

# TEACHER GIFT GUIDELINES

Because questions often arise regarding teacher recognition, the Oak Knoll PTO has put into place a series of teacher gift guidelines. The purpose of these guidelines is to appropriately recognize our teachers while also preventing the recognition of teacher appreciation from becoming a burden on parents. We also hope to promote a certain level of consistency and equality across classrooms so that no teacher feels over or under recognized relative to his/her peers. For these reasons, please make every effort to work within the following guidelines:

## Teacher Birthdays

The room parents should organize and promote an activity that allows the children to acknowledge and celebrate the teacher's birthday without gifts or food. Some suggestions; a handmade card from each child, a handmade book of pictures drawn by each child or a sentence about their teacher, singing happy birthday, a poster for the teacher that all the children can sign. If individuals want to do more, they may consider donating a book to the library in honor of the teacher (Adopt-a-Book) or purchasing something small but *this is in no way required*.

**Importantly, NO funds should be solicited from parents for this purpose.**

## Winter Holidays

Children and families can individually elect to give gifts to their teachers during the holidays, but please DO NOT solicit funds from parents for a class gift. If families approach the room parents for gift suggestions, please inform them that gift certificates (rather than personal items) are generally appreciated by the teachers. **Importantly, NO funds should be solicited for a gift for the winter holidays.**

## Teacher Appreciation Week

Teacher Appreciation Week is typically held in the spring and the purpose of this event is to acknowledge the wonderful contributions of our teachers. Here is a list of teacher appreciation activities that we ask all classrooms to follow:

- **Monday** – Homemade Cards: Ask each student to bring in a homemade card for the teacher.
- **Tuesday** – Coffee and breakfast treats: The Oak Knoll Teacher Appreciation Committee will provide a “coffee cart” in the teacher's lounge on Tuesday morning. At the coffee cart, teachers will be able to order a specialty coffee and choose a breakfast treat. Room parents can take a break on this day since everything will be taken care of by this committee.
- **Wednesday** – Flower Day: Each student will be asked to bring in a flower from their home garden. Flowers will be given directly to the teacher. Room parents will need to get 1 volunteer to help the teacher with the flowers and get them placed in a vase.

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- **Thursday** – Extra volunteer help: Get 1 or 2 parent volunteers to help provide the teacher with extra assistance. Confirm with teacher their need before assigning the volunteer(s).
  - Ideas include:
    - Take the teacher's yard duty shift so he/she gets an extra break that day.
    - Take the teacher's shift monitoring the carpool line, doing crossing guard duty, or walking kids to the bus.
    - Provide 30 minutes of administrative help after school (e.g., making copies, assembling materials, taking down or hanging up student work).
    - Spend 30 minutes helping clean-up the classroom (e.g., wiping down desks and white boards, organizing cupboards).
- **Friday** – Treat for the Teacher: Use your creativity to come up with one additional recognition activity. Ideas to consider include lunch for the teacher or a photo album of class activities throughout the year. **Please note that no funds can be solicited for this purpose and the total donated value of the activity should not exceed \$20.**

Please stay within these guidelines so that all teachers have a similar experience during teacher appreciation week. If parents express interest in doing more, please remind them that they'll have the opportunity to contribute more via the end of the year teacher gift. Also, remember to involve the children as much as possible to create additional excitement!

Throughout the week, please also try to remember any classroom aides in your room. While they don't expect to be recognized to the same extent as your teacher, it is important to celebrate their efforts in the classroom during teacher appreciation week as well.

### End of the Year Gift

The end of the year gift is the only gift for which you may collect voluntary contributions from parents in the class.

**Please start collecting voluntary contributions from parents in APRIL! Parents are usually overly busy in May with end of year activities, so collection for the teacher gift should happen in April.**

**When soliciting donations, please make it clear that contributions are purely optional.** Please do not request a specific dollar amount. If you need ideas for the end of the year gift, refer to ideas you gathered from the teacher at your initial meeting at the start of the school year, or ask families in the class, your GLCs/GLL, or one of the Room Parent Program Co-Chairs for suggestions. Finally, please don't forget to acknowledge any classroom aides with a small token of appreciation (you can use a small portion of the funds raised for the teacher gift).