

## **Teacher Gift Guidelines**

Because questions often arise regarding teacher recognition, the Oak Knoll PTO developed teacher gift guidelines. The purpose of these guidelines is to recognize our teachers without burdening parents. We also hope to promote consistency and equality across classrooms so no teacher feels over- or under-recognized relative to his/her peers.

### **Teacher Birthdays**

Room parents may organize an activity that allows students to celebrate the teacher's birthday without gifts or food (e.g., a homemade card from each child, a handmade book of student art/sentiment, a poster for the teacher that all students sign, singing happy birthday, etc.). If individuals want to do more, they may consider donating a book to the library in honor of the teacher or purchasing a small gift, but this is not required. Room parents should not solicit money for a class gift.

### **Winter Holidays**

Students and families may individually give gifts to their teachers during the holidays, but room parents should not solicit funds for a class gift. If families approach the room parents for gift suggestions, room parents should inform them that gift certificates (rather than personal items) are generally appreciated by the teachers.

### **Teacher Appreciation Week**

Teacher Appreciation Week (TAW) is an opportunity for the school community to acknowledge our teachers, para-educators, and staff. TAW is typically held in the spring; dates and specific recognition activities are determined by the PTO and may vary from year to year. Common recognition activities include homemade cards, coffee and breakfast treats, flowers, extra volunteer help, and the annual TAW luncheon. Room parents should not solicit money for a class gift.

### **End-of-Year Gift**

Room parents should solicit voluntary contributions for an end-of-year gift. Past gifts have included cash, photo books, gift certificates, and a combination of these items. Don't forget to acknowledge classroom aides with a small token of appreciation, often a small percentage of funds raised for the teacher. When soliciting donations, please emphasize that contributions are entirely optional.

### **Teacher Milestones (e.g., baby, marriage, retirement)**

Room parents should collect voluntary contributions for teacher gifts only at the end of the year. The only exception to this rule is in the event of a teacher milestone, such as a baby, marriage, or retirement. To recognize teacher milestones, room parents may 1) organize gifts that require no/little money (e.g., homemade cards or drawings, Kudobaords, pages for memory book, etc.), and/or 2) collect voluntary contributions for a class gift (e.g., from a registry). If the teacher milestone occurs at or near the end of the school year, room parents should make one collection that will be used for both the milestone gift and the end-of-year gift, rather than asking for two separate donations.