



**2009-2010
WINDY RIDGE
Homeroom
Representative
Handbook**

Dear Homeroom Representative,

Thank you for making the commitment to become a volunteer at Windy Ridge. Homeroom Representatives provide valuable assistance to the teaching staff throughout the year. The children benefit from the little “extras” you are able to bring to the classroom. You will serve as a crucial and very much appreciated resource for your child’s classroom.

Where do I start?

1. Go to www.volunteer.ocps.net to register with the county’s volunteer program called ADDitions. Please be sure to read and follow all of the ADDitions guidelines. Each time you volunteer on campus, you must sign in at the front desk computer and print and wear the sticker name badge provided.

2. Make an appointment with the teacher you will be helping this year. Together you will devise a plan for the year. Get a good idea of how much volunteering your teacher would like in the classroom. Also, if your Teacher Information Sheet was not included in your folder, now would be a good time to give a friendly reminder to your teacher to complete it.

3. Send home a letter introducing yourself to the other parents in the class. Let them know that you will be corresponding with them on various projects and special occasions. You may also request parent email and phone numbers to make further communications easier. Distribute a copy of the Teacher Information Sheet with this letter so that parents have it as a reference.

Who’s going to help me?

Use the Classroom Sign Up Sheet as a reference. Everyone likes to feel useful. Call on the others who have signed up, either as “Homeroom Helpers” or specifically for an event, and ask them to help.

The Administration, PTA, and ADDitions team would like to thank you for making a commitment to get involved in your child’s Windy Ridge experience as a volunteer. If you have any questions regarding your Homeroom Representative activities, please feel free to contact either of us. Here’s to a great year!

Sincerely,

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Homeroom Rep Co-Coordinator

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School Events that Require Parent Assistance

1. Literacy Parade – Thursday, October 29th
2. Class Celebrations – Winter Holiday Party and End of the Year Party
3. Staff Appreciation Grade-Level Luncheons
4. Field Day – March 23rd – 25th
5. Class Basket for Spring Fling – April
6. Game or Activity Booth for Spring Fling – April
7. National Teacher Appreciation Week – May 3rd - 7th
8. Teacher Birthdays

1. Literacy Parade – Thursday, October 29th - In lieu of a “Halloween” parade, Windy Ridge K-4 students participate in a “Literacy Parade”, where they dress up as characters from books. Teachers will either select a book or theme for the class, or they may allow the children to choose their own. You will need to discuss with your teacher what his/her needs are for this day and help coordinate costumes if needed. Some teachers may also require assistance in planning a literacy-based celebration on this day. This is a lot of fun for the students and your participation is very helpful to the teacher.



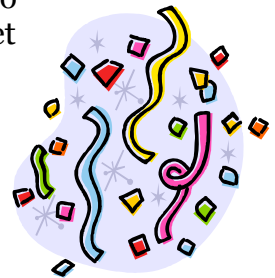
2. Class Celebrations



Special Note on Teacher Gift Requests: For Winter Holiday and End of the Year parties, letters may be sent home to parents, folded and stapled or in sealed envelopes, asking for donations to purchase a gift for the teacher. In this way the teacher will not see the letter, spoiling the surprise. Also, enclose a return envelope with your name (and title of Homeroom Representative) on it so that any monetary donations can be sent to you through the classroom teacher. Please do not request a specific amount.

Winter Holiday Party – Windy Ridge is a very diverse school with students from many ethnic backgrounds, so we like to keep our winter holiday parties non-religious. This is a very exciting time for the students and a very hectic time for parents and teachers, so be sure to elicit help from your “homeroom helpers.” Meet with or talk to your teacher to establish a theme and schedule for the party. Remember to send home letters to parents in plenty of time so no one feels pressed to get things done at the last minute. Also, remember to have fun and celebrate all the accomplishments and contributions for the first half of the year!

End of the Year Party – As with any classroom party, the best place to start is with your teacher to select a day, theme, and schedule of events. Some teachers have an entire day set aside, while others opt for a few hours during the day. In either case, everyone is ready to “party!” Again, remember to rely on your “homeroom helpers.” Also, get your parent letters home early, since this time of year is extremely busy for everyone. At this point, you have formed special and well-established relationships with the teacher, students, and parents. You deserve to have fun and celebrate the end of a rewarding year.



Other Class Celebrations – Depending on the teacher, you may be asked to help with other small celebrations as well, i.e., for Thanksgiving, Valentine’s Day, FCAT testing, or for specific academic units. Your teacher will work with you closely on these other celebrations. Please check with your teacher for his/her policies regarding student birthdays, as well.

Two GREAT resources for craft items, party themes, game ideas:

Family Fun magazine – www.familyfun.com

Oriental Trading Co. – www.orientaltrading.com

Rules for Food in the Classroom:

PLEASE remember . . . to keep our school in tip-top shape, food and drinks in the classroom will be strictly limited and only with teacher approval. Also, soda is **not allowed** at any celebration and sweets should be kept to a minimum. There is a county-wide focus on health and nutrition and our administration requests your support in bringing this focus to the classroom.



According to the OCPS guidelines, “All foods given to students... must come from an identifiable source and presented in a sealed container with the manufacturer clearly identified on the seal...” Pizza and other restaurant prepared food must be delivered *by* the restaurant, not a volunteer.

Volunteers may not prepare food/drinks at home or in the classroom. All food/drinks must be prepared by “inspected food manufacturing facilities and labeled” accordingly, so they can track it. Please see the included correspondence from OCPS dated October 2, 2008 and contact Homeroom Representative Coordinators with any questions.

3. Staff Appreciation Grade-Level Luncheons – The Windy Ridge staff will be recognized at these luncheons which will be held monthly in the teacher’s lounge in the cafeteria during the grade’s lunch time. Each grade will be assigned ONE luncheon (except ESE who is doing a breakfast) as follows:

Sept. 11th – 4th Grade (11:37-12:14)

Jan. 29th – ESE Breakfast (7:45-8:20)

Oct. 9th – 5th Grade (11:59-12:36)

Feb. 19th – 2nd Grade (11:15-11:45)

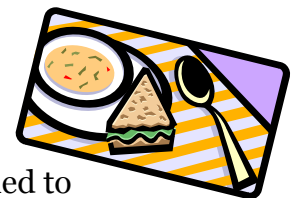
Nov. 14th – Middle School (1:30-2:00)

Mar. 12th – 1st Grade (10:53-11:30)

Jan. 15th – 3rd Grade (12:19-12:55)

Apr. 16th – Kindergarten (10:33-11:08)

All Homeroom Representatives for the assigned grade level (usually 6-8 of you together) will coordinate to send out invitations, plan for or prepare the food, and work the luncheon during your grade’s lunch period. One of your group will extend the invitations to your grade’s teachers, para-professionals and a few other school staff members assigned to your luncheon group. We want to make sure ALL staff at Windy Ridge know how important they are to our kids’ education and experience at school! This is a new format for appreciation luncheons this year and you will receive more information via email as your month approaches.



4. Field Day (March 23rd – 25th) – This special day is a school-wide function organized by the P.E. teachers, along with the Special Areas team. PTA will provide healthy snacks only, and volunteers are needed at the event to pass out snacks and help with activities. An email goes out to the entire student body soliciting parent help for this event.

5. Class Basket for Spring Fling (April) – Spring Fling is a very important and fun fundraiser at Windy Ridge. You will need to contact the parent(s) who signed up on the Classroom Volunteer forms to coordinate this. If nobody signed up, it is your responsibility to solicit parent help for this project. There will be a PTA Spring Fling meeting to explain the process and to offer ideas for basket themes. You or your class basket coordinator should send letters home to parents for contributions. You may choose to request specific items and/or ask for monetary donations so that you can purchase items yourself. Once the basket is complete, be sure to bring it to the classroom for the teacher and students to see prior to Spring Fling. The more desirable the basket, the more money it will raise at the Silent Auction. However, please note that quality is better than quantity, and the PTA wishes to have baskets of varying values.

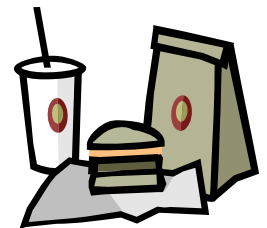


6. Game or Activity Booth for Spring Fling (April) – Booths are created by the Spring Fling PTA Committee. Volunteers from grades K-5 are needed to monitor a booth for a half-hour shift. Check your Classroom Volunteer sheet and contact any parents who have signed up to help with this. It is possible that the PTA will have community volunteers in place to work all of the booths, but if not, your class will need to provide volunteers. Middle school grades are assigned shifts at a ticket or concession booth.



7. National Teacher Appreciation Week (May 3rd -7th) – This week takes place in late spring to honor our teachers. Please do not collect money for gifts. Instead, send home a letter requesting that each student bring in small tokens of appreciation for the teacher. To keep things consistent for everyone, here's a schedule to follow for the week:

Take-Out Tuesday – Find out where your teacher's favorite lunch is and bring it in that day during their lunch period. They do not get to leave school for lunch, so what a great way to treat your teacher to a lunch in!



Wednesday – Appreciation Card Day – Each student should bring in a homemade card to express their appreciation for the teacher. You may wish to provide construction paper in the teacher's favorite color. An alternative is to help the students make one big card, poster, or booklet for the teacher.



Thursday – Flower/Snack Day – Have each student bring in the teacher's favorite pretzels, popcorn, crackers, etc. OR a flower for the teacher. You may want to discuss with your teacher what types of snacks they prefer, as some may have dietary restrictions, etc. You should provide a basket or bag in which to collect the snacks and a vase for the flowers.

Hopefully these guidelines will keep things consistent and enjoyable for all teachers. The key to making this work is communication with the parents in the way of letters being sent home the week prior, and reminders the day before items are to be brought in.

8. **Teacher Birthdays** – You will be responsible for notifying your classroom’s parents of the teacher’s birthday. Whatever you’d like to do is up to you. This year, we’d like to suggest that you keep it small; a simple card or poster will do. You are not to ask for a monetary donation from the class.



Additional Guidelines for Volunteers:

- Please wear comfortable clothes but be sure to adhere to the school dress code, with nothing revealing or distracting. Clothing may not advertise alcohol or contain obscenities or suggestive logos. No tummies please, and remember the rule about the length of your shorts: drop your arms at your side and if your shorts go above your fingertips, they are too short. Tank top straps should be “3 fingers” wide, and undergarments must be worn at all times.
- No one is allowed to accompany volunteers in the classrooms or on field trips, including older and younger children. Children may only accompany you to school as a visitor for performances or to attend a scheduled conference.
- All field trip chaperones will be required to sign a Chaperone Guidelines form, available from teachers and the front office, in addition to the Orange County Chaperone application and ADDitions application.



Be A Five Star Helper!

In the past, our school has been awarded the Five Star School Award. The Florida Commissioner of Education presents this award each year to schools that have “demonstrated and documented the importance of community involvement to student success.

A Five Star School has shown evidence of exemplary community involvement in the areas of business partnerships, family involvement, volunteers, student community service and school advisory councils.” (<https://www.ocps.net/es/cr/resources/Pages/FiveStarSchoolAward.aspx>)

Windy Ridge has earned this award numerous times in the past, but it requires a great amount of effort and dedication to the qualification process: creating a Five Star Book to showcase our community involvement. The most difficult thing about putting together this book is gathering pictures of numerous events throughout the school year. YOU can be a big help in our achieving this award again this year by simply emailing pictures of events you’ve attended such as:

- Meet the Teacher
- Open House
- Book Fair
- Teach In
- Field Day
- Movie Night
- Additions Breakfast/Training
- Pictures of SAC members
- Partners in Education Events (Spirit Night, sponsored event, etc.) **** very important****
- First Day of School
- Dads & Doughnuts
- Classroom Volunteers with children
- Spring Fling
- Award Ceremonies
- Pictures of the Staff, Students
- PTA meetings w/ or w/o extra speakers
- Pictures of PTA officers

Email all pictures to: Five Star Book Coordinator Nicole Kalicak at nkalicak@earthlink.net.