

**Mounds Park Academy  
Parents Association  
Grade Representative Guide  
( 2 0 1 0 )**

This guide serves as a general reference for Grade Representatives of the Parents Association at Mounds Park Academy. It describes and outlines the roles and responsibilities for this important volunteer position.

**Definition of a Grade Representative**

A Parents Association Grade Representative is a parent or guardian who – along with others in that grade – serves in a voluntary role on behalf of the grade during the school year.

**The Value of a Grade Representative**

Grade Representatives play an important role in the overall parent experience at MPA. Some of the key responsibilities are the following:

**Foster a Sense of Community**

The most important role of the Grade Representative is to foster a sense of community within the class and, as an extension, within MPA. This benefits the families, the students, and the school. As children request play dates, sleepovers or parties at a classmate's home, families who have participated in family/school events will feel more comfortable participating.

**Mounds Park Academy Information Pipeline**

In addition to relaying information from a teacher level, Grade Reps should attend Parents Association meetings. Having a good understanding of division and school activities makes you a valuable resource for parents. Grade Representatives are the information pipelines when a parent is interested in getting involved.

**Teacher Connection**

Connect with the class teachers at the beginning of the school year to coordinate plans for the year. Gain an understanding of their needs and events requiring parent involvement.

**Provider of Thorough Communication to Parents**

Building an email network of addresses for your class or utilizing the division secretaries to disseminate information to all parents is important. Families are busy so email reminders or posting class events to the e-calendar is critical for parent involvement. When you plan events, forward any information to the VP of Grade Reps to post on MPA website.

### **Understand Parents' Interests and Skills**

Suggest conducting a brief survey to inventory parent talents, skills and interests. MPA conducts a survey in the beginning of the year to ascertain how parents would like to volunteer. Although this information will be disseminated to you, you will want to do a brief list of needs for your specific class. Ask parents to commit to something on the list based on the needs and data collected from your teachers.

### **Encourage and Engage Participation by Parents**

For classes with more than one Grade Representative, we suggest assigning specific tasks such as the following positions:

- Lead Grade Representative - provides overall leadership for the class. Makes sure events are reported back to VP of Grade Reps for posting to e-calendar.
- Event Chair Grade Representative organizes events, such as the parent and family socials or the class committee for the book festival.
- Ambassador Grade Representative will help engage other parents and families. Special attention to new families helps them acclimate and feel comfortable with the MPA community.

### **Active Member of Parents Association**

You are vital to the operations of the Parents Association as you are the body of parents who vote on any Bylaw changes for the organization. Ensuring the Parents Association remains true to its mission when making Bylaw changes is an important role.

### **HAVE FUN!**

Being engaged in activities at MPA is very rewarding and enriching to the MPA educational experience for the family and ultimately the student. There are many wonderful experiences that come with playing a role in the MPAPA.

### **Basic Roles and Responsibilities of a Grade Representative**

There are several responsibilities all Grade Representatives share:

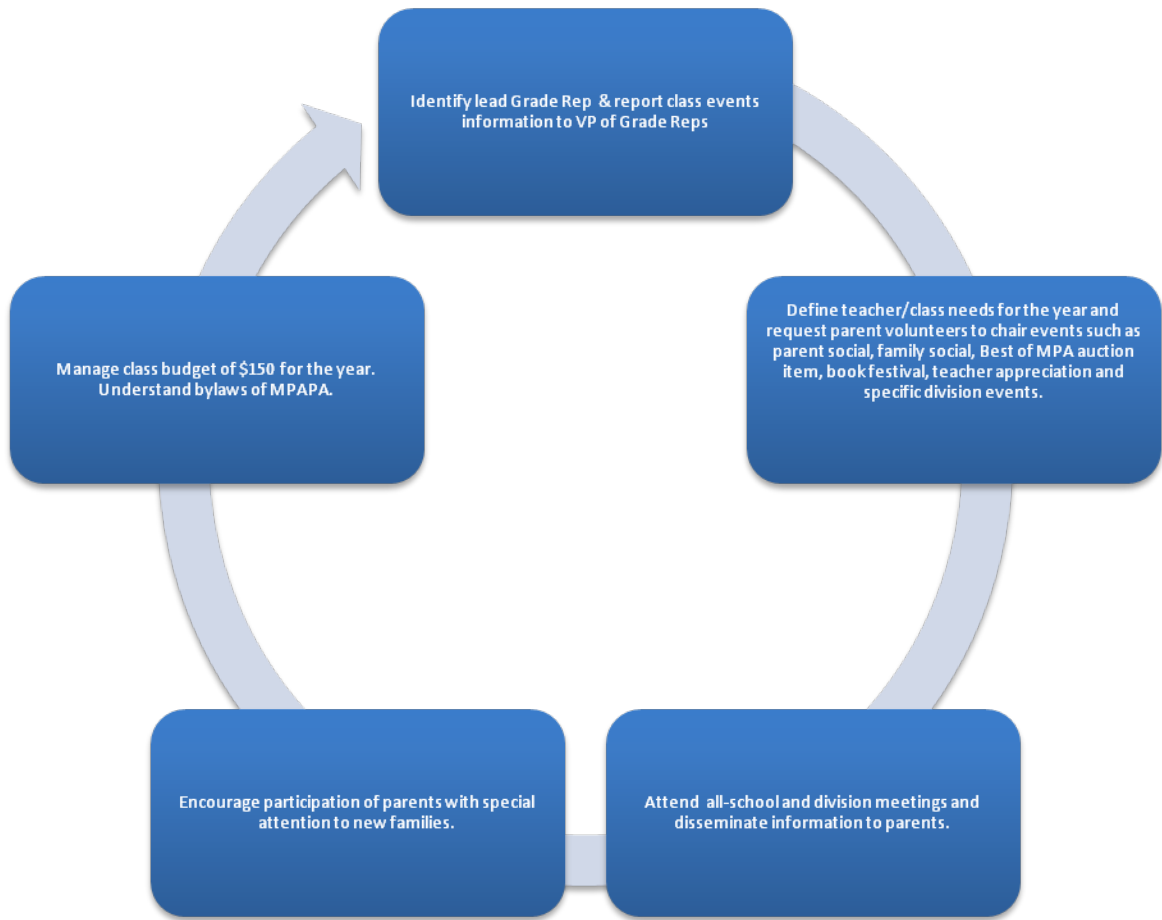
#### **All School Responsibilities**

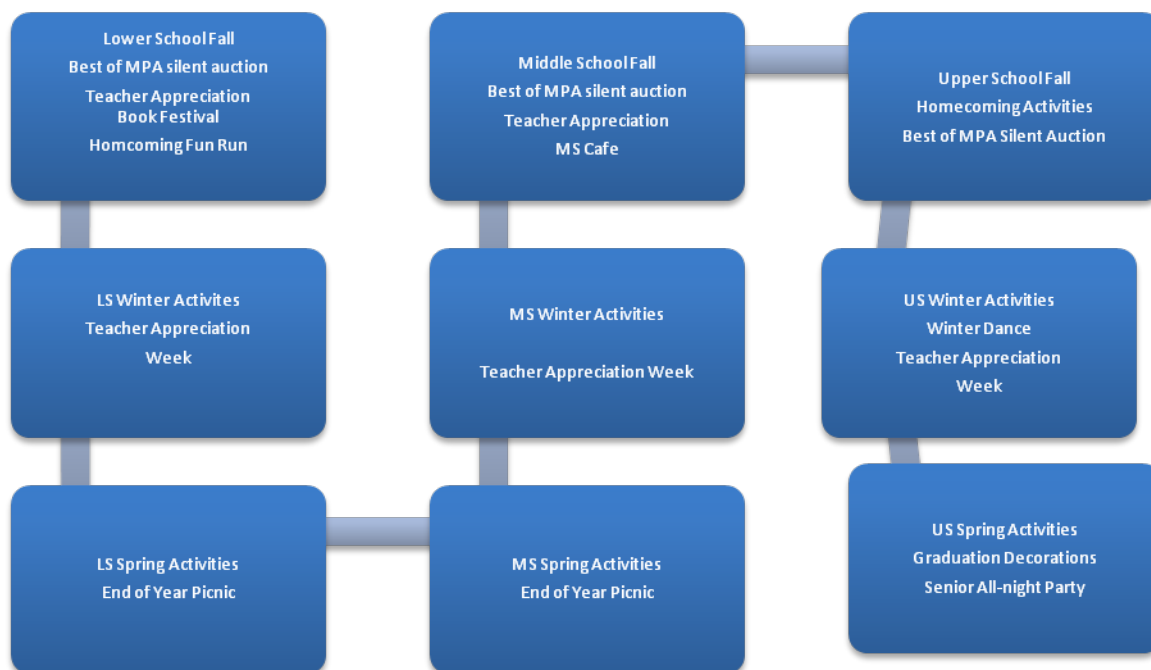
- Know what is on the MPA master calendar, both printed and online. Report your events to VP of Grade Reps to be published on e-calendar.
- Attend as many of the MPA Parents Association all-school and division meetings as possible.
- Personally volunteer for at least one Parents Association activity per year

- Vote, in person or via email, on Parents Association Bylaw changes or other business where a quorum of Grade Representatives is necessary. Be familiar with the information on Parents Association webpage and with MPAPA bylaws.

### **Role for Specific Class Duties**

- With parents and fellow Grade Representatives, plan at least two grade socials per year; typically one as a family event and one as a parent/guardian-only event.
- Suggest creating a Lead Representative, Ambassador Grade Representative and Events Chair for each grade if more than one Grade Rep per class.
- Identify individuals to chair specific events such as parent social, family social, year-end picnic, Best of MPA silent auction or homecoming. (See chart of division specific activities.)
- At the beginning of the school year, connect with teachers to define needs for the year. Depending on the teachers, Grade Representatives may be asked to coordinate in-class parties or other volunteer activities. While Grade Representatives make the offer to be available to help at any time, teachers determine number of events and vary regarding how or if they use parents/guardians in the classroom.
- Invite, via personal conversation, telephone or email, families in the grade to attend MPA events and fundraisers





### **The Time Commitment to be a Grade Representative**

The time commitment varies from grade to grade and depending on level of delegation to other parents but roughly 10-25 hours for the year. Working and nonworking parents/guardians are equally qualified to be Grade Representatives. Attending the all-school and divisional Parents Association meetings, coordinating with other Grade Representatives in the grade to plan grade socials, assisting teachers, assisting with Parent Association events or fundraisers, attending MPA events, and taking time to get to know the families in the grade can be done within your time availability.

### **How You Become a Grade Representative**

Each spring the Parents Association Vice President for Grade Representatives and the Division Chairs enlists volunteers for Grade Representatives. Any parent or guardian of an MPA student who accepts the responsibilities outlined above may volunteer to be a Grade Representative.

### **Limitations to the Number of Grade Representatives Per Grade and the Number of Years You May Serve as a Grade Representative**

There are no limitations to the number of years you can serve. Grade Representatives are often asked to consider additional roles that support the school in a broader context. This does not preclude you from continuing to serve as a Grade Representative while taking on that larger role.

### **Reimbursement Process**

All expense reimbursement for the MPAPA activities should follow these guidelines:

- Use MPAPA Expense Reimbursement form available [HERE](#) or in the Treasurer folder located in the Main Reception Office in the MPAPA mailbox.
- The class allotment per grade is \$150 total per grade for the school year. Record all expenses and attach all original receipts.
- Return completed Expense Form to the Treasurer folder for processing.
- Reimbursements shall be made as promptly as possible, but no less frequently than twice monthly on the 1st and 15th of the month.

### **Out-of-Pocket Expenses for a Grade Representative**

Grade Representatives are not expected to shoulder a financial burden for doing the important work you do. The Parents Association allots \$150 per grade per year to help offset the expenses for grade socials. Receipts are submitted for reimbursement to the Parents Association Treasurer, as detailed in the procedure. Additional expenses for grade socials are shared by the attending families. Grade Representatives should not be encumbered with unforeseen expenses.

The collection of funds occurs sporadically during the school year, such as the donation for the class Best of MPA auction item or teacher gifts. These funds are collected voluntarily from families in the grade and spent at the pleasure of the Grade Representatives for a specific need.