

Lawrence Community Nursery School Parent Handbook

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Introduction

Welcome to The Little Red Schoolhouse! You are now part of a unique preschool, which is sustained and developed through the cooperative efforts of the parents. You will share the satisfaction of planning and working to create an enriching and happy environment where children can learn and grow. By being a part of your children's preschool experience, you are afforded the opportunity to know your children's playmates, activities, and experience time with them in the classroom. By observing a skilled teacher interacting with your child, you will gain insights and skills that will carry over into your family life. This cooperative effort is also the basis for deep friendships among member families and staff.

Mission

The Lawrence Community Nursery School is the second oldest cooperative preschool in the United States. It was founded in 1948 by a group of parents committed to providing the community with a cooperative interracial nursery school, and continues to provide Lawrence with a preschool education that is cooperative, interracial, low cost, diverse, and inclusive. LCNS will not discriminate based on race, religion, gender identity, or sexual orientation.

LCNS is a play-based preschool where children learn about the world through developmentally appropriate hands-on activities. The main emphasis of our program is social/emotional development—the process of learning to communicate and interact positively and effectively with adults and peers. LCNS utilizes Positive Behavior Supports (PBS) as a framework for teaching the skills children need to navigate peer interactions. Our cooperative atmosphere strengthens connections within the teachers and families, and lends cohesion to all parts of the child's life. LCNS also facilitates the acquisition of whole concepts, rather than isolated skills. We focus on receptive and expressive language, creativity, dramatic and constructive play, and large and small motor development. Daily activities engage children through language, art, sensory play, math, science, and knowledge of the world around us. Our goal is to provide a preschool education that:

- Fosters social-emotional development of all students, allowing children to share their feelings, and validating those feelings in an atmosphere of trust and respect.
- Models, teaches, and practices empathy and respect in all interactions
- Provides tools for peer interactions and redirection to preferred actions
- Upholds every person's right to autonomy, through giving tools to speak up for one's own autonomy, modeling and teaching consent.
- Includes parents in all aspects of their student's education, and provide peaceful parenting tools to be used at school and home
- Works together with our community of families to provide an environment where people of all religions, races, sexual orientations, and gender identities are respected and diversity is celebrated.
- Teaches our children how to stand up for what they believe in
- Takes care of our environment through gardening, recycling, and using sustainable items.

History

The Lawrence League for the Practice of Democracy and the Oread Society of Friends provided much of the initial financial support for the school. During the early years, the school met in various churches, but in 1956 we were able to purchase the present building at 645 Alabama. Since that time, dedicated members have made substantial improvements to the building and grounds. Fundraising efforts, tuition payments and the cooperation of parents have enabled us to maintain a school well equipped to meet the needs of the children.

Philosophy of Education

The main emphasis of the preschool program at LCNS is social/emotional development—the process of learning to communicate and interact positively and effectively with adults and peers. LCNS utilizes Positive Behavior Supports (PBS) as a framework for teaching the skills children need to navigate peer interactions and to redirect to a preferred skill. For example, to redirect a child who is running in the classroom, a teacher might say, “Please use your walking feet so you and your friends will be safe in our school.” This gives a rationale and supplies the new skill we want to see. During class, teachers will intervene in child interactions to teach the new skills needed and teach children to come up with solutions to their problems. Another example would be if two children want to play with the same toy. Teachers will help children share their feelings about it, thus validating them. Then

teachers can help children learn the language needed to seek a solution.

Our program stresses receptive and expressive language, creativity, dramatic and constructive play, large and small motor development, and knowledge of the world around us. We stress the acquisition of whole concepts rather than isolated skills. These skills are crucial for success in kindergarten and beyond.

The teachers carry out this philosophy through a variety of experiences and activities—structured and unstructured time, indoor and outdoor play, and individual and group interactions. Structured time, such as circle time and centers, compliments unstructured time in which the children are free to choose an activity such as painting, playdough, blocks, and dramatic play. There is time for indoor play, such as tactile stimulation and school-readiness activities as well as large gross motor skill development such as outside swinging, climbing, and riding tricycles. Individual games and activities that develop fine motor skills are balanced by group singing and creative movement that develop listening skills. Children learn about themselves and others through play and exposure to varied opportunities for self-expression.

Notes for Families New to LCNS

The first break from home to school should be a gradual one. If your child's first days at the co-op indicate their need for your presence, you may stay with them until the need diminishes. Additionally, teachers can assist you in creating a routine for drop off and/or pick up times that puts your child at ease and sets them up for a successful day.

LCNS Parent Responsibilities

1. **Parent Classroom Participation:** The primary requirement of parents at LCNS is to participate in the classroom as an assistant to the teachers for the required number of days each semester, based on enrollment.
2. **Weekend Cleaning/Lawn Maintenance Day:** Each family is responsible for helping to clean the school one weekend each semester. This can be done at any time during the weekend and requires about 2 hours. During the summer session, families may sign up to do lawn maintenance. Members of the Administrative Board are not assigned a cleaning weekend, but do work together one weekend to prepare the school for the year before the start of the fall semester.
3. **Fall & Spring Work Days:** Once each semester there is an all-school work day. Each family is required to send one parent to work for two hours on his day (or two adults for 1 hour each). This is the day when much of the facility upkeep including painting, gardening, etc. is done.
4. **Committee Work:** Each family serves on one committee. Ideally families are assigned to a committee of their choice. Some examples include fundraising committees, lawn maintenance, teacher support committee, etc. As an alternative, parents may be elected to the administrative board.
5. **Participation in Fundraising:** When the school holds a fundraiser, families are asked to participate in some way. They may be asked to work at the fundraiser, sell tickets, donate some baked goods, or something of that nature. This is typically two hours of work on the day of the event, with alternative setup/cleanup or baking assignments available as needed.
6. **Attend Mandatory Meetings:** These include orientation and general membership meetings (see Bylaws).

Parent Responsibility #1: Classroom Participation

For many parents, the classroom participation is one of the most enjoyable aspects of the co-op. It is a great way to be a part of your child's education and personal growth.

In general, parents will participate between five and ten days a semester, depending on how many days their child is enrolled. Parents choose their specific participation days at the beginning of each semester.

When parents participate, they come with their child to school for the day and serve as one of the classroom assistants at the school. Due to state regulations, siblings and other children cannot come with participating parents. The school director has made plans for the day and makes all teaching arrangements. Parents are simply required to work with all the children and act as a supervisory adult. On their participation day, parents bring and set up snacks for all the children in the school and clean the school at the end of the day. Parents can count on finishing their work at the same time the school day ends.

General Guidelines For Participating Parents

- Children pick up on how you feel about being at the school. Talking with them, playing their games, and listening to their stories in a positive, genuine and understanding way lets them know you like being with them.
- Always wait until after class to discuss any difficulties or questions you have with the children, unless it is a concern with health or an obvious danger to a child. In other words don't discuss problems with children in front of any children. Wait for a private moment with the teacher.
- Do your best to learn each child's name as quickly as possible—let them know you care about them.
- Respect the individuality of each child.
- Intervene with children who are disrupting activities or disturbing others, or bring any problems to the attention of one of the teachers.
- Have fun! Being a participating parent is what makes our school unique. If you have any special activities, crafts, games or adventures you would like to do on your day, we would be thrilled. We simply ask that you let us know ahead of time so we can plan accordingly.
- When you come for your participation day, do not be surprised if some of your child's recently acquired social skills vanish into thin air. This is usually

temporary, and will disappear once you and your child become comfortable in these new roles. You may find it helps to leave the guidance of your child to another adult whenever possible.

- Toilet accidents should be handled in a matter of fact way. Never scold or punish a child for an accident. Feel free to aid your own child in the potty on your participation day, but only teachers should help all other children with bathroom needs and changing clothes.
- Children respond best to respectful, courteous, affectionate, and firm treatment. They need to learn that rude, cruel, and discourteous behavior is not acceptable at school or anywhere in life. Corporal punishment is never employed at LCNS. Utilize positive language and frame things to focus on the strengths of the child. Give behavior specific praise to highlight the positive things the child does.
- Help the children to substitute verbal approaches for gross motor physical actions- "You can talk to John. You can tell him what you want instead of hitting him."
- Always walk over to a child to speak with them, bending or squatting to their level if possible (unless a situation is dangerous).
- Encourage children to help themselves (shoes, coat, clean up, etc.) Let them know you will be happy to help when you see them trying.
- Try to use positive direction (PBS)—here are a few examples of what to say:
 - "use walking feet" instead of "don't run"
 - "use your words" instead of "stop hitting"
 - "excuse me is a nice way to say that" instead of "don't push or move"
 - "blocks can go as high as your chin" instead of "don't stack the blocks too high"
- Help put on outdoor clothes.
- Make contact with as many children as possible. Rotate your attention among all of the children.
- When low on supplies, tell the teacher and write on the supply list.
- Be familiar with LCNS rules and discipline policy (see both in policy section).
- Remember to let the teacher know how you thought the day went.
- Remember your ideas are always welcome.
- Do not be offended if the teacher occasionally reverses a parental decision in order to treat all the children fairly with regard to toys, equipment, etc.

Snack Suggestions for Participating Parents

You are encouraged to bring nutritious food to be shared by all of the children. Your own ideas and cooking efforts are welcome! Again, check for food allergies. State Health Regulations require the snacks to include **at least one of the following**:

- (A) milk, milk product, or food made with milk;
- (B) fruit, vegetable, or full-strength fruit or vegetable juice;
- (C) meat;
- (D) peanut butter (if peanut butter is allowed the year you attend); or
- (E) bread or cereal products

Please don't be stressed about providing an appropriate snack. Simple snacks work as well as anything and are enjoyed by the children. Items such as raw fruits and veggies, dips such as hummus or yogurt, whole grain crackers, or fruit smoothies (we have a blender at school) are all things kids love and are simple to create. Review the lists below for additional ideas. Though we do not restrict foods with high fructose corn syrup and preservatives, it is strongly encouraged to provide a snack as whole as possible to ensure the highest possible nutrition content. On special days, such as birthdays, feel free to bring whatever delicious treat your child finds as their favorite. Please share great healthy snack ideas with our school community and if you ever have questions or concerns about snacks, don't hesitate to ask a teacher or the director.

If your child has a food allergy, you will be asked to place their name and allergy on the allergy list. If your child has a food preference, you will be asked to document this as well. We ask for differentiation in allergy and preference so any medical reaction is clear and we can keep children safe. Food preferences that are not allergies are also listed and parents are asked to make accommodations when it is simple to do so. For example, if only one item of four is restricted as a preference for a child, they will still have many items to choose for their nutritious snack. Parents may also provide alternative snacks for children with allergies and/or preferences. To clarify, an example of a food preference would be vegetarian, vegan, and dairy free. An example of a food allergy would be a physiological reaction to eating a food, such as peanuts, other nuts, dairy, etc.

If you intend to prepare a snack at school, bring the necessary ingredients from

home. While the cooking equipment is reasonably adequate, you may wish to check things out beforehand to make sure that all the utensils you will need are available at school. Be sure to check the day's activities with the teacher prior to cooking projects to make certain it's convenient.

It is a good idea to look at the snack calendar to see what other snacks have been brought around the time that you are participating in order to cut down on repeats. You can also get in touch with the other participating parent to coordinate your snacks.

What To Do On Your Parent Participation Day

Before your day:

- Sign up for your required number of days on the electronic school calendar on SignUp Genius.
- Please keep the school calendar and SignUp Genius updated with any participation changes.
- Plan a snack for your class size, plus some for adults is helpful
- Check the allergy sheet (to check for banned food that a child cannot eat). This is available on the school website under the Current Families tab.
- If possible, via SignUp Genius, Facebook, email, or by phone, contact the other participating parent to coordinate your snack.

Upon arrival:

- Arrive at 8:15am for the morning class or 12:45pm for the afternoon class.
- Wash your hands
- Check Allergy Sheet to see if you will need to add a snack alternative (located in the cabinet) for a child who cannot eat the day's snack.
- Record what the snack is for that day on the snack calendar posted on the kitchen cabinet.
- Check with the teachers about snacks and the day's activities.
- If the snack requires more extensive preparation, begin getting it ready.
- Empty out the dishwasher and return clean cups/dishes from the previous class to cupboards. Some people prefer to set the tables at snack time straight from the dishwasher. That is fine, but please check the dishwasher at the beginning of the class so if they aren't clean, there is time to clean them or find paper plates.

Outdoor play:

- Help supervise, make contact by initiating or joining in activities.
- Move around, and be vigilant for child safety at the gate and around the playground.

Circle time:

- Supervise the removal of coats as children come; help them hang coats in their cubbies.
- Join the circle to be introduced and participate in activities.
- Remember that because of licensing, only staff are allowed to take the children to the bathroom, except for your own child.
- Provide redirection of children as needed.

Activities:

- Teachers will assign you to a center activity.
- Help direct children to a center or redirect a child who has lost interest.
- Help teachers with transition to the next activity (cleaning up centers, directing children).

Snack Preparation (your child may help you or play downstairs):

- Finish snack preparation, wearing gloves
- Safety locks on cabinets and drawers are released by the magnets located on the refrigerator.
- Wash the tables, and follow the daily cleaning checklist located above the kitchen sink.
- Snacks can go on large snack platters in the cupboards. Keep the snack platters on the counters until after the students are seated. We then will walk around and ask what each child would like to eat.
- Put name tags and a cup, and plates on the tables.
 - Drinks should go into small pitchers and be placed on tables so that the children learn how to pour their drinks.
 - Have a parent or teacher at each table.
- Set the tables
 - Wash hands, and wear gloves
 - Set out a plate and a glass/cup and a nametag for each child, as spread out as possible.
 - Keep snack at the counters for gloved adults to service
- Tell the teachers when you're ready - children can go downstairs to announce snack time.
- Snack time preparation should take no longer than 20 minutes.

Snack:

- Help children to their chairs. Encourage them to join in the thankful song.
- Sit at a table (or nearby if we are social distancing); encourage small group language interaction.
- When the children are finished, remind them, "dishes in the dishwasher, food in the garbage."
- Move to circle time area
- Sit with children at circle; help to put on coats.
- If cleanup time is short, check with a teacher about starting the downstairs cleaning during circle time

Participation Day Cleaning Routine

- Follow the daily cleaning checklist located above the kitchen sink.
- Always write down needed supplies at the bottom of the checklist, though check the supply closet first.
- Double check that all jobs are done and school is tidy.
- Check with a teacher before you leave.

What To Do If You Can't Make Your Participation Day

In the event that a family is unable to participate on their scheduled day, the family is responsible for finding someone to cover it. Depending on how much time you have before your participation day, please follow the following procedures.

If Time Allows:

1. Arrange a swap with another attending family on your day via SignUp Genius, Facebook, email, or by phone.
2. Contact the Participation Chair and notify them of the swap or request help finding a replacement by email or by phone.
3. Update the school calendar and notify your teacher.

In Emergencies:

1. Call the school and email to the school director.
2. Contact the Participation Chair by email or by phone.

Here are some tips on what to do if you can't make LCNS participation requirements:

[Can't make my participation](#)

Parent Responsibility #2 - Weekend Cleaning

In addition to our daily cleanings, parents are also responsible for maintaining our school by participating in a more thorough cleaning over a weekend during the semester. Each semester, families will sign up for a cleaning weekend at the same time they sign up for their participation days via SignUp Genius.

You will need to contact the Facilities Director for a code to the key box located on the front gate. The front doors have a locking feature so that people inside can get out, but people outside cannot get in. If you have questions about how the locks work, please check with someone before your weekend, or just be sure to have the key with you if you go in and out during cleaning.

Weekend Cleaning

- School cleaning is divided by upstairs/downstairs.
- Check the weekend cleaning list for cleaning responsibilities. Checklists are found in the front hallway of the school, in the filing tray on top of the cubbies.
- Cleaning supplies are located in the cabinet under the sink and in the storage room in the basement.
- The storage closet key as well as the paper towel dispenser key is located on the nail besides the storage closet in the basement.
- The vacuum and attachments may be located upstairs by the refrigerator in the cleaning supply cabinet and/or in the basement storage room. If the machine is unfamiliar to you, check it out before school closes so that someone familiar with the machine may be available to demonstrate how to operate it, etc. Check the canister before using. Extra filters are kept in the upstairs cleaning supply cabinet.
- Make sure to record any needed supplies on the weekend checklist and return to the Facilities Director mailbox above the cubbies in the school entryway. Also make notes of anything broken or needing extra attention.
- Return all cleaning supplies to the cabinet or cleaning closet.
- Return key to key box outside.

Parent Responsibility #3 - Fall & Spring Workdays

The school has one fall workday, and one spring workday. Families on the Facilities Committees work the whole day and help to plan for work that needs to be accomplished. All other families are required to work for 2 total hours each

workday. There are always a variety of tasks to be accomplished at all skill levels. Workdays are typically held on Saturdays.

Parent Responsibility #4 - Committee Work

Committee work is a great way to put your unique skills and knowledge to work at the school. Each spring, the Vice President disseminates a committee preference sheet, which allows families to indicate three committee preferences for the following school year. Families who are new to the school are also given a committee preference sheet with enrollment forms. As the committees fill up, the choices of committees become more limited, and new families do not always get the committee of their choice. Every effort is made to get families on a committee that works for them. However, flexibility is encouraged and appreciated.

Below is a link to the current list of committee descriptions. Please note that committees may be added to or dropped from the list and the number of families within each committee may change from year to year depending on enrollment and the school's needs.

[Committee Descriptions Document](#)

Parent Responsibility #5 - Fundraising

Every year LCNS holds a spring fundraising event. While the main objective of this event is to raise money, it also serves as a community-building event for the school and is a great way to reach out to the larger Lawrence community and give prospective families the opportunity to learn about LCNS. One of the requirements of this co-op is to participate in and help with fundraising activities as needed. The school has specific committees that are in charge of organizing fundraisers, but it takes the help of the entire membership to make these events run smoothly. Examples of participation required by the membership for fundraisers often include selling tickets, passing out flyers, helping with setup, working at the actual event, cleanup, or bringing baked goods to the event. Members will be notified what is required of them well before every fundraiser, and they will often have a choice in what capacity they help out.

Parent Responsibility #6 - Membership Meetings

Membership meetings are designed for members to actively participate in the business of running the school. All families will be required to attend a semester

membership meeting where school business will be discussed. Important co-op votes will occur and orientation for the school will take place at these biannual meetings. Committees will also present their current business to the rest of the membership. Childcare will be provided for the membership at the school. Each meeting should be less than two hours, and take place at the Lawrence Public Library or another community venue.

LCNS Policies

Admissions Policy

- Through the course of the admissions process, an attempt will be made to create a group which is heterogeneous in race, nationality, and creed; and balanced in age and gender.
- In general, admission to LCNS is on a first-come, first-served basis. However, there is an early enrollment period for returning families. During the early-enrollment period, priority is given to current students, siblings of current students, and previously-enrolled families, in that order. After that deadline passes, any applicants on the waitlist will be enrolled. Remaining spots will be given to new applications on a first-come, first-served basis. Note that spots will not be held past the early-enrollment deadline. After the early-enrollment period, returning families will go in the queue of new applications in the order they are received.
- In some cases, families would like to hold spots for their children mid-year or mid semester. This most often occurs when families are waiting for their child to reach 2.5 years old or for potty training. Spaces will be held for children without a charge if there is not a waitlist. If there is a waitlist, families wishing to hold a spot for their child must pay 75% tuition for each month that the spot is held.
- To be eligible for the AM class, children need to be 2.5 years old and potty trained. If a child is almost 2.5 or almost potty trained, a parent may need to attend with them for up to two weeks until all enrollment criteria is met. If the child will not meet that criteria for longer than two weeks, they can choose to pay tuition(75% if class is full, or nothing if the class is not full) to hold the spot until they can attend school. Zero to 75% tuition payment can be in effect for up to two months or for as long as there is no other child on the waiting list. After two months, if there are any other children on the waiting list, 100% tuition must be paid to hold the spot open. This policy is subject to the Director's discretion and approval.
- Prospective and new members must be able to fulfill the responsibilities of membership as outlined in Article IV of the bylaws.

- Enrollment at LCNS does not guarantee a specific teacher. Spaces are held based on the times/days that children will attend. Due to the nature of the school, specific teachers may teach different classes from semester to semester based on the current needs of the school.

Discipline Policy

The purpose of the LCNS Discipline Policy is to provide a clear, concise, and direct discipline standard for the School Director, Teachers, Assistant Teachers, and Parents at LCNS. Although every family has its own method and system of discipline, it is helpful for children to have one consistent system at school. Clear discipline boundaries help children to develop age-appropriate social behaviors. The Discipline Policy should be considered a tool for maintaining appropriate behaviors in school, and for assisting teachers and parents as they respond to children who are learning appropriate social behavior. At LCNS, we use PBS, or Positive Behavior Support. PBS offers a holistic approach by considering all factors that may be impacting a child's behavior. It helps teach the child new skills to be successful that are appropriate by focusing on what they need to be doing, and not just saying 'no'. Example: "If you want to play with the legos, please put away the magnets first." Or, "If you want to play with the broom, please sweep with it." We also use strategies from Conscious Discipline which was developed by Dr. Becky Bailey, based on brain research. It focuses on problem solving, connecting with the child, and creating mindful caregivers who look at the emotional/social elements behind a child's behavior.

The policy is as follows:

If children exhibit disruptive behavior in circle or aggressive or violent behavior at any time throughout the day, teachers and parents will take the following steps.

For disruptive behavior in circle:

- Step One: Warning/Reminder of expectations. Children will be reminded of what they should be doing in circle time like sitting quietly with your hands to yourself. Choices can be offered like, "you can sit on the A or B, but please find a seat and sit down." and "If you want to sit by your friends, then you need to be quiet." Children can be moved to a different spot on the rug if needed or asked to scoot back for a moment and take a breath. Sometimes sitting in an adult's lap can help a child focus better as well. If disruptive

behavior continues, a teacher might talk with the child outside of the circle time area. The teacher might have the child practice sitting quietly at their circle time spot for a short time at the end of circle time, before moving on to the next activity. This builds on their whole-body listening skills, and is a positive reminder that we sit and listen during circle time, and then get to move on to activities.

- Step Two (for more intense behaviors). If a child's behavior is very intense or is unsafe for themselves or others, a teacher will remove the child to the front hallway or outside, to help them calm down and regain safe behaviors. The teacher will stay with them or nearby to help the child. The child and teacher will return to the circle once the student is calm and ready to try again. If the behavior was aggressive or violent, there will also be follow-up as described below. If disruptive behaviors do not improve, a parent-teacher conference will occur.

For aggressive/violent behavior:

- Step One: Children will be asked to check on the person/child that was affected immediately. If aggression persists, a child may be asked to sit down away from their peers and take a breath or hold a teacher's hand until we feel that the child can be safe again. They may also be encouraged to play alone for a short time as everyone calms down and feels safe. Aggressive/violent behavior consists of hitting, throwing things at someone, spitting, biting, etc.. The child can return to play with peers when they have calmed down and are ready to play safely.
- Step Two: When a child needs to sit down, play alone etc., the teacher will notify the child's parents at pick up time. This should be done in a non-threatening manner, but it should provide a clear opportunity for the school director/teacher to discuss the child's behavior to parents. Incidences will be recorded on the lead teacher's attendance list that will be filed in the attendance list file for future reference. The teachers will also work to identify triggers to these behaviors, and closely monitor the child to try to anticipate frustrations and teach tools to use more appropriate behaviors.
- Step Three: Parent Conference. When a child has had persistent inappropriate aggressive behavior within a reasonable period of time (severity and frequency of behavior, as well as the level of disruption to the class will be considered), the school director/teacher will schedule a conference with the child's parents to discuss the child's behavior and

establish a plan for helping that child to learn appropriate school behavior. Together the parents and School Director/teacher will establish a plan specifically tailored to that child's needs. Behavior plans will be revisited by the teacher on a weekly basis to look for improvement. New behavior plans will be made if needed. One potential method to help that child will be for a parent to attend class with their child, so that they may help redirect the child before their behavior becomes disruptive to the class.

- **Step Four: Consider Other School Options.** If a child continues to exhibit disruptive behavior following the execution of the mutually-established plan(or plans), and no improvement has been seen by the director and /or lead teacher, the School Director will work with the parents of the child to consider other school options. In some cases, children work better in different environments. It is possible that they might need a different setting that might be more or less structured than LCNS.

Additional Tools:

1. Parent Training. Disciplining your child is difficult. Disciplining other people's children is even more difficult!! At every new parent orientation, the School Director will present a description of how the teachers use PBS (Positive Behavior Support) to help the children in the classroom. Examples will be given on how to handle certain situations using the PBS strategies. At every General Membership meeting, the School Director will also present a short inservice that usually deals with discipline strategies and how to help our children be successful. Remember, children NEED consistent and firm boundaries in order to grow and develop appropriate social behavior. Please make sure when disciplining that you are taking into consideration the child's developmental level or age appropriate behavior.

2. PBS/Conscious Discipline. Many courses on PBS and Conscious Discipline are offered through KCCTO.org and Child Care Aware that talk directly about these discipline strategies. Along with these classes offered, there are many handouts and websites that may be of help.

<http://challengingbehavior.fmhi.usf.edu/index.htm>

<http://csefel.vanderbilt.edu/>

<http://consciousdiscipline.com/>

School Rules

Classroom Rules – these are the four main rules that the children are taught in the classroom:

1. Respect people and property - listen, use manners, cooperate, follow directions, treat others how you want to be treated, be kind, don't damage property.
2. Responsibility - pick up/clean up after yourself, tell the truth, take care of things.
3. Be Fair - take turns, include everyone, share toys.
4. Be safe - no one will be hurt.

Specific Rules

- No weapons (real or pretend) allowed at school.
- No gum or candy at school.
- Please don't bring toys to school.
- (Blankets, etc. for security are welcome.)
- Children are not allowed inside the school without an adult and not allowed on the playground without an adult.
- Please provide a seasonally-appropriate change of clothing for your child to be left at school in their cubby. Both a sweater and coat should be provided in changeable weather. Boots, hats, mittens, etc. should be provided when necessary and labeled with your child's name.

**Remember:* Learning is frequently a dirty, messy business. In some of our activities it is impossible for parents and children alike to keep clean. Durable play clothing is recommended.

Outdoor Rules & Reminders

- Black tube structure: Children must be sitting on this, please do not allow children to stand.
- Tire Swing : Only 3 on the swing a time. Children must sit down.(Masks are required for children if they are riding tire swing during covid)
- Sandbox: Encourage children to keep sand in the sandbox, although it is often used as "baking" ingredients and taken to the playhouse or lemonade stand. (Children must wear masks in sandbox due to close quarters during covid)
- Play House with slide: No climbing on the outside of the structure. Children are not allowed to drop toys off the top. No trucks/cars down this slide.
- Tricycles: Children are not allowed to crash into each other or other objects. Children should be driving slowly and carefully and encouraged to stop or

slow down by the front gate. Children should be all riding in the same direction. If the rules are not followed, children should take a break from the bike.

- Playhouse: Please encourage children to keep sand and rocks outside of the playhouse. If the children bring it in, they should clean it out. The door to the playhouse should remain hooked open during school hours and then closed on the weekends.
- Pirate Ship- Please do not allow children to climb up on the front on the pirate ship. They should also not climb on the outside of the railings.
- Please leave the flowers in the ground.
- Please include everyone in your games.
- Outside toys stay outside.
- Please encourage children to keep rocks and sand off the sidewalks. Have children sweep it off if they dump it on the sidewalk.
- Shoes and coats can be off if it is at least 60 degrees.
- There should always be an adult watching the front gate. Parents/Teachers should move around the playground to make sure all areas are watched.

Indoor Rules

- Bathroom: Only teachers can take the children downstairs to the bathroom.
- Table Activities: These activities need to stay at the tables.
- Blocks: The large wooden blocks should not be stacked higher than the child's chin. They are heavy and can really hurt if they fall on you. Cardboard blocks can be stacked as high as they want. Please make sure children are only knocking down their own block building.
- Stage Area: Stage area usually includes the sensory table activities. These items should stay in the sensory table.
- General: Please do not get other toys out. Experience what is already out. Occasionally other toys/activities may be added or taken out, but the teacher decides this. Activities are planned by the teachers specifically to relate to the theme and the different areas of a child's development like pre-math, fine motor, science, reading, etc...
- Please remind the children to use walking feet and inside voices.
- Inside toys stay inside.
- Children will remove their shoes and should be encouraged to put them in their cubby or under the cubby shelf indoors and on the big picnic table.

THE MOST IMPORTANT RULE: **Have Fun!**

Participation Policy

Guidelines For Number of Participation Days Per Family:

Our school is in the correct ratio of adult to child mandated by KDHE licensing with just the teachers. However, as a cooperative with parent participation, we get to have a better adult to child ratio! The number of participating parents each class session may vary with enrollment. With fairly full enrollment, there will be two participating parents per class. With less full enrollment, there might be one participating parent. It is very rare to have a day with no participators, and likely will only happen under extenuating circumstances. Your participation requirements will depend on the number of days you are enrolled.

- Tuesday/Thursday families will participate 4 days per semester
- Monday/Wednesday/Friday families will participate 6 days per semester
- Monday-Friday families will participate 10 times per semester.

If you enroll mid-semester, the Participation Chair will work with you to find an approximate prorated number of participation days for your family. Sometimes weekend cleaning and classroom participation may be swapped for a family to help fill any open spots. When enrollment is full, there will likely be less slots available than the total number of participation required. When this happens, participation days might be reduced for some people, starting with families with multiple children enrolled, families with newborns, or any other circumstances that might make participation more challenging.

Guidelines for Non-Participation Option

Families with 2 or more children simultaneously enrolled, or families with special needs, may be granted a non-participation option at the discretion of the Board.

The following guidelines will be considered:

1. Families submitting application form, application fee, and security deposit by an application deadline of August 1 (fall session) and May 1 (summer session) take priority over later dates.
2. A family whose child has been enrolled for several consecutive sessions takes priority over a family who has interrupted the child's enrollment or who has recently enrolled at LCNS.

3. If several families who meet the above requirements apply for a limited number of non-participation openings, the Board shall make the final selection as to who obtains these openings.
4. If permission is granted to a family not to participate for a 2 or 3 day per week enrollment option, this family cannot automatically convert this non-participation option into a greater option (i.e., 5 days per week). New approval is required.

When establishing fall or summer enrollment, the Board is encouraged to limit the number of non-participating families to one per class session. As enrollment increases during the session, other non-participation slots may be created at the discretion of the Board. For example, 1 TTh AM slot, 1 MWF AM slot, and 1 MWF PM slot or 1 MTWThF AM slot and 1 MWF PM slot could initially be made available to non-participating families.

Tuition rates for non-participating families shall be higher than that of participating families. Additional tuition is figured according to the following formula: Number of days families would have participated x 3.5 hours per day x the current part time teacher fair wage per hour. For example, 7 days x 3.5 hours x \$12.50 = \$306.25. The additional tuition may be paid in one lump sum or divided equally among the monthly tuition payments for the semester. This would be for one semester, example: August through December.

Sub Option

If a family has a day that they are unable to participate, the family must first try to trade that day with another family. In the event that they are unable to trade, they may request and pay for a substitute teacher to cover that participation day. This request is subject to Board approval, and the amount the family will need to pay to cover the substitute teacher will be determined by the Board, in accordance with current substitute teaching wages.

Families of Twins and Multiples

Families with twins or multiples, enrolled at the same time, may sign up for both participation slots on a single day and only send one adult to fulfill their obligation. Additional dispensation for families of twins or multiples may be granted depending on enrollment levels each semester. If this applies to your family, please inquire with the School Director.

Finance Policy

These policies were recommended by Kevin Kressig, the LCNS accountant, during the fall 2005 semester to improve financial controls and help protect both the school and the individuals who handle money for the school.

1. Cash Reserve. LCNS will maintain a cash reserve of at least \$10,000. The recommended amount for most nonprofits is 3 months of operating expenses, which would be about \$16,500 for LCNS, but since we are tuition based, we will probably be fine with \$10,000

2. Separation of Duties. The following procedures will assure proper separation of duties: The President or Director will open all bank statements that arrive in the mail and look at them for any irregularities. The Treasurer will then be given the bank statements and will be responsible for writing checks on the bank accounts and reconciling the accounts. The President and Vice President may also write checks if the Treasurer is unable to. The Assistant Treasurer will make deposits and turn deposit slips over to the Treasurer. The Assistant Treasurer will not have check writing ability or access to bank statements. If the Assistant Treasurer is unable to make deposits, s/he may designate someone else at the school to do this, as long as it is NOT the President, Vice President or the Treasurer.

3. Review of Expenditures. The President or Director will review receipts and approve expenditures by signing expense forms.

4. Signatures on Checks. Two signatures will be required for purchases, other than payroll, above \$500. Check signers include the Treasurer, President and Vice President.

5. Reports to the LCNS Board. The Treasurer will provide a written and verbal report at each board meeting that includes expenses from the previous month, with a comparison from the previous year, if possible, and the cash balance of each account. The Treasurer will highlight trends or major changes related to the incoming and outgoing funds.

Health Policy

The assessment shall be recorded on forms supplied by the Kansas Department of Health and Environment State Health Regulations.

The following health regulations were established by the State of Kansas for Preschools and Child Care Centers. To retain its license, LCNS must be in complete compliance.

- A pre-entrance health assessment conducted within six months prior to enrollment shall be required for each child. The assessment shall be conducted by a licensed physician, or a nurse approved to perform health assessments. Results of the assessment shall be kept in the child's file at the facility.
- Immunizations shall be current in accordance with the child's age at time of enrollment, and shall be maintained current for protection against diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus, measles, mumps, rubella, and poliomyelitis. A record of each child's immunizations shall be maintained on the child's health assessment form.
- Each facility shall have on file at the facility written notarized permission of the parent, guardian, or legal custodian for emergency medical treatment on a form which meets the requirements of the hospital or clinic where emergency care will be given.

Each parent who participates in the classroom must submit a certificate showing freedom from active tuberculosis obtained within the two years prior to the family's enrollment. Such certificates are available free of charge from the local health department.

LCNS Health Regulations

The following regulations are required in order to safeguard the health of the entire group of children, including your own.

- ❑ Children should not attend school when they exhibit any signs of illness, including:
 - a temperature exceeding 100° F

- vomiting or diarrhea within the past 24 hours
 - a contagious virus such as pink eye
 - listlessness, irritability, unusual fatigue
 - current KDHE guidelines will supercede these (for example, there are more exclusion criteria during Covid pandemic)
- ❑ In the event that your child is exposed to a communicable disease, such as chickenpox, diphtheria, German measles, mumps, polio, whooping cough, strep, pinworms, ringworm, or impetigo, please inform the teacher so that incubation and isolation dates may be verified and the health needs of all the children protected. The school is required to report this to the Kansas Department of Health & Environment.
- ❑ If you feel that your child is not well enough to play outdoors, they should not be at school.
- ❑ If you or your child are ill on your participation day, you must notify the school immediately and seek coverage for your participation via a trade. Let the Director know ASAP if you are unsuccessful at finding another parent to trade.

Field Trip Policy

On all walking and carpool field trips:

- Groups of children will be assigned to adults/and or teachers. The adults will carry a field trip bag containing a first aid kit and a list of children in their group. ,
- Emergency Authorization sheets and Medical records for each child will be brought by the lead teacher in their group.
- On walking field trips, children will walk with a partner. Adults assigned a field trip group are responsible for that specific group of children the entire field trip.
- There shall be a pre-established leaving time, returning time, and meeting place once you arrive at the field trip destination.

- If a parent chooses to attend a field trip with their other children as well as their children enrolled in the class, they will not be assigned a field trip group.

When leaving for all field trips:

- Lead teacher will lock the building after doing a 'once around' for any children inside. All children at this time should be on the playground with the remaining adults/teachers.
- Lead teacher will then roll call or call out the children's names for each field trip group and check them out the gate to either their field trip cars or to the sidewalk by the fence, if we are walking.
- After the last group leaves, the lead teacher and their group will do a 'once around' the playground before locking the gate.
- On walking field trips, a final roll call of the whole group is taken before leaving by the lead teacher.
- Carpool groups shall make sure every child in their group is present and buckled in before driving away.

On field trips:

- Groups shall meet at the prearranged meeting place at the field trip destination.
- Lead teacher will check in groups as they arrive at the meeting place.
- Roll Call will be taken within all field trip groups every 30 minutes by the adult/teacher. Any possible missing children should be reported to the lead teacher immediately.
- If you decide to leave the field trip and not return to the school (in cases where you only have driven your own child/children), please let the lead teacher know.
- Lead teacher will check out the field trip groups before they go back to the school.

When returning from field trips:

- Roll call/check back in with the lead teacher as you enter the school gate.

Transportation Policy

The following rules should be observed for vehicles owned by staff or volunteers.

- When a vehicle is used for transportation of children, the driver shall be 18 years of age or older and shall hold an operator's license of a type appropriate for the vehicle being used. Trailers pulled by another vehicle, camper shells or truck beds shall not be used for transportation of children.
- Each transporting vehicle shall be maintained in safe operating condition.
- Emergency release forms and health assessment records shall be in the vehicle when children are transported.
- Each vehicle shall be equipped with an individual restraint for each child as follows:
 - A child able to sit up without support shall be provided with one of the following restraints:
 - a car seat facing the front that is designed to hold a child weighing up to the seat's maximum weight; or
 - a car seat rear-facing facing that is designed to hold a child weighing up to the seat's maximum weight limit for safely rear-facing; or
 - a child weighing 40 pounds or more, and age 4 or older, may have a booster seat with a lap belt, rather than a 5-point harness seat. Any child under 4 must have a 5-point harness seat.
 - Please note that every LCNS child must have a legal car seat/booster when being transported in a teacher or another parent's car for field trips.
 - Car seat laws supersede this list, should there be any contradictions
- Not more than one child shall be restrained in each lap belt.
- The safety of the children riding in the vehicle shall be protected as follows:
 - All doors except the front door on the driver's side shall be locked while the vehicle is in motion.
 - Discipline shall be maintained at all times.

- All parts of the child's body shall remain inside the vehicle at all times.
- Children shall neither enter nor exit the vehicle into a lane of traffic.:
- Children under 10 years of age shall not be left in a vehicle unattended by an adult. When the vehicle is vacated, the driver shall make certain no child is left in the vehicle.
- Smoking in the vehicle shall be prohibited while children are being transported.
- Staff/child ratios shall not exceed limits set by Kansas Regulations for Licensing Preschools and Child Care Centers.
- The driver shall transport the child to the intended location, person, agency or institution as designated by the child's parent or legal guardian, or by the agency person in charge.
- The vehicles shall be covered as required by K.S.A. 40-3104 and 40-3118 and any amendments to it (a minimum of 25/50/10 basic liability).
- Each driver shall be informed of the provision of the transportation rules listed above.

Staff Evaluation Policy

Every member shall be provided with a form to evaluate teaching and the general program at LCNS twice annually, around the end of October and February. Members will have approximately one week to complete the evaluation forms. Results will be tabulated with responses where appropriate and given back to the membership.

In order to foster professional development and to provide a tangible foundation for the end-of-year contract renewal and salary adjustment, the board will conduct a mid-year professional evaluation of the director that will be separate from and in addition to the staff evaluations provided by the general membership. The Board will also conduct skip-level meetings with the rest of the staff twice a year, in the fall and spring semesters. The purpose of the skip-levels is to elicit their feedback on the school and the director. The results of these meetings will be made anonymous and shared with the Board and the Director

The director is responsible for mid-year and end-of-year evaluations of the lead and assistant teachers.

Problem-Solving Policy

Because LCNS is a cooperative preschool, it takes a special effort among parents and teachers to ensure that their relationships with one another are harmonious and effective. The following problem solving strategy is to serve as a guideline in the development of these relationships.

Parent/Teacher Relationship:

Teachers at LCNS should be receptive to constructive suggestions from parents. Parents are encouraged to discuss educational policies and goals, make suggestions, and talk things over. Parents also have the opportunity to evaluate the teaching staff once each year. Other concerns of parent(s) or teacher(s) with regard to their respective relationship should be addressed to the President of the Administrative Board so they can be presented and dealt with at the monthly Board meeting.

If a teacher has a concern regarding a policy, program, piece of equipment, or condition of the facility provided by the Board, they should first inform the Board of their concern. If the matter is not resolved to the teacher's satisfaction, they may place the matter on the agenda for the following general membership meeting.

Parent/Parent/Board Relationship:

The success of LCNS as an institution depends on mutual trust and goodwill among its members. All parents are expected to treat each other with civility and respect. Behavior which interferes with the duties of the Board or school committees, or which conflicts with the cooperative spirit of the school as a whole, is not condoned and should not be accepted.

When a parent has a concern over their relationship with another parent or the school, they should voice their concern to the appropriate member of the Administrative Board or directly to the President, so it can be presented and dealt with at the monthly Board meeting. At the discretion of the Board and the concerned parent, the matter may be brought before the school at the following general membership meeting.

To facilitate effective decision making, except in case of emergency, parents wishing items discussed at a semester's general membership meeting should present said item to the Administrative Board prior to its meeting the preceding month.

Teacher/Teacher complaints- These complaints should go directly to the director first. If the director cannot solve the problem, the board president may be solicited for help.

Teacher/Director Complaints- Skip levels occur twice a year where the Board president sits down with the teachers individually to discuss effectiveness of the director in his/her duties. This is a chance for the teachers to voice any concerns they may have that they do not feel comfortable talking with the director about. Ultimately we hope teachers bring any issues of concern up with the director directly first.

- The next route would be to have the teacher/teachers bring up any problems/issues with the Board President(only) for discussion.
- Board president may consult with the Exec VP first then solicit the rest of the board in an executive session to solve or take steps to resolve the issue.

Complaints:

General meetings: Teacher(s) and assistant(s) will leave following the close of the regular business portion of each meeting and a brief session will then be held during which members will have an opportunity to discuss staff effectiveness and concerns.

Complaint procedures:

1. Members may discuss concerns with the teacher/assistant teacher personally if they feel comfortable doing so. In addition, members should call or email the participation chair and briefly:

- a) describe the event of concern
- b) detail the problem, i.e.: what does the member think was handled poorly
- c) detail how the member would prefer the situation had been handled
- d) explain what steps the member thinks should be taken (e.g., situation monitored, Board action)

2. The participation chair will record all complaints and promptly report them to the President. The President will make a report to the Board.

3. The Board will review the complaint(s) and determine what action should be taken.

4. If deemed necessary by the Board, the President and participation chair will meet with the teacher/assistant to discuss the situation.

The President and participation chairs will review the completed forms and draft possible steps to be taken to correct any deficiencies requiring Board action.

1. The President and participation chair will report their recommendations to the Board.
2. The Board will determine steps to be taken to correct deficiencies and set dates for follow-up review.
3. The President and participation chair, as a group, will meet with each staff member individually. At this meeting they will:
 - a) provide the applicable evaluation forms for review
 - b) discuss positive aspects of the teacher/aide's abilities, citing specific examples
 - c) discuss deficiencies noted, emphasizing those of concern to the Board
 - d) detail corrections required by the Board and dates for follow-up review
 - e) answer staff questions and concernsA positive and encouraging outlook will be maintained by the Board representative.
4. The President and participation chair will conduct a follow-up review on the dates set by the Board and report to the Board at the next meeting.

Teacher/Teacher complaints- These complaints should go directly to the director first. If the director cannot solve the problem, the board president may be solicited for help.

Teacher/Director Complaints- Skip levels occur twice a year where the Board president sits down with the teachers individually to discuss effectiveness of the director in his/her duties. This is a chance for the teachers to voice any concerns they may have that they do not feel comfortable talking with the director about. Ultimately we hope teachers bring any issues of concern up with the director directly first.

- The next route would be to have the teacher/teachers bring up any problems/issues with the Board President(only) for discussion.
- Board president may consult with the Exec VP first then solicit the rest of the board in an executive session to solve or take steps to resolve the issue.

Non-completion of Responsibilities:

In the event a family misses one of the responsibilities required for membership without prior notice, the appropriate person will notify the President (see Standing Rule 7). The President will send a letter to the family. The family will have one week from the receipt of the letter to appeal the penalty to the Board.

Typical Progression Policy

If a child in the AM class turns four during the school year, they will move to the PM class in the fall of the following year. It is in the best interest of the child if they remain with their peers for transition and continuity purposes. If a family has special circumstances, and would like for their child to move from the AM class to the PM class at semester, this needs to be requested, and then approval is granted through the Director and the Board. If a child is close to turning four at the start of the school year, they can enroll in the PM class, pending teacher approval.

School Grounds Policy

The facility and ground maintenance committees are established at the start of each semester. These committees shall, in conjunction with their regular duties outlined in the committee description section, also maintain the garden beds and garden sections on the school playground. This means that on a regular basis the gardens shall be weeded, watered, harvested, and future plantings will be done according to the appropriate season. Maintaining these gardens are to be done by the committee and children are to be a part of its maintenance as well. For example, children can help water, weed, plant, and harvest the items planted throughout the year. The school shall also maintain a farm to school connection by soliciting farmers and families who farm to share and teach about their gardens/crops. This can be done through field trips to farms, farmers bringing in items they have grown to share, and other educational experiences.

Electronic Devices in the Classroom Policy

As a school we want to teach our kids about focus and priorities in terms of the presence of technology in our lives. School is a great place to practice and model

these ethics and behaviors. We are not opposed to technology and recognize its many benefits in the classroom. We will continue to encourage appropriate technology as it supports the needs of the children, but we want to ensure that we are doing so in a mindful way.

In regards to photography and recording videos, we advise parents and teachers to be mindful. We certainly want to document special events, and even some of our daily routine. However, in this day and age, we all have smartphones in our pockets, enabling us to record videos and snap photos any time or place. We have the following concerns about how this affects our children's learning experience:

1. It interrupts their focus on what they are doing by encouraging posing and mugging for the camera. Kids are also aware of "stealth" photography while they're at play, even when we think they aren't paying attention.
2. It pulls them away from being "in the moment," and pushes them to spend time documenting their lives rather than living them.
3. It teaches them it's okay to have our phones out a lot, even when we are doing other things.

Teachers

LCNS teachers should generally not use their electronic devices during class. Of course, there are exceptions, such as documenting special events (the birth of our baby chicks, a visit from the Fire Department, etc) and playing music for the kids. But in general, we want our teachers to feel free to focus on the children during instructional time. They are not expected to access social media or email during their teaching day, including at lunch. The Director is available on Monday, Wednesday and Friday, and all the teachers can be reached by telephone for immediate concerns, such as reporting an absence, during the school day.

Participating Parents

We also encourage parents to be mindful about using their electronic devices (specifically, smartphones) while they are participating. We all want to capture special moments, like a particularly awesome science activity or adorable playground interaction. We want these for our own memories and for our school yearbook. We simply ask that parents are thoughtful about our educational philosophy when deciding whether to take a photo or video at school. Additionally, we ask participating parents to limit personal use of electronic devices while they are participating, so that they are free to focus on their interactions with the children.

Gardening/Cooking Curriculum Policy

The curriculum at Lawrence Community Nursery shall be diverse and cover many areas of interest for the children, while also remaining age appropriate. On a yearly basis, gardening will be discussed and children will participate in learning about its maintenance. For example, during the fall certain fruits and vegetables become harvestable like pumpkins, squash, apples, etc. children will learn how they grow, experience what they taste like and participate in cooking activities planned by the teachers or families. It is suggested that cooking activities happen in the classroom on at least a monthly basis if not bi-monthly.

Breastfeeding

In accordance with Kansas Law, LCNS supports the right of mothers to breastfeed. If you are a nursing mom, you are welcome to breastfeed anywhere on school property. Additionally, if you prefer a private place to nurse your child, feel free to ask a teacher for assistance.