



PARENTS' ASSOCIATION MANUAL

Dear Garden House Families,

We are very excited about the upcoming academic year and look forward to your participation in the Parents' Association.

“We believe that parental involvement is a vital aspect in children succeeding at school. Through cooperative and collaborative relationships with parents, Garden House School’s faculty and staff provide a setting in which the school serves as an extension of the child’s home life; providing a continuity of mutual respect, morals and goals. Teachers, parents and administrators work together to ensure a safe and nurturing school life. The Parents’ Association was established to facilitate the school’s effort to provide the children with the best environment possible.”

Natalie Williams,
Director

COMMITTEES & RESPONSIBILITIES

All committees of the Parents' Association have Co-chairs from each location who serve voluntarily for the entire school year. The Co-chairs are responsible for every aspect of their committee and report directly to the Director of the school. The Director serves as mentor to the Co-chairs, supporting them throughout the year and acting as their liaison to the Board of Trustees. Co-chairs are also responsible for duties that may be considered mundane, such as creating sub-committees, mailings, photocopies, storing materials, maintaining Parents Association storage spaces at both locations, etc... (All flyers/letters must be approved by the Director before printing. Flyers/letters should be brought to the office on or before Thursday for distribution in Friday folders).

Please note that the following are guidelines and do not necessarily include all aspects of the position.

Book Fair

- Annually scheduled during our Spring Fair in May.
- There should be two Co-chairs at each location.
- The books arrive the day before the fair.
- Set-up is required the morning of the event.
- Clean-up is required the afternoon of the event.
- Co-chairs should calculate final sales at the end of the event and submit to the Director immediately.

Cocktail Party

- Annually scheduled during the second semester. The date must be scheduled 6 – 12 months in advance. This is the only fundraising event for the school.
- There should be 4 Co-chairs in total – 2 from each location, responsible for every aspect of the event.
- Co-chairs work closely with the Director to choose venue, theme, invitations, menu, etc.
- Co-chairs liaise with Class Representatives to create class projects that will be auctioned off at the event.
- Co-chairs create an auction sub-committee responsible for soliciting, cataloguing, storing, transporting and cashing out items the night of the event.
- Co-chairs recruit volunteers for every aspect of the event, such as set-up, storage of auction items/class projects, check-out, greeters, clean-up, etc...

Library

- There should be a Co-chair for each location.
- Co-chairs are responsible for maintaining the library throughout the entire school year. This includes reshelving books every week, covering books and repairing damaged books.

Logo

- There should be a Co-chair for each location.
- The Co-chairs of this committee are responsible for making GHS logo products available to families throughout the school year, but especially at the Book Fair and Spring Fair.
- All purchases and product ideas must be approved by the Director beforehand.
- All logo products are stored at their respective locations; therefore, maintenance of the storage spaces is paramount.

Mentor

- One person is responsible for this assignment.
- Responsibilities include recruiting mentors at both locations, obtaining names, addresses and phone numbers of incoming families from the Director, matching mentors to incoming families at both locations throughout the spring and summer if necessary.
- An incoming family table at the Spring Fair that welcomes new families with a special greeting and gift is organized.
- A Mentor Breakfast is scheduled in the Spring.

Spring Fair

- There should be two to four Co-chairs from each location.
- Annually scheduled in May.
- Co-chairs liaise with the Director to plan and organize the fair.
- Responsibilities include, but are not limited to organizing volunteers, booking entertainment, ordering invitations (with the Director's assistance), set-up and clean-up.
- Set-up is required the morning of the event.

Toy Drive

- There should be one Co-chair for each location.
- Annually scheduled at both locations in the time period between Thanksgiving and the Winter Break.
- Co-chairs liaise with charities, chosen by the school, that are willing to accept and pick-up toys.
- Co-chairs publicize the event by creating posters/flyers and sending home reminders in the Friday folders. All flyers must be approved by the Director and Friday folder inserts must be printed and delivered to both schools by noon on Thursday for review.
- Co-chairs are responsible for maintaining boxes as they tend to get quite full. Hence, they may need to schedule more than one pick-up throughout the length of the drive.

Used Uniform

Please contact Chaz Foley at chaz@gardenhouseschool.org if you need used uniform items.

Yearbook

- There should be one Co-chair for each location.
- Co-chairs are responsible for creating the yearbook using the existing templates found on Blurb.com
- Coordinating photography (of special events, trips, specialty classes) with parent volunteers.
- Coordinating with school photographer (via office).
- Coordinating with the graduating class teachers regarding the “what I want to be” project.
- Organizing class dedications to teachers (from class).

CLASS REPRESENTATIVE RESPONSIBILITIES

Attend Meetings: The Class Rep is expected to attend PA meetings throughout the year. During these meetings, the Director and/or the Parents' Association Committee Co-Chairs disseminate information regarding various events and activities such as the annual Cocktail Party and Auction, class gifts, upcoming deadlines and announcements. The Class Rep will then send out this information via email to the class parents and should copy the school (info@gardenhouseschool.org) and, if applicable, the teacher.

Classroom Parties: There are a total of four parties throughout the academic year, including *Halloween*, *(Winter) Holiday*, *Valentine's Day* and *Y2s, Toddlers & Juniors Year End Party / Graduation Party* (Seniors & K). The dates for these parties are set by the GHS Office. The Classroom teachers are given a Sign-Up sheet for each event to post in the classroom prior to the event, so that parents may sign up to help with food, drinks, decorations or paper goods. It is the Class Reps' responsibility to ensure that everyone knows that the Sign-Up sheet is posted and that all parts of the party have a volunteer assigned. In addition, the Sign-Up sheet will be posted two weeks before the date of the event. Parents do not attend the Halloween and Valentine's Day parties as they are conducted during the scheduled snack times. Parents and family members can attend the Holiday and End-of-Year Celebration (dates are on the academic calendar).

Class Gifts to Teachers: Parents are able to give a donation towards the Holiday Teachers Fund in December. This is conducted anonymously through the school office (you will be notified of this later in the fall). The Class Reps may coordinate an "End-of-the-Year" teacher's gift at the end of the school year if the class chooses to give a "class gift" (usually something like an American Express Gift Card). It is important to keep in mind that any gifts to teachers are voluntary and parents should not, at any point, feel pressured to participate. It is the Class Reps' responsibility to coordinate and collect any monies (if needed). Teachers should not be involved in the coordination of these efforts.

Class Donations for Cocktail Party: The Cocktail Party is held in January. The Class Rep is responsible for coordinating a "Class Project" for the event. The Class Rep will be given guidelines for the project by The Cocktail Party Committee Co-Chairs.

Class Dedication for Yearbook: The Class Reps are responsible for writing the "class dedication" for the yearbook. The Class Reps should solicit ideas and/or thoughts from other parents, as well as get general approval from the class before submitting. Past yearbooks are available to flip through in the school office.

Liaison: The Class Reps act as a liaison between their class and the GHS Office. Class Reps should always be available to clarify issues from emails/flyers sent, but should not discuss teachers, policy or curriculum. Class Reps should not speak on behalf of other parents, but should instead encourage parents to bring their questions/concerns directly to the Director. The GHS Office has an "open door policy" and parents are always welcomed. However, to ensure that full attention is given to each parent/matter, the Director asks that parents call or stop by to schedule appointments. Any personal and/or major issues should be communicated to the School Office directly.

Relationship with Teachers: The relationship between Class Reps and Teachers vary within each classroom. Class Reps should be respectful to teachers and the classroom environment. In addition, Class Reps should schedule appointments with the teachers to discuss matters (i.e. parties, projects).

Class Directory/Email List: All families should have received a class list in their Summer Package. Class Reps should collect the email address from each family. Class Reps should check their personal email frequently as important information from the Office may be distributed via email. All information received should be communicated to the classroom families (via email, in-person or via telephone).

Role in an Emergency: Class Reps will help coordinate the dissemination of information in case of an emergency, inclement weather, school closing or early dismissal.

GHS Contact Information

Park Avenue: (212) 421-5095

Sutton Place: (212) 421-3282

Email: info@gardenhouseschool.org