

Guidelines for Parent Gift-Giving

We are increasingly aware that many occasions exist in the course of a school year when parents wish to demonstrate in some tangible and meaningful way their gratitude and appreciation to members of our faculty and staff. In an effort to provide clarity and reduce potential misunderstandings and hurt feelings, the following guidelines have been developed.

Appropriate gifts

A good way for parents, and their children, to express their appreciation is through personal cards or small, appropriate gifts. These gifts are particularly meaningful when made or initiated by the student. In the Pre-School and the Lower School, room parents coordinate an optional collection of modest contributions to provide class gifts for classroom teachers, special subject teachers, and teaching assistants at Christmas time and at the end of the year. Similarly, at the end of the sports season, parents may wish to coordinate on a gift for their team's coach(es) using this same approach.

Tickets and Season Passes

We are aware that many families have tickets and season passes to a variety of performance and sports activities in our area. We welcome the gift of such tickets that can then be given to our teachers, administrators, and staff members through random drawings. Please contact Claire Frahm in the Headmaster's Office should you wish to make a gift of this kind.

Other Ways to Honor Teachers, etc.

We are also grateful for gifts that honor employees through the Annual Fund, the Legacy Campaign, or gifts to our Library and other school-sponsored programs such as Breakthrough San Juan Capistrano or Special Camp for Special Kids. These gifts are acknowledged in the Annual Report, and the honorees express great pleasure with the recognition.

Inappropriate Gifts

Finally and most importantly, we ask that you not give gifts of significance or influence (cash gifts, material gifts, use of vacation homes, or service gifts except for the kind of group gifts described above), which may be misunderstood and give the appearance of a conflict of interest. In a community that values diversity, including economic diversity, these gifts are inappropriate, in part because they exclude those who cannot afford to give them. Our teachers work with their students without regard to the parents' resources, generosity or level of engagement with the school. To maintain the integrity of the teaching environment, it is essential that potential conflicts of interest be eliminated and there never be even the appearance that teachers are being rewarded by certain parents for specific acts. Families should understand that employees have been instructed to decline gifts that exceed these guidelines.

We appreciate the community's support in our efforts to create an equitable and inclusive workplace.

