

# The MPH Parents' Association

## Class Gatherings Information

Class gatherings are informal social events for parents, organized or facilitated by room parents for each grade level. These events provide an opportunity for parents to get to know the parents of children in their child's class in a relaxed atmosphere. Since we are not a neighborhood school, the Parents' Association and the School consciously plan ways to support a sense of community at MPH. Class gatherings have proven very effective in building that sense of community.

What to do:

- Decide where to have the gathering – at your own or another parent's home, somewhere in the community, or at MPH.
- Choose a date that is good for you, but avoids conflicts with other MPH activities. If you would like to have it at MPH, you should call [Jenn Neuner](#) (315-446-2452, ext. 116) with possible dates and times; she will check the availability of the space you plan to use. Gatherings should be scheduled for an evening or weekend so that working parents can attend. **Ideally, you should plan to have your gathering before the vacation break in December.**
- Get the word out to everyone in the class. It is best to send out written invitations or e-mails **and** to follow up with phone calls. Be sure to make a special effort to encourage new families to attend. Before sending the invitation, please give a copy to the appropriate Division Head and Jenn Neuner or Kelly Rose for approval.
- If your gathering is at MPH, call Bob Stewart, 446-2452, ext. 117 several days in advance to arrange to pick up a key to the building you will be using and to drop off the key after the event. Set-up and clean-up for the gathering is the responsibility of the room parents. Since class gatherings are intended as social occasions to help families get to know each other, teachers, even when invited, do not usually attend.

The following are suggestions from previous gatherings:

- Schedule a dessert-and-coffee event and ask everyone to bring a dessert to share. It makes less work for the parents hosting the gathering and gives all the guests an opportunity to participate.
- Parents of children in younger grades often appreciate a family gathering on a weekend afternoon at MPH or perhaps at a park. Specific activities can be planned for young children, with older siblings as "sitters," enabling parents to socialize. Family, rather than parent gatherings, work well in lower grades.
- Middle and Upper School parents frequently plan gatherings around school dances or class trips. Since most parents drop off and pick up their child at MPH for trips and dances, they are already "in the neighborhood" and a gathering nearby is convenient.
- Parents of older students may want to focus their get-together around a specific topic or issue about which they have questions (the college application process, for example). A school representative could be invited as a guest speaker.