

The Children's Community School

Employment Benefits for 2023-24

Updated 10/10/23

This document describes employment benefits at the Children's Community School and may be considered a part of the staff handbook. This document is public.

Our goal is to make CCS a long-term professional home for quality early childhood educators and professionals. To that end, we strive to provide staff with the best compensation and benefits we can afford.

Health Benefits

All staff members working at least 18 hours per week may opt in to medical and dental insurance plans, in which employee premiums are fully paid by the school. Additionally, CCS will cover 25% of premiums for dependents of insured staff (spouses, children, domestic partners, etc.).

New employees are eligible for coverage after 30 days of employment. The application for benefits must be completed two weeks prior to benefits beginning. See the business manager for details.

Note: CCS's insurance plan is renewed annually on May 1, at which time benefits and costs may change. Any changes will be communicated in advance, and employees will have the opportunity to renew or opt out at this time.

Hourly employees must work a minimum average of 18 hours per week in order to participate in health benefits. Hourly employees choosing not to work in the summer will not be eligible for health benefits during their absence.

Paid Time Off Benefits

All contracted staff members receive Paid Time Off (PTO). PTO provides employees with flexible paid time off that can be used for vacation, personal or family illness, doctor appointments, school, volunteerism, and other activities of the employee's choice. Our goal is to reduce unscheduled absences and the need for supervisory oversight.

Accrued PTO

Employees accrue PTO at a rate of one (1) hour of PTO for every thirty-two (32) hours worked. For most employees this is the equivalent of about 7.2 paid days off per year. Staff accrue PTO every time they work, based on hours clocked using the timeclock. PTO is not accrued during paid or unpaid time off, vacations, or leaves of absence.

Our PTO plan resets on August 15th of each year, and unused PTO is carried over. There is a 80-hour cap on the amount of PTO an employee can accrue. The cap is intended to encourage employees to use PTO and allows CCS to manage its financial obligations. Once the cap is

reached, employees cannot accrue additional PTO until they use PTO and drop below the cap, at which point they will begin accruing PTO again.

Awarded PTO

Seniority: Returning staff are awarded additional PTO hours at the start of each contract year, equivalent to 10% of the contract year's weekly hours for every previous year worked at CCS. (For example, an employee working 40hr/wk starting their second year at CCS would receive an extra 4 hours PTO—10% of 40hr X 1 previous year).

Summer PTO: All teachers and administrators who work for the entirety of the summer program (between the last day of the school year and the first day of teacher orientation) receive an extra two weeks of PTO for use specifically in the summer. Teachers and administrators must schedule the use of Summer PTO long enough in advance to ensure adequate coverage, and must coordinate with their teammates to not use Summer PTO at the same time. In some cases, with the advance approval of the director, Summer PTO may be used before the summer begins or after summer ends.

Using PTO

All absences are automatically considered PTO if the employee has a PTO balance available. Awarded PTO will be applied first, and Accrued PTO will be applied second. An employee does not have to notify anyone that a planned or unplanned absence is intended to use PTO.

Unpaid Time Off

If an employee does not have sufficient PTO available to cover the time off they take, time off in excess of the PTO balance will be unpaid time off. For salaried staff, the employee's base salary will be reduced according to their equivalent hourly wage to account for unpaid time off in a given pay period.

Unused PTO

At the end of employment, departing employees will be paid the balance of their unused PTO at their hourly rate (or equivalent hourly rate, for salaried employees), provided they have served to the end of their contracted term; have given at least 60 days notice of departure; and have no outstanding debts to the school.

PTO and Jury Duty

All staff receive one paid day off for the first day of jury duty. Proof of jury duty attendance must be submitted to the business manager. For jury duty lasting longer than one day, PTO balance will be used. Contact the business manager with any questions or concerns.

PTO and Snow Days

On days when CCS is closed due to weather, all staff will be paid according to their normally scheduled hours. See “Snow Days” in the Staff Handbook for more information on closures for weather.

PTO and COVID

Refer to the CCS COVID Handbook.

Medical/Disability/Family/Parental Leave

The leave policy applies to staff members who

- Are sick or injured, to the degree that they cannot work (with a confirming note from a medical professional—see below). “Sick” explicitly includes mental health conditions.
- Have a sick or injured family member who needs care
- Have a new child (whether birthed, adopted, or fostered)

Contracted staff members who have been employed for at least one calendar year are entitled to paid leave for up to six weeks for one qualifying circumstance.

- Teachers may, with the written approval of the director, divide their six calendar weeks into up to two chunks, each chunk lasting no less than one week
- Non-teaching staff (e.g. office staff) may, with the written approval of the director, take non-continuous or part-day time off (for instance, twelve weeks part time)
- This benefit may not be used by any staff member more than once in any 12 month period
- Staff members whose work hours have changed within the last 12 months will receive pay during the term of leave proportional to their average weekly schedule in the 12 month period.

All contracted staff are entitled to unpaid leave for up to 12 continuous months, with a guarantee of a comparable job on return if such a position is available (note that particular positions are especially difficult to arrange in the middle of a school year).

- For salaried full-time staff, the 12 month period INCLUDES the six weeks of paid leave
- Due to the nature of enrollment and staffing, we cannot guarantee a teacher the same job (the same classroom, the same teaching team) upon return, but we will guarantee a similar job, at the same pay
- This benefit may not be used by any staff member more than once in any 24 month period

The staff member must give CCS administration a minimum of 2 weeks’ notice before returning to work. The administration requests that a staff member on leave communicate periodically about their needs and expected return date.

During both paid and unpaid leave, CCS will continue the staff member’s health insurance benefits at the same level.

Documentation requirements for medical leave

When an employee takes a leave for medical reasons (including mental health reasons), CCS requires a letter from a doctor (or, if relevant, a certified mental health professional) indicating:

- That the employee is temporarily too unwell to perform the duties described in the job description
- The length of leave they recommend
- Any accommodations that might be necessary on the employee's return, and for how long those accommodations might be necessary

When an employee is taking a paid leave for medical reasons, CCS cannot release the pay for that time until the doctor's note is received. Upon receipt of the doctor's note, any pay for the leave that had been withheld will be added to the paycheck for the next pay period.

Enrollment and Tuition Benefits

The children of staff members are guaranteed admission to CCS if there is space for them. To use this benefit, the staff member must inform the administration of their intent to enroll their child long enough in advance that there are spaces available.

Staff who work at least 30 hours per week and have worked at CCS for at least one year receive a 50% discount on tuition per family (with a maximum discount per year per family of the tuition of one child enrolled full time). Staff who have been employed for less than 12 months and staff who work less than 30 hours per week receive a 25% discount. Staff tuition discount cannot be combined with other tuition assistance programs, such as CCIS.

Vacation Care

On many days when CCS is closed (for vacation or professional development) we operate a "Vacation Care" program for children. Eligible children of staff may make use of the program for free, provided they arrange to participate long enough in advance that space is available.

Retirement/401(k)

CCS offers the option of participating in a 401(k) retirement plan. Staff are entitled to matching contributions from CCS of up to 1% of each paycheck. Staff may begin participating in the 401(k) plan after 90 days of employment. See business manager for details.

Use of Space

Employees may make use of CCS's space for many kinds of events for free. Employees will be given generous rental rates for events that are regular or ongoing (e.g. a weekly class); charging money (e.g. a fundraiser or class); or for an organization that would pay rent for events elsewhere. All events must be scheduled with the business manager; see the business manager for more details.

Bring-Your-Child-to-Work Benefit

Staff with children older or younger than the age CCS serves may bring their children to work. We feel this is an important benefit to offer working parents in order to make long-term employment at CCS sustainable. We also recognize that the presence of extra children can be an imposition on other staff. We seek to balance the needs of all staff and children in creating the bring-your-child-to-work policies.

CCS will take reasonable measures to accommodate these children at school, as long as the presence of the children does not compromise our care for enrolled children and does not compromise the ability of the staff member to perform their job as described in their job description. Following are the expectations when a child above CCS age spends time at school. If these expectations are not followed, the staff member may not be able to continue to bring their child to work.

- Expectations of the child
 - When in classrooms, they will take the role of observers or helpers
 - They do not make more work for teachers, and do not distract teachers from their work
 - They do not distract other children from participation in school activities
 - They may choose to participate in classroom activities
 - They may come and go from classrooms that their parent has discussed with those teachers, and may come and go from other spaces (common room, library, office, etc.) without other staff's approval or knowledge
- Expectations of the parent/staff member
 - They will give administrators and teachers whose classrooms the child might visit advanced notice of the child's presence and schedule, and ask for teachers' approval to have the child in their classroom
 - They will discuss with their child in advance expectations for behavior
 - They will be ready to leave their position that day if their child need supervision or support, and will have discussed this possibility with teammates
- Expectations of teachers in whose classroom the child is spending time
 - They will be kind, welcoming, and sensitive to the child and their parent, as they would be with any other family in our school community
 - They will be communicative and clear with the child when in their classroom
 - They will make expectations and boundaries clear to the child when in their classroom
 - They will make reasonable accommodations for the child's participation in classroom activities, and allow the child to take the role of helper when possible
 - They will NOT be expected to be the child's supervisor or teacher, to monitor the child's whereabouts, or to take any action that compromises the care and teaching of the children in their class
 - If there are any problems or concerns, they will discuss them kindly with the child's parent and with directors
- Expectations of directors

- They will check in regularly with the parent and with any affected teaching teams to make sure all needs are being met, and problem solve around any concerns
- If the presence of the child repeatedly interferes with any staff member's ability to do their job, directors will work with the parent to find other care solutions

Professional Development and Education Benefits

In-House PD

CCS provides extensive professional development to staff throughout the school year during staff meetings, orientation, etc., during which staff is paid for their time. Much of that PD is created/provided in-house; some of it is provided by outside consultants. PD will include a minimum of 6 hours per year of Pennsylvania-sanctioned professional development hours through the Keystone Stars Registry (aka "PQAS").

Individual PD

The following benefits are all contingent upon available budget and schedule, and require advanced approval from the director and business manager. Any individualized PD funded by CCS must be directly related to the employee's job description. Any employee receiving outside individual PD is asked to present some of their learning to the rest of the staff. These benefits may not be used by any employee in the last three months of their employment with the school.

- **CCS-Funded PD for Individuals:** CCS has limited funds (about 10% of our total PD budget) to pay for or offset the cost of individual staff's professional development—attending conferences or workshops, for instance, or taking classes.
- **Extra Paid Time Off for PD:** In addition to the paid time off described above, staff may take two days per year in order to attend professional development (such as a conference or a class) that occurs during work hours.
- **Travel Benefit for PD:** If a staff member travels to another city (on a vacation, for instance), they may receive an \$80 stipend for spending a minimum of 3 hours observing at a high quality early childhood program during their trip. The stipend may be received once per school year by any staff member, and will be paid after the staff member presents what they learned to other staff. The administration maintains a [list of known high-quality programs](#); staff may also visit other sites not on the list, with advance approval from the director. Administrators will also help coordinate visits to other programs upon request.