

Guidelines for Classroom Parties at Benson and Franzen

Thank you for volunteering to host the Halloween and Holiday classroom parties! These guidelines were created by the teachers and staff at Benson and Franzen, in conjunction with the IEPTO Board. Please follow these to ensure a smooth, safe and fun party for our students.

Frequently Asked Questions:

Q: I signed up to volunteer, now what do I do?

A: Attend the September IEPTO Meeting to confirm you were chosen (in case more than four parents signed up, volunteers are selected randomly). This list will be posted online in the IEPTO September Newsletter. At the meeting, Teacher Reps will be discussing guidelines, helpful tips, and the suggested snack list.

Q: Now that I know the four parent volunteers and have the party guidelines, what next?

A: At least four weeks before the party, contact the other parent volunteers for your classroom. Do not wait for someone else to contact you. No one is designated “head parent”, so all four parents should work together as a team. Plan a meeting to create your “party plan”.

Q: What is a “party plan”?

A: Your “party plan” is an outline of what activities you will be doing and the timing of each. Classroom parties are one hour. List your activities in order of occurrence. Plan how you will set-up the classroom. Consider how long each activity will actually take to complete. Remember to account for the time it takes to set-up, transition time between activities and clean-up time. Most classroom parties consist of a snack, a craft, games, & a quiet ending activity. Sometimes it is easier to divide the students into groups and have several activities going on at once in which students can rotate around. A suggested timeline for a 60-minute party might include:

- Snack time: Give each student a snack (10-15 minutes)
- Craft time: Provide a craft for students to complete and take home [no glitter please] (10-15 minutes)
- Game time: Play a game or do an activity for kids to participate in (10-15 minutes)
- Quiet time: End with a quiet activity, like a coloring sheet or story (5-10 minutes)
- Set-up, transition and clean-up time (3-5 minutes)
- Plan a few “back-up” activities in case things move more quickly than planned

Q: Who pays for what?

A: It is up to the four parent volunteers to cover any expenses or to ask for donations from other class parents. To ask for donations, create a letter asking for donations of specific items (not money), make copies of the letter, and then give to the teacher to send home with all of his/her students. A parent volunteer must be listed on this letter for class parents to contact if they are interested in helping donate items. It is recommended to have this sent home approximately two weeks before the party.

Q: Should I contact the classroom teacher?

A: Yes, the teacher is expecting to hear from you at least two weeks before the party. Provide the following:

- List the four parent volunteers
- Provide copies of the donation letter to be sent home, if applicable
- Outline your “party plan” detailing what activities you will be doing and the timing of each
- Ask about any classroom allergies or other considerations for planning

Q: What should I do the day of the party?

A: Plan to arrive to the school 10-15 minutes before the party is expected to start. Sign in at the office, and pick up a visitor badge before heading to the classroom. Please do not enter or interrupt the classroom until the teacher says it is ok as teaching will usually still be in progress. Once the party is to begin, you – the four parent volunteers – are in charge of everything. The teachers will remain in the classroom as the supervisor of student behavior. Please be aware of the time throughout the party to ensure it ends on time, including time for clean-up. Stop at the office on your way out to sign-out and return the visitor badge.

Q: Can I take my child home with me right after the party?

A: Yes, you may sign your child out in the office and take him/her with you.

Q: What is the date and time of the parties and what happens if school is cancelled due to weather?

A: The Halloween parties will be held on Monday, October 31 and the Holiday parties will be held on Friday, December 16. If school is cancelled due to bad weather, the parties will not be rescheduled. The party times are as follows:

- FRANZEN – Halloween Parade 12:30-12:45pm, Parties 12:45-1:45pm
- BENSON – AM EC, AM K-Prep and AM Kindergarten Parties
Halloween Parade 10:00-10:15am, Parties 10:15-11:15am
- BENSON – PM EC, PM Kindergarten, and ALL first and second grade classes
Halloween Parade 1:15-1:45pm, Parties 1:45-2:45pm

Q: What can we bring in as snacks?

A: Please refer to the recommended snack list provided by the school nurses. This can be found on Page 36 of the Student Handbook. All treats must be store-bought and not homemade. Please remember that students just ate their lunch a little before the afternoon parties and therefore only need a small snack. In addition, most students (1st-5th grade only) bring a water bottle with them each day to school and would already have water at their desk. Remember to ask your teacher about any food allergies in the classroom. No soda pop, pizza or frozen foods please.

Q: What else do I need to know?

A: Listed below are a few additional tips to consider:

- Due to **SEVERE** allergies at Benson & Franzen, latex balloons are not allowed for any parties.
- Younger siblings are not allowed to attend the classroom parties. (All parents, along with younger siblings, are welcome to see the Halloween parades.)
- Many students bring additional treats to share with their classmates. These should be distributed at the party and sent home with students (not eaten during the party).
- The IEPTO will no longer be supplying water bottles or brown paper bags.

Q: Who do I contact if I have any other questions?

A: For BENSON parties, contact Sherri Wolfe at smwolfe@comcast.net or (630) 467-1314. For FRANZEN parties, contact Josie Cardone at josiocardone@comcast.net or (630)417-3878. In addition, you can also contact your child's teacher directly.

Again, thank you for getting involved with your children's classroom parties. We're sure the children will love to see you there! Have fun!