

Room Parent Guidelines for Collecting Money for Teacher Gifts

The Cornelius PTO has adopted a set of guidelines for room parents to use when collecting money for purchasing group teacher gifts.

Teacher gifts are typically given from the class for winter holiday and Teacher Appreciation Week. For the teacher's birthday, cards from the class work well.

Room parents typically collect money for teacher gifts in late November thru early December (before winter holiday) and again before Teacher Appreciation Week. Please follow the guidelines below:

- Please notify parents that contributing for a group gift is completely optional and that the amount given is totally up to the family. Please do not suggest an amount for families to contribute
- Please communicate from the beginning that the money collected is for the teacher/faculty member's holiday gift and Teacher Appreciation gift
- The preference is for room parents to collect donations for the teacher gifts via electronic transfers. (Please see instructions below.)
- The room parent in charge of collecting money must send an email receipt with the amount given to each parent who contributes. The other room parent(s) must be copied on this email to protect room parent volunteers as well as to provide accountability to all parents
- Together, the room parents must keep an accurate record of the money collected and spent. While the individual contributions should be kept confidential between the room parents, please share the total amount contributed for gifts with all of the parents in the class.
- Please send an email to all parents with a list of gifts purchased so parents are fully informed about how the money is spent. A best practice is to send an email with a picture of the gifts for the teacher and the faculty member prior to when the gift is presented so all parents are in the loop and feel like the gift is from them when presented to the teachers
- The Room Parent Coordinator will send you approved email templates prior to the time that you are to collect money. You will be able to customize them to your specific teacher

Thank you for taking on this significant volunteer job! Please address any questions to your PTO Room Parent Coordinator or your PTO Executive Board.

Sample Receipt Email:

Dear _____,

I received your contribution of \$ _____ to be used along with other parents' contributions for the purchase of a winter holiday gift (Teacher Appreciation Week gift) for _____ and the faculty member _____ assigned to our class.

I have copied the other room parent(s) _____, so that both of us can work together to keep an accurate record of money collected and spent.

Thank you for your generous contribution. Please let me know if you have any questions.

Name, Room Parent Contact Info

Electronic transfers

Electronic transfers are a great way to collect money for teacher gifts. Donations aren't limited by the cash parents happen to have in their wallets when the donation is requested, and parents don't need to remember to send in a check (and then you don't have to cash the check). Electronic transfers are also great for parents who may have forgotten to send in their money and it is almost the deadline for collecting donations. Finally, most electronic transfer options automatically provide receipts to both the sender and recipient which assures the parent that the money transfer went through and the receipt is great for tracking the donations.

Set up: To use electronic transfers, you need to **first get yourself set up to receive electronic transfers**. There are several options you can use. The more options you give your parents, the more likely they will be to send money as they may only be comfortable with one of the options below.

1.  **Money Transfer via your bank's online/mobile banking (also called "Zelle"):** More than 175 banks use Zelle in their online/mobile banking which allows its customers to send money to just about anyone in the U.S. It may be referred to as "Zelle" or it may just be referred to as an external transfer to someone outside of the bank. Zelle works within online banking and mobile banking for many banks including: Bank of America, Wells Fargo, Chase, Citi, Ally, BB&T, Capital One, Citizens Bank, First Citizens, Fifth-Third, Key Bank, PNC, Regions Bank, SunTrust, TD Bank, US Bank, USAA.
 - To use Zelle, go to your bank's transfers tab and follow the instructions to add your mobile phone number or email address to receive money transfers. (You can also do this step after the first donation has been transferred to you.)
 - That's it...you are all set up to receive money
 - If you previously registered for Zelle, validate your email/phone number are still accurate
 - You will need to provide your information to your class for them to make the transfer

2.  **PayPal.me** is another great option for electronic transfers. Over 254MM people already have a PayPal account, so this is a convenient option for many. There are two ways to get PayPal.me
- o **Download the PayPal app**
 - o **Go online to PayPal.me**
- Click the profile headshot picture at the top (or your own picture if you already have picture loaded to the app)
 - Select “PayPal.me”
 - Click “Get Started”
 - Create your name for your paypal.me account. Enter it after “paypal.me/”
 - Add a picture to your profile from your phone. (You can change the picture later)
 - Select “Friends & Family” when the app asks you what you will use your link for
 - Click “Create Your PayPal.me”
 - Click “Share your Link” to send yourself a reminder of your new paypal.me link
 - Congratulations! You can now use your new paypal.me link listed on the page for parents to send you money
 - Click the profile picture at the top and click “Personal Info” to ensure your mobile phone and email addresses are up to date
 - Enter your checking account information so PayPal can use it to access funds.
 - o No fees if you send money via checking account; however, 2.9% + \$0.30 fee if using debit card or credit card. So recommend only sending money from checking account

3.  **Venmo**: Many people use Venmo, however those that do not will need to download and register in the Venmo app to use it for money transfer. (You can link your debit card and avoid entering your checking account information with Venmo.)
- Download the app by searching “Venmo”
 - Register to use the app by entering your name, mobile phone number and email address
 - Skip the section to invite your contacts
 - Under “settings”, add your debit card or your bank account info so you can transfer money
 - o Note: Venmo charges 3% if you link your credit card, so that is NOT recommended
 - Adding a picture of yourself is a great idea. This will help parents and friends have confidence they are sending money to the right person. (It doesn’t need to be perfect...just grab one!)
 - If you click the upper left corner of the app once set up, you will see your account number
 - On the bottom of the app, select the “Scan” button, then select “Venmo me” at the top of the screen. Your personalized QR code will show on screen. You can click the send icon to email it to yourself. Then copy/paste it to include in your donation emails
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[Electronic Transfer Instructions to Parents for Donation:](#)

Below are the instructions you can add to the donation email which you will send to your parents when you inform them about a class gift. Just include the payment options for which you are set up. Add your information to all of the [\[blue text in brackets\]](#) and remove the examples.

1.  **Bank Transfer (also known as Zelle):** More than 175 banks enable money transfers via Zelle within their online banking and mobile apps including: Bank of America, Wells Fargo, Chase, Citi, Ally, BB&T, Capital One, Citizens Bank, First Citizens, Fifth-Third, Key Bank, PNC, Regions Bank, SunTrust, TD Bank, US Bank, USAA and many more
 - Login to your bank's online banking or mobile banking
 - Go to Transfers or Send or Move Money
 - Select Send
 - Enter my phone number (or email address): [\[enter your phone number or email address\]](#)
 - Enter amount you wish to donate for the teacher gift and click continue
 - Please note it is for the teacher donation in the memo or the "What's it for" section
 - Select "Send Money" or "OK"

2.  **PayPal:** Note: you need to register with PayPal in the PayPal app to send money via PayPal. You will need to include checking account information to transfer money.
 - **If you don't have a PayPal account:**
 - o Search for PayPal in the app store to download app
 - o Register for PayPal with your name, address
 - **If you already have a PayPal account:**
 - o Either online or in the PayPal app, type: [paypal.me/\[enter the paypal me name you set up\]](#)
For example: [paypal.me/MelissaHartTarheel](#)
 - o Type the amount of money you would like to donate and click the "Next" button
 - o Select payment type
 - o No fees if via checking account; however, 2.9% + \$0.30 fee if using debit card or credit card so recommend only sending money from checking account

3.  **Venmo:** Note: you need to register with Venmo in the Venmo app to use it. You will also need to include either your checking account information or a debit card to transfer money using Venmo.
 - **If not yet registered for Venmo:**
 - o Download the app by searching "Venmo"
 - o Register to use the app by entering your name, mobile phone number and email address
 - o Skip the section to invite your contacts
 - o Under "settings", add your debit card or your bank account info so you can transfer money
 - o Note: Venmo charges 3% if you link your credit card, so that is not recommended
 - **If you are already registered with Venmo** (or just signed up as listed above):
 - o Select the "Scan" button near the bottom of the screen
 - o Scan this QR Code: [\[paste the image of your QR code here which you emailed to yourself in the set-up process. You will want to shrink the size so it isn't huge. You should scan your QR code as a test to ensure it copied properly.\]](#)
 - o [DELETE this example before sending, but it should look like this:\]](#)



Melissa Hart
@Melissa-Hart-11



venmo

Scan QR code for payment

- o Another option is to select the “Pay or Request” button at the bottom of the screen. Then enter my email [\[enter email here\]](#) or phone number [\[enter phone number here\]](#) to send your donation to me

That’s it! You’ll receive a confirmation on the screen for each of these payment options. I will also send you an email receipt confirming that I received your donation.

Room parents: If you have questions regarding electronic payments, feel free to contact Melissa Hart at 704-517-9724 or at melissa_tarheel@hotmail.com. If you would feel more comfortable testing the electronic payments options before emailing the parents in your class, I’m happy to help by transferring in and out \$1 so that you have confidence that it will work. ☺ Once you start using electronic payments, you’ll probably use them often as they are so convenient.