

Section 4: A majority of the members of the school shall constitute a quorum.

Section 5: The Bylaws shall be amended by a three-fourths vote of members present, provided that the membership shall have been informed at least three days in advance that an amendment to the Bylaws would be proposed.

Cedar Lane Nursery School
9601 Cedar Lane
Bethesda, MD 20814

301-564-1680
Fax 301-897-5713
www.clns.org



Handbook

Updated

May 13, 2008

Cedar Lane Nursery School
9601 Cedar Lane
Bethesda, MD 20814

301-564-1680
Fax 301-897-5713
www.clns.org

Contents

The History of Cedar Lane Nursery School (CLNS)	3
Our Mission	4
Our Philosophy	4
Our Curriculum	4
Why We Co-Op	4
How CLNS is Run	5
The Board.....	5
Teacher-Director.....	5
Membership.....	6
Our Facilities.....	6
CLNS Inclement Weather Policy.....	6
How to Join CLNS	7
Admissions Timeline.....	8
Fees	9
Withdrawals and Refunds.....	9
Children’s Confidential Records.....	10
Changes in Tuition and Assessments.....	10
The Co-Oping Parent	10
Classroom Work.....	11
Administrative Work.....	12
Membership Meetings.....	12
Parent-Teacher Conferences.....	12
Bulletin Boards/Cubbies.....	12
Parent Education.....	13
Weekly E-mail Newsletter.....	13
Workdays.....	13
Fundraisers.....	13
Physicals.....	13
Parent Job List.....	13
Co-Op Parent’s Responsibilities.....	14
Grievance Policy.....	14

Section 4: The Secretary shall keep the minutes of all membership and Board meetings. The Secretary shall conduct the correspondence for the school as requested by the Board. The Secretary shall communicate with the State licensing and accreditation representatives as required.

Section 5: The Treasurer shall have supervision and control of all financial affairs and funds of the school, subject to the discretion of the Board. The Treasurer shall prepare the annual budget, collect all tuition and fees, manage the disbursement of all funds, keep a record of all financial transactions, prepare an annual financial statement, and provide a monthly update on budget expenditures and income for the Board. Any proposed deviation from the approved budget must be authorized in advance by the Board. Each CLNS check must have the signature of either the Treasurer or the President. The Vice President or the Secretary has the authority to co-sign checks. Two signatures are required for each check.

Section 6: Coop/Parent Education shall coordinate with the Teacher-Director to design and implement the coop orientation for the beginning of the school year, and coordinate parent education for the membership meetings. Co-op/Parent Education will also conduct and analyze the program evaluation.

Section 7: The Fundraising Chair shall plan, promote and, oversee all fundraising activities undertaken on behalf of the school.

Section 8: The Budget shall be determined by the Board, in consultation with the membership, in advance of the school year. The Board will approve the Budget.

Section 9: The Two-Year Old Program Representative shall be a parent of a child in the school's two year old program. S/he shall represent the interests of the 2s program, and shall facilitate communication to and among the parents of the children in the 2s program.

Article IX: **Special Committees**

Other committees may be formed as deemed desirable by the Board, and the procedures and activities of such committees shall be directed by the Board.

Article X: **Membership Meeting**

Section 1: Regular membership meetings shall generally be held every month at a time found agreeable to the majority of the members at the first meeting of the year.

Section 2: At least two parent-teacher conferences a year for each child shall be held to acquaint parents and teachers with the backgrounds of the children and to discuss the development and interests of each child.

Section 3: An annual meeting shall be held to elect members of the Board. Prior to the date set for the annual meeting, the President, with the approval of the Board, shall appoint a nominating committee of three members, with him/herself and the Teacher-Director as ex-officio members. This committee shall present to the membership three days prior to the annual meeting a slate for the offices of President, Vice President, Admissions Chair, and Treasurer. The Fund Raising Chair, Secretary, Co-op/Parent Education, and Two-Year Old Program representative, though members of the Board, are not elected positions. All nominations for the Board shall be written on a ballot and submitted to the membership for vote. Nominations from the floor will be entertained, provided that the consent of the nominee is obtained. The nominating committee shall inform the membership of the results of the vote within two days.

Article VII: **The Executive Board**

Section 1: The Board of Directors shall consist of the President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Co-op-Parent Education Chair, Admissions Chair, Fundraising Chair, and Two-Year Old Program Representative.

Section 2: When possible, in making the nominations and selections for each year's Board, efforts shall be made to include parents of children from each of the classes in the school, including the two-year old program representative (whose selection shall be made in consultation with the Admissions Chair).

Section 3: The Board, subject to the resolutions adopted at membership meetings, shall administer the policy of the school. A majority of the Board members shall constitute a quorum.

Section 4: The Board shall request the resignation of any member who does not follow the policies of the school in letter and spirit. The Board may request the withdrawal of any child in the school upon the recommendation of the Teacher-Director.

Section 5: The Board shall be responsible for the employment of staff members.

Section 6: The Board shall approve any expenditures for a single item over \$50.00, regardless of income source, in advance. Without prior Board approval, items will not be reimbursed.

Section 7: All approved expenditures will be paid on a reimbursement basis. The individual must provide a receipt.

Section 8: All fees, tuition, and any other funds will be made payable to CLNS. All payments will be made from CLNS.

Section 9: The Board shall conduct the business of the school during the summer vacation.

Section 10: The Board shall be elected by the membership each spring for the upcoming school year and shall take office in May preceding the beginning of the school year. Each Board member-elect shall work under the direction of the current Board member holding his/her respective position until June to ensure a smooth transition.

Article VIII: **Duties of the Board**

Section 1: The President shall be the chief executive officer of the school, shall summon meetings, shall make all non-elective appointments, and shall report his/her actions to the Board. The President shall fill any vacancies that occur in the Board during the year.

Section 2: The Vice President shall assist the President as needed and shall act in the President's place in case of his/her temporary absence or disability. The Vice President shall become President until a new President is elected by the membership if the President is unable to continue in that office

Section 3: The Admissions Chair shall recruit prospective members and respond to all inquiries related to school admissions. The Admissions Chair, in conjunction with the Membership Chair, shall maintain and update applications and other information pertaining to the school for distribution to prospective members and shall maintain all records pertaining to membership. The Admissions Chair, in conjunction with the Teacher-Director, may evaluate applicants for school membership.

Our Day: The Curriculum in Action.....15

Drop Off and Pick Up.....16

What to Bring to School.....16

What to Wear.....17

Choice Time.....17

Circle Time.....17

Outdoor Play.....17

Snacks.....17

Birthdays.....18

When There Is Conflict.....19

Health and Safety Issues.....20

In Case of Emergency.....20

Code Blue.....20

Code Red.....21

Sick Children and Contagious Diseases.....21

Medical Emergencies.....22

Medications.....22

Child Injury Reports.....22

Suspicion of Child Abuse or Neglect.....22

CLNS Bylaws.....23

The History of CLNS

Cedar Lane Nursery School (CLNS) is a nonprofit, non-sectarian, parent cooperative nursery school for two- to six-year-old children. The school was founded in 1959 by members of Cedar Lane Unitarian Universalist Church, where CLNS is still located. Cedar Lane became a member of the Maryland Council of Parent Participation Nursery Schools in 1959, and in 2002 was accredited by the Maryland State Department of Education.

Our Mission

Our mission is to provide a warm nurturing environment where children are respected and encouraged to discover themselves. Play is at the heart of learning and hands-on opportunities are provided to encourage learning.

Our Philosophy

Young children learn through play. Through play children have the opportunity to explore their environment, try out various roles and problem solving strategies, and work on the idea of discovering relationships. This involves their senses as they touch, move, create, and develop understanding about their feelings. Sensory development is facilitated by multi-sensory experiences, play, and language development. Through interaction with adults and peers, children become fascinated by the power of language as a tool for communication and understanding each other. Through positive nurturing and encouragement, children are guided towards the development of autonomy and positive self-esteem.

Our Curriculum

The focus of learning through play is for children to form concepts about themselves and their physical and social environments. Generally following the well-established Creative Curriculum, activities are designed to encourage the development of language skills, math concepts, large and small muscle development, music, and art, all in the context of play.

Why We Co-Op

The preschool years are much more than the time before “real school.” They are an unparalleled time of growth, joy, and wonder. What a wonderful time for parents to be involved in their child’s life! In return for an investment of time and energy, parents who co-op have opportunities to grow in knowledge and understanding of the world of young children, while enjoying

Section 3: Each parent or legal guardian shall follow school policy as set forth in the Membership Agreement and Manual.

Section 4: At least one parent or legal guardian shall attend the regular meetings of the Organization.

Section 5: Each family shall have one office or job for each child enrolled in the school to be performed according to the description of that job in the Manual.

Section 6: Each family shall assist with participation in fundraising activities, and with meeting the annual financial goal established by the Board.

Article VI: **Staff**

Section 1: The staff shall consist of one or more qualified nursery school teachers whose duties shall be to conduct the educational program and to participate in the parent education program. One of these shall be the Teacher-Director.

Section 2: The Teacher-Director and any teachers shall serve on the parent education committee and shall attend all meetings concerned with parent education.

Section 3: The Teacher-Director and any teachers shall sign a contract approved by the Board, which shall be signed by the President and Treasurer on behalf of the school. In the event that the President and/or Treasurer have a conflict of interest, the Vice President and/or Secretary shall sign the contract on behalf of the school instead. Contracts shall generally be for one-year terms except that the Teacher-Director’s contract may be for a two-year term if the Board determines it to be in the best interest of the school. The respective contracts should be offered every year no later than March 1st, and are to be returned by each staff member no later than the following April 1st, except that in the case of an existing two-year contract, a renewal may be offered either every year or every other year.

Section 4: Employment of the staff shall not be restricted by race, color, or national origin.

Section 5: A staff member’s resignation shall be submitted by the Board to a membership meeting for acceptance. The Board may recommend termination of a staff member’s contract by a three-fourths vote of its members. Within 48 hours members shall be notified of this recommendation. Within 96 hours the staff member will be given the required notice unless a majority of the members have requested in writing a review of the recommendation by the membership.

Section 6: Salary, benefits, and compensation will be competitive with other local, comparable parent-cooperative nursery schools.

Section 7: The amount of money budgeted for substitute teaching will match the number of paid leave days allowed for in the contract(s) of the Teacher-Director and any teachers.

Section 8: The Teacher-Director and any teachers are each responsible for finding and securing respective substitutes for days s/he cannot be at school. The President, Vice President, and the Scheduler will also have copies of the substitute list. In the event of an emergency, when the Teacher-Director or teacher is unable to secure a substitute for a given day, the President shall be responsible for finding an appropriate substitute for that day.

Section 9: The substitute must hold current CPR and First Aid training and must have early childhood classroom experience.

month's attendance. For example: September's tuition payment pays for October. The last tuition payment will be paid in March.

Section 3: The amount of tuition shall be recommended by the Board and approved by the membership.

Section 4: Special financial assessments may be levied on members during the school year by a three-quarters vote of those present at a regular membership meeting. The membership shall be informed at least three days in advance of the meeting that a vote will be taken on a special assessment.

Section 5: Tuition shall be payable monthly to the Treasurer in advance of a date to be specified by the Board. Tuition will be pro-rated for children who enroll after the beginning of school year, with a two-month non-refundable tuition payment required.

Section 6: A non-refundable fee for supplies, capital equipment, annual events, and field trips shall be paid at the beginning of each school year.

Section 7: We should be careful, cost-conscious, creative, and efficient with our money. The purchasing representative will purchase most supplies and materials for the school. We will limit ad-hoc purchasing.

Section 8: Members who withdraw before the end of the school year shall give 30 days written notice to the Board. The tuition payment for the month of withdrawal is still due and payable to CLNS. Other tuition paid in advance, with the exception of the initial two months prepayment, may be refunded if withdrawal is for one of the following reasons upon written request to the Board:

- ❖ Serious or prolonged illness;
- ❖ Permanent removal of family from the area; or
- ❖ Mutual agreement between member and the Board on such withdrawal if there is unsatisfactory adjustment of the child or of the member participator to the school, and if a suitable replacement is found within 30 days and without loss of tuition to the school. Extenuating circumstances may be evaluated by the Board.

Section 9: In the event of the dissolution of the Organization, all assets will be used to further educational and charitable activities in accordance with Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of the United States of America.

Article V: ***Duties of Members***

Section 1: Participation shall be considered mandatory. At least one parent or legal guardian from each family shall participate in the classroom. Families who give birth during the school year may be given four weeks free leave without having to make up participation days if the participation schedule permits. Cases of unanticipated illness of sufficiently long duration (including complications of pregnancy), deaths in the family, adoption of a child, or other similar events that may cause a family to be unable to fulfill its co-oping responsibilities for an extended period, may be considered individually by the Board.

Section 2: The family shall participate according to the special needs of the program in making and maintaining equipment and in maintaining the facilities and the playground.

a shared experience with like-minded parents. Co-oping is a responsibility and a commitment to the membership; it is also a gift to your child.

We believe childhood is more than just preparation for adulthood. It is a one-way journey, to be enjoyed along the way by children and the adults who care about them. We believe that children learn best when they:

- ❖ Play in a stimulating, developmentally-appropriate environment.
- ❖ Have first-hand experiences that use multiple senses.
- ❖ Are given choices and decisions to make.
- ❖ Are allowed to solve conflicts and problems when appropriate.
- ❖ Are seen as individuals with their own rates of development.
- ❖ Enjoy a classroom that reflects their work and their interests.
- ❖ Have a comfortable and familiar routine.
- ❖ Have a developmentally-appropriate curriculum and materials.
- ❖ Are supported through interaction with caring adults.

How CLNS Is Run

The Board

The Board of Directors makes policy and advises the Teacher-Director. Board meetings are held monthly or may be called by the President. A three-quarters vote of members present is required to make changes to the bylaws. A majority of the membership is required when a vote is taken electronically (by e-mail).

Teacher-Director

The Teacher-Director, in conjunction with teaching staff, is responsible for the day-to-day implementation of the curriculum, and for ongoing communication with parents. She/he is responsible for supervising any teaching staff. She/he is expected to continue to develop professionally, provide parent education, and attend board and membership meetings as well as school functions.

Teaching Staff

Teachers shall be responsible for the implementation of the curriculum for the class to which s/he is assigned, and for ongoing communication with parents in that class. S/he is expected to continue to develop professionally, provide parent education, and attend board and membership meetings as well as school functions.

The Membership

CLNS parents participate in the classrooms in support of the teachers on a regular basis. They take part in other facets of the program, including, but not limited to, taking a “school job,” participating in “work days,” conducting fundraising events, and attending monthly membership meetings. For further information see the Membership Agreement section one.

Our Facilities

Cedar Lane Nursery School is located in the lower level of the Cedar Lane Unitarian Universalist Church, in a beautiful wooded setting next to Rock Creek Park. The entrance to the lower parking lot is from the driveway closest to the traffic light at Beach Drive and Cedar Lane. Our address is 9601 Cedar Lane, Bethesda, MD 20814. Our telephone number is 301-564-1680, and our facsimile number is 301-897-5713. Our facilities are lead and asbestos free. Other information is available on our website: www.clns.org.

Inclement Weather Policy

For school closings due to inclement weather, CLNS follows Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS). If MCPS is closed due to inclement weather, all CLNS classes will be canceled. To check the status of Montgomery County, go to www.schoolsout.com or check radio or television. CLNS may offer additional days of classes if Montgomery County uses its allotted number of snow days.

CLNS Bylaws

Article I: **Name**

The name of the organization shall be the Cedar Lane Nursery School, Inc.

Article II: **Purpose**

The purpose of the school is to sponsor and maintain a cooperative, non-profit organization, which aids in bridging the gap between the child's home and the outside environment, to help the child feel comfortable with a variety of adults and children, to develop new skills, and to offer parents an opportunity to participate with their children in these tasks.

Article III: **Membership**

Section 1: The active members of the Organization shall be the parents and guardians of the children enrolled in the school.

Section 2: Each family shall have one vote for each child enrolled in the school.

Section 3: By September 1st of the school year, children must have had their 2nd birthday to be eligible for the 2s program, their 3rd birthday to be eligible for the 3s program, and their 4th birthday to be eligible for the 4/5s program. Subject to Board approval, children turning 3 or 4 in September who demonstrate capabilities warranting early admission to the respective 3s or 4/5s programs may be admitted to those programs upon the recommendation of the Teacher-Director. The Teacher-Director shall develop evaluation criteria to be applied in assessing whether early admission is appropriate in particular circumstances. For each child so assessed (at the child's parent's request), the Teacher-Director shall make written findings supporting her/his decision whether or not to recommend the requested early admission of the child.

Section 4: Admission of members shall not be restricted by race, color, or national origin.

Section 5: Current members in good standing (as outlined in the membership agreement), their siblings, and alumni families in good standing will be given priority, in that order, in applying for membership. Members of the Cedar Lane Unitarian Universalist Church shall also be given subsequent priority in applying for memberships up to 20% of the school. Subsequent applications are “first come – first served” with attempts for gender and age balance.

Section 6: All applicants may be subject to evaluation by the Teacher-Director and/or the Admissions Chair prior to the acceptance of their application and admission to the school.

Article IV: **Tuition and Fees**

Section 1: A non-refundable application fee per child shall be paid at the time of application. This fee is not required for returning students.

Section 2: Two months' tuition (covering May and portions of June and September) per child shall be paid at the time the child is accepted into the school or by a date to be specified by the Board. No refund of the first two months' tuition shall be made after having been received unless the Board unanimously votes to refund it. Each month's tuition payment then pays for the following

Medical Emergencies

Emergency contact information for each child is kept on file in the respective classrooms. If a child or an adult is injured at school, the teacher should be notified and an accident report must be completed immediately. Parents will be notified in the event of a medical emergency. If urgent medical care is required, the child will be taken to the nearest hospital for treatment.

Medications

If your child requires medication during the school day, a Physician's Medical Order form must be on file at school. Medications must be in the original packaging and kept under lock and key, directly supervised by the teacher.

Child Injury Reports

A Child Injury Report must be filled out if a child is injured in any way during school hours. The adult who saw the injury take place completes the report. The completed form is to be given to the teacher.

Suspicion of Child Abuse or Neglect.

In accordance with Maryland law (Article 7, Section 35A), we are required to report any suspicion of child abuse or neglect to the teacher immediately. Any parent or teacher who has reason to believe a child has been abused or neglected is required to make a report to: Child, Youth and Family Services division of the Montgomery County Dept. of Health and Human Services, 401 Hungerford Drive, Rockville, MD 20850. The main phone number for the Child Welfare Service branch is 240-777-3500. The 24-hour reporting line is 240-777-4417. Regulations of the Dept. of Health and Human Resources require that the identity of the person making the report remain confidential.

If MCPS starts two hours late, CLNS's 2s class will be canceled. Also, if MCPS starts two hours late on Thursday or Friday, the 3s and/or 4/5s classes will be canceled.

If MCPS starts two hours late on Monday, Tuesday, or Wednesday, the 3s and/or 4/5s may have class. The Teacher-Director will determine if there is an adequate adult to student ratio based on the availability of the cooping parents by 7:30 a.m. Assuming there is an adequate ratio, the Teacher-Director will decide whether or not to open school on time or slightly delayed. In either event, the Teacher-Director will activate the Emergency Phone Tree in order to inform all parents about the status of the school opening.

How to Join CLNS

By September 1st of the school year, children must have had their 2nd birthday to be eligible for the 2s program, their 3rd birthday to be eligible for the 3s program, and their 4th birthday to be eligible for the 4/5s program. An effort is made to keep a balance of boys/girls and ages. Enrollment may also be limited based on the needs of the current group. Subject to Board approval, children turning 3 or 4 in September who demonstrate capabilities warranting admission to the respective 3s or 4/5s programs may be admitted to those programs upon the recommendation of the Teacher-Director.

Inquiries about membership are referred to the Admissions Chair, who will schedule a school visit and give the prospective member an application package (which is also available on the CLNS website). When a completed packet and a check for the non-refundable application fee are received by the Admissions Chair, parents will be notified by letter of the application's status. The nature and commitment of a co-op school shall be discussed with prospective parents.

CLNS considers these points in the following order of priority before accepting a family:

- ❖ Status as current members.
- ❖ Status as siblings of current members.
- ❖ Status as alumni families in good standing.
- ❖ Status as members of Cedar Lane Unitarian Universalist Church.
- ❖ Date of application.
- ❖ Age and gender of child.
- ❖ Ability of parents to fulfill membership responsibilities.
- ❖ Admission of members shall not be restricted by race, color, or national origin.

Admissions Timeline

- ❖ October, November, and December - Inquiries and school visits help parents see the school in action.
- ❖ October, November, and December - Applications accepted for the next school year.
- ❖ January - Current members, past members in good standing, and church members must submit applications to receive priority placement consideration.
- ❖ Mid-to-late February - Acceptance letters mailed. Accepted applicants have 2 weeks to mail a non-refundable deposit of one month's tuition to demonstrate their intention to attend. If appropriate, waiting list letters are sent at this time.
- ❖ March 15 - First tuition prepayment due.
- ❖ April 15 - Second tuition prepayment due.
- ❖ August 1 - All required forms must be received by the Health and Safety Chair. Note: late forms must be accompanied by a \$150 late fee. Children may not attend CLNS nor may parents co-op unless all requisite forms are respectively received and approved.

Code Red

Definition: The term "code red" indicates that there is imminent danger to all staff and children. The teacher declares the code red. Follow these procedures:

- ❖ If outside, bring the children inside.
- ❖ Ensure all children are accounted for and escorted at all times.
- ❖ Keep calm; maintain a quiet, normal atmosphere in the classroom.
- ❖ Notify CLUUC staff to lock the outside doors.
- ❖ Escort the children to room 11 – keep children away from windows.
- ❖ Close double doors in hallway.
- ❖ Bring the class daily sign in/out clipboard, First Aid supplies, and a cell phone to room 11.
- ❖ Activate emergency phone tree.
- ❖ Turn on battery-powered radio.
- ❖ Release the children to authorized people as they arrive.

Sick Children and Contagious Diseases

Children who are not feeling well cannot fully participate, and germs spread quickly in a preschool classroom. Please keep your child at home if:

- ❖ He/she has a fever. Temperature should be normal -- without medication -- for 24 hours before returning to school.
- ❖ There is indication of an eye infection.
- ❖ There is indication of any contagious disease, such as a rash or severe itching.
- ❖ If vomiting or diarrhea occurs, children should remain at home for 24 hours after the last episode.
- ❖ Children who are absent for 3 or more consecutive school days due to illness must bring a doctor's note stating that they may resume normal activities. If your child is going to be absent, notify the school office 301-564-1680 as early as possible.

Health and Safety Issues

In Case of Emergency

There is a radio from Montgomery County called the emergency alert radio in each classroom. The radio is automatically activated in case of severe weather or other local alerts.

Whenever the children are outside the classroom area (e.g., on the playground), the teacher or a co-oping parent accompanying the children should have the class daily sign in/out clipboard and a cell phone with her/him at all times.

The Department of Homeland Security requires schools to formulate emergency procedures. CLNS's procedures are reviewed at parent orientation, and are posted in the classrooms, and the parent bulletin board. There are two alert levels:

Code Blue

Definition: The term "code blue" indicates that there is an emergency or crisis near or at Cedar Lane Nursery School. The teacher declares the code blue. The teacher and the parent/co-opsers follow these procedures:

- ❖ If outside, bring the children inside.
- ❖ Bring the children to the 4/5s classroom.
- ❖ Ensure all children are accounted for and escorted at all times.
- ❖ Keep calm; maintain a quiet, normal atmosphere in the classroom.
- ❖ Notify CLUUC staff to lock the outside building doors.
- ❖ Lock classroom doors.
- ❖ Activate emergency phone tree.
- ❖ Release the children to authorized people as they arrive.

Required forms include:

- General Health Inventory.
- Immunization records.
- Health form for the parent(s) intending to co-op, including proof of a negative TB test within the last 12 months.
- Emergency Information Card.
- Health and Safety Information sheet.
- Proof of adequate auto insurance coverage.

Fees

Fees include: Tuition, Activity Fee, Equipment Fee, Lunch Bunch (optional), and Afternoon Enrichment (optional). See the current fee schedule for tuition and fee amounts. There is a late fee for monthly tuition received after the 15th of the month.

The first month's tuition is non-refundable and is due March 15. It covers the partial months of September and June. A second month's non-refundable tuition prepayment is due April 15th. This payment covers May tuition. When school starts, families will pay tuition for October through April on a monthly basis before the 15th of the respective previous months. Tuition will be pro-rated for children who enroll after the beginning of school year, with a two-month non-refundable tuition payment required.

Withdrawals and Refunds

Members who withdraw before the end of the school year shall give 30 days written notice to the Board. The tuition payment for the month of withdrawal is still due and payable to CLNS. In all cases, one month's tuition is due to CLNS. Upon written request to the Board, other tuition paid in advance, with

the exception of the two months tuition prepayments, may be refunded if withdrawal is for one of the following reasons:

- ❖ Serious or prolonged illness.
- ❖ Permanent relocation of the family from the area.
- ❖ There is mutual agreement between the Board and the member that there are issues that cannot be resolved and a suitable replacement can be enrolled without loss of tuition to the school within 30 days.

Violations of the Membership Agreement may result in no tuition refunds. All fees will be pro-rated.

Children's Confidential Records

Records are maintained for each child for one year after leaving the school. After one year the records are destroyed unless parents request in writing that they be sent to them. The records are confidential. The Teacher-Director will release copies of the records upon a written request from parents.

Changes in Tuition and Assessments

The Board of Directors will recommend the tuition each year and send it to the membership for approval. Special financial assessments may be levied by a three-quarters vote of those present. The membership must be given three days' notice of the meeting where a vote on assessment will be taken.

The Co-oping Parent

The success of CLNS depends on its members honoring their responsibilities to the program. Each family must give careful consideration to their choice of a cooperative program and fully understand the expectations of being a member.

When There is Conflict

Moments of conflict are expected and inevitable in the preschool classroom, and, in fact, frequently present a teachable moment. Timeouts don't help children learn to resolve conflicts, or stop out-of-control behavior. They are not used at CLNS. When teachers and parents have established strategies prior to the conflict, they are able to react calmly and consistently. We try to follow this four-step strategy:

Step 1 - Observe, for a minute, to determine if you need to intervene or if the children are working it out on their own.

Step 2 - If there is no danger to anyone, but you feel it is appropriate to stop the behavior to keep things from escalating, enter in with questions or comments, such as "What is this game?" or "I see you both want the same toy."

Step 3 - Help the children define the problem, and ask if they have a solution. If their solution is not acceptable, explain why.

Step 4 - If they cannot come up with a good solution, offer one. Get on their eye level and be sure to have the child's full attention.

The following tips also help in conflict situations:

- ❖ Gentle physical contact sometimes helps establish eye contact.
- ❖ Encourage the children to look at each other.
- ❖ If a child has been physically hurt, let the offending child know that is not acceptable behavior: "I can't let you hurt Johnny."
- ❖ Encourage them to label their feelings: "I see that you're angry."
- ❖ Do not force apologies, as forced apologies are rarely sincere. Instead ask the child who has hurt someone, "Is there anything you want to say to Johnny?"
- ❖ Talk about "next time" behavior: "Next time you can tell Johnny you need the long block for your road."

One parent on the co-op list provides a snack each day. We request a nutritious choice that reflects two food groups. Maryland requires that snacks -- including name brands -- be recorded on a form; our forms for each class are posted on the bulletin boards inside the classrooms. Please advise the teacher if your child has any food allergies -- make a sign to attach to the inside of the classroom's snack cabinet to alert others.

Special treats are allowed to complement, but not replace, a healthy snack. If you wish to share a favorite family food, birthday treats, or a special-occasion snack, please discuss your idea in advance with the teacher. Snacks can be prepared by the children in school as a learning activity, with advance planning. Suggested snacks include:

- ❖ Fresh fruit: whole peaches, peeled and sectioned oranges, halves of bananas, whole or quartered apples.
- ❖ Yogurt without candy, add-ins or artificial sweeteners.
- ❖ Rice cakes, non-sweetened.
- ❖ Granola bars, try both the soft and crunchy varieties.
- ❖ Cut-up veggies, children enjoy making and eating this with dip.
- ❖ Pretzels, low sodium, whole-grain.
- ❖ Triscuits or other whole-grain crackers.
- ❖ Small pieces of whole-grain bagels.
- ❖ Fruit smoothies for a real treat (yogurt, fruit, orange juice)...you'll need a blender for this one.
- ❖ Low fat raisin English muffin quarters.
- ❖ Whole wheat pita quarters warmed in microwave.
- ❖ Cheese cubes.

Birthdays

Please do not distribute invitations to birthday parties at school unless you are inviting everyone. Birthdays may be celebrated in school with a special treat at snack time, with advance notice to the teacher.

Classroom Work

Parents are generally assigned two to three days per month to work in the classroom. Co-oping parents should arrive 15 minutes before the scheduled start of class, and are expected to stay until all children have been picked up, as well for a half an hour after class for clean-up. The schedule is based on the number and composition of the class. Parents provide healthy snacks for the children. See the discussion on page 13.

Field Trips are regularly scheduled to extend learning out into the community. Parents providing transportation must carry \$100,000/\$300,000 in liability insurance and \$100,000/\$300,000 in uninsured motorist coverage on their auto insurance. Parents are strongly encouraged to file proof of coverage prior to the first day of school, and to provide updated proof, as necessary. Car seats are required by law for children under 6 or under 60 lbs. No child may ride in the front seat of a car equipped with passenger-side airbags. For each trip, signed permission slips are required for each child attending.

Families who give birth are given four weeks of leave from classroom duties. Other changes in family circumstances may be brought to the Board for consideration. If illness keeps a parent from fulfilling her/his duties in the classroom, it is the parent's responsibility to find a replacement parent, pay for sitter expenses incurred by the replacement, and take a subsequent turn for the replacement on the schedule. Nannies, sitters, or grandparents may not be replacements.

In addition to co-oping days, each family will be scheduled as the emergency parent or E-parent approximately once or twice a month. On this day, the designated E-parent must be available to co-op if an emergency arises. This means that the E-parent should arrange backup babysitting for other siblings in the family if necessary and be able to be reached by phone during school hours. The E-parent will cover for cooping parents when an emergency arises. For example, if a child or co-oping parent wakes up in

the night or morning ill, the parent can call upon the E-parent. If a co-oping parent has to call upon an E-parent the regularly scheduled co-oping parent is required to co-op for the E-parent at a later date. E-parents, however, should not be used for conflicts that are known about ahead of time such as doctor appointments or trips. Also, if a co-oping parent's child is ill and s/he knows that the child will not be able to attend school the next day, the co-oping parent should try to swap co-op days with someone else so that the E-parent will be available up to the last minute.

Administrative Work

Parents run CLNS! In addition to assisting in the classroom, each family has administrative duties, one job for each enrolled child. A list of jobs can be found at the end of this section. In addition, parents take part in the following activities:

Membership Meetings. Monthly membership meetings are regularly held on a day designated by the current Board (e.g., the first Thursday of the month). Meetings are devoted to parent education, discussion of classroom and co-op issues, and other membership matters as needed. Meetings also serve as a way for parents to get to know each other better. Issues concerning administration should be directed to the President. Meetings are for adults only (except for nursing infants); please make arrangements for your children.

Parent-Teacher Conferences. Parent-Teacher Conferences are held mid-semester twice a year. At least one parent must attend. The teacher or the parent may request additional conferences at any time.

Bulletin Boards/Cubbies. One bulletin board in the hallway outside the classroom is for parent communication. The board is for announcements and articles of interest and upcoming events such as parent education opportunities. In addition, each child has a cubby for take-home information and artwork. Check cubbies daily for mail.

What to Wear

Both adults and children should dress comfortably for messy activities and active play. Shoes should be suited for play as well. Sandals, open toes, or dressy shoes with slippery soles are not safe. If boots are worn on inclement days, please include a pair of shoes to change into. We go outdoors unless it is bitterly cold or there is heavy rain. On days of light rain, send your child with hooded raingear and boots. On snowy days, your child will need a hat and boots along with a warm coat. Label all clothing with your child's name.

Choice Time

During this time, children choose an activity at any of the centers in the classroom. The role of the teacher and co-oping parents during this time is to talk to the children, ask questions about what they are doing, and support them with encouragement. This is a time to get to know children individually and to make observations and assessments.

Circle Time

This is a group time planned by the teacher aimed at one or more of the goals of the curriculum. S/he may read to the group, play a learning game, sing, or lead movement activities.

Outdoor Play

The playground is an extension of the classroom. The outdoors offers an opportunity for strengthening muscles and observing the natural world. When weather permits, snacks, art, and story time may be taken outside.

Snacks

Snack time is a social time, as well as a time for children to renew their energy. Snacks are served "family" style, as appropriate, and children learn to take their fair share and practice table manners. They also take responsibility for cleaning up when they finish.

If there is persistent negative behavior, parents and teachers must collaborate to find solutions. Parents are encouraged to share information about stresses the child may be feeling outside of school, such as a new baby, family illness, or an absent parent.

It is essential to the quality of our program that CLNS has good communication between parents and teacher. Please approach the teacher if you have a suggestion, question, or comment about classroom-related issues.

Drop off and Pick up

The 4/5s class begins at 9:15 am (M/Tu/W/Th/F), the 3s class begins at 9:30 am (M/W/F), and the 2s class begins at 9:30 am (Tu/Th). Children must be escorted into the classroom and be acknowledged by the teacher or co-op parent. Children must be signed in and out on a sheet posted for that purpose. The children in the 2s class are to be picked up at 12:00pm. Unless arrangements have been made to stay for lunch bunch and/or extended day, the children in the 4/5s classes will be picked up at 12:00 pm and the children in the 3s class will be picked up at 12:15 pm. We expect some tears at the start of the school year. Your teacher will have suggestions for easing the transition from home to school.

What to Bring to School

- ❖ A backpack or other carryall with your child's name printed clearly.
- ❖ A spare change of clothing in a plastic sealable bag.
- ❖ Diapers and wipes, if needed.
- ❖ Please note: guns and toys that promote rough or violent play should stay at home.

Parent Education. A primary goal of CLNS is to strengthen parental skills and deepen parental understanding of the young child and early education, for both school and home. Parent education will be an integral part of the membership meetings. In addition, the school will pass on information to the members about parent education opportunities in the community.

Weekly E-mail Newsletter. This contains announcements, articles of general interest, schedules, and other items related to CLNS. Parents are invited to submit entries.

Work Days. Each family signs up for two workdays over the course of the school year - - a pre-school year set-up day and a spring clean-up day. One parent is required to attend each session.

Fundraisers. CLNS is a nonprofit corporation. The school bylaws direct that we be careful, cost-conscious, and efficient regarding school spending. At the same time it is important that tuition remains affordable. Accordingly, CLNS holds fundraising events each year. Annual fundraising enables the school to replace worn materials, maintain facilities, and keep a viable financial cushion. Fundraising requires the cooperative efforts of all members. The Board will determine a fundraising goal annually.

Physicals. Maryland requires all health forms to be on file for a child or a parent to attend school. Each co-op parent must have a Health Form completed by a physician and have had a negative TB test within the last 24 months.

Parent Job List

BOARD OF DIRECTORS: President, Vice President/Operations Manager, Secretary/Recorder/Licensing Chair, Treasurer, Admissions Chair, Fundraising Chair, Co-op/Parent Education Chair; and Two-Year Old Program Representative.

GENERAL MEMBERSHIP: Administrative Assistants, Alumni Database, Archivist, Capital Equipment, Classroom Support, Field Trips/Activities, Health and Safety Chair, Librarians, Membership Chair, Newsletter Coordinator, Webmaster, Photographer/Visual Production, Publicity, Purchasing Chair, Scheduler, and Social Coordinator. Jobs may be changed, added or deleted, as needed.

Co-op Parent's Responsibilities

- ❖ I am always on time when I co-op.
- ❖ I focus on the children and keep conversation with adults to a minimum.
- ❖ I model appropriate behavior for the children.
- ❖ I am patient and allow children time to figure things out for themselves.
- ❖ I never leave children unsupervised.
- ❖ I do what is asked of me cheerfully.
- ❖ I am consistent, positive, and flexible.
- ❖ I cope with difficult behavior.
- ❖ I ask questions when I don't understand or want to know more.
- ❖ I show no favoritism.
- ❖ I do not leave until the room is tidy and all the children have left.
- ❖ I am discreet in conversation with children about their families.

Grievance/Request Policy

If a member of Cedar Lane Nursery School has a grievance, concern, or request that deals with either the teacher or policy of the school they must follow the procedure described below:

- ❖ Send an e-mail or letter detailing the grievance/request to the Vice President who is responsible for acting as a liaison between the membership, the board, and the teacher. This e-mail must be sent at least a full week before a board meeting to ensure it is discussed and decided upon at that meeting.

- ❖ After the description of the grievance/request has been received the Vice President will make sure that the board members receive the request in time to be able to discuss and vote on it at the next board meeting.
- ❖ At the board meeting the board will determine whether any additional information is needed from the member who brought forth the issue.
- ❖ Once the board has sufficient information and has appropriately discussed the matter, it will take a vote. The vote of the board will be final and the results of the vote will be communicated to the member who brought the issue to the board's attention.
- ❖ If the member with the grievance/request is a member of the board, they will not be present for the discussion and will abstain from the vote on the issue.

Our Day: The Curriculum in Action

Our curriculum addresses the needs of the “whole child.” The day is balanced with active and quiet activities, and both child-initiated and teacher-guided experiences. The mainstays of our learning environment include block play, art, dramatic play, music, books, table toys, puzzles, and water play. Children are encouraged, but not required, to participate in a variety of activities. The process of learning is more important than the product. The CLNS curriculum acknowledges differences in development, culture, temperament, and interests among children. A child is assessed by how much he or she has learned, not by comparison to other children. A copy of the curriculum is available from the Teacher-Director.

Physical and emotional safety is essential to a learning environment. Our goal is to guide children to develop self-control and good judgment, to help them learn ways to manage anger and frustration, and to respect and understand the feelings of others. Corrections are made gently and positively and in private when possible. Often simple redirection will stop unwanted behavior.