

Big Backyard Classroom Coordinator Responsibilities

1. Identify which parents in your classroom will be volunteering to lead the walk.
2. Schedule the walk with the teacher, confirm with parents.
3. Enter the date of your walk on the master calendar.
4. Pick up and return equipment packets the day of walk.
5. Ask your teacher to give brief introductory and follow-up talks in the classroom.

1. Identifying Volunteers

Each walk should ideally have 4-5 parent volunteers. Call parents whose names are listed as volunteers in your classroom on the attached sheet. If you can't find four parents (including yourself), you could send home a note soliciting more volunteers, or contact your grade coordinator and we will help you. When you call parents, get an idea of what days and times they're available.

2. Scheduling Walks

Try the following approach: a) find out when parents are generally available, b) obtain a couple of dates/times from teacher that overlap best with parent availability, c) check the master calendar for conflicting walks, d) call volunteers to confirm date/time, e) confirm date/time with teacher, and f) enter on master calendar.

Please do **not** schedule rain dates until every class has had a chance to schedule its walk. Make sure that the teacher notifies parents a week beforehand of the walk date and dress, and sends a reminder home the day before the walk. A template of the reminder form is online on under *Documents*. Also, it will be up to the teacher (and you) to cancel a walk due to inclement weather. Do this early in the morning (swap phone #'s with the teacher) so you can notify other volunteers of cancellation before the school day begins.

3. Using the Master Calendar and Resource Center

Our resource center is located in Room 8 (next to the computer lab). This is where you get walk guides and pick up equipment packets. The master calendar is posted to the right of the door.

Master Calendar: This large calendar is our master schedule for all walks. Follow the guidelines posted on the calendar. Please check this board just before you schedule your walk, and enter your date/time/teacher/grade immediately after.

Walk guides: There are extra walk guides for volunteers who missed the training session. Encourage them to read the walks ahead of time, and – preferably – attend a walk of another classroom from the same grade before they go out. We also have videos of both the general and outdoor training. Contact your grade coordinator if you would like to view one.

4. Pick Up and Return Equipment

We will (try to) put the equipment for the walk into a packet attached to a clipboard for each parent volunteer. These packets will be organized by grade in boxes. After your walk, please collect all equipment, clean (if necessary) and return promptly to the box.

5. Introduction and Follow-up Talks

Right before the walk goes out, the teacher should do a brief 5 minute introduction to the whole classroom, explaining what the walk is about, appropriate walk behavior (listening and looking closely), that good questions are as important as answers, etc. The teacher should then review rules for the walk before everyone disperses. These communications help set the right tone for the walk.

The 15-minute (or longer) concluding session back in the classroom is vital in helping the children make sense of everything they experienced on the walk. Please make sure that the teacher plans to do the follow-up. You may want to point out that each walk has its own suggested post-walk activities. Using a flip chart to list discoveries/conclusions can be very helpful with younger grades.

THANK YOU!