

**Rockville Presbyterian Cooperative
Nursery School**

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Policy Manual

School Year 2022-2023

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Admissions Policy

Regardless of race, color, ethnic or national origin any child is eligible for admission. All admitted students are entitled to all the rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to students at our school. We do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin in administration of our educational policies, admissions policies, and other school administered programs. All attending children must be the age of the class by September 1st of that school year refer to COMAR 13A.16.16.08 D. Regarding **immunizations**: The COMAR regulations title 13A, subtitle 16, .03 Management and Administration .04 Child Records addresses the fact that a child admitted is required to have had medical records completed by a physician and to be current on their immunizations, unless “the parent objects because of bona fide religious beliefs and practices.” If for any reason your enrolled child(ren) is/are not vaccinated or hasn’t had as many vaccinations as is specified in COMAR 13A.15.03.03 & COMAR 13A.16.03.04.G & H RPCNS our membership will be notified, upon request, that there has/have been an unvaccinated or incompletely vaccinated child(ren) admitted. Regarding **toilet training**: children admitted into the four-year-old class must be toilet trained, unless a waiver is granted by the Board of Directors. Children in the younger classes who are not toilet trained must bring with them their own supply of disposable diapers, diaper wipes, and a changing pad. (We strongly recommend that a spare set of clothes also be kept in the child’s backpack at school.)

Any child with a physically handicapping condition must be advised that Rockville Presbyterian Cooperative Nursery School, located in the basement of the Rockville Presbyterian Church’s Education Building, has no ramp facilities for a wheelchair. A child with a physically handicapping condition is eligible for enrollment if he or she has received an assessment, a diagnostic evaluation, or a recommendation by a qualified person familiar with handicaps, that mainstreaming is recommended. In addition, this child must receive special services outside the school for the handicapping condition. Any child with a mentally or emotionally handicapping condition is eligible for enrollment if this condition does not require specialized care on a one-to-one basis. The Board of Directors and the appropriate teacher will have the final authority in all enrollment decisions for a child with a mentally, emotionally or physically handicapping condition. RPCNS holds a *Child Development Program License* from Maryland State Department of Education under COMAR 13A.subtitle 16. RPCNS is designated as a non-public private nursery school. In compliance with these regulations none of our staff is required to be certified in special education.

We have Open Enrollment throughout the year. Re-enrollment is held during December. Remaining spaces are filled in the order in which the applications are received. RPCNS only enrolls students on a full-time basis. This means that once a child is enrolled in a class that child is expected to attend that class each time it is scheduled to meet, unless the child is physically unable to do so (for example, due to illness). The school reserves the right to strive for a boy-girl balance in the classroom. Once a class is filled, a wait list will be started. The Fours curriculum is designed to prepare our students for Kindergarten; it is progressive in nature; and therefore, enrollment of new students in the Fours for each school year will not extend beyond the beginning of the winter break in December unless the child has been enrolled in another similar program. The Director, in consultation with the teacher, parent members of that class, and the Board, will make the final decision.

RPCNS is licensed by the Maryland State Department of Education’s Office of Child Care (OCC). The OCC regulations clearly state which forms it requires each student to have completed

and on file before the child attends school. In addition, RPCNS has additional forms that must be completed and submitted by the student's parent prior to the start of the school year. Please refer to the Parent Handbook, the enrollment packet or the Admissions Coordinator for a complete list of required forms. It is our policy that your child may not attend class at RPCNS until **ALL** required forms are complete and on file.

Enrollment, Tuition and Fees Policy

Enrollment

Enrollment for new students: RPCNS has **rolling admissions**, which means that an application can be submitted at any time during the year. Our **application** has two components: the completed application form and the application fee. An application is considered incomplete until both components are received by RPCNS's Admissions Coordinator.

Enrollment after August 1st: If a family enrolls their child after our membership has paid their Tuition Installment, submitted the Enrollment Packet forms, and tuition has started to be collected for those making monthly payments, then the following sequence is to be followed by the new member family under the guidance of our Admissions Coordinator:

- Prior to joining the following are due before their child starts to attend class:
 - RPCNS application must be completed and it's fee paid;
 - The Membership Agreement must be signed and submitted;
 - The Tuition Installment paid;
 - All the forms in the Enrollment Packet completed and submitted;
- Before their child begins attending the Tuition owed for the remainder of the year will be determined on a per diem basis from the child(ren)'s start date, and a payment schedule worked out with the Director, Admissions Coordinator, Treasurer and Accountant;
- The Activity Fee is to be paid with the second tuition payment.
 - If the child's start date is prior to winter break then the full amount is owed;
 - If the child's start date is after January 1st, then half the annual amount is due;
- The Clean-up Deposit is to be paid with the third month's tuition.

If a family enrolls their child later in the school year, this aforementioned schedule may need to be adapted to fit the remaining time frame. If this is the case, a customized schedule will be worked out with the new member family by the Admissions Coordinator, the Director and Treasurer and the Accountant. The *Mid-Year Enrollment form* will also be implemented to disseminate pertinent information to the applicable Board members.

Re-enrollment for current students: Re-enrollment for the following school year starts before winter break, with currently enrolled students receiving priority over new students for spaces. An Acceptance Letter is mailed to the applicant, which confirms their acceptance, usually well within a month.

Please understand that any family who has been a member, who then withdraws their child from RPCNS, and then requests to re-enroll their child (either for the same school year or a subsequent school year), must re-apply to RPCNS. The **re-application process** includes completing a new application, paying the application fee, paying the full tuition installment, signing a new Membership Agreement and paying any applicable fees. If there is a wait list for

their child's grade, the family will then be placed on the wait list, in the order, by date, in which their application was received.

Tuition Installment:

What is the tuition installment? It is a payment applied to the total annual tuition owed for an enrolled student. It is used to confirm an accepted parent member's intention to have their child attend RPCNS. Once a student has been accepted to RPCNS, a tuition installment is required to be paid in order to hold the child's space in our school.

How much is the tuition Installment? Please refer to your *Membership Agreement* for the amount or contact our Admissions Coordinator. Please note that the full amount of the installment payment must be paid even if you are a parent member currently serving as one of the Board officers whose position receives a tuition discount. Refunds to the Co-Chairs, Treasurer, and Facilities manager are made in May. The refund is calculated on the number of months served in the school year at the four tuition deposit amount for that school year. As those board positions run on a calendar year basis, 4/9 of the total refund will be paid in the first May they serve on the board (for their service from February-May). The remainder of the refund (5/9 for the months September-January) will be paid in May of the following year.

When is the tuition installment due? When the tuition installment is due depends on two factors: whether the applicant is new to our school or a returning student, and when their acceptance letter was received. If the acceptance letter is received by a returning family in the spring of the preceding school year, the tuition installment is to be paid no later than May 1st. If the acceptance letter is received by a new family to our school the tuition installment is to be paid within two weeks of receiving their acceptance letter.

Is the tuition installment refundable? Please refer to the *Refund Policy* below.

Tuition:

What is Tuition? Tuition is the primary portion of money paid by a member family to RPCNS for their child to attend our school.

How is Tuition to be paid? Tuition is paid as follows. RPCNS accepts payment in the form of personal checks, cashier's checks, money order or cash. The first portion of the annual tuition to be paid is the Tuition Installment, (*see more detailed explanation below about the Tuition Installment*). The remaining tuition balance may be paid in full prior to the start of school, or in payments made over the course of 9 months, starting in August, through April (each payment is due on the 1st of the month).

When is a tuition payment considered late? Tuition is considered late if it is not deposited by noon of the seventh day of that month. When the seventh day of the month is on a Saturday, Sunday or holiday, tuition is then due on the weekday immediately *preceding* the seventh of the month.

Are there Tuition Discounts? Yes. Member families are entitled to all discounts for which they are qualified. The following are circumstances in which a tuition discount may be applicable.

- When a family has more than one child enrolled during the same academic year, a 10% sibling discount is available. The discount is taken off the younger child's tuition and any extended day program the younger sibling is enrolled in.

- Certain Officers of the Board of Directors receive a tuition discount. The term of office on the board of directors is from 1 February through to the end of the following January, 12 months. It is during these months, while the parent member is serving in one of the board positions which receives a tuition discount that they are to pay the discounted rate of tuition.
 - The Chairperson traditionally receives 100% tuition discount for their oldest child's tuition. When there are co-chairs, they shall share the compensation for one child's tuition, up to the value of the current 4s tuition rate, as decided by themselves.
 - The Treasurer and Facility Coordinator also received a tuition discount. The amount of this discount is to be confirmed with our Accountant before the board officer starts paying a discounted rate of tuition.
- There is also a tuition discount given to the enrolled children of current teaching staff. Refer to the *Requirements for Hiring Professional Staff* section for further details.
- There is 10% discount granted to families who are members of the Rockville Presbyterian Church.

Fees

Activity Fee and Clean-up Deposit: In addition to the tuition, there are two additional fees paid in the first couple of months of the school year. These are:

- **The Activity Fee**
 - **What is the Activity Fee?** It is money paid by the parent member to cover the cost of art and materials used over the course of the school year, as well as the cost of field trips for the enrolled student.
 - **When is the Activity Fee paid and how much is it?** It is paid in full, at the beginning of the school year (see the *Membership Agreement* for the specific due date and the amount for your child's grade.)
 - **Is the Activity Fee refundable?** Please refer to our *Refund Policy* below.
- **The Clean-up Deposit**
 - **What is the Clean-up Deposit?** It is money paid by the parent member to cover costs incurred if the member family doesn't full fill their Work Day obligations. (refer to the *Membership Agreement*)
 - **When is the Clean-up Deposit paid and how much is it?** It is paid in full, one fee per member family, early in the school year (see the *Membership Agreement* for the specific date due and the amount for your child's grade.)
 - **Is the Clean-up Deposit Refundable?** Please refer to our *Refund Policy* below.

Policy to Address Non-Payment

RPCNS must meet financial obligations; therefore timely payment of tuition and fees is essential to the smooth operation of our school. Please refer to your *Membership Agreement* and see the *Addendum* for specifics on late fees and fines.

- If a family is having financial difficulties, they are encouraged to inform the Chairperson(s) or Treasurer of their circumstances. Alternative payment arrangements may be made at the discretion of the Board of Directors.

- If your tuition payment is one month in arrears your child will automatically be suspended until the tuition and late fees are paid. Non-payment of tuition is grounds for separation from RPCNS (see *Separation from RPCNS Policy*). In addition, your child's transcript may not be furnished (see *Issuing Transcripts Policy*).
- Extended Absences (such as overseas travel) do not negate a member's obligation to pay tuition.

Refund Policy

Please know that our Board of Directors has determined that if RPCNS is temporarily closed for the following reasons - as a health precaution, due to weather, or for any other reason beyond the control of the organization - tuition shall continue to be charged. If RPCNS is facing a long-term closure, the current membership, under the guidance of the Board of the Directors and the Advisory Committee, will determine a course of action.

Answers to the questions posed below require an understanding of the following terms: **withdrawal** as it applies to RPCNS, and **Membership Agreement**.

What does withdrawal mean? In a private school, such as RPCNS, withdrawal means a student who has been enrolled is no longer enrolled in the school. It also means that the parents of the formerly enrolled student, who is now withdrawn, are no longer parent members, and no longer have the privileges of membership.

What is the Membership Agreement? The *Membership Agreement* is the legally binding document that adheres both the member family and RPCNS to agreed-upon rules and expectations. The *Membership Agreement* satisfies the requirements specified in COMAR 13A.16 Child Care Centers. 03 Management and Administration. 03 Program Records. D Maintain a Written Record (1) fees, (2) discipline policy, (3) pets & (4) volunteers.

Under what circumstances can any of these fees or tuition be refunded?

- **Application Fee:** The application fee is non-refundable under any circumstances, nor is it applicable to the tuition.
- **Tuition Installment:** The tuition installment is essentially non-refundable. The following are the circumstances under which the tuition installment may be refunded:
 - A new member family withdraws their child prior to signing the Membership Agreement.
 - The member family withdraws the child after signing the *Membership Agreement*, and RPCNS's enrollment is at 100% for the grade in which the child is enrolled, on the date the child is withdrawn (which is the last day the child is enrolled).
 - Procedure: The former member family must make a formal request (submitted in writing) to the RPCNS Board of Directors at the time of the child's withdrawal. The Board of Directors will review the request. The Board of Directors reserves the right to deny the request.
 - *Before SY 2011-12 the tuition installment was non-refundable, period. In 2011-12 the Board amended this policy to specify the limited circumstance under which the tuition installment might be refunded. In keeping with the overall intent of that policy change, this policy has been revised in 2015-16, 2016-17, and again for*

2017-18 so that it is coordinated with other changes. Refer to prior editions of this Policy Manual for specifics.

- **Tuition:** To discern if any tuition is refundable to a former member family who has withdrawn their child prior to the end of the school year the following procedure is to be done by the Director:
 - calculate how many days the withdrawn child's class will have met by the child's last day of enrollment,
 - obtain from the Treasurer, or the Accountant, the total amount of tuition (including the Installment amount) the family has paid to date, determine if both the Activity Fee and the Clean-up Deposit have been paid, and if the withdrawing member family is current on their Work Day obligations;
 - subtract the per Diem rate for that class multiplied by the number of days the child was enrolled, and subtract the Tuition Installment amount (unless the tuition Installment qualifies for a refund);
 - determine if there is an amount to be refunded by RPCNS, what that amount is, and notify both the Treasurer and the Accountant, who will issue said refund.
- **Activity Fee:** Half of the Activity Fee can be refunded if the member family withdraws their child prior to Winter Break. If the Child is withdrawn after winter break no portion of the Activity Fee is refundable.
- **Clean-up Deposit:** The Clean-up Deposit can be refunded if the member family is current in meeting this membership obligation when their child is withdrawn.

Reimbursement Policy and Donations

This policy covers reimbursement for the purchasing of classroom, kitchen, housekeeping supplies and administrative services. RPCNS shall reimburse parents for expenses incurred while fulfilling their assigned jobs at the school. Such expenses include the purchase of equipment or supplies for school use, and parents are urged to shop competitively! If there is any question about the appropriate nature of the item(s) to be purchased, obtain approval of the Board of Directors prior to the purchase. For bookkeeping purposes, in order to actually receive your reimbursement, a parent member must fill out a reimbursement form, attach the original receipt, and submit both components to the Board Officer to which they report. If that Board Officer approves the expenditure s/he will refer it on to the Chairperson(s) for second approval. The Chairperson(s) forwards the paperwork to the Treasurer. The accountant cuts the check and the Treasurer gets the reimbursement to the parent member.

In regards to donations, RPCNS is a nonprofit organization and gladly accepts donations of supplies, equipment, and money. Donation receipt letters are available from the Chairperson(s).

Budget Policy

The school's budget is set annually in accordance with the Constitution and Bylaws. Board minutes from the preceding year should be consulted for any discussions or votes relevant to the development of future budgets.

Probationary Enrollment Policy

It is our desire that your child's nursery school experience, along with all the other children enrolled in our school, be as positive and enriching as possible. Towards that end the first sixty days of each year that your child is enrolled in our school is regarded as a probationary period. If during this probationary period the teacher discerns that the child is not adjusting to school in a satisfactory manner then the following steps are to be taken:

- The child is to be observed by the Director. The Director is to meet with the child's teacher and the child's parents to discuss the observation and determine a mutually agreed upon course of action.
- If all the parties are not in agreement as to which course of action should be taken then a child development consultant will be brought in to observe the child in the classroom setting, at the parent's expense. The findings and recommendations will then be discussed at a follow-up meeting with the child's teacher, parents and Director. A decision will be made by the Director, in concert with another staff member, the Co-Chair(s) and the parents as to whether the child is to remain enrolled.
- If it is decided that it is in the best interest of the child and the school that the child no longer attend RPCNS the Refund Policy will be implemented.
- If the child involved enrolls the following school year, s/he will be regarded as a returning student and his/her application will be handled as such.

Transitions Policy

Transition is the process or period of changing from one state or condition to another. There are a variety of transitions in a young child's life, not only during the course of the child's day, but especially when a child is enrolled in a nursery school.

Transition from Home to Nursery School

When incorporating nursery school into their life, a young child, and his/her parent, now need to transition to a classroom environment with other students, a teacher and other assisting adults. To facilitate a successful transition for both the parent(s) and child to RPCNS we start with an in-person tour of our school, in which not only the parent(s) attend(s), but in which we encourage the child to attend as well, not only see our school but to experience how it feels to be here. Our Admissions Coordinator gives an in depth orientation which includes not only what is in the school, but also what kinds of activities are done during a typical school day, information about our curriculum, any before and after school options, what the level of commitment is for both co-oping and non-co-oping parent members, and what the financial commitment is as well. All this information is provided both verbally and in writing (in paper form and on our website).

To further support a successful transition to RPCNS, during the summer before the school year starts, all our member families for the upcoming school year are invited to attend a series of "playdates in the park." Our Admissions Coordinator and Co-Chairs attend these playdates, and facilitate introductions. As we get closer to the start of the school year, after our Set-up Days are completed, we host a "Teacher Meet and Greet" at the school, in which the parents and their

children have the opportunity to not only meet their child's teacher, but also the other parents and children in their class, to spend time in both the classroom and play on our playground. During this school event, the various Board members will also have a chance to review the parent job requirements for the parent members reporting to them. All co-oping parent members are also required to complete the Orientation Tour of the school before the start of the school year. And just before classes begin we have a Parent Orientation meeting, which is mandatory for all parent members to attend, in which the parents spend a significant amount of time with their child's teacher reviewing every aspect of the upcoming school year from curriculum details, to how to successfully co-op in their child's classroom. All this information is also in writing, and readily available.

During the first couple of days of classes our Co-Chairs host a Parent Coffee, providing another opportunity for the parents to mingle, get to know each other, and support each other as their child adjusts to school. For our youngest students, those in our Twos Classes, we also have a phase-in schedule. Their first week in class their school day is just one hour long. During this time their teacher has a chance to introduce the children to a shortened version of the daily schedule, and further orient the children as to where things are in the classroom. The second week their class is 2 hours long, and by the third week their class is 2.5 hours long. After the winter break, their class is the full 3.25 hours long till the end of the school year.

A few of our young students and/or their parent are challenged with **separation anxiety**. Our teachers and director have many strategies for helping both the child and the parent to overcome separation anxiety, starting with our notice posted outside each classroom titled "Leaving Process" which prompts parents on how best to say "Good-bye" to set their child up for a successful transition to class. We also provide all our parent members with a copy of NAEYC's pamphlet "So Many Good-byes." We will also work with each family to develop an individual plan if need be.

Transitions during the school day

Whenever there is a change from one activity to another, regardless of whether the class stays in the classroom or moves to another space in the school (e.g. - bathrooms to wash hands, Music class, outside to the playground), a transition takes place. Each of our teachers has their own techniques (such as giving a three minute warning, setting a timer, flickering the lights in the classroom) to facilitate these school day transitions. Sometimes a child finds it difficult to stop what s/he is doing to move onto to the next activity. Our teachers work with this child, employing one or both of these commonly used strategies: providing this child with advance notice of the upcoming transition, and having this child assist in giving notice to the other children in the class.

Some of our students have further exposure to transition opportunities because they are participating in our Before School program or one of our after school programs.

To provide an optimal learning environment and assist with the transition to our program for a **child with a disability or special health care need**, our staff will communicate or meet with outside professionals, welcome special education professionals into her classroom to observe, work with Child Link mental health professionals and the child's family, attend IEP meetings if requested, and above all else work with the child's parents to optimize the child's learning experience.

Transition from one grade to the next

During the course of enrollment for the next school year, which usually takes place in the late winter or spring of the current school year, each parent member is welcome to visit the class of the next grade's teacher(s), observing the classroom dynamics and activities. A parent member is always welcome to communicate with any of our teachers, and support staff as well. The children also have a chance to get to know all our teaching staff because our classes frequently mingle on the playground, and so many of our enrolled children participate in our summer camp program which is multi-grade/mixed-aged in structure. Our teachers also provide the next grade's teacher with information, shared observations and best practices intended to benefit each student.

To support our Pre-K students in transitioning to Kindergarten, our Pre-K teacher provides enrollment materials from the public school system to each of her student's parents pertaining not only to how to enroll their child in Kindergarten, but also what skills (e.g. – putting on and zippering one's own jacket independently, opening one's own lunch containers independently) and strategies (not only reading stories but also discussing what happened in the story, who the characters were, predicting what will happen next, etc.) to also foster at home in preparation for a successful transition. If a student is receiving special education services our Pre-K teacher will provide all requested information to support this child's successful transition to Public School.

Adjustment to School Policy

The purpose of this policy is to address a situation where a child, who is enrolled for the following school year into either the Threes or the Fours grade, may need additional time to adjust to the classroom setting, for whatever reason. (There are circumstances in some young children's lives, which have left them experiencing a greater level of separation anxiety than usual, this policy is designed to address that reality.) In order to enable this child to be better able to fully participate in the classroom at the beginning of the coming school year it may be possible for this child to spend time with children with whom s/he will be attending school the following year.

The procedure and/or points to consider in implementing this policy are:

- the enrolled child's parent need to contact the Director,
- the Director will then make whatever arrangements are possible,
 - determining if there are any reasons why this can't be done from a liability or regulatory standpoint,
 - determining if the child should attend
 - summer camp if there's space
 - regular school year if there's space
 - or both
 - taking into consideration the following for the classes being considered
 - input from the teachers involved
 - the number of students enrolled with regard to maximum enrollment levels,
 - the dynamics and experiences this school year for each class
 - the parents'
 - informing them in a timely manner before the child attends
 - sharing with them relevant information about the visiting child
 - addressing their concerns
 - What will happen if their class is adversely impacted?

- What constitutes adversely impacted?
- develop a plan with clearly defined perimeters including but not limited to
 - number of visits
 - length of each visit
 - is each visit the same length of time or increasing in length?
 - at what point in the class will the child attend?
 - During circle time?
 - During the project?
 - Are there enough materials for this child, too?
 - During the specials?
 - During snack?
 - Has the “A” been informed or is the child’s parent providing snack?
 - expectations of the role of the enrolling child’s parent
 - parent needs to remain on site
 - will the parent co-op, or will that be counterproductive?
 - will the parent hold a job?
 - Does the enrolling child have a sibling?
 - will the sibling be in the nursery?
 - will the sibling be with the parent?
 - What tuition is to be paid?
 - At what point will this situation be re-evaluated?
 - After each visit?
 - After a two week period?
 - Is it possible and would it make more sense for the child to just enroll formally for the rest of the school year, with a phased in approach?

Requirements for Hiring Professional Staff Policy

The teachers and the Director must be professionally trained, certified in Early Childhood Education, and preferably experienced in the education and guidance of young children. They are selected without regard to race, color, creed or national origin. RPCNS meets both the requirements specified by the regulations of the Office of Child Care and the Maryland State Department of Education for non-public nursery schools.

RPCNS is licensed to operate as a Non-Public Nursery School in the State of Maryland. In compliance with the regulations (COMAR 13A:16:16 Educational Programs in Non-Public Nursery School) governing our license (educational program) issued by the Office of Child Care, the teacher qualifications are as follows: Bachelor’s Degree or 120 semester hours of college credit. If the teacher’s undergraduate degree is not in early Childhood Education the teacher is also required to have successfully completed a state approved 90-hour Early Childhood Education course. After 1 July 2010 all new teachers hired will be required to have taken at least six semester hours of approved college level early childhood coursework instead of the 90-hour course. These regulations do not require our staff to be certified in Special Education, or to have taken any Special Education courses.

Before a staff member starts working for RPCNS s/he is required to have CPR and First Aid Certification (which must be kept current), submitted a notarized *Release of Information* OCC form 1260, a criminal background check in compliance with Maryland Senate Bill 111, (which was signed into law in May 2006), an Employee Medical OCC 1204 form, completed the Individual Personnel Information OCC form 1205, and taken Staff Orientation Tour.

As of 1 July 2010 teachers are required to complete twelve hours of continuing education each year to maintain their certification. The records of these continuing education courses are to be maintained by the Director, kept in the employee's file and noted on OCC form 100.

There will be a review of the teachers by parent members via an annual evaluation form, and the Director, conducted at least once a year. Newly hired teachers will be given a written probationary evaluation in November or after sixty days of employment.

The Board of Directors approved the following benefit at the May 2004 meeting (and again in September 2006): If an employee of RPCNS also has her children enrolled at RPCNS, she will receive the following tuition benefits:

- For the first year of employment the tuition reduction will be for fifty percent (50%) of the oldest enrolled child's tuition, and the ten percent (10%) sibling discount shall also apply if warranted. The teacher shall pay the application and activity fees, the teacher shall also hold a "job" and participate in the three required workdays.
- For the second year of employment the tuition reduction will be for seventy-five percent (75%) of the oldest enrolled child's tuition, and the ten percent (10%) tuition sibling discount shall also apply if warranted. The teacher shall pay the application and activity fees, the teacher shall also hold a "job" and participate in all workdays;
- For the third and successive years of employment the tuition reduction will be for one hundred percent (100%) of the oldest enrolled child's tuition, and the ten percent (10%) tuition sibling discount shall also apply if warranted. The teacher shall pay the application and activity fees, the teacher shall also hold a "job" and participate in all workdays.

The Director is employed 12 hours/week during the school year plus additional hours during the summer, worked at her discretion, totaling 510 hours for the fiscal year, (which is approximately 25% of a full-time position). Specific requirements for directors/administrative heads of preschools may be found under COMAR 13A.16.06.05 & 06. The Director's job description shall be posted as required by this regulation.

Substitute Teacher Policy

What is a substitute teacher? A substitute teacher is someone who is teaching for one of the regular teachers at the school when that teacher cannot be at the school to teach (due to illness, etc.).

Who can serve as a substitute teacher at RPCNS? A substitute teacher must be at least 18 years of age, and for RPCNS can be one of the following: one of the other teachers on staff, or an approved co-oping parent member in good standing. If a parent member is to be the substitute teacher, then every effort should be made to use a parent whose child is in that class, so she or he is familiar with the children, the classroom routines, and the children are familiar with the parent

who is substituting. Refer to COMAR 13A. Subtitle 16 Child Care Centers. 06 Staff Requirements. .13 Substitutes for further regulatory information.

How is a substitute teacher compensated? If the substitute teacher is one of the regular RPCNS teachers, she is to be paid her hourly rate for the length of the class plus 30 minutes to cover set-up and clean-up, 3.25 hours. In the case of an extended absence requiring additional preparation time then the teacher is to be paid for 3.75 hours. If the substitute is an approved co-oping member in good standing, then that co-oper will be paid the budgeted rate for the morning. If either needs to use the nursery to watch their child, then the substitute is to be further compensated for his/her expense of the nursery. The Director will notify the Accountant, who will then process this information for pay.

Who prepares the lesson plan taught by the substitute teacher? The lesson plan is prepared by the regular classroom teacher for the substitute teacher, and gone over or reviewed by both the regular classroom teacher and the substitute prior to the absence, unless the situation is such that this is not possible. In that case the substitute teacher is to consult with the other teachers to develop an age appropriate, topic appropriate lesson plan.

Who needs to be notified if there is going to be a substitute teacher in a class? The following people need to be made aware that a substitute will be teaching a class: the Director, the Co-Chairs, the parents in that class.

When does a teacher notify the required parties that she will be absent? A teacher is to notify the required parties, in writing, as soon as she has made arrangements with her substitute teachers.

How is a long term absence handled? Every effort will be made to find a qualified candidate to hire for the duration of the regular teacher's absence. Provisions are spelled out in COMAR 13A.16.06.13.C&D.

Class Roster Policy

This policy addresses the situation in which there is more than one class in a grade that is starting at the same point in the school year. RPCNS does not accept specific teacher and/or class assignment requests. Please realize that you enrolled your child in our school, not in a specific teacher's class. Every attempt will be made to place your child in the class best suited for your child based on the information you have provided the school. It is the sole responsibility of the Director to generate the class rosters.

Jobs Policy

Each member family, co-oping or non-co-oping, is required to hold a school job in addition to their Work Day (e.g.: Set-up Day, Saturday Clean-up Day Pack-up Day) obligations. A list of jobs and detailed descriptions is available to all member families. It is the responsibility of the Chairperson(s), taking into consideration the parent member's job preference, and in consultation with the Admissions Coordinator and the Director, to place each member family in one of the school jobs, and then to generate the Jobs List. The Jobs List is posted by the Office telephone,

and a bulletin board display is arranged in the shape of our organizational chart, comprised of the photos of each parent member, labeled with their name and their job.

Work Days Policy

In order to better maintain the school physically, RPCNS has Work Days scheduled over the course of the school year. Each family must attend and participate in one of each of the three types of Work Days. The three types are (1) a “Set-Up” day, prior to the opening of school, in which the school is prepared for opening; (2) a “Pack-Up” day, at the end of the school year, in which the school is “put to bed” for the summer; and (3) a Saturday Clean-up day, when regular maintenance, cleaning, and facility enhancements are done. The Sign-up sheet for the Work Days is included in your Enrollment Packet.

In the event that a family joins the school after the start of the school year, the number of work days they are required to attend shall be reduced to two, one Saturday clean-up day and one Pack-up day at the end of the school year. The full amount of the clean-up deposit shall still be required.

If a parent member fails to attend either the “Set-Up” day, a Saturday clean-up day, or the “Pack-Up” day and do not make alternative arrangements with the Facility Coordinator or Chairperson(s), your “clean-up” deposit will not be refunded. (See Addendum for Tuition, Fees and Fines.)

On May 18th, 2009 the Board of Directors passed the following motion: “In Addition to the Work Days, RPCNS families are required to assist with one of the school-sponsored events.”

Child to Adult Ratio Policy

The COMAR regulations guiding our licensing have clearly stated adult to child ratios (COMAR 13A.16.08.03). In an effort to enhance the quality of your child’s experience in our school RPCNS has chosen to achieve lower ratios than the regulations stipulate. In general, RPCNS ratios are as follows: for the Twos and Threes classes, the ratio tends to be three or four children per adult; and for the Fours, the ratio tends to be five or six children per adult.

For the school year 2004-05 we upgraded our facility to be able to accommodate, within the perimeters of our Office of Child Care license, 60 students on any given day. When we have 60 students enrolled on any given day the classroom capacities are as follows: Rooms 102, 104 and 112 may have 10 students each; Rooms 107-108 & Rooms 110-111 may have 15 students each. (These capacities are determined by the square footage of each classroom in conjunction with the number of toilets/sinks on the floor and the number of water fountains.) If the school is not enrolled to this capacity, either of the two larger classrooms has the square footage to accommodate up to 18 students. (Due to their square footage room 102 can accommodate 11 students, rooms 104 and 112 can accommodate 10 students per room.)

The size of a class is not voted on by membership, it is not a question of policy. The Board’s fiscal responsibility is to operate our school as close to full capacity as possible. Please be mindful that when any of our classrooms are enrolled to maximum capacity the enrolled students will still be well supervised, safe, and have a developmentally appropriate experience.

Whenever possible we strive for parity between two classes in the same grade, be that size of classrooms used (referring to square footage), number of students enrolled in the classes and frequency of co-oping days for the parent members. When all factors are considered it may not always be possible to have all the classes in each grade be equivalent.

Our customary staffing in each class is one teacher and two co-oping adults. However, if the enrollment of a particular class falls below a certain threshold, and the co-ops in that class find that maintaining two co-ops for each time the class meets a burden, then that class may request to drop the staffing to one co-oping adult and the teacher, assuming the Office of Child Care's regulations on adult to child ratios are met, and the teacher of that class is in agreement with the request. If the enrollment of a class is such that either the teacher or the parents request an additional co-oper, then that request is to be made to and reviewed by the Director in consultation with the Co-Chairs, the co-op Scheduler, the teacher and Class Representative. If, in the judgment of the Director the enrollment of a class is at such a level that a third co-oper is in the best interest of that class, then that class will be scheduled with three co-ops.

Co-oping Policy

For each co-oping member family, at least one adult associated with that family (e.g. parent, grandparent, au pair, nanny), who is at least 18 years of age, and who has met the regulatory requirements to work in their child's class, is required co-op in the child's classroom on a scheduled, rotating basis. The co-oping adult must be able to communicate in English, and be free of communicable disease in order to secure the safety and well-being of the children. Each co-oper is required to have the Employment Medical Report (OCC 1204) completed by a physician, their fingerprints run, submitted a notarized copy of the Release of Information form (OCC 1260), and taken the Orientation Tour before s/he is allowed to co-op in the classroom. For explanation of the responsibilities of co-oping adult please read the Parent Handbook, and refer to the Co-oper Manual in your child's classroom. If a family has two (or more) children enrolled in the school, the family's co-oping obligation will be to co-op in all of their children's classes as frequently as the other parents in their children's classes. For example, in the case of twins, the family's co-oping obligation will be doubled, (since the co-oping requirement is divided equally among the students in the class). Co-ops are considered employees by the Office of Child Care, are counted towards our staffing ratios, and are needed to function as a teacher assistant.

In the event that a family joins the school after the start of the school year, their co-oping obligation shall be determined from the date that they joined the school. There shall be no retroactive responsibilities for co-oping days that occurred prior to the enrollment of their child in our school. (For example, a family who joins in November is not responsible for making up co-op days that occurred prior to their arrival in October and September.)

Non-Co-oping Policy

Permanent Non-Co-oping

A parent member may enroll their child as a non-co-oping member. However, RPCNS is committed to remaining a cooperative nursery school, in which the parent members are involved in their child's nursery school experience. Towards this end, non-co-oping member families are required to hold one of the school jobs, to participate in the Work Days (see page 13), to participate in school-wide events held outside of regular school hours and our fund raisers. Tuition will be

adjusted to cover the cost of a hired co-oper. All other policies and financial obligations stand (see Membership Agreement).

Temporary Non-Co-oping

A request for temporary, or partial year, non co-oping status may be made. A request to change enrollment status from co-oping to non-co-oping is to be made to the Co-Chairs and Director. Please realize that a paid co-oper will need to be hired to cover your co-oping shifts, and your tuition rate will be adjusted accordingly. We recommend that this type of request be made as far in advance as possible in order to allow adequate time to arrange for sufficient staffing.

There are times when a co-oping member family will not be available to co-op for a couple of weeks. This could be due to travel or the birth of a child. Please communicate your plans to both the co-op scheduler, the Co-Chairs and your child's teacher, so that the co-oping shifts in your child's class can be scheduled as equitably as possible. For example, expectant moms can plan for their "maternity leave" by arranging to work additional co-oping shifts before (referred to as "front loading") or after (referred to as "back loading") they give birth.

Conduct Policy

All adults at RPCNS (teachers and parents) working with our children are to be positive role models at all times, allowing the children to learn appropriate behaviors by their example. Teachers are responsible for assuring that their classroom has a safe and secure environment at all times. Discipline for the children must be constructive in nature, including methods as described in the Discipline Policy. It is never acceptable for an adult to discipline a child using physical means (i.e. hitting, slapping, and spanking). Verbal attempts should be made to prevent or stop a child from acting inappropriately (i.e. hazardous behavior, harming another child). Co-oping adults should make the teacher aware of any situation requiring intervention and defer to the teacher's judgement.

All occurrences of questionable physical contact by an adult, including yanking, hitting or pushing of a child will be investigated by the Director and Chairperson(s) on a case-by-case basis with consideration of the situation (i.e. safety of others, intent of the adult, and severity of contact).

The following occurrences will not be tolerated and are grounds for immediate dismissal of the teacher or co-oper from the classroom:

- Physical punishment used as discipline, such as intentional shaking or hitting;
- Verbal threats of physical punishment;
- Verbally abusive language;
- Any contact considered sexual abuse according to State law.

After an incident is investigated and deemed inappropriate (inappropriateness of the action depends on several factors including the safety of other children, the intent of the adult, the severity of the action, consequences to the child, and the reactions of others involved), the adult will be counseled by the Director and the Chairperson(s) and put on notification of separation. If a second inappropriate incident occurs, the adult will be dismissed from the classroom. However, certain behaviors are so egregious that they warrant the immediate separation of a parent and/or family member from RPCNS. If the dismissed adult involved is a parent member, s/he must provide a replacement co-oping adult or the family will be changed to non-cooping status (see Non-Co-oping Policy). If the dismissed adult is a teacher, s/he will be separated per the terms of his/her contract.

Notification of the involved child's parent(s) will be done by the teacher, Director and/or Chairperson(s) as soon as possible, but no later than 48 hours after any occurrence. When an adult is put on notice of separation, the Board of Directors and the parent members in that class will be notified as soon as possible. It will be the decision of the Board of Directors if all parents within the school are to be notified.

Discipline Policy

At RPCNS, our philosophy of discipline begins with the firm and loving establishment of rules designed to respect the integrity of each person, adult and child. Our rules are meant to be supportive, nurturing and educational. Clear and consistent age appropriate limits will be set, and through these limits children will learn what acceptable behavior is. One of our goals is for each child to be able to self-regulate, to demonstrate self-control. Children are encouraged to solve as many of their own problems as possible under the guidance of a staff member. Children are also encouraged to use words to handle their differences and shown how to stop others from interfering with their activities. When a teacher must intervene, age appropriate and constructive methods of discipline are used, starting with a verbal intervention, redirecting and removing a child from the situation if necessary. Physical or emotional danger will be grounds for a teacher to intervene immediately. Whenever possible, the parent members are included in this discipline process so the children can see both parents and the teacher reinforce limit setting. Parents are notified verbally or in writing regarding disciplinary action taken by the teacher, to better aid the child in improving his/her behavior. A parent-teacher conference will be scheduled if further action is considered necessary. Good discipline is based on respect, honesty, trust and caring. It's what we do and say to children that helps them learn to respect the rights of others and to behave cooperatively within our society.

Children need to learn the difference between the inner world of feeling (for example, the right to feel angry) and how to act on their feelings in a socially acceptable manner. We emphasize consideration of other's feelings and instruct children of the appropriate actions they may use.

Children will test the limits of their environment. Young children do not know automatically what is right or wrong; therefore, they need adults whom they can trust to help them learn. An adult should be fair, and act matter-of-factly and confidently to limit a child's unacceptable behavior. When the child knows that the adult will stop out-of-control acts when necessary, s/he can relax and feel free to explore and experience the environment.

Please be aware that RPCNS does not use discipline that is prohibited by Maryland law, including any form of discipline that would cause a child to be subject to abuse, neglect, mental injury, or injurious treatment; that would force a child to eat or drink; withhold food or beverage as punishment; deliberately inflict physical pain, including spanking, hitting, shaking, or any other means of physical discipline; subject a child to verbal abuse intended to cause mental distress, such as shouting, cursing, shaming, or ridiculing; use other inappropriate methods that create undue discomfort; or enforce acts which result in physical pain. In situations where children become unruly or pose a threat to themselves, other children or adults, age appropriate interventions are used to prevent injury.

We expect all adults working in the classroom to be positive role models at all times, enabling children to learn appropriate social behaviors and skills. Simple, understandable rules will be clearly established so that expectations and limitations are clearly defined. Discipline will be constructive and whenever possible instructive in nature, including such strategies as diversion, separation of child from the situation, praise of appropriate behavior, or gentle physical restraint, such as holding. We believe that these methods, if used consistently and in a positive way, will serve as a means of helping our children learn appropriate social behaviors and skills. In the interest of maintaining a safe and happy learning environment, RPCNS reserves the right to exclude any child from the program for a specified period of time or to terminate any child's enrollment if that child is found to be continuously disruptive to our program. (See our *Separation from RPCNS Policy*)

Evaluation Policy

An informal student review will be held in late autumn between the teacher and her student's parents or guardians. At any point during the course of the school year either the teacher or the parents/guardians of an enrolled student may request a conference. Prior to the end of the school year, conferences will be held between the teacher and the parents/guardians of each enrolled student, in which a formal written progress report will be discussed and a copy issued to the parents/guardians. The school will keep a copy of this progress report in the student's file.

Progression Policy

A child in the Two-year-old class will automatically go into the Three-year-old class the following year, as will a Three-year-old go into the Fours class. The exceptions are in addition to COMAR 13A.16.16.08.D2:

- A parent or guardian wishes to hold a child back for his/her own reasons, then their child will be held back, except in the case where a child will turn six (6) years of age prior to graduation (because we are licensed for children ages two (2) through five (5) (If the child has an IEP or 504 Plan, will these services be adversely affected if the child is held back?));
- A teacher thinks a child is not ready to proceed to the next class, in which case, the teacher will explain this to the parents/guardians and they will come to a mutually agreeable decision. If a mutually acceptable agreement is not reached the final evaluation and decision rests with the teacher involved and the Director;
- In the event a family wishes to advance their child by one year. RPCNS strongly discourages parents from advancing their children by one year into the next year's class. Should the parents wish to persist and believe that it is in the best interest for their child, the following requirements must be met:
 - RPCNS will only allow a child to be advanced from the Twos (skipping the Threes) to the Fours class;
 - There must be space in the Fours class sufficient to accept the child;
 - In order to advance, the child cannot be more than one month younger than the cut-off date (the child must have his/her birthday by September 30th);
 - The parents must speak to the principal of the elementary school where the child will attend Kindergarten, in order to ensure that the child will be allowed to advance, and this information must be conveyed to the Board of Directors;

- A letter from the child's pediatrician must be submitted to the Board of Directors stating why this advancement is in the child's best interest;
- A letter from the child's current teacher must be submitted to the Board of Directors stating why this is in the child's best interest (if the child's teacher has a personal relationship with the family, or feels that it would be difficult or impossible for her to be objective in this matter, then this requirement shall be waived);
- The Director's opinion on this situation shall be made to the Board of Directors, either in person or in writing, stating why or why not this advancement is in the child's best interest.

All this information must be submitted to the Board of Directors for its consideration. The parents may attend the meeting but cannot be present during the Board of Director's deliberation or vote. If the parent is a member of the Board of Directors, the parent must abstain from the deliberation and the vote.

Contents of Student Records Policy

To be in compliance with our Certificate of Approval with the Maryland State Department of Education, RPCNS shall establish and maintain cumulative records for every student enrolled. According to COMAR 13A.16.16.08B these records shall include the following:

- The School's name, location address, telephone number;
- Personal identification: full legal name, sex, and date of birth;
- Family and residence information: names of parents/guardians and residence address and telephone number;
- Physical health information: results of vision and hearing tests, physical impairment(s), records of disease and illness which might require emergency action by school personnel, name, address, residence and business telephone of persons to be notified in case of emergency;
- Enrollment information: date entered and date of withdrawal, student evaluation reports;
- Number of days of attendance in each school year.

These records are to be kept current and in locked files in the school. The records will be retained for several years.

Rights of Privacy/Access to Student Records Policy

Parents/guardians have the right to access their child's records. The Parent/ guardian may ask the Director or the Admissions Coordinator to show him/her his/her child's records. In addition, the Chairperson(s), RPCNS teachers, the Montgomery County or City of Rockville Health Department, the Office of Child Care and the Maryland State Department of Education will have access to these records. Any other person will only be allowed access to the student records upon the written request of the parent/guardian. A record of this request shall be kept in the vicinity of the files. Written requests by parents shall be filed in the respective student's file.

Issuing Transcripts Policy

RPCNS shall provide, upon written request of the parent/guardian, a transcript of the records of a student leaving the school for any reason. The transcript should include personal identification information, family residence information, enrollment information, and/or performance information. The transcript shall be handed out or mailed to the parent/guardian by the Director or the Admissions Coordinator. If a tuition balance is due, the transcript will be withheld until all fees and fines have been paid. (See *Addendum on Tuition, Fees and Fines*)

Separation from RPCNS Policy

A child/family may be dismissed from RPCNS at any time due to, but not limited to, the following circumstances:

- a child requires an excessive amount of individual attention;
- a child presents issues which cannot be successfully managed in this environment;
- a child is consistently disruptive to his/her class;
- a child exhibits excessively and consistently aggressive behavior;
- a child is absent for an extensive period of time (to be defined by the Director) with no notification from the parent member, and the child's parent's refusal to respond to communications from the school;
- a child's parent is unwilling to leave the child in the classroom with the teacher and the other co-oping parents after the sixty day probationary period;
- a co-oper grossly and/or consistently fails in his/her co-oping duties as outlined in the RPCNS Parent Handbook;
- a parent engages in non-constructive, divisive behavior and/or communication;
- a family consistently fails to pay tuition on time, fails to pay tuition for an extended absence or their checks are consistently returned from the bank (See Late or Non-Payment Policy);
- a family consistently fails to perform their job (job performance is monitored by corresponding member of the Board of Directors);
- a family fails to disclose or omits information necessary for the safe and efficient operation of the school, pertaining to either themselves or their child, not because of the child's disability, but because of the parent's untruth.

The separation will be made on the recommendation of the teacher and the Director to the Chairperson(s), who will then follow the procedures outlines in Section 8 – *Termination of Membership* of Article VI – *Membership* of our Constitution and Bylaws.

Re-admittance Policy

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance when addressing a situation in which a student withdrew from our school and desires re-admittance later in the same school year. (Also consult and coordinate with the *Tuition Installment Policy*.)

- The procedure:
 - The student's parents are to contact RPCNS and indicate their desire to re-enroll their child.

- A meeting must take place prior to re-admittance with the Director, involved teacher and Co-Chair(s). The purpose of the meeting is to
 - review the reasons for the original withdrawal,
 - discern if the reasons are still relevant,
 - discern if the re-admittance of the student would adversely impact the class in which the student would be enrolled,
 - determine if it's necessary and/or desired by any party to establish a clearly defined probationary or trial period where all parties involved meet and assess the situation a determine if re-enrollment should take place.
- If at the initial meeting it is determined by the school's representatives that it would be in the best interest of the child for the parents not to co-op in the child's classroom for a specific period of time then the co-op schedule should be adjusted reflect this decision. If there isn't sufficient time remaining in the school year for the child's parent to make up the co-oping shifts, then the tuition paid must reflect this reality. (Refer to the *Non Co-oping Policy*)
- Also determined at the initial meeting with the school's representatives will be the amount of tuition and tuition installment to be paid.
- Prior to the re-admitted child's return the parents of the other students in the class will be notified.

Reporting Child Abuse Policy

Any teacher, other professional employee, or parent member of RPCNS who believes or has reason to suspect that a student has been abused is required to make a report (refer to COMAR 13A.16.07.02). The teachers, other professional employees or parent members shall be informed of this requirement at the time of hiring. The teachers, other professional employees or parent members should also advise the Director if such a report is being filed. Filing this kind of report is very serious, and is not to be done if there are any doubts. Copies of the Montgomery County Public School Report of Suspected Child Abuse are kept in the school's "Membership Files" draw, in the Co-Chair's desk in the Office. When necessary, reports should be mailed to the Montgomery County Department of Social Services, 1301 Piccard Drive, Rockville, MD 20850. The Child Abuse Hotline telephone number is 301-217-4417.

School Year and Inclement Weather Policy

RPCNS usually starts classes the week after Labor Day but reserves the right to adjust the start of the school year as needed, and is in session usually through the first Friday in June. The Maryland State Department of Education has not established a minimum number of required days for preschools. RPCNS, whose staff are all members of the Potomac Association of Cooperative Teachers, will close school for the two P.A.C.T. Professional Development Days. The Director sets the RPCNS school calendar, which is usually 168 days.

While RPCNS is in session, it will follow the MCPS school calendar with regards to days when classes are in session. Therefore, if MCPS is closed, RPCNS will also be closed. If MCPS declares a two-hour delayed opening, RPCNS will also open two hours late (at 11:45 a.m.) and conduct classes for two hours instead of the regular 2.5 or 2.75 hours, dismissal will be 1:45 p.m. Any Before School program will also start two hours late (such as Before Care, which would start at 11:00 a.m. instead of 9:00 a.m.). In this circumstance each child is to bring his/her lunch.

(Please make sure that your child's lunch does not include any type of nut, peanut butter or foods that may have been processed in a plant with nuts.) The "A" parent should bring milk instead of a snack. If the "A" parent does not have milk on hand, non-perishable milk will be made available from our emergency snack supplies. When there is a two-hour delayed opening then any Enrichment programs scheduled for the morning (such as *Mommy & Me Music* or *Wee Ones*, but not *Music* for our Twos, Threes and/or Fours classes) will be canceled, and those who were expected to attend will be notified via email, a posting on our website and notice on our Facebook page. On a day with a delayed opening if there is a non-co-oping afternoon program scheduled (such as *Stay & Play*), and there are no safety concerns (such as ice on the parking lot) then that non-co-oping program will run from class dismissal (1:45 p.m.) to its regular ending time. On a day when there's a delayed opening, we will assume that children who have been signed up for Lunch, through our After Care program, will be staying until 3:00 p.m., unless we are informed, by the child's parent/guardian, otherwise.

In the event that MCPS closes the public schools early, RPCNS will stay open till our regular dismissal time unless there is a safety concern, but any program scheduled for the afternoon will be canceled. Extended Day programs affected by an early closure will be rescheduled, however any non-co-oping program, (such as *Stay & Play*) will not be made up. RPCNS reserves the right to close school before our regularly scheduled Dismissal time in an extraordinary situation (e.g. 09/11/01). In regards to making up for school closings due to circumstances beyond the school's control (such as a weather event, damage from an earthquake or non-operational sewer system), RPCNS will not make up the days.

Selection and Maintenance of Library Media Collection Policy

RPCNS maintains a library/media collection, with a variety of printed and non-printed material as required for our Certificate of Approval by the Maryland State Board of Education COMAR 13A.14.13. The Coordinator of Educational Services will be in charge of deciding if any additional materials are needed for the library/media collection, provided the Board of Directors disperses the funds for purchase of these materials. The Coordinator of Educational Services will also be in charge of reviewing the collection annually and discarding any materials that are no longer appropriate or in good repair. The Coordinator of Educational Services will be responsible for overseeing the physical state of library/media collection. The school jobs of Librarian and Assistant Librarian(s) are performed by parent members.

The library is provided as a service to all RPCNS member families and the honor system is used to maintain the collection. Parent members are expected to sign books out for a specified period (usually three weeks) as listed in the library notebook. At the close of the school year, any materials not yet returned will be assumed lost. Parents will be required to replace the lost items or pay a replacement fee.

Parental requests for the removal of objectionable items from the library/media collection should proceed as follows:

- From the Librarian, obtain a copy of the form "Request for Removal of Library Item."
- Return completed form to the Chairperson(s).
- Request shall be discussed and voted upon by the Board of Directors at its scheduled monthly meeting. The parent filing the request will be informed by the Chairperson(s) prior to the meeting date of the time and place of the meeting when their request will be presented and may attend.

- The decision of the Board of Directors may be appealed. The parent should inform the Chairperson(s) of the desire to appeal and a special election of the membership to vote upon removal of the objectionable item will be held. A majority vote of members is required to withdraw library item.

Sick Child Policy

It is our policy and practice to send sick children home. If during the school day, a child shows signs or symptoms of acute illness, the teacher or one of the co-oping parents will call the child's parent (or other designated person) and ask that the child be picked up as soon as possible. The teacher shall determine if the child needs to be isolated. If isolation is required, the child will be supervised, a parent (either "A" or "B") will remain within sight and sound of the child.

Children are expected to be free from illness (i.e. fever, vomiting, diarrhea) without the aid of over-the-counter medication for a **minimum of 24 hours** before returning to school. A child recovering from a bacterial illness must be on antibiotics for a **minimum of 24 hours** before returning to school. This policy is in compliance with COMAR 13A.16.11.01. With regards to COVID-19, please refer to our COVID-19 Mitigation Strategies for the current school year.

In the case of Head Lice, we have a No Nits policy. This means that a child is not to attend RPCNS with nits at any stage of development. See the Parent Handbook for a detailed explanation and protocol for dealing with a head lice outbreak.

Food Allergy Policy

This policy addresses when a co-oping parent member brings in the snack for all the children in their child's class to share during Snack time.

Preface: Because we are a cooperative nursery school parent members are entrusted with the care of your child each day. Trust is an essential foundation of a cooperative nursery school. Please be aware of the following realities:

- Parent members take turns bringing in the snack to be eaten by the children;
- Parent members have different educational experiences;
- Parent members have varying degrees of English language proficiency;
- Parent members come from different cultural backgrounds.

Despite our collective efforts to make sure that only sealed prepackaged food is served, according to COMAR 13A.16.12.03.C, and that parent members are on their honor to comply with the regulations and dietary modifications, we cannot guarantee that mistakes won't be made.

Allergens can be pervasive, present in foods not readily obvious. The consequences of a child inadvertently or accidentally ingesting the wrong food can be life threatening. We are supportive and sympathetic to this reality. We are also sympathetic to the psychosocial development of the child with food allergies in regards to feeling different when not eating the same foods as the other children in his/her class. However, we have decided to place the child's physical health and well-being above this concern. We strongly encourage parents of children with food allergies to educate their child as to what foods s/he can and cannot eat, as well as to inform their child's teacher and the other parents in their child's class. By enrolling your child in

our school you accept that your child runs the risk of exposure to something to which s/he is allergic.

In response to an increasing number of students with food allergies the Board of Directors adopted the following policy in January 2007: We accept for enrollment children with food allergies. If it is possible for the child to have an anaphylactic reaction at school, then we need to have a meeting with the child's parents prior to enrollment. The purpose of this meeting is to discuss the severity of the child's allergy, and to determine if RPCNS is the appropriate placement for the child. If an understanding is reached, it will be documented and signed. The requirements applicable in COMAR 13A.16.11.04 are to be met.

In light of the fact that the majority of allergic-reaction fatalities are accountable to peanuts and tree nuts we request that peanuts and tree nuts of any type not be brought in to our school at any time, or foods processed at a facility which may have processed peanuts or any other type of nut. Please refer to our Parent Handbook for procedures pertaining to snack foods and epi-pens.

Administering Medication

No prescription or non-prescription medication will be administered to students by teachers or co-oping parent, per COMAR 13A.16.11.04A, except in emergency situations involving asthma or severe allergic reactions. Administer of medication in these two situations will be done by a teacher who has had the Medications Administration training or the involved child's parent. The following requirements apply:

- Medication can only be administered with prior written authorization from the child's parent. OCC Medication Order forms are available in the Office and must be on file before a child may be administered any medication.
- Parent authorization must include: the child's name, parent signature (and date signed), name of the medication and dosage for the child, beginning and ending dates that the medication should be administered, conditions for which the medication is to be administered, and how to store the medication (i.e. refrigerate). Only medication that has been given to the child prior to its use at school will be administered.
- Prescription medication must be labeled by the pharmacy or physician with the child's name, name of medication and expiration date that indicates that the medication is still usable.
- It is the parent's responsibility to provide written instruction and train the child's teacher and at least one other teacher on how the medication is to be administered. (Prescription medication can only be administered according to the instructions on the label). It is also the parent's responsibility to ensure that the medication has not passed the expiration date.
- The school will properly and safely store all labeled medication. Medication will be returned to the child's parent when it is no longer to be administered.
- In the event a child with a known allergy is stung by a bee or is in asthmatic distress, the teacher will be responsible for initiating the "Injured Child Procedure" and administering the medication according to written instructions.
- The teacher will record the amount, date and time of administration and who administered the medication to the child. This record will be placed in the child's

medication file at the school. The teacher is also responsible for notifying the parent of this information.

Pet Policy

Small creatures, (except birds, most likely will be fish in a tank) may be kept in a classroom. The responsibility for the care and maintenance of the small creature(s) falls to the teacher. Under no circumstances may the creature(s) be mistreated, or put into a situation where the creature could harm. If an enrolled student has an allergy to the creature(s) then an arrangement must be made so that the child can be safely in the classroom.

Regarding visiting pets: It may be possible to arrange for a family pet to visit our school. Details will be discussed and arrangements worked out on a case-by-case basis.

Regarding creatures as part of an outreach program: RPCNS does bring in outreach programs with creatures from time to time. No enrolled student will be required to come into physical contact with any of these visiting creatures. Any concerns should be directed to the Director.

Gift Policy

Children are welcome to express their personal appreciation to their teachers. If a classroom gift is organized, participation must be optional.

Policy for the use of Electronic and/or Screened Devices

In general, RPCNS does not use, nor does it have passive or interactive electronic based technology for our students to use while school is in session. However, we do acknowledge that there may be an occasional opportunity during the school year in which the use of a passive or interactive electronic device may assist in achieving an instructional goal. In such a circumstance we would permit the use of a passive or interactive electronic device. Our school's guiding philosophy is learning through play. We acknowledge that children at this young age are experiential learners. It is our practice to provide our students with opportunities to investigate the world around them with concrete, hands-on learning activities during the school day, employing the use of, or engaging, as many of their senses as possible. In regards to the use of cell phones (and other similar devices) by our parent members and staff, we expect them to only use these devices for emergency purposes while working with the children during school hours.

Conflicts of Interest for Board Members Policy

ARTICLE I PURPOSE

The purpose of this Conflicts of Interest Policy (the "Policy") is to protect the interests of Rockville Presbyterian Cooperative Nursery School (RPCNS) by seeking a full disclosure of relationships, financial or otherwise, between members of the RPCNS Board and any third party that may conduct business with RPCNS or take a position that is adverse to the intent, purpose or stated mission of RPCNS. This policy is intended to supplement but not replace any applicable laws governing conflicts of interest.

ARTICLE II DEFINITIONS

1. Interested Person.

Any member of the Board (for all purposes of this Policy, such members shall be referred to hereafter as "Board Members"), or member of a committee with Board delegated powers ("Committee"), who has a direct or indirect Disclosable Interest, as defined below, is an Interested Person.

2. Disclosable Interest.

A person has a Disclosable Interest if the person has, directly or indirectly, through personal, business, investment, family (i.e., spouse, child or other household member) or domestic partner:

- a. an ownership or investment interest in any entity with which RPCNS has a transaction or arrangement;
- b. a compensation arrangement with RPCNS or with any entity or individual with which RPCNS has a transaction or arrangement (provided that a Board Member's employment with a member of RPCNS shall not be considered a Disclosable Interest);
- c. a potential ownership or investment interest in, or compensation arrangement with, any entity or individual with which RPCNS contemplates negotiating a transaction or arrangement;
- d. involvement, other than in his or her capacity as a RPCNS Board Member, in any project sponsored or supported by RPCNS, including but not limited to:
 - (1) applying for, or preparing any proposal for, any award or contract from RPCNS, on behalf of the Board Member or any organization with which the Board Member is affiliated; and
 - (2) evaluating any application or proposal with respect to which any organization with which the Board Member is affiliated has submitted, or is considering submitting, to RPCNS; or
- e. involvement on behalf of any entity, other than RPCNS, in the preparation of any proposal, bid or application for any contract or grant in competition with RPCNS.

Compensation includes direct and indirect remuneration as well as gifts or favors that are substantial in nature.

A Disclosable Interest is not necessarily a conflict of interest. Under Article III, Section 2, a person who has a Disclosable Interest may have a conflict of interest only if the Board or appropriate Committee decides that a conflict of interest exists.

ARTICLE III PROCEDURES

1. Duty to Disclose.

An Interested Person must disclose the existence of his or her Disclosable Interest and must disclose all material facts to the Board or responsible Committee for the purpose of evaluating the possible conflict of interest.

2. Determining Whether a Conflict of Interest Exists.

After disclosure of the Disclosable Interest and all material facts, and after any discussion with the Interested Person, the Interested Person shall leave the Board or Committee meeting while the determination of a conflict of interest is discussed and voted upon. The remaining Board or Committee members shall decide if a conflict of interest exists.

3. Procedures for Addressing the Conflict of Interest.

a. Relating to a Transaction or Arrangement with an Interested Person:

1. An Interested Person may present information stating his or her case to the Board or Committee in writing or may make a live presentation at a Board or Committee meeting. If a live presentation is made, then after such presentation the Interested Person shall leave the meeting during the discussion of, and the vote on, the transaction or arrangement that results in the conflict of interest. If the Board or Committee determines that a conflict exists, it may decide that no further action is required, or it may proceed to deal with the conflict as follows.
2. The chairperson of the Board or Committee shall, if appropriate, appoint a disinterested person or committee to investigate alternatives to the proposed transaction or arrangement and/or the Interested Person's involvement therein.
3. After exercising due diligence, the Board or Committee shall determine whether RPCNS can obtain a more advantageous transaction or arrangement with reasonable efforts from a person or entity that would not give rise to a conflict of interest.
4. If a more advantageous transaction or arrangement is not reasonably attainable under circumstances that would not give rise to a conflict of interest, the Board or Committee shall determine by a majority vote of disinterested Board members whether the transaction or arrangement and/or the Interested Person's involvement therein is in RPCNS's best interest and for its own benefit and whether the transaction is fair and reasonable to RPCNS and shall make its decision as to whether to enter into the transaction or arrangement in conformity with such determination. In making such determination, the Board or Committee must have obtained and relied upon appropriate data as to comparability. In the case of services, comparable information includes, but is not limited to, compensation levels paid by similarly situated organizations, both taxable and tax-exempt, for functionally comparable services; the availability of similar services in the pertinent geographic area; current compensation surveys compiled by independent firms; and actual written offers from similar organizations competing for the services of the interested person. In the case of property, comparable information includes, but is not limited to, current independent appraisals of the value of all property to be transferred; and offers received as part of an open and competitive bidding process.

b. Relating to Affiliations with Competing Entities:

1. Due to confidentiality concerns, any Interested Person with a Disclosable Interest defined by paragraph 2.e. of Article II, is presumed to have a conflict of interest with RPCNS and, as a result, must avoid participation in the preparation of any proposal, bid or application submitted by RPCNS, and must take all reasonable steps to avoid obtaining information used or to be used by RPCNS in RPCNS's preparation of any proposal, bid or application.
 2. Despite the presumption set forth in paragraph 3.b.1 above, if an Interested Person with a Disclosable Interest believes the Disclosable Interest as defined by paragraph 2.e. of Article II does not present a conflict of interest, such Interested Person shall be given a reasonable opportunity to submit a written statement or to make a live presentation to the Board or Committee. If the Board or Committee determines that a conflict of interest does exist, then the Interested Person shall follow the requirements as set forth at paragraph 3.b.1. of this Article III.
4. Violations of the Conflicts of Interest Policy.
- a. If the Board or Committee has reasonable cause to believe that a Board Member has failed to disclose actual or possible conflicts of interest, it shall inform the Board Member of the basis for such belief and afford the Board Member an opportunity to explain the apparent failure to disclose.
 - b. If, after hearing the response of the Board Member and making such further investigation as may be warranted in the circumstances, the Board or Committee determines that the Board Member has in fact failed to disclose an actual or possible conflict of interest, it shall take appropriate disciplinary and corrective action, up to and including possible removal of the Board Member from the Board.

ARTICLE IV RECORDS OF PROCEEDINGS

- The minutes of the Board or Committee shall contain:
1. The names of the persons who disclosed or otherwise were found to have a Disclosable Interest in connection with an actual or possible conflict of interest, the nature of the Disclosable Interest, any action taken to determine whether a conflict of interest was present, and the Board's or Committee's decision as to whether a conflict of interest in fact existed; and
 2. The names of the persons, if any, who were present for discussions and votes relating to the transaction or arrangement, the content of the discussion, including any alternatives to the proposed transaction or arrangement, a record of any written statements or materials submitted to the Board or the Committee, and a record of any votes taken in connection therewith.

ARTICLE V OTHER RULES FOR CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

1. Board Members shall not use their positions or information obtained therefrom to provide an unfair advantage to themselves or their employers or any other organization with which they are affiliated, with respect to matters involving RPCNS contracts, grants or other approvals and appointments.

2. Board Members shall not use confidential information acquired by virtue of being a RPCNS Board Member to obtain private gain or gain from or for their employers or any other organizations with which they are affiliated, whether during or after their term as Board Member.
3. No Board member may ever borrow money from RPCNS.
4. Any Board Member excluded from voting on any matter at a Board or Committee meeting because of a conflict of interest shall not be counted in determining the presence of a quorum for purposes of such vote.
5. No Board Member shall receive any compensation, directly or indirectly, from any award or contract granted by RPCNS.
6. No Board Member shall serve as principal investigator on any contract or grant issued to RPCNS.

ARTICLE VI

ANNUAL STATEMENT

Each Board Member shall annually sign a statement which affirms that such Board Member:

1. Has received a copy of this conflicts of interest policy;
2. Has read and understands the policy;
3. Has agreed to comply with the policy;
4. Has disclosed all Disclosable Interests existing on or before the date of the statement; and
5. Understands that RPCNS is a charitable organization and that in order to maintain its federal tax exemption it must engage primarily in activities which accomplish one or more of its tax-exempt purposes.

Document Retention Policy

Rockville Presbyterian Cooperative Nursery School will hereinafter be referred to as the “School”. The purpose of this policy is to provide a system for complying with document retention laws, ensure that the School retains valuable documents, saves money, time and space, protects the organization against allegations of selective document destruction, and provides for routine destruction of non-business, superfluous, and outdated documents.

Documents that should be retained and the period of retention are listed below. In general, documents that are not subject to a retention requirement should be kept only long enough to accomplish the task for which they were generated.

The Director is in charge of complying with the document retention schedule. On April 1st of each year, the Executive Director will review the list of documents that have been sent to storage or destroyed. The list will identify the documents with enough specificity that one outside the department could determine which documents were stored or destroyed. The list of documents stored or destroyed will be kept by the Director.

The School has a legal duty to retain relevant documents which it knows or believes may be relevant to any legal action. Such documents also include those that could lead to discovery of

admissible evidence. Accordingly, all document destruction is automatically suspended when a lawsuit, claim, or government investigation is pending, threatened or reasonably foreseeable. In such a case, paper document destruction, as well as electronic destruction must cease immediately.

In accordance with this policy, the following documents must be retained as set forth in the schedule below.

FINANCIAL DOCUMENT	MINIMUM STORAGE REQUIREMENT
Accounts Payable Ledgers and Schedules	5 years
Audit Reports	7 years (many organizations keep these records permanently).
Bank Reconciliations and Statements	5 years and/or until all federal and state audit requirements have been met.
Checks (for important payments and purchases)	5 years or 4 years after item purchased is no longer owned.
Correspondence – customers/vendors	Depends on issue in correspondence and whether there is a contract; if potential litigation-3 years until threat of litigation has passed; if contract claim is possible, 4 years or until potential claim has dissipated.
Depreciation Schedules	While active + 3 years
Expenses and Purchases - Documentation can include: cash register tapes, account statements, canceled checks, invoices, credit card sales slips. Separate deductible expenses in the event organization pays unrelated business income tax.	5 years
Gross Receipts - amounts received from all sources. Documents that support gross receipts include: cash register tapes, bank deposit slips, receipt books, invoices, credit card charge slips, and Form 1099-MISC	5 years
Year-end financial statements	If Audit Report is generated by organization- 7 years; if no audit is conducted and year-end financial report is used in place of audit – permanently.

Confidential Reporting of Financial Impropriety Policy or Misuse of Rockville Cooperative Nursery School's Resources

Reporting of Organizational Improprieties or Misuse of Resources

Rockville Presbyterian Cooperative Nursery school will hereinafter be referred to as the "School." Any member of the staff, member of the Board, or volunteer affiliated with the School who has information about known or suspected financial improprieties or misuse of the School's resources, or other ethical problems, is encouraged to report their concerns to the Treasurer who will then ask the Chair of the Organization to investigate. In the event that the allegations involve the Chair, then the past-Chair, with the assistance of the Director will investigate the reported misconduct.

The person reporting may choose to do so anonymously via mail or through other means of communication that protects the individual's identity.

All efforts will be made to protect the confidentiality of those who report financial improprieties and choose not to do so anonymously. However, in certain situations, legal requirements make it impossible to keep the individual's identity confidential.

In accordance with the Sarbanes-Oxley Act, no retaliatory organizational action will be taken against those who report truthful information, even if the person incorrectly believes that a violation has occurred, about the commission or possible commission of any federal offense to a "law enforcement officer." The phrase "law enforcement officer" is defined by the Sarbanes-Oxley Act as including any "officer or employee of the Federal Government...authorized under law to engage in or supervise the prevention, detection, investigation, or prosecution of an offense."

Addendum regarding **Tuition Rates, Fees and Fines**

Application fee is money paid and submitted with the application form when a parent applies to enroll their child in RPCNS. It is \$75 for one child or \$125 for two or more children from the same family.

Tuition is the fee for attendance and instruction for your child enrolled in RPCNS. Tuition may be paid in full at the beginning of the academic year or monthly. If paying the tuition monthly, the payment is due on the first (1st) of the month. If payment is not received by noon of the seventh (7th) day of the month, a \$10/week late fee will be accessed. When the seventh (7th) day of the month falls on a Saturday, Sunday, holiday or during a school break, then tuition is due by the first day your child's class meets when school resumes. If your tuition payment is one month in arrears your child will automatically be suspended until the tuition and late fees are paid or an alternative payment plan has been developed and approved by the Treasurer and the Director. Non-payment of tuition is grounds for separation from RPCNS (see *Separation from RPCNS Policy*). In addition, your child's transcript may not be furnished (see *Issuing Transcripts Policy*). If paying tuition monthly, the first payment is due in August, the last payment is due in May.

Tuition Installment is either \$300, \$400, \$500 or \$600 paid to secure your child's place at RPCNS. It is due 2 weeks after receipt of your acceptance letter for new families or by June 1st of the preceding school year for returning families.

Activity Fee covers the cost of supplies consumed and field trips attended by your child over the course of the academic year while enrolled in RPCNS. The activity fee is due with the second tuition payment in September.

Clean-up Deposit is **\$90 per family**. This fee is refunded to you after the successful completion of one of the Set-up Days before school starts, one of the Saturday Clean-up Days during the school year, and one of the Pack-up Days at the end of the school year. This deposit is due with the third tuition payment in October.

Insufficient Funds occur because there weren't enough funds in your account to cover your payment. If a check is returned by the bank, to RPCNS, due to insufficient funds, a replacement check with the amount owed plus any bank fees paid incurred by RPCNS must be submitted as soon as possible. A second infraction is grounds for separation from RPCNS (See *Separation from RPCNS Policy*).

Fines - To ensure the equal participation of all co-oping families, fine guidelines are as follows:

- Failure to attend a "Set-Up," "Pack-Up," and one of the "Saturday Work Day" \$90.00
- Failure to attend Parent Orientation or Co-oper Check-in \$40.00
- Failure to pay tuition by noon on the 7th of the month \$10.00/week/family

Tuition and Fees for this current school year may be found on our school's website: www.rpcns.org