

*Membership Handbook
for the
Pacifica Co-op Nursery School, Inc.*

*Rules and Procedures
Revised September 2017*

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INTRODUCTION

WELCOME

We are very glad that your family has joined our nursery school.

This handbook is your reference guide, with important information about how the school is run and what your responsibilities are, as well as our overall philosophy and guidelines for dealing with children. Please read it thoroughly, and refer to it when you have questions. Remember to ask if you don't understand something – your Session Representative is a good person to start with.

Our school attempts to keep a warm, appreciative atmosphere in which growth is fostered. We all learn from each other, and we hope that you will make suggestions to us to help us grow in our knowledge and experiences. You and your opinions are important. If you ever have a concern or question, don't hesitate to bring it up. We can only provide answers if we know there is a concern.

We share many similarities and yet have many differences. Hopefully, sharing experiences will help us to know each other better and will benefit our children and ourselves.

WHAT IS A CO-OP?

We are known as the Pacifica Co-op Nursery School, but our official name is the **Pacifica Nursery School, Inc.** We are a “co-op” or “parent participation nursery school,” which means that we, as parents, work together to run the school in accord with the philosophy and goals of our program. We endeavor to be a workshop in self-government. But, like any organization, we are subject to bureaucratic state and federal regulations to qualify for grants and licenses.

As members of the Co-op, we all work at the school one session per week, share in the maintenance and upkeep of the facilities, and plan **and** participate in fund-raisers. We benefit from our shared commitment by learning about parenting and by serving our children in a stimulating social environment. We also pay tuition that is well below that of other schools.

Past members of parent participation organizations such as ours look back upon this time as one of the richest and most worthwhile experiences of their lives. The cooperation upon which our school depends is in itself a rewarding experience. Your understanding and appreciation of others will be deepened. Working together so closely stimulates friendships and increased confidence in your own abilities.

PHILOSOPHY

We believe that together as parents, caregivers, and staff we can enhance growth, development and self-esteem, and promote a deeper understanding and respect of each child's unique qualities.

GOAL

Our goal is to provide an environment in which a child's social-emotional, cognitive and physical being will be enriched.

OBJECTIVE

Our objective is to create an environment of learning for parents, caregivers, and children to practice the numerous skills, which increase the cognitive, social-emotional and physical skills of each child, by providing hands-on experiences in a safe, socially stimulating and supervised environment.

PROGRAM

Our program is **thematic** and **multi-modal**. Emphasis is placed on the process rather than on an end product. By thematic we mean information is presented within a theme (e.g. Colors, Outer Space, Safety or Winter Celebrations) over two to three weeks. By multi-modal we mean themes are presented through a variety of activities.

A typical three-hour session includes two major time segments:

The first segment allows self-directed activities among three play areas of the school: dress-up and housekeeping, creative and table manipulatives (such as play dough, coloring, puzzles and construction), and outdoor play. We often label these experiences as "just playing" but, in truth, play is a child's work.

During the second segment, the theme is introduced at the first circle time. The children are informed about the daily activities in the art and craft area, the story-time area, the varied cognitive area (math, language and science), and the large motor area. These activities are supervised by the Staff and by Member-Teachers. The children are encouraged to participate in any or all of the activity areas, including the outdoor area where the play is generally not structured. At the last circle time, the theme is extended through songs, finger plays and rhymes.

The participation and education of Member-Teachers is an integral part of our program. In daily seminars, the Director prepares parents for promoting and facilitating the play in each of their assigned areas. Member-Teachers are also given time to discuss questions and concerns. In addition, there may be discussion on any mandatory reading assignments facilitated by the Director at their discretion.

ENROLLMENT REQUIREMENTS

REQUIREMENTS FOR MEMBERSHIP

Before a family may begin nursery school:

1. Per licensing, the child must be at least 2 1/2 years old and toilet-trained. The child must not need to wear diapers or pull-ups while attending school.
2. You must read, *Selecting the Number of Days Your Child Will Attend Nursery School* (see *Your Child at School* in this Handbook)
3. You must submit a complete application form and sign our Admission Agreement.
4. You must submit the results of TB test, Pertussis/Whooping Cough/Measles, and Flu Shot for parent(s) and any other relatives who will work at the school on a workday. For the child, a doctor's signed statement indicating that TB risk factors are not present must be included. Parents or workers must have a negative TB test every 3 years or within 3 years if there is a break. For new parents, TB tests must have been taken within 12 months preceding enrollment.
5. You must show proof of auto insurance by submitting a photocopy of your policy and a copy of your current driver's license. Any parent who does not have this on file at the school may not drive other children on field trips.
6. You must submit all forms, medical reports, TB results, registration, janitorial fees, and tuition before the child begins school.
7. You must pay any outstanding financial obligations owed to the school, including but not limited to, late tuition payments, incurred by your family in prior years, before your child's application will be processed.

MEMBERSHIP COMMITMENT

All members of the Pacifica Co-op Nursery School must fulfill the following contractual commitments to remain in good standing. Each item is described in detail in the respective sections of this Handbook:

1. Pay all Tuition, Fees and Deposits in a timely manner.
2. Abide by the Policies and Bylaws of the Nursery School.
3. Work at school as a Member-Teacher one session each week and approximately once every 4-6 weeks as the Emergency Parent of the Day (EPOD) providing supervision of activity areas and clean up of school facilities.
4. Hold a job within the school to assist in the administration and operation of the Nursery School.
5. Fulfill Enhancement requirements to improve and maintain the school facilities.
6. Attend the combined Communication/Information meetings held four times per year to be informed of the school's activities and curriculum.

7. Participate in all of our fund-raising activities to provide moneys for the school's programs.
8. Participate in eScrip, either by enrolling your own family, or by enrolling a friend or other family member when given instruction to do so by the Board.

SCHOOL HOURS

AM Session

Playground opens at 8:40 A.M.

Begins at 8:45 A.M. and ends at 11:45 A.M.

Children must be picked up at 11:45 A.M. A Late fee is applied if child has not been picked up by 12:01 P.M.*

*****Playground CLOSED from 12pm to 12:40pm*****

PM Session

Playground opens at 12:40 P.M.

Begins at 12:45 P.M. and ends at 3:45 P.M.

Children must be picked up at 3:45 P.M. A Late fee is applied if child has not been picked up by 4:01 P.M.*

*See "*Tuition and Fees Schedule*" (a loose sheet of paper in the pocket of this handbook).

LEAVES OF ABSENCE

Emergency

In case of illness, family emergency, etc., a parent and/or child may be granted a leave of absence by the Board for up to three weeks. If both parent and child are on leave, one-half tuition must be paid to reserve their place in the school. If only the parent is on a leave of absence and the child continues to attend nursery school, full tuition must be paid. To cover workdays and job responsibilities the Representative for the session the family attends will post a volunteer sign-up sheet or workers will be found at the discretion of the board.

Vacation

Up to one month's leave of absence will be available for a family who is on vacation. One-half tuition must be paid to reserve their place in the school. If no tuition is paid, reinstatement will be on a space available basis. The parent must arrange for a substitute to work their workday, and must make arrangement for the completion of their school job during their absence. The family is still expected to attend any Communication/Information Meetings during the one-month's period and any absence will be dealt with as set forth in the *Making up a Missed Meeting* in the *Parent Education* section of this Handbook.

Maternity

Up to six week's leave of absence may be taken for maternity care. During maternity leave, if the child continues to attend school, full tuition must be paid. If the child does not attend school, one-half tuition must be paid to reserve their place in the school. It is the family's responsibility

to obtain coverage for any work days missed. Efforts will be made by the Representatives to solicit volunteers through sign-ups. You may consider working for other parents in advance to “accrue” owed time for when your maternity leave arrives. If coverage cannot be arranged, the family must pay a Worker-for-Donation. Should the family have difficulty attending the Communication/Information Meetings, that family should contact the Board through their Representative to discuss their situation. The parent may also take a leave from his or her job, but is responsible for finding someone to cover his or her job duties.

SESSION PLACEMENT

Although every attempt is made for a child’s placement in their session of choice, there are many factors that play into this decision.

Session Priority

Priority for a specific session is as follows:

1. Returning families* enrolled in that session.
2. Siblings of students in that session.
3. Alumni **
4. Children enrolled in the other session who are currently on the waitlist.
5. Siblings of students in the other session who are currently on the waitlist.
6. New members.

* Returning Family: A Returning Family is one that comes back to Pacifica Co-op Nursery School after a period of less than one year and/or has a deposit in, has their name on the wait list, etc.

** Alumni Family: An Alumni Family is one that has left and is completely departed from Pacifica Co-op Nursery School in good standing for no less than exactly one year. Families with deposits, names on wait lists, etc. will not be considered Alumni.

Waitlist:

If you desire a particular session and that session is full, you will be put on a waiting list. This list is only to indicate your intention to be moved to the desired session on a space-available basis and is not a guarantee of placement based solely on your position on the list. The session priority still applies (see above), but there are other factors taken into account, at the discretion of the Board and the Director, which reflect the variables required to effectively run two school sessions and maintain the school as a viable business including, but not limited to, reserving placement slots for incoming families with extenuating circumstances.

SWITCHING SESSIONS

1. See *Session Priority* listed above.
2. If you anticipate needing to change sessions at any time during your child's attendance in the Nursery School please state your reason in writing to the Vice President as soon as

you can. If you are given the opportunity to switch sessions and you decline, your name will remain where it is on the Change Request List and you will be called when another opening is available.

3. A session change can only occur if:
 - a. It will not adversely affect the age or sex ratios in either session; **and**
 - b. After the session change, there will be at least six workers per session per day and no more than twenty-seven (27) children per session per day.
4. In order to minimize unnecessary session changes and avoid problems, each session change request will be brought before the Director and/or the Board by the Vice President for final approval before a change will occur. Changes are implemented at the beginning of each month with two weeks prior notice.
5. If there is a high demand for slots in a specific session the Vice-President may need to limit the number of days newly enrolled children may attend. This applies to all students coming into that session for the first time.
6. **Switching from one session to another and then back again is strongly discouraged.** Please make your decision to switch sessions carefully.
7. If you withdraw your child from school before attending 10 consecutive months, with the intention of enrolling him/her at a later date, we cannot hold a space open for you or give you session priority.
8. Summer Session slots are available on a first come/first served basis. Please turn in your application forms as soon as possible after you receive them.

FAMILY WITHDRAWAL

Should a family need to withdraw from the membership, a minimum of two weeks notice must be given in writing to the Vice-President. If the family leaves before the end of two weeks, the parent(s) will arrange for a substitute to cover workdays for the remaining period. Families leaving before mid-November (or before mid-April in the second semester) will not be penalized for uncompleted enhancement hours. Outstanding tuition must be paid within 30 days.

DUE PROCESS FOR TERMINATION

Probation may be called for when a family fails to fulfill *The Membership Commitment* listed in the beginning of this section, and will depend upon the severity of each situation. If a family repeatedly fails to meet their commitments, or behavior problems require dismissal, the termination process is as follows:

1. Parents will be put on 30 days probation when notified by the Executive Board. Options for mediating their situation will be offered. It is the goal of the school to ensure that families with special circumstances are offered options in order to meet their commitment to the school.
2. If the problem is not remedied as such, the President will arrange for a Closed Board meeting at an appropriate time for all parties within 7 days of the end of probation.

3. At the Closed Board meeting, the situation will be discussed. A plan for resolution will be written in contract form and include a time frame in which it is to be implemented.
4. If the family refuses to effect the solution within the agreed upon time frame, enrollment will be terminated.
5. In the case of termination of membership, the Board will inform the regional council of CCPNS (California Council of Parent Participatory Nursery Schools) of the steps taken to remediate the situation and the ultimate cause for termination.

NOTE: If the safety of people or property is in question, the Executive Board may abbreviate the above Due Process.

ARBITRATION

Arbitration is called for when there is a problem between two parents, or a parent and staff member, that remains unresolved. The following procedure will be followed:

1. The parent or staff member with whom the complaint was filed will select a professional arbitrator.
2. The Executive Board selects an arbitrator.
3. The two arbitrators select a third arbitrator.
4. Both parties involved must abide by the decision of the arbitrators.
5. In the event a staff member is party to the problem, documentation of the arbitration proceedings will be kept. If the problem exists between two parents, it is the decision of the parents whether to document the arbitration proceedings.

MEMBER PENALTY NOTIFICATION

All members of the Pacifica Co-op Nursery School must fulfill certain important and contractual commitments, as defined in this handbook, to remain in good standing at the school. Should issues (that include but not limited to: school job, attendance or conduct) emerge and need immediate attention, the Board of Directors will first attempt to contact the parent by phone. Should the issue continue, the Board will then request that the member attend a Board of Directors meeting to further discuss the issue and come to a resolution. The Member Penalty Notification form will be used to document the occurrence and will be copied and placed in the member's communication file.

TUITION AND FEES

TUITION

Tuition is due on the first of each month and is delinquent after the 10th of that month. If paid after the 10th, a 10% late fee must be included with the payment of tuition. If by the Board meeting, a board member has not been notified to the member's intent, that member will be placed on probation (see page 6 Due Process for Termination).

Please refer to “Tuition and Fees Schedule” (a loose sheet of paper in the pocket of this handbook) for current tuition rates.

Half-month tuition is due in December and in June. The June tuition payment is due on the 1st and late on the 5th of June.

If you change the number of days your child will be attending, the Treasurer will pro-rate your tuition payment according to the week the change becomes effective.

SUPPORT FOR TUITION

Scholarship Program

A limited number of scholarships are available to families with qualifying income. If a family would like their child to attend for more days than the scholarship covers, the family must cover the balance of the tuition at its own expense (assuming the Director has determined that the child is ready for such an attendance schedule). Families participating in this program are still responsible for all other requirements and duties set forth in the school’s by-laws and these Policies and Procedures, including, but not limited to, the payment of registration and janitorial fees.

Scholarships are awarded by the Scholarship Committee (which consists of the Board 2nd Vice President, Director, and one additional Board member) by considering family income and family size. A family’s income level is determined by combining the incomes of both parents living in the household. The family size consists of the number of people currently living in and being supported by the household. Priority is given to continuing families who are in good standing. Continuing families must submit scholarship applications at the May Communication/Information Meeting. New or returning alumni families must submit their applications before they start school. Applicants must supply income documentation upon submission of the annual application. Scholarship recipients must submit updated income information on or before January 15th. Families awarded scholarships are required to notify a member of the Scholarship Committee of any significant increase in their income.

Tuition Assistance

Tuition Assistance may be available to enrolled families in good standing who suddenly find themselves in need. Tuition Assistance is available for one month’s tuition per school year. Families in need of Tuition Assistance should contact the 2nd Vice-President.

REGISTRATION AND FEES

Waiting List Application Fee

There is a one-time non-refundable fee per child to secure a place on the school’s waiting list. Payment of this fee does not guarantee enrollment in the school. Please refer to *Tuition and Fees Schedule* located at the front of this handbook for current rates.

Registration and Janitorial Fees

Each year there will be a non-refundable registration fee for new, returning alumni and continuing children (i.e. those children without any gap between attendance years). This

includes a yearly fee for janitorial costs (this janitorial fee is cut in half for a family enrolling after January 31). The janitorial fee is refundable in the case where a family withdraws from the school before the start of the school year. For current rates, please refer to “*Tuition and Fees Schedule*” located in the front pocket of this handbook.

These fees are due in full upon the submission of an enrollment application for a child of a new, continuing, or returning family. If a continuing family enrolls additional children/siblings during the school year, the registration fees for the added child(ren) must be paid prior to that child starting school.

Commitment Checks

Prior to the beginning of the school year (or upon enrollment during the school year), each family must submit two (2) checks written to the school, one post-dated December 1st and the other post-dated May 1st (families enrolling after January 1 need only submit one check post-dated May 1st) in order to ensure the completion of that family’s commitments to the school (see “*Tuition and Fees Schedule*” located in the front pocket of this handbook for current fees.) Such commitments include, but are not limited to, completion of enhancement hours, payment of any outstanding fees, participation in fund-raising activities (including ESCRIP) and return of any outstanding library books. In the case of enhancement hours, each family must fulfill one half of its enhancement obligation by December 31st. If this obligation is not completed by then, the first check will be deposited. Each family must fulfill the second half of its enhancement obligation by the last day of school or the second check will be deposited. See the *Your Enhancement Hours* section of this handbook for details regarding your Enhancement Hours obligations.

Commitment checks will be destroyed (or upon timely request returned) if the family has fully completed its financial and participatory obligations in a timely manner. Families withdrawing from school before mid-November (or before mid-April for the second semester) will have their commitment checks returned to them, assuming that the family has fulfilled its other obligations that have already accrued.

Worker-for-Donation and EPOD Fees

Please refer to *Tuition and Fees Schedule* located in the front pocket of this handbook for current rates.

The Worker-for-Donation or EPOD fees shall be paid within 3 days of completing the work, unless otherwise mutually agreed upon by the parents involved.

Child Care Fee

Childcare during a date or time slot where the child is not otherwise enrolled may be arranged **IN ADVANCE** through the Director. The Director has the discretion to deny a request if enrollment is at the maximum or if it is at a time incompatible with the needs of the school.

The fee for childcare arrangements is listed on the *Tuition and Fees Schedule* located in the front pocket of this handbook. This fee must be paid and deposited in the treasurer’s folder on the day of care. In the memo section of the check please write the child’s full name, note that the payment is for childcare, and write the date of care. The childcare fee will not be charged to

Workers-for-Donation or to Board members with tuition-free slots who do not enroll their child 5-days per week. The fee is also not charged if the parent(s) did a “straight trade.” All childcare arrangements are up to the discretion of the Director regardless of whether the child’s parent is working during the session where childcare has been requested.

Late Pick-Up Fee

It is the responsibility of the parent to ensure that his/her child is picked up by 12:00 noon for the AM session or by 4:00 for the PM session. Thereafter, **you will be charged at the rate of \$1.00 per minute**. If you know you will be late picking up your child, please call the Director to let them and your child know when you will be arriving. You will still be charged the late fee and you will be expected to pay the teacher at the time of pickup.

Missed Meeting Fees

Attendance at the Communication Meetings is **MANDATORY** in order for members to meet the requirements and responsibilities of the School.

Each missed meeting must be made up by paying a fine. Please see the *Tuition and Fees Schedule* located in the front pocket of this handbook for current fee.

For further details, see *Making up a Missed Meeting* in the *Parent Communication/Information* section of this Handbook.

Failure to Return Handbook Fee

It is the responsibility of the parent to return this handbook at the final mandatory information meeting of the year (in May). If the handbook is not returned, you will be charged \$10. Please remember to return this handbook!

Fees for Returned Checks

Checks returned by the bank for insufficient funds will result in a fee of **\$20** per check returned and a **10%** late tuition fee, if the check was written to cover a tuition fee. Each family will be allowed only two (2) returned checks per school year. If a family has had two (2) returned checks in a given school year then that family shall thereafter pay with cash, cashier’s check or money order only for the remainder of the school year.

Financial Responsibility

All families shall meet their financial responsibilities to the Pacifica Nursery School, Inc. in a timely manner in order to assure the financial wellbeing of the school.

Failure to meet financial responsibilities is grounds for probation and/or termination. A family’s failure to pay any outstanding financial obligations upon its departure from the school will result in that family being denied enrollment in the school at a later date until any money owed to the school is paid in full.

In the event of extenuating circumstances, any member may make a written appeal to the Board to request forgiveness of a fee.

POLICIES

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

The Pacifica Co-op Nursery School admits children and their families regardless of their race, color, religion, nationality, ethnic origin or sexual orientation, to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to the students and member families of the school. The Co-op does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, nationality, ethnic origin or sexual orientation in the administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship programs or any other school-administered programs.

SIBLING POLICY

Due to problems with safety, licensing and insurance requirements, the Pacifica Nursery School has the following sibling policy, which each family agrees to as a condition of enrollment in the school:

1. A sibling may come on a parent's workday at school if the child is **nine (9) months** of age or younger. The school will schedule workdays in such a way **that only one sibling is present per session per day**. If two such children should arrive (as in the case of someone substituting for another) the regularly scheduled child will stay, the second party will be sent home, and other arrangements made.
2. Siblings attending on a workday may not be with the parent in the school kitchen. The working parent must arrange to switch work areas with the approval of the Director.
3. Siblings must be kept safely in a front or backpack (not a stroller or car seat).
4. EPODs are strongly encouraged not to bring a sibling unless necessary.
5. Siblings are permitted when school pictures are being taken and parents wish to include them, provided parent is present and sibling leaves after picture is taken.
6. Siblings are permitted on party days during the party portion of the session, if accompanied by a non-working parent. If it is your workday, you must make arrangements for their supervision.
7. Siblings are permitted on field trips if their supervising adult is present. If it is your workday, you must make arrangements for their supervision.
8. Visitors may bring their children.

If for some reason the sibling's temperament or size does not allow the parent to perform the duties of the school, other arrangements for the sibling must be made.

You must familiarize yourself with the Hygiene and Diaper Changes policies listed below.

SMOKING POLICY

Smoking will **not** be allowed on the school grounds **at any time**. This includes indoors and within the fenced area outdoors.

SUBSTANCE ABUSE POLICY

Drinking of alcoholic beverages or use of illicit drugs will **not** be allowed on the school grounds **at any time**.

Any employee, parent or volunteer, when performing under the directives of the Pacifica Nursery School, Inc., whom we reasonably suspect is under the influence of drugs or alcohol, will be suspended **immediately**. Arrangements for their child's safety will be made by calling emergency contacts listed on the family's phone list. The suspended individual may request a drug or alcohol test, to be done immediately, at the school's expense. The report must include the test results and the time the test was taken. The school will arrange for a cab to transport the individual for testing. If the individual refuses, and attempts to drive while under the influence, the school will notify the police. If the test result is positive, the family will be called to a closed Board meeting to discuss their situation.

HEALTH AND HYGIENE POLICIES AND COLD PREVENTION

In order to lessen the spreading of colds and flu within our Nursery School, please keep your child home if they are showing signs of illness and return only after their symptoms have cleared. Please use the following guidelines to assist in determining whether or not to bring a child to school:

1. Do not bring a child to school if he/she has yellow or green mucous coming from his/her nose or eyes.
2. If your child has a fever, wait for 48 hours **after his or her temperature has returned to normal** before bringing him/her to school.
3. If your child experiences vomiting and/or diarrhea, wait for 48 hours before bringing him/her to school.
4. Do not bring your child to school with an infected cut.
5. Do not bring your child to school with an undiagnosed rash, untreated head lice, etc. Check with the Director about diagnosed rashes or conditions, which may pose a health risk to pregnant women or immune-compromised persons.
6. Siblings with any above symptoms of illness are not be allowed to enter the play yard or school building. If you need to drop off a well child and have an ill child in the car, ask another parent to sign your well-child in (can be any parent to sign child in).
7. If a teacher feels a child is not well enough to be at school, the parent will be called to take the child home as soon as possible.

These rules apply to working adults also!

No matter how healthy or exuberant your child seems as he/she pleads with you to go to school – **don't do it** if it would violate any of the above guidelines. Our whole school will be healthier for it.

Hygiene

Remember, hands should always be washed after using the bathroom or **assisting a child in the bathroom**. Washing your hands with your child upon arrival is a great way to reinforce proper hygiene as well as help them become more comfortable with the facilities.

Wash hands after using Kleenex or helping a child blow his/her nose.

Hands should be washed before setting the snack tables, working in the kitchen or serving food. Long hair should be tied back when working in the kitchen.

Touching an object with germs on it and then inadvertently touching your nose or eyes causes more colds than drinking from the same glass as a person with a cold. This is because the acidity of your digestive system defends itself better against germs than the mucous membranes of your eyes and nose. If you want fewer colds, washing your hands often, and encouraging your children to do the same, can help prevent germs from getting into your system.

Blood Borne Pathogen Act Policy

In 1992, the Federal Government passed laws and policies to protect employees who might be exposed to blood and other body fluids in the course of their work. The following precautions are to be taken by all members of the Nursery School:

1. Use rubber gloves whenever you attend to **any** child's body fluids.
2. Dispose of rubber gloves, diapers, etc. in a sealed plastic bag and place in the large garbage cans with lids outside of the kitchen, behind the building. Do not leave them inside of the school.
3. Clothing that has been contaminated should be put in a sealed plastic bag and returned to the parent(s).
4. All surfaces which were contaminated (sinks, toilets, floors, etc.) should be decontaminated using one of our anti-bacterial cleaners, such as bleach.

Diaper Changes

At no time shall anyone change a child's pants or diaper by laying them down on the couch, rug, pillows, etc., without proper protection under the child. If you are bringing an infant to school, we recommend that you bring a special pad from home and follow the precautions listed above.

Lice Protocol

The best way to prevent a lice infestation is for parents to routinely screen their children for nits. Should a parent find nits or lice on a student or themselves, **they must notify a teacher or Board Member immediately**. Once it's determined that the child has live lice or only nits, the following steps will be taken to stop the spread of lice:

Nits Only: The Board of Directors will assist teachers in screening students in both sessions. Students will remain outside the building until cleared by a teacher/board member. The Board

will send out an email to the membership notifying parents about the case of nits, and what to look for. The student or parent with nits may return to the school only after at least 3 days following treatment and eradication of nits and must be rescreened by at teacher/board member before returning to school.

Live Lice and Nits: In addition to performing the “Nits Only” procedure above, should a case of live lice be reported, the Board of Directors will perform the following: Bag up all clothing/scarves/hats from dress up, all carpet squares, all sharing bags, all puppets and all coats on coat rack. Any pillows will need to be put in a dryer for 20 minutes at 140°F. All items bagged will return to their original locations two weeks after the lice case was reported.

Other Policies

Personnel, Regulatory, Licensing, Insurance and other policies are on file at the school. Contact the President if you wish to review these documents.

YOUR WORKDAY

You will work one session per week (as arranged with the Vice-President) under the guidance of the Director, and with the Teacher and other parents. We maintain a ratio of at least one adult to five children. You will receive a work schedule and program curriculum in your communication folder every five weeks or so. See the *School Communications* section of this Handbook for more information.

Being at school with your child is a significant experience for both of you. Parents and children appreciate each other more as a result of their shared moments. On the parent's workday, the child sees the parent as a valuable part of the school and the parent can observe the child's progress as a social being.

WORKDAY HOURS

AM SESSION	begins PROMPTLY at 8:45 AM and ends at 11:45 AM Please arrange for your child to be picked up by 11:45AM.
PM SESSION	begins PROMPTLY at 12:45 PM and ends at 3:45 PM Please arrange for your child to be picked up by 3:45 PM

Please note: To allow for staff education and preparation, the school doors will be closed until 8:45 AM. The membership should vacate the building at 11:45 AM, the doors will close at 12:00 noon. The doors will re-open at 12:45 PM. It is the parent's responsibility to make sure his/her child is picked up **promptly**. For further information see *Late Pick-Up Fee* in the *Tuition and Fees* section of this Handbook.

It is essential that the Member-Worker arrive on time at the start of the session to help set up equipment necessary for the day's activities. If you arrive more than fifteen (15) minutes late on your workday, without notifying the school, you will be responsible for paying the EPOD. Habitual tardiness may be cause for probationary action.

If you are bringing an infant, you must be familiar with our Sibling and Hygiene policies listed in the *Policies* section of this Handbook.

A family who is paying for more than five (5) days of tuition per week (more than one child attends school) may be asked to work an extra day each month. This may be necessary to maintain proper workday coverage or to correct scheduling problems caused by the number of siblings in attendance.

MISSING A WORKDAY

If you find that you are unable to make it to school on your workday, it is your responsibility to find a replacement. **It is not the Director's or the Board's responsibility to find a substitute or to contact the EPOD for you.**

These are the steps to take if you cannot do your workday:

1. Call the parents listed as a Worker-for-Donation.

2. Call as many parents as you can to find someone to take your place or trade workdays with you, go down the complete roster, call every parent on the list, except those who are already working that day.
3. Send an email request through the Yahoo Group.
4. As a **last resort**, call the Emergency Parent of the Day (EPOD). The EPOD is to be contacted for last minute emergencies. (For example: you or your child becomes ill on the way out the door. All other uses of the EPOD are prohibited. Before calling the EPOD, you must have exhausted all other options. If you cannot reach the EPOD, call the school and leave a message there. If you use the EPOD you must either arrange a work a day in return or pay him/her the EPOD fee. **It is up to the EPOD to decide.** Payment should be made within 3 days unless otherwise mutually agreed upon by the parents involved. (See section next page, *Emergency Parent of the Day*, for more information on EPOD.)
5. Excessive use of the EPOD will be brought to the attention of the Board and the President will arrange a Closed Board Meeting at an appropriate time for all parties.

TRADING WORKDAYS

Members are encouraged to trade workdays with another parent when they are unable to make it to school. Trades can often be arranged well in advance and to the advantage of both families. When you trade you will enlarge your network of acquaintances by working with a different group of parents. Trades work best if they can be arranged between families whose children attend on the days traded.

If you want to ask a parent with an infant in a backpack to trade work days, you should first make sure that no other parent will be bringing an infant on your work day. Call all the parents and the EPOD scheduled to work to determine whether they have a substitute who will be bringing an infant. See *Sibling Policy* in the *Policies* section of this Handbook.

If a substitute worker accepts a trade and is then unable to fulfill it, he or she is responsible for finding a replacement.

No member can use an occasional substitute to cover his/her workday unless that substitute is a current member, school alumni or has had prior approval from the Director.

WORKER-FOR-DONATION

Workers-for-Donation are listed at the bottom of your work schedule (contact the Scheduler for your session if you are interested in being added to the list). Workers-for-Donation may accept or decline work without explanation. If the Worker-for-Donation accepts an assignment and is then unable to fulfill it, he/she is responsible for finding a replacement. You are responsible for paying Workers-for-Donation (including an EPOD) within three (3) days, unless mutually agreed otherwise. See *Worker-for-Donation Fee* and *EPOD Fee* on the ***Tuition and Fees*** insert located in the front pocket of this Handbook. Any Co-op parent may work another parent's workday for pay, but these arrangements must be worked out individually between parents.

Workers-for-Donation should be familiar with details listed above under "Trading Work Days" regarding their child's attendance on non-scheduled days and on bringing infants. Workers-for-Donation are not charged for childcare. If their child attends on a non-scheduled day with Director approval, they should be signed-in as usual.

If you pay someone to work for you regularly, you must let the Scheduler for your session know of this arrangement. In addition, you must see to it that you have coverage for your EPOD day.

EMERGENCY PARENT OF THE DAY (EPOD)

Each parent is scheduled to be EPOD on the same day of the week once every 4-6 weeks. You will be notified in advance of your assigned EPOD day.

Mark EPOD on your calendar as soon as you receive your schedule!

When you are scheduled for EPOD:

1. Arrive at school and be ready to work as if it was your work day.
2. You should not make any unalterable plans for that morning/afternoon. When you come to school, plan to stay at school until 9:15 or 1:15, to determine if you are needed.
3. If for some reason you are needed and cannot be reached on your EPOD day, you must pay the school the EPOD fee. The substitute worker will be paid the EPOD fee as stated under the section on *Tuition and Fees* in this Handbook.
4. If you cannot do a scheduled EPOD, it is important for you to switch with someone in advance. If you do switch, you must notify ALL parents who regularly work that day so they will know whom to contact if they need to use the EPOD. Please also make the change on the master schedule at school.
5. If you have asked another parent to switch with you as EPOD you are required to pay a \$10.00 stand-by fee to cover the time that the parent was available. The stand-by fee is paid whether the EPOD is called to duty or not (or mutually agreed upon trade is arranged).
6. Should you be needed to work on your EPOD day, you will be compensated \$40.00 by the parent unable to cover his/her shift. If you have trouble collecting this fee from the parent, please don't hesitate to mention it to the Director.
7. Also see *Sibling Policy* in the *Policies* section of this Handbook.

YOUR FIRST WORKDAY

Being a newcomer to school may feel as bewildering to you as it does to your child. It is an ever-changing and seemingly chaotic environment - a true laboratory in human relations! If you are feeling overwhelmed, relax! Help is at hand in the form of veteran parents. They will be glad to work with you, answer questions, and show you the routines. Remember, too, that you can later ask questions of your Representative or any member of the Board. All telephone numbers are on the roster.

Your Child and You on Your Work Day

Children look forward to their parent's workday. However, they often act up or behave out of character on these days. Perfectly at ease all the other days without their parent, they may now become aggressive, or whiny, or inclined to show off. This behavior is all quite normal, so if your child acts up on your workday, the best response is to give an extra bit of attention. Let him/her know that he/she is still very special and that you belong to each other. If someone else's child acts up on your work day, do what you can to ease the other parent's sense of guilt at being all tied up with his/her child; he/she may do the same for you on another day.

Signing In

When you arrive at school, sign your child in (writing your full name legibly) and sign in as a worker on the adult roster, giving your full name and the time of arrival. Be sure to sign in any children you bring in a car pool. If you are working for someone else, also write their name in the right column of the adult roster and inform the Teacher and Director for whom you are working.

Check to see what area you are assigned to and read the job card for specific information about your responsibilities and duties in that area.

Direct the children to hang up their wraps and help them choose and get started on an activity (the children are allowed the choice of activity).

Job Cards

Job cards for the seven work areas are kept near the sign-in area and are two-sided for AM and PM sessions. These carry-with-you cards show the approximate scheduled times and activities of your work area. Please wear the job card around your neck at all times to indicate you are a parent worker for that day.

Work Areas

Outside	No seminar	Supervise outdoor area
Quiet Room	No seminar	Read stories
Kitchen	No seminar	Make snack
Support	No seminar	Fill in where needed
Varied	Seminar	Cognitive activities in snack area

Large Motor	Seminar	Plays & physical skills in circle area
Art	Seminar	Artistic project/craft in art area

Sample Session Schedule (Subject to Change)

AM Session	PM Session	
8:45	12:45	Doors Open. Sign In.
8:45 - 9:30	12:45 - 1:30	Children go to table activities, dress-up or outside; supervised by Quiet Room, Snack, Support, and Outdoor parents.
9:00 - 9:30	1:00 - 1:30	Seminar with Director to talk over day's activities for Large Motor, Varied & Art areas, and for parent education.
9:30 - 9:50	1:30 – 1:50	Circle Time: What's happening at school today.
9:50 - 10:30	1:50 – 2:30	Activity Time: Children participate in activity areas of their choice.
10:30 - 10:40	2:30 – 2:40	Clean up of activity areas and set-up for snack.
10:40 - 10:55	2:40 – 2:55	Snack time.
10:55 - 11:15	2:55 – 3:15	Children go outside with Outdoor, Quiet Room & Support parents
11:15 - 11:45	3:15 – 3:45	Last Circle Time: Sharing time, songs and Goodbye.
11:45	3:45	Sign Out.
12:01	4:01	Late fee starts.

SEMINAR

Time is set aside at the beginning of each session for the Director to meet with parents supervising the Art, Varied Activities, and Large Motor areas. In addition to being briefed on the day's agenda, parents must also be prepared to discuss the week's reading assignment. During Seminar, parents can also ask questions or bring up problems with procedure or children.

For more information, see the *Parent Participation* section of this Handbook.

SHARING DAY

Your child's sharing day takes place every other week on your regularly scheduled workday. If you are absent or trade days with another parent, your child's sharing day will remain on the regularly scheduled day.

We are looking to direct children away from sharing items like toys to sharing meaningful events or accomplishments. Your child should bring a piece of paper to school with the story or clues *already* written (they may not be written at school). Gathering this information can be turned into a regular event at your house. It can be done at bedtime, sending children off into positive dreams, or done at the dinner table as a public acknowledgment of a child's accomplishments. Some children like to embellish their "sharing note" with drawings, etc. We try, however, to discourage long stories at this time.

Sharing takes place at the last circle time. One by one, children are called up to share their story. More reserved children sometimes prefer to have their sharing note read.

ALTERNATE PARENTS DAY

Alternate Parents Day is usually held in the fall on a Saturday chosen by the Staff. It is an opportunity primarily for parents who do not usually work at school to come and spend time there with their child. School staff will post a signup sheet for people who would like to attend. All enrolled children are welcome to attend in their regular session.

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Attendance

You are **absolutely** responsible to be there on your workday. If it is impossible for you to be there, you **must** find a substitute. Wear comfortable, durable clothes on your workday. Be sure to bring a sweater or jacket along.

Arrive 5 minutes early for your session (8:45 for the AM session; 12:45 for the PM session). Only if all working parents are there on time can the children receive the full value of the program.

Do not plan to work if you are not feeling well, especially if you are coughing or have other symptoms of a contagion. We have a list of parents willing to work for donation (see your work schedule) if you are unable to trade with another parent.

Your Duties

Learn the names of the children as soon as possible.

To do a proper job of supervising your work area, you must be ever watchful of what is going on. **DO NOT SOCIALIZE WITH OTHER PARENTS WHILE YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR CHILDREN.** If you must leave your assigned area (**this is highly discouraged**), be certain to have another parent keep an eye on your area until you return.

Take care to see that materials and equipment are used properly and safely. A few things to watch out for: play dough stays in the area where it is set up, indoor toys remain indoors, water play is generally outdoors, snack is eaten in the snack area only, and dress-up clothing and imaginative play items stay within the dress-up and large motor areas unless otherwise directed by the teachers.

At the end of the session be as orderly and careful as possible in putting equipment and supplies away so that there is no damage and the next session's set-up can go smoothly. Children should be active participants in every stage of the clean up. Remember, not only is picking up items they

played with good practice, it is also a good time to strengthen classification skills (such as picking up and sorting blocks).

Always bring a child to the Director for treatment of all injuries. **Always** report an injury. Be sure to write down any injury on the child's sign-in sheet, so that the parent is aware of the occurrence.

Directing Children

Use your voice as a teaching tool and keep a calm, cheerful attitude. Simple, low, and direct speech is most effective; try to use as few words as necessary to make a child understand; use consistency, firmness, and kindness as you communicate what you expect or need of the children in your care.

Children usually want to do what adults expect of them. Consequently, we as adults must be certain of our expectations. We must let them know what we expect, and that we intend to follow through.

Give new children a little time to become acquainted with the rules of the school. Remember that immediate CONFORMITY IS NOT AS IMPORTANT AS PROGRESS TOWARD VOLUNTARY ACCEPTANCE.

Encourage children to share highly prized equipment such as bicycles and swings. Remind them of taking turns. Sometimes the use of a 5-minute timer can be helpful. Children should not be made to wait too long to do something that is expected of them. (Example: to wait in line for toileting, only 3 or 4 children should be brought in at a time.)

Discourage children from bullying or intentionally leaving other children out of games or play by suggesting something all children can do together, or helping to problem solve. Discourage sword or gun play by suggesting children "write tickets" as police or play chase or tag.

Teach within the philosophy of the school. You do not have to agree with it, **but you must conduct yourself according to that philosophy while at school.** No child may ever be hit or hurt in any way by any adult, nor should a child ever be humiliated or insulted. Help children in the expression of their needs, but don't do their creating for them.

Handling Problems

Never discuss a child in his or her presence or in the presence of other children. The teachers will be glad to discuss any situation with you, but you may have to wait until they can leave their area or until the daily seminar time. You may of course, make an appointment to talk to the Director outside of school hours (or call for a conference).

Because each person working in the nursery school has a direct or indirect influence on each child, it is important not to have hurt feelings, anger or misunderstandings among ourselves. If something is concerning, it is better to say so right away. In most instances, problems arise from a failure of communication rather than malice on anyone's part. Communicate your feelings to the teachers and other parents. We can all do a better job if feelings are shared. Just be sure to hold these adult conversations out of earshot of the children.

From time to time, you will become aware of ways in which routines can be improved, equipment bettered, or the school can be run more smoothly. Feel free to mention your ideas to your Representative.

For more helpful guidelines, see the separate handout titled *Things You Always Wanted to Know About How to Manage the Children But Couldn't Find in the Handbook*.

SNACK PROCEDURE

Approximately once a month you will be preparing the session's snack and cleaning up the kitchen afterwards. The daily menus and recipes are posted in the kitchen. The food is supplied by the Shoppers. The Food Program Administrator will be happy to consider your ideas or recipes. Contact him/her with your ideas.

We call this meal “**snack**” because it is not intended to replace any **meals**. However, it is nutritionally balanced with milk, protein, fruit or vegetable and a carbohydrate. A sample menu might be milk, celery with cheese and crackers. After signing in, check the clipboard located on the kitchen counter for instructions on preparing the snack for that day. Then, check the cupboard and refrigerator for menu ingredients. Always check the list of children with allergies and special dietary needs posted in the kitchen, and the cupboard or refrigerator for parent provided food substitutes. This list is also posted in the snack area.

All bowls, cups, plates, serving utensils and flatware that have been on the snack tables **must be sterilized in the dishwasher**, except for serving bowls, which may be hand-washed after being sprayed with hydrogen peroxide.

If you are assigned to do snack on a field trip day you need to assemble the snack the **day before** so that it will be ready to go on the field trip with the children. Check with the Director two full days prior to the field trip for details.

Always remember to wash your hands and tie back long hair prior to preparing the snack.

SCHOOL SAFETY POINTS

General Guidelines

An extensive handout titled *Safety Guidelines* lists specific areas of concern. Please familiarize yourself with it. Additionally:

1. The gates should be secured during school hours. Parents are asked to use the main/driveway side gate to leave. It is the Outdoor Parent's responsibility to make sure all gates are secure. When securing the gate, use both hooks. Do not allow children to open or close the gate.
2. If you are a new parent on duty outside, please ask about hazards in the yard, if you haven't been instructed.
3. The outdoor area should be thoroughly checked before snack time and the last circle time to be sure that all children are not hiding anywhere – do an accurate head count. The outdoor parent should be the **LAST** person to come indoors, and the **FIRST** person to go outdoors after circle time and snack.

4. The quiet room door to the outside should be closed. The same is true for the kitchen door. Children are never allowed in the kitchen.
5. Encourage walking inside. (Running is an outdoor activity.)
6. Children are not allowed to hurt others or to destroy property or equipment. They should not use toys or equipment in such a way as to endanger others or themselves. Running into each other or objects is not allowed. Removal from the situation may be necessary.
7. No standing on or running into each other or objects on wheel toys.
8. Bikes are to be ridden at a safe speed.
9. Blocks are to be built only as high as the builder's shoulders.
10. Children must be taught that they must stay out of range of the swings and must not jump off of them when they are in motion.
11. Children are allowed to climb only as high as is safe for that particular child. Children are not allowed to climb up the slide. Children are not allowed to climb over walls or fences.
12. Jumping is never allowed from too high a position or where the area below is obstructed or cluttered.
13. Children must learn the boundaries of the playground. They are not to go outside the fence or into the butterfly or native plant gardens without an adult.
14. Children may pick flowers or leaves in the butterfly habitat.

Adult Safety

When working in the nursery school it is important that adults conduct themselves in a safe manner and are aware of various safety considerations. Please note the following:

1. **Report all injuries to the Director immediately.**
2. Notify the Director if you see any unsafe conditions.
3. If you have any concerns about performing any duties in the school due to your lack of skill, inexperience or physical limitations, please make your concerns known to the Director for alternate action.
4. Move cautiously throughout the building and grounds, being especially aware of small, moving children and equipment.
5. Always take caution when lifting children and/or equipment to protect your back from injury. Lift by bending your knees first. Also bend at the knees when helping the children, talking to them, wiping noses and the like.
6. Do not stack or store materials in unsafe conditions, such as on top of high cupboards or on the floor where it may obstruct a walkway.
7. Do not store any flammable material in the furnace room.
8. Be cautious of wet floors while cleaning. Wipe up any liquid spills immediately.
9. Always leave your workstation in a safe manner.

10. If you have a life-threatening allergy or medical condition, please inform the staff. If necessary, keep emergency information and/or medication available.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Fire - When you hear the smoke alarm:

1. If in the building, take all the children in your area and leave by the nearest exit. Close the exit as you leave the building.
2. Lead the children at a swift walk (do not run) across the yard and line up along the fence near the driveway in one line.
3. Reassure, calm and comfort them and **do not leave them** until the Director arrives. Leave your group only if the Director gives you another assignment.
4. The Director will join you at the fence and take roll from the sign-in sheet. The Director will dispatch one person to call the Fire Department.
5. At this time, more than any other, it is critically important that you **remain calm**, follow orders, avoid frightening the children by your own fear, and use good sense. Such an emergency will test your self-control, particularly if you are in one part of the school and your child is in another.
6. The first thing the fire department will do under normal circumstances is to turn off the gas valve and the electric circuit breaker. Each one of you should be aware of how to turn them off. The circuit breaker is just outside the kitchen door, and the key for the gas main is in the pantry.

Earthquake

If an earthquake begins:

1. If time allows, move the children in your area away from tall shelves and into the center of the room to crouch and cover or duck under the tables to crouch, cover and hold on.
2. If you are outside, stay outside and direct children toward the fence nearest the parking lot.
3. As soon as the jolt is over, gather the children into a safe area for roll-taking and mutual comfort.
4. Turn off the gas valve and the circuit breakers if you suspect a gas leak or smell natural gas.
5. Earthquake mitigation files are located next to the communication folders. These files contain procedures to be followed by staff and working parents.
6. We will stay at school with the children until each and every child has been picked up by the child's parent(s) or other individual authorized to pick the child up (i.e. the individual is listed on the authorized pick-up sheet or has a note from the child's parent(s)). If you are away from school, arrive as quickly as possible to pick up your child.

See "Emergency Phone Contact" in the Communications section of this Handbook.

YOUR “JOB” AT SCHOOL

Each family is required to take an ongoing job in the school. Returning families sign up for a job at the end of the previous school year, and new families will select a job at the New Parent Orientation meeting in September. The Job Coordinator assigns jobs to families who enroll after the September meeting.

Any families starting in the month of May will be assigned the jobs left vacant. The Incoming Board will assign these jobs when appropriate. Serving on the Board of Directors qualifies as a job. Committees are formed according to the needs of the nursery school. Any member may serve on a committee. This does not take the place of an ongoing job in the school.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President *	1 st Vice President*
Secretary*	2 nd Vice President*
AM Representative(s)	Treasurer *
P.M. Representative(s)	

RETURNING FAMILY JOBS, AS NEEDED

Snack Program Administrator **	Maintenance Chairperson
Publicity Chairperson	Trike-a-thon Chairperson
RainbowFest Chairperson *****	Librarian
Director's Assistant***	Web Site Coordinator
A.M. Field Trip Coordinator	P.M. Field Trip Coordinator
General Purchaser	Job Coordinator
Newsletter Editor	Cal Osha Chairperson
A.M. Scheduler	P.M. Scheduler
Enhancement Coordinator (2)	Director’s Assistant
Orientation Assistant	Cutout Coordinator

NEW-TO-THE-SCHOOL FAMILY JOBS

A.M. Children's Parties Planner/Assistants	P.M. Children's Parties Planner/Assistants
Dress up Area Maintenance	General Purchaser
Towel Washer	Cutout Coordinator & Cutout Persons
Food Buyers (shoppers)	Gardener

Scholastic Book Club
Web Site Coordinator
Sand and Fibar Maintenance
Art Area Maintenance
Recycler

Communication/Information Meeting Hospitality

*Receives 5 days/week free tuition

**Receives 3 days/week free tuition

***Receives 2 days/week free tuition

**** Receives 6 free months of tuition from November to June. Receives 3 days/week free tuition if two co-chairs or 5 days/week free tuition if one chair

(The days allocated for the tuition-free slots listed above can be distributed between children within the same family at the recipient's discretion)

All chairpersons will give brief informational reports at the monthly meetings when necessary.

The Job Coordinator keeps a file of all job descriptions and distributes them to job holders. Any job may be changed, deleted, or combined to best meet the needs of the school, as determined by the Board with input from the Job Coordinator.

YOUR ENHANCEMENT HOURS

“Enhancement” is the term we use to describe our ongoing efforts to keep our school safe, clean, attractive and in good repair. We must rely on our parents, not highly paid professionals, to make this happen.

Every family will be required to complete a minimum number of enhancement hours based on the month that attendance begins:

If Attendance Begins	Required Hours
In September	4 hours (1st semester) plus 4 hours (2nd semester)
In October	3 hours (1st semester) plus 4 hours (2nd semester)
In November	2 hours (1st semester) plus 4 hours (2nd semester)
In December	1 hour (1st semester) plus 4 hours (2nd semester)
In January/February	4 hours
In March	3 hours
In April	2 hours
In May	1 hour

Families withdrawing before mid-November (or before mid-April in the second semester) will not be penalized for uncompleted enhancement hours.

The two commitment checks that you are required to submit at the beginning of the year are held as guarantee that you will fulfill this obligation. For details, see the *Tuition and Fees* section of this Handbook. However, your time and skills are far more valuable to the school than the funds. If you have special skills that can be put to use, you are strongly encouraged to share them with the school.

You may not transfer hours into a new school year. The only possible transfer is from fall to spring semester. Any exceptions need to be brought before the board. Enhancement hours are overseen by the Enhancement Coordinators.

You may choose to fulfill this requirement in a number of ways:

1. Complete a maintenance project designated and approved by the Director (e.g. wash/repair toys, clean refrigerator, carpentry repairs)
2. Attend a "work party." Work parties are held at the school several times a year, usually toward the beginning and end of semesters. They usually last four hours each.
3. Recruit a family.

PARENT PARTICIPATION

Every aspect of your nursery school activity is parent education in the deepest sense of the word.

Our school program helps parents learn how to effectively guide all children toward a positive sense of self-esteem, an ability to think for themselves, and "a feeling that there is no problem so great that they can't solve it."¹ For parents, growth in self-confidence, ability to express oneself, and group participation skills are an extension of our philosophy.

Communication / Information Meetings

Four evenings throughout the school year we devote to sharing the information and concepts, which influence the day-to-day operation of our school. The Communication/Information meeting informs the membership of school Communication, upcoming events, curriculum plans and actions of the Board.

Communication / Information meeting dates are included on the school calendar made available to members at the start of each year and are held during the school year. This is an adult meeting and children may attend only if child is nine (9) months of age or younger.

¹Barbara Colorosa, Winning at Parenting

Attendance at the Communication/Information Meetings is mandatory for several reasons:

1. We all share the responsibilities of our school's operation and must keep informed.
2. We aim to create a cohesive group of parents working toward the consistent and positive guidance of children.

It is the responsibility of each family to sign the attendance sheet at the meeting.

Making up Your Missed Meetings

Attendance of the four Information/Communication meetings is MANDATORY. If you are unable to attend, the Board should be notified prior to the start of the meeting and you will be responsible for finding a Board-approved substitute to attend on your behalf, who is not a currently enrolled member, to relay the information conveyed at the meeting to you. Failure to do so will result in a fine.

Daily Seminars

During each session, the Director/Teachers holds a seminar for the Member-Workers who rotate thru the Large Motor, Arts and Crafts, and Varied Activities areas that day. They meet for the following purposes:

1. To discuss teaching and supervision tasks of the day.
2. To gain an understanding of the developmental aspects of the day's activities.
3. To address personal concerns in managing or understanding a child's behavior.
4. Discuss mandatory reading.

Members should be aware that seminar is held at the discretion of the Director and discussions brought up in seminar, personal or otherwise, would not be considered confidential (unless designated as such). Discussions of others will be for the purpose of developing an understanding, or plan of action, for the individuals concerned. Members should be sensitive to the fact that the sharing of information about others, while sometimes necessary in school, should be done with respect for each individuals' character. Therefore, one should strive to describe behavior and not opinions about that behavior.

For more on getting what you need out of seminar, see the separate handout titled *Things You Always Wanted to Know About How to Manage the Children But Couldn't Find in the Handbook*.

PARENT EDUCATION LIBRARY

We have an extensive adult library offering books and videotapes on child development, guidance, and parenting. We also have a large children's collection. The materials may be checked out for a one-month period. Ask the Director to guide you in your search for the appropriate book. The School Librarian oversees the circulation and will accept your donations and suggestions. Our slogan is "Read the book but study the child."

CONFERENCE WEEK AND INDIVIDUAL CONFERENCES

Children who are at least three years old and who have been at the school at least three months will undergo a developmental assessment. The Director will schedule conferences with parents twice yearly, after the children have been assessed. At this time, you may discuss your child's academic and social progress in the school; problems in handling or understanding your child; family relationships; yourself as a Member-Teacher; or any other issues of concern. Keep in mind that you can request a conference with the Director at any time.

FUND-RAISING

It is every member's responsibility to participate in all school fund-raisers. If you are not able to be physically present on the day of the fund-raiser, you are responsible for finding a replacement.

A family who fails to participate to the satisfaction of the fund-raising chair(s) may have their maintenance hours increased, may be asked to work four additional hours the day of the Spring fundraiser (if the fall fundraiser is missed) or may be put on probation.

TRIKE-A-THON

The fall fund-raiser called the "Trike-a-Thon," is generally held in October. At this weekend morning event, students ride their bikes or trikes around a track with family and teachers looking on. Typical carnival games, prizes and ice cream follow. All members are **required to attend** and assist the event. Members are required to raise a minimum amount as per the current year's Trike-a-thon document. This event is coordinated by the Trike-a-Thon Chairperson.

RAINBOW FEST

This is the nursery school's major fund-raiser as it provides a substantial amount of our budgeted revenue. It helps us maintain our school and our status in the community and is a fun afternoon out for families and friends of the Co-op. Rainbow Fest is held on a weekend afternoon in the spring and includes a big-ticket raffle, children's activity and vendor booths, food, drinks and live entertainment. The Rainbow Fest Chairperson(s) and the Raffle, Solicitation, and Packaging Chairpersons coordinate the preparations for this event. **Children are welcome and encouraged to attend this event!**

For the Rainbow Fest to be successful, each and every family **is required** participate.

Details will vary from year to year, but in general, each family's commitment is as follows:

1. Sell a designated number of raffle tickets for big-ticket prize packages,
2. Work **either** a pre- event job **or** a day-of job (a family can work both if desired),
3. Promote the event to friends and family,
4. Pay for family admission to the event, and
5. At least one family member must attend this event.

ESCRIP

Each family is required to sign up for eScrip when directed by the Board. eScrip is proven to be a fantastic resource for fund-raising where participating business partners contribute a percentage of your grocery loyalty cards, credit cards, and debit/ATM purchases to the school. Please visit their website at www.escrip.com for details and to register.

YOUR CHILD AT SCHOOL

SELECTING THE NUMBER OF DAYS YOUR CHILD WILL ATTEND NURSERY SCHOOL

Like swimming, becoming a nursery school participant takes skill and learning before one can maneuver well within the program. You wouldn't put your child in deep water without knowing if he or she could swim. Similarly, you wouldn't enroll your child in an advanced class until the child showed some readiness.

In order to maximize your child's positive growth, it is important that you **carefully** consider the number of days your child participates in our program. To reap the benefits of a program of our scope your child must first be socially ready and temperamentally disposed to some periods of self-regulation and separation from you, regardless of chronological age.

Our Co-op requires that the child interact with 27 children and about 34 adults each and every week.

The size of each daily session challenges the social skills of even the most experienced adult, let alone a child. Helping children to grow socially and emotionally in the pre-school years requires a great deal of skill, cooperation, consideration and patience from the staff and parents. Only two adults per session are professionally trained to make the most of the children's experiences.

Choosing the right number of days to attend school will be more rewarding for your child because he or she will not be expected to behave at a level beyond their development or temperament.

Please use the following guidelines to determine your child's preparedness for nursery school.

Beginning Readiness

Select one or two days per week if one or more of the following applies to your child:

- Has occasional bouts of separation problems;
- Has periodic difficulty conforming to the routines of the day; may need assistance, but will come in for circle time and snack.
- Finds it difficult to sit for 15 minutes at circle time, but can manage with periodic reminders.
- Needs frequent intervention to stay on task.

Intermediate Readiness

Select three days per week if all of the following are true of your child:

- Can separate from you most of the time;
- Can stay in circle-time with a little bit of assistance;
- Is able to honor requests to stay out of areas designated as closed;
- Needs only occasional redirection (once or twice per week).

Advanced Readiness

Select four or five days a week when your child exhibits the following:

- Rarely has a problem with separation;
- Responds cooperatively to requests made by adults and can manage at circle times;
- Is able to honor the boundaries and limits of the school;
- Rarely needs someone to redirect his or her behavior.

Your Child Is Not Yet Ready If:

- Unable to separate from you and shows considerable sadness or distress;
- Unable to stay within the school boundaries;
- Destructive toward property;
- Frequently disruptive;
- Belligerent or aggressive toward children and staff;
- Not toilet-trained and off the bottle or pacifier during school hours.

It is sometimes difficult for a parent, or even a staff person, to know at first how many days are appropriate for your child to attend. If necessary, the staff will evaluate and may make recommendations to adjust your child's daily attendance after roughly 30 days (within the first week during the summer program). We would appreciate your cooperation and understanding, as well as your input at this time to both maximize your child's wellbeing and that of the school's.

Together our choices make a positive environment for everyone.

PREPARING FOR THE FIRST DAYS NURSERY SCHOOL

Each child has his/her own way of reacting to the new and the strange, of approaching new situations and new people. Although we plan our program to ease your child's adjustment to nursery school, it will probably be an exciting and trying time. Plan the first week or two of school so that you can stay with your child as long as needed. The first few days, be prepared for a very stimulating environment. Your child will learn to pace himself/herself over time. Get your child off to a good start by making sure that he or she:

1. Has a good night's sleep each night,
2. Gets up early enough to have time for dressing and eating,
3. Wears simple, sturdy, washable clothes that can get dirty,
4. Brings a jacket or sweater (it is often warm at home and chilly at school), and
5. Brings a security items such as a blanket or toy (only if necessary).

Common First Reactions

School is a strange new place for children, even for those who have socialized at the park or playground. You may see some of the following behavior, even if you haven't seen it from your child before:

1. Crying when you leave: Be sure the teacher **and your child** knows that you are leaving. Children may feel deserted if they suddenly look for you and you are gone. Be firm in saying good-bye, but don't prolong the parting once you decide to go.
2. Wetting or soiled clothes: This problem is usually of short duration if not made an issue of. Just furnish the school with extra clothes.
3. Irritability-tiredness-clinging-whining-lack of cooperation: Any of these may stem from the excitement and strain of new experiences and new demands that the situation puts on the child.

Try not to be overly sensitive to your child's first reactions. If he/she had all the desirable social skills it would not be childhood. Encourage conversation about school, but don't force it. A word of caution: don't **ever** discuss your child or another child in front of the children. They hear everything and misinterpret much.

For more about separation, see the handout titled *Things You Always Wanted to Know About How to Manage Children but Couldn't Find in the Handbook*.

Signing Your Child In and Out

Always sign your child in so we know he/she is there. Sign out before you leave so we know the child is in your care. If someone else is picking your child up, please let the staff know in advance, preferably in writing, so they will know whom to contact if there is a problem. Remind that person to sign your child in/out. Make a note on the sign in sheet of any changes in arrangements to pick up your child.

Cubbies and Coat Hooks

The "cubby" is the special place where your child keeps his or her "stuff." Every cubby has child's name on it as well as a sticker (since many of the children do not know how to read their name). Please check the coat hooks and cubby for belongings and artwork to take home.

Toys and Toy Weapons

Children should leave their playthings at home unless it is something that fills a need for security or sharing day. But these belongings need to go in their cubby.

Things that the child or parent values may get lost or broken and are better left at home. There will be **no weapons** (i.e., guns, swords, knives, ammunition, etc.) at the school. As inevitable as it is for sticks and like objects to become weapons, we have a rule at the school called "sticks on the ground or in your cubby." The suitability of a questionable toy is left up to the Director's discretion.

SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

Circle Times

Circle times occur two times during the session. The first circle time happens after about an hour of free play. Its purpose is to greet the children and inform them of the day's thematic activities. The last circle time happens about 15 to 25 minutes before the end of session. At this time, we participate in sharing, sing songs, learn finger plays and rhymes and say good-bye. This is also the time we celebrate birthdays. See *Sharing Day* in the *Your Workday* section of this Handbook

Our group times have much to offer a child who is developing social skills. These times provide opportunities to develop listening skills and learn from others' experiences. The children also learn to delay and/or suppress their impulses to be the center of attention or to gain immediate gratification. See the handout titled *Things You Always Wanted To Know About How To Manage Children But Couldn't Find In The Handbook* for more about helping the children at circle time.

Birthdays

During the second circle time of the session, the birthday child usually receives a "Birthday Crown," a goodie from the Birthday Treasure Box and a birthday song. Please sign up on the birthday calendar (bulletin board next to schedules) for the date you want to celebrate your child's birthday. There will be only one celebration per day, the first to sign up has priority.

Parents may bring goodies or party favors to be handed out after the last circle time for the children to enjoy outside. (Examples: little toys, stickers, cookies, cupcakes, pencils, popsicles, etc.). For food items, please keep the portions "toddler-sized" and nut-free (ex. "mini" cupcakes). An alternative to handing out goodies would be to give a "gift" to the school from the child or family (examples: a book, paints, puzzle, etc.).

If a child has a summer birthday, a celebration will occur at the end of the school year (let the Teacher know ahead of time). If the child is attending summer "Bug School" the birthday celebration can be held during the summer program.

Field Trips

All enrolled children are welcome at field trips, even if it is not their scheduled school day. The AM and PM Field Trip Coordinators will post sign-up sheets, in advance. Always indicate whether or not you are going and if you are available as a driver. If a fee is required, it must be paid before the day of the field trip. Field trips begin at school at the regularly scheduled session time (unless otherwise notified). Drivers will be given emergency cards and maps before leaving on the trip. Snack is provided for **enrolled children only**. If it is your workday you must go on the field trip or replace yourself, and we do need you ready as EPOD even on a field trip day.

If you are assigned to do Snack on a field trip day you need to assemble the snack the night before so that it will be ready to go on the field trip with the children. Check with the Director two full days prior to the field trip day for details.

Non-enrolled siblings may come on field trips, if accompanied by the parent (non-family members are not allowed because of the school's insurance coverage). However, you must provide their snack and make arrangements for their supervision. See *Sibling Policy* in the *Policies* section of this Handbook.

Examples:	October Pumpkin Patch:	Tour farm and bring home a pumpkin
	December Tree Farm:	Pick and cut down a tree for the school
	Health and Safety Week:	Firehouse
	End of the Year Picnic:	Combined sessions play at nearby park

Parties

Parties are held at school for Halloween, Thanksgiving, Winter Holiday, Valentines, Spring Holiday and Graduation. All children enrolled in school may come to school the full session on a party day. Sign up if you are coming to the party and indicate what you will be providing. Parties are coordinated by the AM and PM Children’s Parties Planners.

Siblings may attend the party portion of the session if accompanied by a non-working parent. If it is your workday you must make other arrangements for their supervision. See *Sibling Policy* in the *Policies* section of this Handbook.

Assessments

Twice a year the Director, with the aid of parents, assess each child who is three or oldern and who has been at the school for at least three months. The assessments take place in the form of simple games, questions and activities. It takes about a week to test all the children. The Director then evaluates each child’s performance from a developmental perspective.

The outcome is discussed with the parent(s) during conferences (see *Conference Week* in the *Parent Education* section of this Handbook).

Little Group

Little Group is a supplementary program for children old enough to attend kindergarten the following fall.

Each group meets once a week at the end of the child’s session. The Teacher takes a group of about 5-7 children to the Quiet Room area and works with them on various activities that they may encounter in kindergarten.

Graduation

A graduation is held for children who are leaving preschool for kindergarten. Parents, Grandparents and family members are welcome.

“Grad Books” are special books that are presented to the children at graduation. They are prepared by the parents (sometimes the children want to be involved, too) and include your child’s special papers, artwork, photos, etc. We suggest that you date items to help organize things and take a lot of pictures during the year so you will have them to put in your child’s book. Samples will be on display beginning in April.

Picture Day

The nursery school will arrange for a professional photographer to come to the school to take pictures of your child. Non-scheduled members and siblings are welcome but need to leave after their sitting. See *Sibling Policy* in the *Policies* section of this Handbook

KOA Camp-Out

The KOA Camp-out is held the weekend after Graduation in June and all families are enthusiastically invited to attend. Information about the camp-out will be posted early in the second semester. This occasion is extremely informal and fun for all. Families bring bikes, trikes and skates; swimming is usually a favorite activity and we have a bountiful potluck on Saturday night.

Gifts for Teachers

Gifts are traditionally given to the staff for their birthdays, before the Winter Holiday break and at Graduation. Families bring many different kinds of gifts, such as greeting cards, handmade artwork or purchased items.

At the beginning of the school year, the Representatives **may** survey the membership on the suitability of collecting a small cash donation from each family to go toward the purchase of additional gifts for the Staff from the whole membership.

Some graduating families wish to make a lasting impression at the end of the school year by combining funds and purchasing something to enhance the Co-op program. Past graduation gifts include a new computer, monitor and accessories for the school office. Contribution to this gift fund is not mandatory. Please see your Representative for more information.

DISCIPLINE

“Discipline is the slow, bit by bit, time consuming task of helping children see the sense in acting a certain way.”²

We believe that discipline puts the adult in the role of advisor and helper. The Staff is experienced in recognizing age-appropriate behavior, personality differences, lengths of attention span and signs of fatigue or over stimulation. We are ready to save the child from mistakes, which will harm physically or emotionally, but are also willing to let the child make the mistake, which will enable him or her to grow. Some behaviors, such as hitting, biting and pushing, seem extreme and are upsetting to parents. In many instances, these behaviors are age-appropriate reactions that the children must learn to control. For more information about helping children, see the separate handout titled *Things You Always Wanted to Know About How to Manage the Children but Couldn't Find in the Handbook*.

Every child will be treated with dignity. Methods, which may lead to loss of self-respect, will not be used. **No corporal punishment shall be inflicted.**

Discipline procedures include:

1. Problem solving through conflict resolution.
2. “Time-out.” A child hurting another child or causing excessive disruption will be removed from group activity. The child will be placed on a chair, in view of the Staff, for 2 to 5 minutes, according to the age of the child.
3. In the event that “time out” is not effective, the parent will be called for a conference or to suspend the child for the day. The Director will contact the parent(s) of a harmed child to share pertinent information and concerns.
4. Continued behavior over a longer period of time will necessitate a parent conference, where the needs of the child and the group will be evaluated. Also see the following topics titled *Physical Causes for Behavioral Difficulties and Social, Emotional or Behavioral Difficulties*.

Parents should realize that not all programs are right for all children. Pacifica Nursery School, Inc. reserves the right to terminate enrollment if it is in the best interest of the child or the school. See *Due Process for Termination* in the *Enrollment* section of this Handbook.

² Dr. James Hymes

CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

FOOD ALLERGIES, SERIOUS MEDICAL CONDITIONS, OR DIETARY RESTRICTIONS

1. In the case of allergies or other serious medical conditions:
 - a) The parent is to provide a note from the child's physician describing the child's specific food allergy(s) or medical condition (e.g. asthma, epilepsy) and describing a plan of action to be taken in case of emergency. The nursery school can provide a form detailing the information we need to have in case of emergency.
 - b) A copy of emergency information is to be placed in the child's file and in the first aid box.
 - c) If the allergy or medical condition is potentially life-threatening, the parent must supply any emergency medication and make sure outdated medication is replaced. Parents must also sign release forms in order for staff members to administer medication. Medications and instructions should be clearly marked with the child's name and stored in the First Aid cabinet.
 - d) If the parent feels that the child requires a special food diet or items not included on the daily food menu (e.g. soy or rice milk to replace cow's milk), it is the parent's responsibility to provide that food item on a daily basis. This can be done either by
 - i) Sending a complete snack in a box or bag each day, or by
 - ii) Storing the food in the kitchen. Food items must be clearly marked with the child's name and freshness expiration date. The parent will be responsible for checking, maintaining and discarding foods.
2. In the case of religious or dietary beliefs, if the parent feels that his/her child requires a special food diet or item not included in the daily food menu, or requires simple substitution or deletion of a food item normally provided by the school, it is the parent's responsibility to provide that food item on a daily basis. The food shall be maintained as in "1d" above.

NOTE: "Special Foods" are defined as a food deleted or added to the child's snack for reason of allergy, religious beliefs, or family dietary beliefs. No substitutions or deletions will be made for simple food preference.
3. The parent must inform the child of their special dietary needs. No child shall be enrolled or retained in the school program without an understanding by the child of his/her special dietary requirements.
4. The child's name will be posted on the allergy list along with the food items in question and the appropriate action to be taken with respect to these foods.
5. Parents or other workers who have life-threatening allergies or other medical conditions should also inform the staff and, if necessary, keep emergency medical supplies and information on hand.

PHYSICAL CAUSES FOR BEHAVIORAL DIFFICULTIES

Some children may be challenged by diet, food intolerance, or environmental allergies, which may contribute to behavioral or social difficulties exhibited at nursery school. In addition to consulting with appropriate professionals, you may consider:

1. Cleaning up of child's diet:
 - a. Eliminate high sugar foods.
 - b. Eliminate food additives and colorings.
 - c. Eliminate highly processed "junk" foods.
2. Cleaning up of child's environment:
 - a. Avoid contact with molds, dust and animal dander.
 - b. Protect from inhalants, chemicals, tobacco smoke and other household pollutants.

Following some or all of these recommendations may seem overwhelming at first, but in the end could save much turmoil and frustration. A great many children improve significantly, even dramatically, when a holistic approach is taken.

SOCIAL, EMOTIONAL, OR BEHAVIORAL DIFFICULTIES

Working with a child who has special social, emotional or behavioral needs requires an open dialogue between the parents, teachers and when necessary, the Board, in order to insure a positive environment for everyone at the nursery school.

Risky Behavior

The following are some (but not all) behaviors, which seem to put the school and children at risk:

1. Child is dangerous to self or others.
2. Child is destructive to property.
3. Child is unable to, or unwilling to, honor the boundaries of the school (climbs over the fence or will not stay out of closed or "off limit" areas).
4. If the behaviors listed above occur, the Director or Teachers will take immediate action to prevent further danger:
5. Child continues to challenge authority
6. Child needs continued re-direction of behavior. The child is unable to stay focused, needs frequent adult intervention or is frequently disruptive.
7. Child is belligerent or aggressive toward children and/or Staff.
8. Child can't use the toilet themselves.
9. Child appears to be overly withdrawn or depressed.

Addressing Risky Behavior

If any of the listed behaviors occur repeatedly, the Director or Teachers may first:

1. Identify the problem and document instances directly pertaining to the behavior.
2. Meet with the Staff and/or parent(s) to discuss any possible on-site interventions.
3. Document and begin work on a plan of remediation.

If the behavior continues after one month of remediation, the Director and possibly the Staff will ask the parent(s) to participate in a conference to discuss and document the problem and ways to alleviate the situation:

1. Try to define the problem and its underlying causes, such as lack of skill or extenuating circumstances.
2. Define interventions to promote positive behavior at the school and home setting.
3. Define a time limit for remediation.
4. Define the consequences for school and home setting when the child is unable or unwilling to comply.
5. Parents may be notified that their child's behavioral problem and the school's chosen method of intervention will be discussed with other member-teachers so as to maximize the positive intervention in the school setting.

In the interim, to effect a positive change in the child's behavior parents may also be asked to participate in the following ways (this is a partial list of interventions) until such time as the child is able to more appropriately manage themselves in the school setting:

1. Parents may be requested to be present each day that the child attends to more closely monitor, support and direct the child's behavior.
2. Parent may be asked to participate less.
3. Parents may be asked to be "on call" to come to assist or remove their child from school when their child exhibits multiple behavioral disruptions or behavioral distress.
4. The child's number of days of attendance may be restricted until such time as the child is able to be more self-regulatory. (See "Selecting the Number of Days Your Child Will Attend Nursery School" in the beginning of this section).
5. Parents may be asked to meet with the Director to review the progress of the remediation/intervention process.
6. Parents may ask to seek professional consultation.

Behaviorally challenging children can be detrimental to both themselves and others, if the school and the parents lack sufficient means to intervene on the child's behalf or the parents are unwilling to comply with any of the above requests. In the event that a child, after attempted remediation, poses a threat to the wellbeing of another child, children, parent or teacher, the parent(s) of the child posing the threat will be asked to withdraw their child from school. See *Due Process for Termination* in the *Enrollment* section of this Handbook.

Due Process

Before any family is asked to seek professional help or withdraw their child from school due to the child's behavior due process will be followed:

1. The child's behavior before and throughout remediation will be documented and evaluated by the Director and/or Staff.
2. There will be at least two meetings with the Director and the parent(s) to discuss and document a plan for remediation and the subsequent progress of the child.
3. If the Staff does not feel the solutions are effective they will submit their concerns to the Executive Board. If the Executive Board feels the Staff have sufficient cause then:
4. A meeting will then take place between the Executive Board and the parents for discussion. However, the Director and Executive Board will have final say.
5. Parents will be notified by letter of the final decision or provisions for continued enrollment.
6. In the case of termination of membership, the Board will inform the regional council of CCPNS (California Council of Parent Participatory Nursery Schools) of the steps taken to remediate the situation and the ultimate cause for termination.

Parents' Responsibilities

All parents and care givers working at the nursery school can help children who are having difficulty fully participating in our program by:

1. Discussing at seminar observed behaviors of their own or other children, which may need assistance from the teaching staff and other parents.
2. Discussing with your Representative any issues you are not comfortable with.
3. Following teacher's recommendations for skills and/or strategies for helping children at nursery school, or asking teachers for help/intervention with children.
4. Attending Seminar meetings to strengthen parenting skills useful with all children.
5. Keeping in mind that we are striving to care lovingly and to build self esteem for the children and therefore:
6. Practice discipline (teaching) not punishment.
7. Phrase comments of observed behaviors such that you do not gossip or pass judgment.
8. Teach children logical consequences for their actions.
9. Praise desired behaviors and improvements in all children.

SCHOOL COMMUNICATIONS

COMMUNICATION FOLDERS

Communication folders are used to correspond with the membership. The folders are filed by the **child's** last name in boxes near the sign-in area. Check your folder daily for any correspondence so that you will stay informed of what is going on at the nursery school. If you don't wish to receive solicitations (catalogs, etc.) contact the Vice President. A sticker will be placed on your folder to indicate your request.

WORK SCHEDULE

You will receive a work schedule every month, which will indicate your assigned work area for each week and your EPOD day. Your assignment will rotate through seven work areas. A list of Workers-for-Donation is located at the bottom of this schedule. Workers bringing infants are indicated with an asterisk next to their names. This schedule is prepared by the AM and PM Schedulers. Please contact your scheduler if you wish to be added to the Worker-for-Donation list or if you have a regularly scheduled substitute.

PROGRAM CURRICULUM

You will receive a program curriculum once every five weeks or so, which will indicate the activities planned for each area of the school for each day (though changes often occur). The curriculum takes a theme approach, each theme lasting two to three weeks. Details of the activities will be discussed in seminar. It is a good idea to compare your work schedule with the curriculum before coming to school on your workday so that you can be prepared for the activity you will be supervising. Also, if you cannot work on that day you can then tell your replacement what will be happening.

The curriculum often includes a list of materials that are necessary for you to bring from home, so be sure to read it carefully when you receive it.

ROSTER

All members are listed in alphabetical order within their sessions. Updates will periodically be made to the roster and distributed to the membership. The roster is prepared by the 1st Vice President. It is to be used for **nursery school business only**.

NEWSLETTER

You will receive a monthly newsletter via email telling you the general news of the nursery school. If you would like to add items, contact the Newsletter Editor. Deadlines will be announced.

Anyone placing an ad in the newsletter will be charged \$10 per newsletter.

SCHOLASTIC BOOKS

You will receive book order forms from the SCHOLASTIC BOOK CLUB about once a month. You are under no obligation to order. If you order, submit the completed form with a check

written to the publisher (i.e. Scholastic, Trumpet Club, etc.) or online per emailed instructions sent by the Scholastic Book Club Coordinator. Orders are returned in approximately three weeks.

The nursery school will assist you with correspondence with the publisher for returns or refunds, but is not responsible for money collected.

When you order books, the school is awarded a combination of bonuses including free books and points with which we can select books for our library.

BULLETIN BOARDS

There are bulletin boards on both sides of the entrance hall. Announcements, sign-ups, and meeting changes are posted there or on the front doors regularly, so be sure to read the boards when you are at school.

Advertising for personal use is not allowed on the school bulletin board, please use the community board.

EMAIL NOTIFICATION

When there is an announcement, which must be delivered to all members in a timely manner, you will receive an email from a pertinent member of the school.

YAHOO GROUPS:

Yahoo groups is set up for group communication among members. Emails may be sent out the group regarding Co-op business only, specifically soliciting trades or coverage of workdays/EPOD, or communication from the board. Other uses pertaining to special events, school jobs, teacher requests, or Field trips are appropriate. **Please do not use the group email address for advertisement or sharing of personal interest not directly related to the school.**

The Yahoo! Groups website for our group contains many useful files that can be accessed by any member for reference or download (work schedules, applications, etc), and can also be used for photo sharing among members for pictures of Co-op events.

SCHOOL FORMS

All forms referred to in this Handbook are on file in the back of the boxes containing the communication folders and available on the website and/or Yahoo! Groups. The Vice-President may ask returning families to complete the same forms every year, as the information may need to be updated annually.

SCHOOL CALENDAR

A calendar for the whole year showing holidays, meetings, fund-raisers, work parties, etc. will be distributed in August. Some dates will be subject to change.

COPIER USE

The copier is in the Quiet Room. It is available to members for small copying jobs at 10 cents per copy. Please put the money in the can next to the machine, or pay the Treasurer.

COMMUNITY BOARD

The community board is available to those wishing to advertise an event, service, group, etc. Any documents added to the board shall be submitted to the Board and Director for approval prior to posting.

COMPUTER USE

The computer at the Director's desk in the Quiet Room is to be used by the Director, Teacher and Board for school purposes only. If for any reason the Director gives a member permission of use, that member must only use the computer as intended.

POLITICIANS AT SCHOOL EVENTS

We are a non-profit organization and cannot legally support any politician or political views. Any politicians invited to a school event needs to be cleared through the Board first.

SCHOOL PHONES

The school phones should be limited to school business and emergencies. Do not use the phone for personal calls unless absolutely necessary. Please answer the phone when you are nearest to it and remember to identify the school and yourself: "Hello, Pacifica Co-op Nursery School. This is (your name)." Please do not give out any information to individuals from companies calling to "verify" school address, name of teachers, etc. We have experienced problems in the past from companies charging the school for ads placed based just on "verifying" the school address. If you receive one of these calls, please just take a message and give it to one of the teachers or board members.

Emergency Phone Contact

In the event of an earthquake, out-of-state phone lines are open much sooner than in-state lines.

Pacifica Nursery School, Inc. has established an emergency out-of-state phone contact number.

If an earthquake happens during school hours, a teacher would call this number, as soon as she can, with a list of the children and parents at the school and their status. Families can then call this number for information about their family members at school.

This number is (435) 656-5096. You and your partner should carry this number with you at all times. Please copy it down now, program it into your phone, and put it in your purse or wallet.

SCHOOL GOVERNANCE

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Board of Directors consists of the Executive Board including the President, Vice President, Second Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer. The full Board also includes AM and PM session Representatives.

The main purpose of the Board is to act as the governing body of the school. The duties of the officers are listed in the By-laws of the Nursery School.

BOARD MEETINGS

The Board of Directors of the nursery school will meet once a month to discuss the administration, operations and maintenance of the school. The Director, Bookkeeper, and Representatives also attend regularly. The Board meetings will be held monthly at a place to be chosen by the Board.

The general membership is encouraged to attend Board meetings during the year. The agenda can be found posted on the bulletin board at the school entrance before the meeting. Although the general membership does not vote at Board meetings the opinions and ideas expressed lay the foundation for healthy and broad-minded directives in the best interests of the school

Minutes of each meeting will be posted following Board approval

CLOSED BOARD MEETINGS

Upon occasion, closed Board meetings are held in order to discuss confidential matters such as problems with employees, a member's delinquency in tuition, a child's severe behavior problem, etc.

These closed Board meetings are attended by the Executive Board only. The Director, Teachers and/or Bookkeeper may be invited to attend.

Any member of the school can ask for a closed board meeting regarding an issue with any other member, including a board member. You may approach your representative first, but this is not necessary. Any member of the executive board can call for a closed board meeting after they have been contacted and asked to do so.

ELECTIONS

The members of the Board of Directors hold 12-month terms and are elected at the Communication meeting in May. Any member is eligible to run for office.

JOB DESCRIPTIONS

Job Description: Director of Education

- The main duty of the Director shall be to facilitate the teaching of the children. The Director will also coach the parents in how to help the children learn by letting them observe teaching

methods, participate in the program, and through the instructions given through daily seminar meetings.

- The Director shall direct, plan and coordinate each session in conjunction with the Teachers.
- The Director will be held accountable for the operation of the school to the Board of Directors.
- The Director shall supervise all teaching done in the school by the Member-Workers and by the Teachers so as to give maximum benefit to the children.
- The Director shall work from 8:30 AM to 4:00 PM. This gives the Director and the Teachers 15 minutes before the start of each session for preparation and planning. The Director shall be punctual. The Director shall remain at the school until the last child under her care has been picked up at the end of each session.
- The Director shall work with the Orientation Committee.
- The Director shall follow the outline in the *Pacifica Nursery School By-Laws*.
- The Director is urged to attend the Board of Directors meetings regularly. The Director shall attend "closed" Board meetings only by special request.
- The Director shall be responsible for maintaining an instructional instrument, which records a child's needs and developments. The Director shall meet with each parent twice yearly to review that child's state of affairs. The Director shall be responsible for summarizing the instructional instruments before reporting the information to the parents.
- The Director shall contact the parent in case of an emergency. If the child has an injury, which is minor enough for him/her to stay at school, the injury shall be recorded on an attendance sheet. The Director shall inform the parent of the event when the child is picked up or he/she shall phone parent at a later time that day and explain the injury.
- The Director should attend and participate in necessary committee meetings as requested by the President of the Board. The Director shall serve on the Scholarship Committee.
- The Director shall attend any Social Service meeting pertaining to any child in the Nursery School.
- The Director shall be responsible for reporting any needed repairs or necessary replacements needed to the maintenance committee. The Director will be reimbursed for any damage or destruction of any personal property (equipment or material) she has brought to school to perform her teaching duties.
- The Director will leave the school in an orderly fashion, in good order for the next session.
- In case any staff personnel problems arise that cannot be handled by the Director, the matter will be brought to a "closed" Board of Directors meeting.
- When a parent fails to fulfill his or her daily work responsibility it is the Director's responsibility to directly communicate with that parent and if that is ineffective, to contact the appropriate representative who will contact the Board of Directors.
- The Director shall assist the Board in interviewing and hiring the Teachers for each session.

- The Director shall present written curriculum sheets for the forthcoming month to the parents of nursery school children.
- The Director shall be allowed 10 sick sessions per year. Days may be arranged by the Board for the Teachers for attendance at certain workshops or conventions, etc. that are related to the education of pre-school children.
- The Director should not be responsible for transporting children in his/her car on field trips.
- The Director is not required to participate in fundraisers but will offer support to the fundraising chair.
- The Director shall meet with the Teachers once a month (or as needed) for curriculum planning.
- The Director shall be responsible for the school, for compliance with regulations; for communications with the licensing agency; and shall have the authority to acknowledge receipt of deficiency notices and to correct deficiencies that constitute immediate threats to children's health and safety. When temporarily away from the school, the Director shall have the authority to delegate his/her responsibility to a qualified substitute, i.e. a Teacher.

Job Description: Teacher

- Teachers shall be at school from 8:15 AM - 12:15 PM for the morning session and from 12:15 noon – 4:15PM for the afternoon session.
- Teachers shall attend all Communication Meetings except the Spring fundraiser meeting and work with the Director in preparing information for these meetings or act as a resource person.
- Teachers shall assume such teaching preparation and planning duties as agreed upon by the Director and her/himself.
- Teachers shall serve as a substitute for the Director as necessary.
- In case of illness, the Teacher shall contact their co-teacher and the Board to find a replacement and then notify the Director.
- Teachers shall be responsible for keeping and recording attendance sheets and gives copies of these documents to the Bookkeeper.
- Teachers shall be responsible for preparing the forms for, monitoring the execution of, and compiling the information of the child development assessment instruments done twice yearly. The Teacher shall be responsible for conducting make-ups of these instruments upon request.
- Teachers' sick pay will be based on sessions worked per year. Days may be arranged (by the Board) for the Teacher to attend workshops or conventions, etc. that are related to the education of preschool children.
- Teachers shall be reimbursed for damage or destruction of any personal property (equipment or property) that has been brought to school to perform his/her teaching duties.
- Teachers should not be responsible for transporting children in his/her car on field trips.

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- Teachers will meet with the Director once a month (or as needed) for curriculum planning.
- Teachers are not required to participate in fund-raisers unless they have a child enrolled in the school.
- Teachers shall be responsible for any children remaining at school from the morning session to the afternoon session (a 1-hour period).