



Huguenot Street Cooperative Nursery School

Member Handbook 2024 - 2025

Revised Jan. 2024

WELCOME!

We are happy to welcome your family to the Huguenot Street Cooperative Nursery School. Please take a few moments to familiarize yourself with the information contained in this handbook. Be sure to keep it handy as a reference guide to the day-to-day operation of the school.

Once you have read the handbook, any questions you may have can be directed to the Parent Representative of your class or any member of the Board of Directors. As a cooperative nursery school we encourage inquiries, comments and suggestions from the membership throughout the year.

MISSION

To create an environment that cultivates the educational, cultural and social growth of our children through a developmental, child-centered approach in which parents share in the ownership by contributing time, knowledge and experience.

PHILOSOPHY

The Huguenot Street Cooperative Nursery School (HSCNS) is a non-profit, non-sectarian, cooperative school for children ages 2-5. The goal of our program is the enrichment of each child's preschool experience through the development of self-expression and motor skills, and through the encouragement of good habits like sharing, listening and cooperating with others.

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HOW THE COOPERATIVE WORKS

As a cooperative nursery school, the HSCNS relies on parents, teachers and students to work together to operate, maintain and participate in every aspect of the school. The cooperative model brings us all closer together to create a dynamic and enriching learning experience for the children.

Board of Directors – The organizational body of the school is a Board of Directors made up of the cooperative and community members. The board is composed of a President, Vice President of Membership, Secretary, Treasurer, and three Parent Representatives (one from each class).

The Board meets monthly, usually on the last Monday of the month (see school calendar for schedule). All Board meetings are open to the cooperative. The Board is governed by its by-laws, which are available to all members in a white binder on the shelves of the 4 year old classroom or by request of the Secretary. The minutes of each board meeting are also available to all members, also by request of the Secretary. The agenda for each meeting is published a week or so before the meeting date. Please speak with the President if you wish to place an item for discussion on the agenda.

Teaching Staff – The cooperative employs three teachers: Pam Regan teaches the 2 year-old class, Jessica Stirberg teaches the 2/3 mix class; Jillian Tiberio teaches the 3/4 mix classes.

Committees - The success of our cooperative program is contingent upon the active involvement of the entire membership. This is accomplished primarily through committee work. Over the years, the school has consistently benefited from the enthusiasm, expertise and special talents and interests that each parent contributes to the committees. The main committees are:

- Supplies- Keep our supply closet stocked with napkins, cups, garbage bags and other classroom needs
- Education- Planning the enrichment activities
- Fundraising: Help manage our various fundraisers, and brainstorm new ideas for fundraising.
- Publicity- Maintaining schools website and social media accounts
- Playground: Keeping our playground safe, clean, and maintained
- Community: Focuses on bringing a sense of friendship, teamwork, and connection for our school families.

- Membership: Organize and digitize student applications and forms.

These committee names and functions may change based upon the current needs of the school. Ad-hoc committees may also be created during the course of the year.

All projects by committee that may require the use of school funds, whether budgeted or otherwise, must be presented to, and approved by, the Board prior to initiation.

Committees are led by Chairs who are responsible for maintaining parent involvement, delegation, meeting planning and follow-through of all projects and responsibilities. They are also responsible for keeping the Board updated regarding activity of the committee.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF MEMBERSHIP

- Committee involvement – The importance of committee work cannot be overstated. You may serve on as many committees as you like, but a representative from each family must actively serve on at least one committee during the year. There will be an opportunity to sign up for committees on Orientation Night. If you wish to join a committee part way through the year please speak to the committee chair. The Board reserves the right to assign committee positions to parents who have not volunteered to serve.
- Classroom Participation - all parents must participate in the classrooms a few times a month. See “Classroom Participation” section.
- Availability for Field trips – See “Field Trips” section.
- Participation in fundraising activities.
- Prompt Payment of tuition and fees. See “Payment Schedule and Policy” section.
- Maintenance of school property and playground.

DAILY SCHEDULE

Unless a field trip is scheduled, a typical school day for your child may include:

- Free Choice of Activities – These include; easel painting, play dough, texture/sand table, blocks, house/kitchen corner, books, puzzles and board games.
- Circle Time – The children meet as a group with their teacher to talk about the day’s activities. Circle time may include music, rhythm, dramatic activities, games or stories.
- Project – Children are encouraged to participate in the project, yet they are not forced to join the others at the project table. The project may involve artwork or food preparation.
- Clean-up – All children are asked to help pick up and put away toys and games.
- Snack – Children wash their hands at the sink and sit down together for a snack. Each child is responsible to bring their own snack and water bottle.
- Story time/Show and tell (older classes)

- Specials – During the winter months special classes are offered such as; music, dance, karate, and yoga.
- Gross Motor play – weather permitting, children spend a portion of each day outside on the playground.

CLASSROOM PARTICIPATION

Parent participation in the classroom is an integral part of our cooperative program. It is a very rewarding experience for the parents as well as for the children.

Scheduling – The teachers schedule participation on a rotating basis. Each parent participates as a parent helper roughly twice every month for each class in which their child is enrolled, depending on the number of children in the class, thus parents in rotation. Schedules are posted on the front of each class door as well a couple months in advance in the classrooms. Please make a note of the days you are scheduled to come in. If at any time you are unable to participate, it is your responsibility to find another participating parent to substitute for you. Please do not bring anyone with you when you participate, including infants.

Guidelines for the Participating Parent in the Classroom – The parent who is participating in the classroom for the day acts as an assistant to the teacher. Please discuss your responsibilities with the teacher when you arrive in the morning.

As parent assistant, your responsibilities will include, but are not limited to:

- Arrive 15 minutes before class begins. This allows for a smooth transition for the children and gives the teacher time to discuss and plan the morning's activities.
- Greet the children with a smile and help them get established with an activity at the beginning of class.
- Assist children with art projects as needed. This may include helping with smocks, writing their names on their artwork and washing hands. Encourage the children to do as much for themselves as they can.
- Aid the teacher with general supervision. Encourage children who are not constructively involved to find an activity.
- Make the teacher aware of any misbehavior or conflicts that arise between children. Encourage children to work out disagreements on their own. Please defer to the teacher's judgment with regard to discipline. It is the school's policy that the teacher will handle any disciplinary actions necessary in accordance to his/her contract.
- Encourage all children to help pick-up and put away toys and games.
- Assist with snack time.

- Help the teacher maintain a sanitary classroom by following basic rules of hygiene. This includes cleaning the table and washing your hands before snack is served, washing your own hands and helping the children wash their hands after using/assisting with the bathroom and before snack. Please note that teachers are responsible for changing diapers. Please supervise the class while the teacher attends to the student.
- Help the children dress for the outdoors.
- Supervise the children on the playground along with the teacher. Parent helpers must remain on the playground until every parent or guardian from your class has arrived.
- Clean the classroom at the end of the school day. This includes sweeping the floor, cleaning the tables and door knobs, washing items in the sink, straightening the bathroom area and putting away stray toys. Anything swept off the floor must go in the garbage (i.e., fallen sand does not go back into the sandbox). Before leaving please check with the teacher to see if any additional help is needed.
- Please note your personal health before entering the school. If you were ill the night before, are ill that day or are showing signs of becoming ill, please refrain from coming to school. A call to another parent to switch days, reaching out via schools Facebook group, or contacting class rep until a suitable switch is found, is appropriate. Any contagious disease is unacceptable.
- It is the school's policy not to allow siblings of students to be in the classroom during school time when the parent is the Parent Helper. This allows for the parent to be focused on the students in the classroom and keeps continuity for the children.

Sharing your Talents and Interests – If you have ideas for projects or activities, please share them with the teacher. Our teachers are always open to new ideas.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Arrival and Departure – The 2-year old and 2/3-year old mix classes meet from 9am to 11:30am. The 3/4 year old mix classes meet from 9am to 12 noon. Please arrive at school on time, but do not arrive earlier unless you are the parent helper for the day. Parents are encouraged to leave promptly upon dropping off their children. Remember there is plenty of time for socializing after school is over. An on-time start allows the teacher to offer a rewarding day. When picking up your child, please be on time. Please also let the teacher or parent helper know you are removing your child. If someone other than the usual person will be picking up your child, please let the teacher know ahead of time. The doors of the school are locked at 9:15am, for the safety of the children. There is a doorbell if you arrive late, so a teacher can let you into the school, though this can be disruptive so please try our best to be on time.

Mailboxes/Bulletin Board – Please check your child's mailbox before you leave at the end of each school day. The mailboxes and our website are our main means of communication. The monthly newsletter, scholastic book order forms, and news on upcoming events are all distributed in this manner. Your child's mailbox may also contain artwork or personal belongings that might otherwise be lost. Be sure whomever you designate to pick up your child knows to check the mailbox, as well. Look for postings on the bulletin board out in the hall as well as on the classroom doors. Please also check your email regularly.

Clothing – Dress your child for play. The children will be gluing, painting, and cooking. It can and will get messy! Send in one complete set of clothes to be kept at school. Boxes are provided by the school and located on top of the coat cubbies in the hallway. Label all clothing. Dress your child to suit the weather. Please send along boots, hats and mittens as needed. Note to all parents and children wearing diapers: please send in a package of diapers and wipes at the beginning of the year. The teachers will notify parents if more are needed.

Toys – Please do not send your child to school with books or toys from home unless it is for Show and Tell. Toys brought from home can be lost, broken or cause conflicts.

School Calendar – Our calendar will be distributed at the beginning of the school year. HSCNS follows the New Paltz Central School District (NPCSD) calendar with regard to holidays, vacations and cancellations. Traditionally, HSCNS begins one week after the start of NPCSD and ends one week prior to the end of their school

year. **Therefore, the 2024-2025 school year for HSCNS shall start on September 11th 2024 and end on June 17th 2025.**

Field Trips – All field trips will be to local establishments, and it is the parents responsibility to get their child to and from the field trip. A parent or guardian of the child must accompany their child on each field trip. Teachers are not allowed to transport children to or from field trips by car.

Parent/Teacher Conferences – Conferences are scheduled in both the fall and then again in the spring for teachers to discuss a child's progress with his/her parents. Sign up sheets will be posted on the teachers door with available time slots for parents to sign up for. If at any point in the year a parent has a specific concern they would like to address with their child's teacher, a parent/teacher conference can be scheduled at any time. Do not hesitate to communicate with your child's teacher.

New York State Registration – Non-public nursery schools and kindergartens in the state of New York can voluntarily adhere to the registration guidelines. The HSCNS members, staff and children do follow the voluntary registration guidelines for non-public nursery schools issued by the Commissioner of Education for the State of New York to the best of their ability and resources.

Classroom Temperature – Should the classroom heat malfunction and the temperature in the classroom drop below 65 degrees there will be no classes held in the room until heat returns. Parents will be notified either the evening prior or when they arrive at school that day. This is an inconvenience we wish we could avoid, but mechanical systems have the ability to break down.

Substitute Teachers – Should one of our teachers need to be absent from class for any reason, HSCNS will provide a substitute teacher for the school day. Any member who volunteers to fill this role will be paid a stipend of \$50.00 per day. Members who wish to volunteer may sign-up on the Substitute Teacher List at Orientation Night in September. Substitute teacher reimbursement forms are available in the classrooms.

Snow Day Policy – HSCNS follows the NPCSD with regard to closings and delays due to weather. Please see the following table for how the NPCSD closings/delays will affect your child's schedule at HSCNS.

You will be able to find out if the NPCSD has called a delay or closing in the following ways:

- Local radio – WEOK, WCZX, WPDH, WRWD, WDST, WQHQ, WKNY

- Phone the NPCSD hotline – 256-4000
- NPCSD website - www.newpaltz.k12.ny.us/
- WHUD text alerts (to sign up: <http://pamal.com/stormcenter/whud.php>)
- Via email from the Board on the school's group distribution list
- Via Facebook on the school's closed group page

Closed	Closed
1 Hour Delay	Class from 10:00-12:00
2 Hour Delay	Class from 10:30-12:00
3 Hour Delay	Class from 10:30-12:00
Early Dismissal	Class until 11:30

NPCSD

HSCNS

Fire Evacuation Plan – In case of a fire alarm being activated, whether for actual fire or other reasons, the children will be escorted from the building by the teachers and parent helpers. All parents will be notified immediately by phone and/or email in the event of an actual fire. Everyone will exit through the outside door to the playground area. They will walk to, and stand by, the fence farthest from the building but still inside the fenced-in area. They will wait there until told otherwise by the New Paltz Fire Department or Church Official. In the case that the children need to be moved from the property to a safer location, all parents will be notified immediately, and the New Paltz Fire Department would be responsible for the location and time of that removal situation. There are 3 fire extinguishers located within the school. One in each classroom and one in the hallway.

Lockdown or Lockout – The HSCNS will follow the guidelines provided by the NPCSD and the New York State Education Department with regards to emergency situations that may occur during school hours. These emergencies include natural and human-caused disasters, acts of terrorism and local environmental emergencies. The

school shall become aware of such occurrences by means of parent's relay of information, church informant, fire/police or auditory alarms by local officials. To maintain safety and security in our classrooms each day, please be aware of the following:

- The classroom's entrance doors will be locked after drop-off at 9:15, and will be unlocked 10 minutes before pick-up.
- The classroom doors to the school playground are locked at all times, except when the children are in the playground.
- We perform mock safety drills and fire drills yearly.
- Teachers and parent helpers do not leave the school until all children are safely in the hands of parents or guardians.
- If a parent needs access to the school after hours they can contact the board President, VP of Education, or VP of Membership for access.

Should the school receive word that the national alert level is being raised beyond the normal level due to any of the above emergency reasons, children will remain in the school in a Lockout situation. The following safety precautions would occur:

A **LOCKOUT** – most commonly used when the threat is general or the incident is occurring outside the school building, on or off property. No unauthorized personnel will be allowed in the building. Students will be able to continue the normal school day but will not have any outdoor activities. If permitted and possible, parents will be notified immediately. Depending on the situation, children will stay the remainder of the day or are picked-up immediately by parents/guardians.

A **LOCKDOWN** – Most commonly used when the building has an intruder. The children, teachers and parent helpers are secured in the rooms they are currently in and no one is allowed to leave the room or building until the situation has been resolved. No one will be allowed to enter the building or be on school grounds except emergency personnel, police/ambulance should they be necessary. No student may be picked-up until the event has been resolved and then only released to a parent or guardian. This enables the school to account for the safety of our children as well as keeping innocent people from coming into a dangerous situation. If permitted and possible, parents will be notified immediately.

BASIC HEALTH RULES FOR DAILY ATTENDANCE

Teachers are authorized to conduct a daily visual health check at drop off and throughout the day to determine each child's wellness.

If your child has a flushed appearance, sore throat, fever or rash, DO NOT bring them to school. Although these conditions may not constitute an illness.

Parents/Caregivers: Please note your personal health before entering the school. If you were ill the night before or are presently ill, pick-ups and drop-offs are fine, but being the Parent Helper or extended exposure to the children is not.

- **Fever:** Before returning to school, your child's temperature should be normal for at least 24 hours. **A fever is defined as a temperature of 100.4 or higher.**
- **Colds:** Stay home until the head is clear, nose mucous has thickened & cough is minimal.
- **Diarrhea:** Stay home until bowel movements are normal.
- **Bacterial Infections:** (such as strep throat, ear infections, etc.) Stay home until all symptoms, including fever, have been gone for at least 24 hours.
- **Viral Infection:** (such as, but not limited to, respiratory or intestinal flu) Stay home until your child is back to normal & strength returns.
- **Allergies:** Teachers must be notified of any allergies. They should be listed on the medical alert form as well as the background information sheet.
- **Conjunctivitis (pink eye):** This is extremely contagious. Stay home until all symptoms are clear.
- **Lice:** Stay home until eggs and/or lice are no longer found. Notify the teacher immediately. Treat at home with appropriate medication & wash all bedding, clothing, linens, combs and brushes in hot water.
- **Other:** This includes any illness not specifically mentioned here, accidents, surgery, etc. Stay home until released by your doctor to return to school.

*In the event of an outbreak of any of the following communicable diseases, the Ulster County Health Department may order the exclusion of children who have not been immunized: **diphtheria, Haemophilus influenzae type b, hepatitis B, measles, mumps, pertussis, pneumococcal disease, poliomyelitis, rubella, tetanus, and varicella (chickenpox).** Exclusion of students may continue until the danger of disease transmission has passed.

Families must notify the teacher and school immediately upon *known exposure* to any of the above. Intentional exposure requires immediate exclusion of the student, prior to the emergence of any symptoms, through any incubation period, and longer should the disease present. A doctor's note confirming the end of contagion is required to return to school.

*Updated School Immunization Requirements, Public Health Law Section 2164, Rules and Regulations Subpart 66-1 (Effective July 1, 2014)

http://www.health.ny.gov/prevention/immunization/schools/docs/faq_immunization_regulations.pdf

(Revised April 2016)

*Please see schools vaccination policy for further clarification

COVID-19 ADDENDUM:

1) Please make sure your child is well before sending them to school. Students with a fever or other covid symptoms will be asked to contact their physician, and if a covid test is ordered, the child may not return to school until the test is negative. If a test is not warranted by the physician, the child may not return to school until fever free without the aid of medicine for 24 hours. Students must also follow the health policy as stated in the HSCNS Handbook.

2) If a student or teacher tests positive for COVID 19, the school will follow the recommended guidelines and close down the affected class for 5 days when needed. If a family member of a teacher/student tests positive and has had contact with the teacher/student, the teacher/student must not return to school until the designated quarantine period is up.

The New York State Department of Health considers a close contact to be someone who was within 6 feet of an infected person for at least 15 minutes starting from 48 hours before illness onset until the time the person was isolated.

3) Masks are currently optional

4) If a child or household member tests positive for COVID-19, the school must be notified. We will contact the UCDOH for further instruction as well as notify the church per our contract with them. Members of the HSCNS will be notified. However, no information will be given regarding the identity of the positive individual.

Huguenot Cooperative Nursery School Vaccination Policy

All children attending Huguenot Cooperative Nursery School are required to have current vaccinations, as required by their age group. While exemptions may be considered on religious grounds, the board requires a letter written and signed by a member of the petitioner's clergy, substantiating a sincere and genuine belief which necessitates an exemption. Upon review and consideration of this request, the board reserves the right of denial if the grounds for the request do not meet our requirements for exemption.

While it is of course important to us that every member of our school community be made to feel respected and valued, our highest priority must remain the health and safety of the children we are responsible for, and therefore ensuring they are protected against contagious disease remains our policy.

For list of required vaccines visit: <https://www.health.ny.gov/publications/2370.pdf>

If your child is on an alternative vaccination schedule, please contact registration for a "Immunization Catch Up" form, to be signed by your child's pediatrician.

PAYMENT SCHEDULE AND POLICY

Tuition is due the first of each month for eight months (October – May). It is imperative that your payment be prompt in order for us to meet our monthly financial obligations. After the 15th of the month a \$25 late fee will be charged and recorded by the treasurer. Contact the treasurer if financial arrangement needs to be made. To secure your spot after the last day of the month, tuition must be paid in full for the rest of the year. There will be a \$25 penalty on returned checks.

If you wish to pay the year's tuition at the beginning of the school year, please do so by September 15th.

Tuition payments may be placed in either classroom in the tuition dropbox, paid on our schools website, or mailed to:

Huguenot Street Cooperative Nursery School
92 Huguenot St.
New Paltz, NY 12561

Since enrollment is limited and our expenses continue regardless of individual attendees, no refunds will be made for absences, scheduled holidays or emergency school closings.

If you are unable to pay your child's tuition due to financial hardship, please see the President or Treasurer. All such information will be kept confidential.

The school will not fill any open student spaces after January 31st in order to maintain classroom continuity.

The registration fee, application fee and security deposit are all non-refundable. If a student must leave the school and HSCNS is able to fill their position with another student within one month of their withdrawal, then a full or partial security deposit will be refunded. If HSCNS is unable to fill the open spot the security deposit is not refunded to the family.

Please note that all registration paperwork submitted to HSCNS will be held with the VP of Membership for 3 years. After which time all documents will be destroyed unless otherwise requested by individual members.

All required paperwork must be completed and submitted to the VP of Membership prior to the first day of school. Failure to do so will result in your child not being allowed to attend HSCNS until it is received.

REGISTRATION PROCEDURE

Registration is arranged by the membership committee headed by the VP of Membership. The HSCNS uses a lottery system to process registration to ensure fairness to all. Three separate registration sessions will be held as follows:

In-house - For current membership.

Alumni - For siblings of past students.

This registration session is to allow for a continuous preschool experience for families, not to establish a tradition of parent to child legacy.

Open - For the community at large.

On the day of registration anyone interested will come to the specified location at the school to pay the registration fee and submit a ballot to each class they would like to register for. A neutral party will then draw the names at the specified time. All are welcome to attend the drawing, however it is not necessary. The VP of Membership will contact everyone who submits a ballot. The names will be added to the class rosters in the order in which they are drawn. Once all class spots are filled, any additional names will be pulled and added to the wait-list in order. Registration paperwork, fee and security deposit must be submitted and paid by May 31 unless otherwise specified by VP of Membership.

Families with multiples (i.e., twins) will register as follows:

1 ballot will be filled out per family for each class, if the ballot is pulled, the next available spots will be filled.

For example, the Doe family is registering their twins, Jane & John for the 2 year old class. One ballot will be filled out & placed in a lottery for the Doe Family. The Doe Family ballot is pulled 4th. Jane & John will take the 4th & 5th spot in the class. The next ballot pulled will be spot #6.

*In the event the ballot is pulled and there is only one available spot in the class, 1 child will take the last spot in the class, the other will take the first spot on the waitlist.

Students must be the appropriate age to attend our classes:

Two-year olds must be 2 on or before September 15th of the current school year.

Three-year olds must be 3 on or before December 1st of the current school year.

For the $\frac{3}{4}$ mix, Three-year olds must be 3 on or before September 15th of the current school year and must be potty trained as well.

Four-year olds must be 4 on or before December 1st of the current school year.

All required paperwork must be completed and submitted to the VP of Membership prior to the first day of school. Failure to do so will result in your child not being allowed to attend HSCNS until it is received.

Failure to follow our health policy and parent helper responsibilities could result in disciplinary action including expulsion from the school.