies available for use which can save your budget as well. See below "RESERVING TABLES, TABLECLOTHS, DECOR AND SUPPLIES."

Using a sign-up tool (like SignUp Genius) to request donations or help is also a great way to stretch your budget. Please feel free to request donations as needed — our goal is to ensure that Room Parents are never personally responsible for covering class expenses.

Please visit our [SCJ Amazon Affiliate Shop](#) for all your class party needs. Be sure to share the link with your class when requesting donations. The site is updated each season with new options and features supplies designed to help [reduce plastic waste](#) on campus. Please note, this is an Amazon Affiliate shop and SCJPA receives a commission on products purchased from the links.

Please note: Teachers have the final say on if and when a party will take place. Always be sure to follow your teacher's requests.

VOLUNTEERS

Recruiting volunteers early is essential. At the Welcome Back Breakfast on the first day of school, sign-up sheets for various volunteer opportunities to encourage parents to get involved will be provided for each class. Throughout the year, the PA will request your help in recruiting volunteers for schoolwide events. Parents can also earn service hours for volunteering in the classroom; however, all volunteers must be Virtus Certified (see details below).

The start of the school year is the perfect time to secure volunteers. Each family is required to contribute at least 30 volunteer hours per school year (this applies per family, not per child). Any incomplete hours are billed at \$30 per hour.

Please note: You must report all class parent volunteer hours to the PA Volunteer Coordinator, Deborah Nicolaou, within two weeks following the event. After each class party or event, please email a list of volunteers (first and last name, grade level) along with the event name, dates worked and amount of hours earned to deborah.nicolaou@gmail.com.

REIMBURSEMENTS

All reimbursement requests must be submitted via [Reimbursement Form](#). Once completed, please email the form, and copies of all receipts to Jennifer Leung, PA Treasurer, at scjpatreasurer@stcyrilschool.org. We kindly ask that reimbursement requests are submitted timely following the event or expenditure.

Please note: Reimbursement requests must be submitted within 3 months of spending to be reimbursed. Please allow up to 14 business days for your reimbursement to be processed.

VIRTUS TRAINING

All parents who volunteer at the school must complete Virtus training and be fingerprinted. This is a mandatory requirement—no exceptions.

What is Virtus?

Launched in March 1998, the Virtus program was developed under the guidance of the National Catholic Organization, following a forum in Washington, D.C. that brought together national experts on child abuse prevention and awareness. The initiative was shaped by an Ad Hoc Committee and a steering committee of professionals committed to creating a safer environment for children within Catholic institutions.

Virtus training is updated regularly, so even if a parent has been trained in the past, their certification may no longer be valid. Re-certification is required every 4 years.

Training Requirements

- Initial Virtus Training: A one-time, 3-hour in-person class
- Re-Certification (choose one of the following):
 1. Complete 48 online monthly bulletins within 4 years, *or*
 2. Take a 1.5-hour refresher course every 4 years

More details can be found in the *Archdiocese of Los Angeles Re-Certification Guidelines*.

Finding A Training Session

Use the following link to find upcoming sessions: [Virtus Training](#). When searching, select “Los Angeles – San Fernando Region” from the dropdown menu. The school will also host on-site training opportunities throughout the year. For questions, please contact the Religion Coordinator by calling the Front Office.

CLASS MASS & BAKE SALE

Each grade is responsible for sponsoring and hosting a bake sale following their designated class Mass. The Room Parent should send an email to the class **three weeks prior** to the scheduled Mass, including a Sign-Up Genius link requesting the following:

- Donations of baked goods, beverages (coffee, orange juice, etc.)

- Volunteers to help set up, serve, and clean up after Mass

Below is a sample list of what's typically needed when **two classes** co-host a bake sale:

- 8–10 dozen donuts
- 2 dozen assorted pastries (croissants, muffins, bagels, etc.)
- 2 large coffee carafes (Corner Bakery is a common choice; includes cups, creamer, and sugar)
- 2 gallons of orange juice
- 2 gallons of an alternate juice (e.g., apple juice, lemonade, Hawaiian Punch, etc.)
- Small plastic cups for juice
- Napkins/paper plates/plastic utensils, etc.
- A small basket for collecting monetary donations (place at the front of the table)

Handling Funds

All money collected should be placed in an envelope labeled clearly with “Bake Sale – [Grade]” and given to the school bookkeeper. One Room Parent should take the envelope home after Mass and deliver it to the front office the following Monday morning.

Proceeds from the bake sale will be split—a portion will be donated to the church, and the remainder will be added to the respective class funds.

RESERVING THE HALL

If you need to use the Hall for any class event—including setup days or rehearsals—you must reserve it through the Rectory. **Please contact the church secretary at the Rectory office via email at parish@st-cyril.org or by calling 818-986-8234.** Be sure to book well in advance and adhere to all Hall use and cleanup guidelines for every event. Please review the attached Hall Usage Rules and Policies.

RESERVING TABLES, TABLECLOTHS, DECOR AND SUPPLIES

For Room Parents planning room parties, graduation, and first communion events, please read carefully.

Reserving Tables and Chairs — Please email Mrs. Austria at maustria@stcyrilschool.org well in advance of your event and provide a list of the type and number of tables and chairs, including when, how and where you want them set up.

Reserving Tablecloths, Chair Covers and Decor — The PA has many items and supplies available for use that can alleviate the need to spend your budget on these items. **Please text Claudia Fera, Organization Team Lead, at 818-822-1176.** Sima can show you all the many items available for use and explain check out/check in procedures. We strongly recommend you do a walk through with Sima early in your planning phase to determine what decor and supplies are available before you make any purchases.

SOCIAL MEDIA – FACEBOOK & INSTAGRAM

Follow our social media accounts! Please help us boost our ratings/outreach and encourage new families to join our community by following us on social media and/or providing your input on our amazing school. [Facebook](#) ; [Instagram](#) ; [Great Schools](#)

SPECIAL ROOM PARENT EVENTS

PRESCHOOL & PRE-K GRADUATION

As the Room Parent(s) for preschool and Pre-K, you will take the lead in organizing the combined graduation ceremony for both grade levels. This event is traditionally held on the last day of school for preschool and Pre-K, typically after the kindergarten graduation. In some years, the theme and decorations from the kindergarten celebration may be reused for this event. In other years, you may need to start from scratch and collaborate closely with the preschool and Pre-K teachers to create a unique theme.

Your responsibilities include planning and overseeing all aspects of the event—coordinating with teachers, finalizing a theme, handling setup and decorations, arranging light refreshments (such as breakfast or brunch items), and recruiting support from fellow parents.

This is very much a team effort, so be sure to reach out to parents in both classes for help. A great starting point is to connect with last year's Room Parent(s) for ideas, photos, and helpful tips from their experience.

Please note: a portion of your Student Activity Fee has been set aside specifically to support this celebration.

KINDERGARTEN GRADUATION

As the Kindergarten Room Parent, you will take the lead in planning and coordinating the kindergarten graduation ceremony. This includes working closely with the kindergarten teacher to select an overall theme for the event.

Your responsibilities will include organizing decorations, overseeing setup, ordering light refreshments (such as breakfast or brunch items), and recruiting fellow kindergarten parents to help with various tasks. It truly takes a village to bring this special celebration to life, so be sure to engage your entire class for support.

A helpful first step is to connect with the previous year's Kindergarten Room Parent(s) for ideas, inspiration, photos, and suggestions based on their experience.

Please note: a portion of your Student Activity Fee is specifically allocated to support this event.

Whenever possible, consider coordinating with the Room Parents from 2nd and 7th grades to align on a shared theme and budget. This can allow you to reuse or share decorations and supplies, saving both time and resources.

2ND GRADE FIRST COMMUNION RETREAT

As the Second Grade Room Parent, you will be responsible for organizing the First Communion Retreat for your grade. This special event typically takes place on a weekday, during school hours, in the Hall.

Your role includes coordinating with the teacher to plan the retreat, setting up decorations, arranging light refreshments (such as breakfast or brunch items), and recruiting fellow second grade parents to help with various tasks. This is a collaborative effort, so be sure to involve your entire class for support.

A great starting point is to connect with the previous year's Second Grade Room Parent(s) for ideas, photos, and helpful suggestions based on their experience.

Please note: a portion of your Student Activity Fee has been set aside specifically for this event.

It may also be helpful to coordinate with the Room Parents from Kindergarten and 7th grade to align on a shared theme and budget. This can allow you to reuse decorations and supplies across events, saving time and resources.

7TH GRADE HOSTING BRUNCH FOR GRADUATING 8TH GRADE CLASS

As the Seventh Grade Room Parent, you will be responsible for coordinating the Eighth Grade Brunch. This special event is typically held on a weekday during school hours and takes place in the Hall, during the last week of school.

Your responsibilities include working with school staff to plan the event, organizing decorations, overseeing setup, ordering light refreshments (such as breakfast or brunch items), and enlisting help from fellow seventh grade parents. This is a team effort, so be sure to reach out to the entire class for support.

A helpful place to start is by contacting the previous year's Seventh Grade Room Parent(s) for inspiration, photos, and any tips they can share from their experience.

Please note: a portion of your Student Activity Fee has been allocated specifically to support this event.

When possible, consider coordinating with the Room Parents from Kindergarten and 2nd Grade to align on a shared theme and budget. This can help maximize resources and allow for the reuse of decorations and supplies.

THANK YOU!

Thank you so much for stepping up to volunteer for this important role! Your time, energy, and commitment are truly appreciated, and we're so grateful to have you as part of the team. Please know that both the school and the PA Board are here to support you every step of the way.

As a Room Parent, please remember that you are a representative of SCJ School and the PA. If any concerns or issues arise, we kindly ask that you bring them to us directly. We appreciate your leadership—please remember that our children are watching, parents are listening, and your example sets the tone for our school community.

Together, we'll ensure that communication between the school, parents, and teachers stays clear, consistent, and collaborative. We're excited for all the wonderful things this year holds—and with your help, we know it's going to be an amazing one!

