



Dear Preschool Parents:

You have now enrolled your child in a cooperative preschool, a school in which both the child and the parent participate. You are a SHAREHOLDER in the school; an equal owner with all the other parents enrolled for the coming school year and because of this, play an important role in the success of the Co-op for this year.

The cooperative experience will be different for each of us as we are different from one another. Our main objective though, is universal . . . our children. The goal for our preschool is to give your child a head start for the future and to help them in developing skills needed for their continuing education.

A cooperative gives you the opportunity to grow with your child. Both you and your child will meet new people and form friendships with other preschool families.

This handbook is yours to keep while your child is attending preschool. Please read through this handbook before the start of the school year as this contains important information for your cooperative experience. Use this as a reference tool whenever you have a question regarding a preschool policy or procedure. The more familiar you are with the contents of this book, the more you will be able to give your input toward the running of this school.

If you have any questions or concerns about the functioning of the Co-op please feel free to contact any of the Executive Board. We wish you and your child a year of growth and wonderful experiences!

Sincerely,  
Your Executive Board

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## Philosophy

Learning is a natural and ongoing phenomenon, which emerges as we interact with and respond to our environment. As young children play, they develop strategies and form relationships that enable them to create a world that makes sense.

At Chelsea Children's Cooperative Preschool, we believe it is our responsibility to provide multifaceted opportunities for preschoolers to explore, experiment, and grow in a safe, nurturing, and age appropriate arena. Our program is committed to helping individual children:

- Develop and maintain a positive self-image
- Stimulate creativity and a personal interest and joy in learning and discovery
- Work toward self-sufficiency and independence
- Develop problem-solving skills
- Cultivate cooperative social skills with adults and peers in large and small group situations
- Improve their coordination, balance, rhythm, strength, endurance, and body awareness as it relates to health, safety, and fitness issues
- Exercise self control
- Accept and respect others and their opinions
- Successfully communicate their thoughts, feelings and ideas through language, art, music, and dance
- Become proficient and competent elementary school students from early exposure to educationally sound activities that introduce and subtly teach pre-academic competencies necessary for later school success in math, science, social studies, and reading
- Have fun and enjoy school

Research based studies maintain that parents are the first and ultimately the best and most influential teachers. To this end, we are dedicated to providing services to our community within the context of the family. Parents are provided opportunities and are encouraged to assist in many aspects of school development and operation. Establishing a genuine partnership between children, parents, and teachers in an educational setting benefits everyone.

Chelsea Children's Cooperative Preschool philosophy, curriculum, and classroom practices are based on findings from professional resources and research in the field of early childhood development and education. We continually evaluate and revise our practices to reflect what is currently known about children.

Valuing the family as a unit as well as the individuality and worth of each of its members is our philosophy and practical approach to preschool education.

## Daily Schedule

### Morning Class

### Afternoon Class

**8:15 a.m.**

Assist parents and their children arrive. You will be briefed on the days activities, do the routine pre-session duties, and help with last minute preparation and set-up.

**11:30 a.m.**

**8:30 a.m.**

Assist parents greet children and help with nametags (when needed). Children are free to explore the room and begin playing. The daily project at the Art Center remains closed until after gathering time.

**11:45 a.m.**

**8:45 a.m.**

**Gathering Time**--Gathering Time includes taking attendance, marking daily calendar, songs, finger plays and an explanation of activities at centers including special art, science, and/or cooking projects. *(All family members are encouraged to join in Gathering Time.)*

**12:00 p.m.**

**9:00 a.m.**

**Center Time (Free Choice Time)**-- Assist parents help as needed in center activity areas. Of particular importance is the gross motor area. Structured group activities, games, music and creative movement are offered at this time. Special cooking and science projects require additional supervision as well. Ordinarily we like to have no more than four children at the art table at one time. If we keep the number low, we should only need one parent there to help. While this is a very hectic time during the day, please take time to observe and interact with your own child; having you at school means a lot to your child.

**12:15 p.m.**

**10:00 a.m.**

**Clean-up Time**-- A magic wand or other signal is used to designate Clean-up Time. Assist parents help children pick up room and clean off tables (with bleach water) for snacks. Parents also need to help children wash their hands and use the bathroom as necessary. Occasionally we do a group activity, (such as Magic Science), before washing hands. At least one parent needs to remain with the children while the other(s) prepares for snack.

**1:15 p.m.**

**10:15 a.m.**

**Snack Time**-- Assist parents join children at the tables for snacks. Children are encouraged to pour their own water, ask for more snacks, and clean up their own spills, as instructed. This is an important social time during the day.

**1:30 p.m.**

**10:30 a.m.**

**1:45 p.m.**

**Circle and Library Time--** A group time, similar to gathering time, where we share our daily experiences and read or dramatize a story. As many assist parents as possible must join the teacher in the library once the tables have been cleaned after snack. On select days, this time will also include share time.

**10:45 a.m.**

**2:00 p.m.**

**Outdoor Play--** Assist parents help dress children for outdoor play and make sure art projects and share toys are in the children's cubbies. One parent needs to remain inside to clean up from the days activities (see Cleaning Procedures) and prepare the room for the next session. All others must help supervise children on the playground.

**11:00 a.m.**

**2:15 p.m.**

**Dismissal--** Children will be either outside (weather permitting) or outside the classroom, in the hallway when parents arrive to pick them up. **Parents must sign out their child.** Once the session is dismissed, everyone is encouraged to stay out of the classroom and the doors should be closed. Assist parents need to remain at school until all children are picked up.

## **Arts-Go-Round**

Chelsea Center for the Arts provides a multi-faceted arts enrichment program in partnership with Chelsea Children's Cooperative Preschool. *Arts-Go-Round* is a dynamic series of arts classes created just for 4 yr. old and 5 yr. old Co-op preschoolers. AGR gives 4 and 5 year old Co-op preschoolers 45 minutes worth of instruction by the CCA's experts in music, dance, drama, and art that will take place before or after preschool on select Fridays. It does not replace the existing music and art components in the preschool curriculum.

Children participate in dance, music, drama, and art classes as part of a series running on biweekly Fridays. *Arts-Go-Round* is taught by well-trained and warm instructors who will share their enthusiasm for the arts with your child. Through a special arrangement with CCA, Co-op families are given a substantial discount on the public pricing for these classes. Another benefit to Co-op families is the opportunity to enroll early in *Arts-Go-Round*, before the classes are opened to the public.

## **Arts-Go-Round Q & A**

### **Q. When does Arts-Go-Round meet?**

AGR classes meet on a series of Fridays from October 2010, through April 2011.

**Group A** meets from 10:15-11:00am

**Group B** meets from 11:45am – 12:30 pm.

**Q. How much does Arts-Go-Round cost and how do I register?**

You will need to make two separate payments when you register for AGR:

- Tuition for the 12 week series (paid to the CCA)
- Lunch fee for 12 week series (paid to the Co-op)

\*Please contact the CCA office for tuition/lunch costs

**Q. Are there scholarships available for AGR?**

Yes!! Please apply for tuition assistance through CCA: (734) 433-2787.

**Q. Do parents assist in the AGR classroom?**

Yes! Just as in regular Co-op Preschool, one assist parent is needed per class. Each class for both Group A and Group B must have an assist parent present at every meeting. The assist schedule will be set as soon as both classes are full.

**Q. Can I get a tuition break if I assist for AGR?**

Yes! You will receive \$5 off of your total tuition per day you assist. Assist schedules are filled on a first come first serve basis, so sign up early if you wish to assist and receive the discount. Parents are responsible for finding a replacement should there be a last minute conflict for their assist day.

**Q. Do I need to enroll in the entire 12-week series?**

Yes. AGR's effectiveness is much greater when children participate in the entire series. A la carte classes are not an option for AGR. If a student has to miss a class, that class is forfeited. If a class is canceled because of instructor illness, emergency, or weather conditions, the class will either be rescheduled or a refund will be issued from CCA. If Chelsea Schools cancel school for any reason, then AGR is also canceled.

**Q. How soon can I enroll my child?**

Enrollment for Co-op families begins mid-August. Enrollment is limited to 12 students per group and space is very limited. There is a minimum of 8 students per class for each class to run. Please secure your spot early to avoid missing the opportunity. Contact the CCA office at (734) 433-2787 to reserve your child's spot with a \$25 non-refundable deposit.

## **Q. What does a typical Arts-Go-Round Friday schedule look like?**

### ***A message from co-op teacher, Courtney Aldrich:***

Hello Arts-Go-Round families! I wanted to give everyone a little “crash course” on the logistics of Arts-Go-Round from my perspective.

**PM families:** Your Arts-Go-Round class begins at 10:15 am. There are coat hooks in the hallway that lead from our room to the kitchen that have the same symbols on them as the coat hooks in our room. You will use these hallway coat hooks to hang up your child’s coat, backpack, lunchbox, etc. You will then walk back upstairs for your art or music class. Our familiar sign in/out sheet will be at the Arts-Go-Round doorway. Please sign your child in at that time so I know later who is here or not here. If it is a share day, I will have a second share basket in the hallway by the coat hooks for share items. Children are picked up at the end of the day as usual. If you are the PM4 Arts-Go-Round assist parent, you need to help the art or music teacher as needed, including taking children to the bathroom or assisting in guidance/discipline issues. When art or music is over (11:00), you’ll escort the children downstairs and back into the classroom in the area by the rocking chair. *Do not have them wash their hands at this time or get their lunches.* We will do this as a group later. There may be a little bit of transition time here when I am not yet back in the room from my morning class. Perhaps engage the children in a game of Simon Says or read them a story until I get there – whatever works. It would not be a good time to get all of the toys out, since we will be eating lunch. Also, please bring the sign in/out sheet downstairs with you when you come down. Once I return, I will do a song with the morning and afternoon Arts-Go-Round children and we will wash hands as a group. On their return from washing their hands, the children will get their lunchbox and go into the room and start eating. Once all of the children have eaten, and it is approximately 11:35, I will do “switcheroo” with the kids. At this point the afternoon children will go out to the hallway, put their lunchboxes away, and gather everything off of their hooks and stand next to their hooks. They will need your assistance. Once everyone from both classes is ready, I announce “switcheroo”, and the afternoon kids move their stuff to the coat hooks inside the classroom, and can then play until I call for gathering time. You’ll need to be in the classroom with them until either another assist parent or I am back in the classroom.

**AM families:** You will drop your child off in the morning as usual. At 12:30, you will be picking up your child from Arts-Go-Round. First you need to go upstairs to the Arts-Go-Round room and sign them out on our familiar sign in/out sheet located at the Arts-Go-Round doorway (please leave their nametags at school). Then you head downstairs. There are coat hooks in the hallway that lead from our preschool

room to the kitchen that have the same symbols on them as the coat hooks in our room. You will retrieve your child's belongings from these hallway coat hooks. I will also have placed their preschool art projects in a visible spot in that hallway, so remember to look for and take home their art project. If it was a share day, I will also place the share basket with the items in it out in the hallway. If you are the AM4 Arts-Go-Round assist parent, at the end of our "regular" school day, you will help me get the Arts-Go-Round children gathered/inside/undressed from recess and over to the rocking chair. Once everyone is together, I will do a song with the morning and afternoon Arts-Go-Round children and we will wash hands as a group. On their return from washing their hands, the children will get their lunchbox and go into the room and start eating. Once all of the children have eaten, and it is approximately 11:35, I will do "switcheroo" with the kids. At this point the morning children will go to their hooks in our classroom hallway, put their lunchboxes away, and gather everything off of their hooks and stand next to their hooks. They will need your assistance. Once everyone from both classes is ready, I announce "switcheroo", and the morning kids move their stuff to the coat hooks in the outside hallway. I will then line them up and put on their nametags to go upstairs. You will need to bring the sign in/out sheet upstairs with you and hang it on the hook by the doorway when you escort the children upstairs. While in the Arts-Go-Round class, you need to help the art or music teacher as needed, including taking children to the bathroom or assisting in guidance/discipline issues. When art or music is over, please collect nametags and make sure the children are safely dismissed to their caregiver. The sign in/out clipboard and nametags then need to be returned to me.

### **To all of you . . .**

It sounds crazy but works remarkably well. If you ever have any questions, problems with the children, or emergencies, remember I am right there in the classroom and you can always come get my help.

## **Areas With In the Preschool**

The preschool is divided into areas designed to provide multifaceted opportunities for preschoolers to explore, experiment, and grow in a safe, nurturing, and age appropriate arena. These areas include:

### **Activity Area:**

The Activity Area is well stocked with play dough and manipulative toys for developing small muscle coordination. Children are encouraged to pick up before starting another game or toy. A sand table is also available.

**Dramatic Play Area:**

This area of the preschool stimulates dramatic play through the use of dress-up clothes and accessories, playhouse appliances, dolls, and simulated realistic life experiences. It may be set up as a pizza parlor, beauty/barber shop, fix-it shop, spaceship, campground, train, etc.

**Art Area:**

The children will be offered daily art projects. Assist only when needed. Allow the children freedom of expression in whatever art form is scheduled. Easels are also always available.

**Block Area:**

The block area provides a place where children can build with a large assortment of blocks. Block buildings are to be only chest high to the children.

**Outside Play Equipment:**

The playground equipment is specifically designed for the needs of preschoolers. While supervising this area, please follow safety guidelines.

**Library:**

This is a quieter place for children to look at books. Parents may choose to read to children in this area.

**Writing Center:**

The writing center provides paper, pencils, crayons and markers so that children can draw or write.

**Large Motor Area:**

Climbing and large muscle equipment (i.e. rocking boat, climbing fort) are provided in this area.

## Assisting Guidelines

*What do I do when I assist?* This is a common concern for all parents. As an assist parent there are a variety of responsibilities—we will try to summarize them below.

### Upon Arrival:

- Both assist parents need to arrive 15 minutes prior to the start of class (8:15 a.m. for AM classes, 11:30 a.m. for PM classes)
- One parent brings snack (can use refrigerator in 5's room if needed), the other brings water—this is a good time to fill water bottles and store in refrigerator
- One parent helps the teacher set up classroom: setting out appropriate number of chairs, choosing toys to set out on tables and in large motor room –this is a fun opportunity for your child to choose which toys to bring out
- The other parent cleans & restocks the bathroom, if needed, and wipes down railings, doorknobs & light switches (please refer to the Cleaning Procedures sheet)

### After Gathering Time:

One parent needs to be in the large motor room while the other is helping children with the art project. Both parents should interact and help throughout the classroom:

- Help with art project
- Read books
- Play games
- May escort children to bathroom to wash hands or to go to the bathroom (be sure to tell another assist parent or staff member before going)
- May help to resolve disputes between children using the Co-op's Guidance Policy (found in the handbook). If uncomfortable, or unable, to handle these conflicts, the teacher may be summoned.

Generally, this is an opportunity to interact with the children while always being available to help the teacher as needed.

### Snack Time:

One parent assists the children in washing hands while the other parent prepares the snack.

- Wipe down tables with bleach water
- Set out snack supplies (cups, napkins...)
- Serve snack after Snack Song and help as needed

Children are encouraged to pour their own water, set up their “crumb catchers” and clear their spots when done.

### Group Time:

During any large group activity (i.e. Magic Science, Story Time, Share Time...) at least one

parent, and quite often both parents, should participate and be with the children to help with crowd control. It is tempting, at times, to leave the group to get a head start on cleaning, but remember that the first priority must always be to assist the teacher with the children.

**Playground:**

- At least one parent must accompany the teacher on the playground with the children (except for when a teacher's aide is in attendance, then both parents may stay inside to begin cleaning duties)
- Help children dress to go outside (encourage children to put coats, boots, hats, etc... on and help when/where needed)
- Assist parents need to stay at the school until each child's parent/guardian has come and when cleaning responsibilities are done

**End- of- Day Cleaning Responsibilities:** (please refer to Cleaning Procedures)

- Snack area
- Water bottles and cups
- Sweeping and vacuuming
- Putting toys away
- Cleaning orphan toys

**Tips:**

- If you cannot assist, it is your responsibility to find a substitute
  - Call other families in your class or someone on the Paid Assist List
  - Call Session Rep. as a *last resort*
  - Cal Session Rep. to confirm change in assists
- Dress comfortably & appropriately for going outside
  - Getting messy is a possibility ☺
- Ask questions!!

Assisting and being in class with your child is one of the joys and privileges of being in a Co-op preschool. Have fun and don't worry about remembering it all! The teacher and other assist parents are there if you have any questions or concerns.

## Snacks

For healthy growth and development, children need snacks and fluids between meals. Snacks can provide additional energy that children need to avoid late-morning and mid-afternoon slumps. However, snacks should be planned to be nutritious and age-appropriate.

In addition to providing a part of the child's daily food intake, snack time can offer important learning opportunities:

- To try new foods, and explore how they look, feel, sound and smell
- To develop social skills by talking and being with others
- To discuss how food is produced, prepared, its importance to growth, etc.
- To develop a willingness to try different things through eating new foods
- To learn age-appropriate table manners
- To share special events like birthdays or holidays
- To share with one another food that they have prepared themselves
- To enjoy a variety of foods

Healthy Snack Suggestions:

Muffins	Bread sticks
Cheese	Yogurt-covered raisins
Raisins	Yogurt
Crackers	Pretzels
Fruit	Graham crackers
Granola bars	Dried fruit
Cereal	Trail mix (no nuts)
Cut up apples	Orange or tangerine sections
Banana halves	Chunked pineapple
Canned fruit	Cucumber slices
Rice/popcorn cakes	Bread
Grapes cut in half	Bean dip
Frozen 100% juice pops	Fruity yogurt dip
Ranch dressing dip	Chips made from tortillas or pita
Zucchini/banana/pumpkin/carrot/lemon quick bread	

The children will be given bottled water to drink.

It is highly commendable when snacks reflect the creativity of the provider. Recipes for snacks may be shared in our newsletter. Check with your Session Representative if special ingredients are required by the teacher for a cooking project.

### **Snack Restrictions:**

To avoid choking hazards, please **DO NOT** bring the following:

Vegetable sticks (grated or cooked OK)	Hot Dogs
Whole grapes	Fruit Roll-ups
Popcorn	Gum
Hard candy	

To avoid food allergies, the co-op maintains a NUT-FREE classroom. Please **DO NOT** bring

- A snack containing any kind of nut or peanut butter
- A snack with any of the following label warnings:

*May contain traces of peanuts and tree nuts*

- *Manufactured on equipment that processes products containing peanuts and other nuts*
- *Manufactured in a facility that processes nuts*

### **Keeping Children with Allergies Safe:**

The Co-op is committed to creating a safe environment for children. Parental assistance is vital to this commitment. Food allergies have steadily increased, creating a risk to some children. The following policy has been prepared in order to balance food allergy concerns with the traditional Co-op experience promoted by snack time.

1. Every parent of a child with allergy concerns shall complete an Allergy Action Plan form for their child. This form details the child's allergies, allergic reactions, and the necessary action to take in the event of an allergic reaction. The forms will be kept in a binder maintained in the classroom.
2. Every parent of a child with allergy concerns shall create a Safe Snack Box for their child. These will be kept in the kitchen. This is a container, labeled with the child's name as well as the words "Safe Snacks," that hold snacks preapproved by the parent to be safe for a child with food allergies. It is the responsibility of the parent to supply and restock their child's safe snack box with safe snacks.
3. The assist parent providing snack for the day shall bring in the list of ingredients and place them in the bin in the kitchen labeled Snack Ingredient Bin. The list of ingredients could be the snack package, box of mix, recipe, etc.
4. Parents having food allergy concerns shall check the bin at the beginning of the session and review the ingredients to determine whether the snack is safe for their child.
5. Parents having food allergy concerns shall then complete the Snack Acknowledgment Form next to the bin by providing a signature, date and written approval/disapproval of the snack. (If you have no food allergy concerns for your child, it is not necessary to check the bin or complete the Snack Acknowledgement Form.)
6. At snack time, one of the assist parents will check the Snack Acknowledgment Form to determine if the child with food allergies can eat the snack. If the parent approved, then the child will be served the snack provided to the class. If the

parent determined that the snack is not safe for their child, or if the parent forgot to complete the form, then the child will be provided with a snack from their own Safe Snack Box.

### **Snacks for Holiday Parties:**

When multiple parents provide snacks for the purpose of a party, then the following safeguards apply:

1. Each session will maintain a bin for the purpose of collecting party contributions from the parents. Parents may contribute snack or non-snack items.
2. Session representatives will set a deadline for receiving all snack party contributions. Parents may contribute snacks for a particular party until the deadline. The snack name and ingredients shall be placed in the bin set aside for their child's session party. Any party contributions after the deadline shall be non-snack items like stickers, crayons or toys.
3. Parents having food allergy concerns shall review the ingredients of all the contributed snacks and complete the Snack Acknowledgement Form indicating which party snacks are acceptable.
4. On the day of the party one of the assist parents will review the Snack Acknowledgement Form to determine which snacks are safe for the child.

### **Preparing Snacks with the Children:**

On your scheduled snack day feel free to bring ingredients to school and prepare the snack with the children. (Let the teacher know you'll be doing this.) Preparing food teaches math, time concepts (e.g., beat 3 minutes, whip 2 minutes), science concepts (children can observe changes in food as applied to hot and cold temperature, liquid to dry, etc.), social studies, language, health habits, cooperation, and sensory perception. But most important to the children is, COOKING IS FUN! Children will also be given the choice of the right foods and will learn the balance of the food groups. Children will eat and enjoy more varieties of foods when allowed to explore, learn and prepare their own snacks.

### **References:**

State of Michigan, Family Independence Agency (2003 December). Snacks That Count publication.

## **Cleaning Procedures when Assisting**

**These cleaning procedures are to be done daily for each preschool session to ensure a sanitary and safe environment for our children.**

### **Upon Arrival:**

- Prepare a spray bottle (kept on windowsill by art table in 3 – 4's room) with water and a few drops of bleach—this is used to clean the snack tables & countertops
- Clean bathroom
  - Swish toilet bowl with toilet brush, wipe down toilet with Lysol wipe
  - Wipe down countertops and sinks with Lysol wipe
  - Sanitize all door knob handles & light switches with Lysol wipes
  - Refresh toilet paper and paper towel supplies as needed
  - Sweep floor
- Wipe down door handles & light switches in classroom with Lysol wipes
- Wipe down stair rails outside of bathroom with Lysol wipes
- Wash your hands

### **Before Snack Time:**

- Wipe down snack tables with bleach water from spray bottle and paper towel
- Wash your hands

### **Classroom:**

- Straighten art table—AM session should prepare table and tidy art supplies for PM session, PM sessions should clean and put away leftover supplies
- Wipe down snack tables with bleach water and paper towel
- Sweep snack, art and sand areas
- Vacuum all carpeted areas
- Put away toys
- Empty trash cans if necessary—if you are able to take home a full trash bag to dispose of as part of your home trash pick-up, please feel free to do so—take full trash bags to garbage cans in fenced-in area on playground
- Put new bags in trash cans

### **Kitchen:**

- Clean any dishes, water bottles and/ or cutlery
  - Place three washbasins (kept under sink) in sink
  - Fill first with hot water and a squirt of dish detergent
  - Fill second with plain water

- Fill third with water and one capful of chlorine bleach
- Wash with soapy water, rinse with plain water and soak in bleach water for at least one minute
- Allow dishes to air dry in dish drainer
- Dump out all washbasins and turn upside down to drain dry
- Clean art supplies
- Wipe down countertops and sink area with bleach water used to clean snack table

## **Cleaning Procedures when Assisting Young 5's**

**These cleaning procedures are to be done daily for each preschool session to ensure a sanitary and safe environment for our children.**

### **Upon Arrival:**

- Prepare a spray bottle (kept on windowsill by art table in 3 – 4's room) with water and a few drops of bleach—this is used to clean the snack tables & countertops
- Wipe down door handles & light switches in classroom with Lysol wipes

### **End-of-Day**

#### ***Classroom:***

- Wipe down snack tables with bleach water and paper towel
- Sweep snack, art and sand areas
- Clean art supplies/put away
- Vacuum all carpeted areas
- Put away toys
- Empty trash cans if necessary—if you are able to take home a full trash bag to dispose of as part of your home trash pick-up, please feel free to do so—take full trash bags to garbage cans in fenced-in area on playground
- Replace bags in trash cans

#### ***Kitchen:***

- Clean any dishes, water bottles and/ or cutlery
  - Place three washbasins (kept under sink) in sink
  - Fill first with hot water and a squirt of dish detergent
  - Fill second with plain water
  - Fill third with water and one capful of chlorine bleach
  - Wash with soapy water, rinse with plain water and soak in bleach water for at least one minute
  - Allow dishes to air dry in dish drainer
  - Dump out all washbasins and turn upside down to drain dry
- Wipe down countertops and sink area with bleach water used to clean snack table

## A Message to Parents

For many of you, participating in a cooperative preschool will be a new experience. At the onset of school, the pace will be unhurried. This will afford you the chance to acclimate yourself to the school (the routine, location of equipment, and materials), to familiarize yourself with the children and the other parents and the responsibilities of being a Co-op member. It takes time for both the children and parents to adjust themselves to the school. Other children, new adults and new surroundings lend excitement to this experience. The following are some hints to help you and your child enjoy school.

1. Talk with your child about this new adventure. Give them some idea of how many children there will be in their class. Tell them about the equipment, the teacher's name and role, the length of time you will be away (e.g., back before lunch time), and the role of assisting parents.
2. Anticipate fun, but don't paint a too-alluring picture.
3. Avoid drilling your child in advance about good behavior. Some negative behavior is expected at any given time.
4. Be prepared to stay with your child at several sessions, if necessary, until he/she feels secure.
5. Dress children appropriately-- play clothes are best. Don't forget the weather! We go outside everyday when the temperature is over 20 degrees. On chilly days, boots, mittens, hats and warm winter coats are a must.
6. Children should bring a tote bag or backpack to each session. The tote bag or backpack must be clearly labeled with the child's name.
7. Drop off and pick up children on time. Being left can make a child worry.
8. A child may be tired the first few preschool sessions.
9. Try not to interpret verbally for the children, especially about artwork. Let the child tell you about their artwork, rather than ask what it is.
10. Observe the children as objectively as possible without judgment.
11. Take mishaps calmly and correct only when necessary. Never let a child injure themselves or each other, or damage their surroundings.
12. Try to show interest and appreciation in the child's achievements and conversation. Never talk about a child in their presence.
13. Encourage imagination and initiative. Avoid models to copy.
14. Encourage independence. Give only as much help as is really needed. When necessary, ask if they want help rather than if they need it (e.g., pouring their own water, choosing paper, washing hands and helping clean up).
15. Provide children with clothes that work: zippers that zip, boots that fit, coats with all the buttons and so forth.
16. Encourage conversations during snack time. Parents please join children at snack tables.
17. Be natural and friendly with the children. This is an opportunity for children to learn about and relate to new adults.

18. Don't push your own child if they tend to cling to you on days that you assist.
19. Have fun! Enjoy this opportunity of working with children.
20. Support your teachers. They are the professional directors of the preschool.
21. Express dissatisfaction using the proper channels (see Whom to Contact). There is nothing worse than an unhappy parent who complains only to their small group of friends.
22. Contribute new ideas. It's amazing how the Co-op can change and grow depending on how dynamic its members are.
23. Take an interest in the activities of the group. Your own sincere feelings of involvement will have meaning to your child.
24. Think of ways you can contribute special skills and hobbies; like bringing in animals, showing how to make special foods, playing a musical instrument, demonstrating arts and crafts, sharing special songs, poems, books, pictures, etc.
25. Your concern about the day-to-day operation of the preschool is what will make it an outstanding experience for your child. The little touches that you add on your assist day, the suggestions you make at membership meetings, and your willingness to volunteer when called upon add up to a high quality organization.

## **Guidance Strategies Work at School and Home**

### **Philosophy of Child Guidance:**

Young children are just learning how to get along in a group. The role of the teacher is to help children learn acceptable ways to express and meet their needs. Teachers give children cues about which behaviors to maintain or avoid and which alternative behaviors may be more successful. The overall guidance policy is aimed at creating an encouraging classroom environment that helps children develop social skills.

### **What is Guidance?**

Guidance is the means by which we help children learn about working together, self-control, decision-making, problem solving, and conflict resolution in an encouraging atmosphere that maintains their self-esteem.

### **Encouragement in the Classroom and at Home:**

We will work to create a caring, inclusive, responsive environment for your child that offers opportunities for large group, small group and individual interactions. The following are some strategies used in the classroom to create an encouraging environment that teaches social skills and cooperation. These strategies can also be used in your home.

1. Avoid singling out an individual child publicly for either praise or criticism. Keep your encouragement and guidance private in order not to embarrass them or compare them to others. (Gartrell 2001)

2. Teach children to recognize and accept how they and others are feeling, and what the names are for those feelings. This can be done using facial expression pictures or storybooks.
3. When a child is upset or angry, acknowledge how that child is feeling. (e.g., *I can see that you are angry because your tower was knocked over.*)
4. Teach children acceptable, non-hurting ways to express strong emotions. (Gartrell 2001) This can be done through techniques such as role-playing or storybooks. Reinforce this teaching with guidance or encouragement when a child is actually experiencing strong emotions.
5. Teach children conflict resolution skills, such as taking turns, expressing their points of view and coming up with alternative solutions. Once again, this can be done through techniques such as role-playing, puppetry, and story telling. Reinforce this teaching with guidance or encouragement when a conflict actually occurs.
6. Model for the child how to work with others in a group and accept the differences between members of the group. (Gartrell [1998] 2001)
7. Always affirm for the children how important and special and worthy each of them is as an individual and a member of the class or group. (Gartrell 2001)
8. When talking with a child, get yourself in close proximity to the child, get down to their eye level and let them know they have your full attention and make sure you have theirs.
9. Focus on children's behavior rather than attitudes or personality characteristics. Label by name the behavior of the child that is either positive or negative. Avoid labels such as you're a good/bad child or that they were not nice. In addition, give the child a description of the expected behavior and the reason behind the expectation. (e.g., *Hitting is not okay, it hurts our friends. We need to use friendly, gentle touches . . .* instead of *You are bad for hitting.*)
10. Avoid using guilt, shame or comparisons. (e.g., *You may not hit Susie with the block* instead of *You should be ashamed of yourself for hitting Susie--you like her.*)

### **Guiding Children's Behavior:**

Even in an encouraging environment, conflicts are going to occur. It is helpful to think of conflict in terms of mistaken behaviors rather than misbehaviors. (Gartrell [1995] 2001) Following are some tips for guiding children's behavior to help them learn from their mistakes and recognize their successes. Once again, these ideas can also be applied successfully at home.

1. Let children work it out for themselves. (Jalongo & Isenberg 2000) Often we are tempted to jump in too soon. Give the children a chance to work it out. You can

- either pretend not to notice anything, or you can subtly let the children see you watching and listening. After the issue is resolved, you may want to give a specific comment to reinforce positive behaviors. (e.g., *I really appreciate how you've all waited your turn. Now everyone can have a chance to play.*)
2. Comment on what you see, without offering solutions. (Jalongo & Isenberg 2000) Often just the reminder will prompt children to solve the problem. (e.g., *I see the sandbox toys scattered all over the playground.*)
  3. Reinforce rules in a positive manner when possible. (e.g., *Ride on the cement.* instead of *Don't ride on the grass.*; *We keep the sand in the sandbox.* instead of *Don't dump the sand out of the sandbox.* )
  4. When you need to intervene in a conflict situation, ask questions. (Jalongo & Isenberg 2000) Instead of rushing to judge, let the children express their views about what is happening.
  5. Always go to the victim first. If a conflict occurs between two children and one is obviously the victim, always tend to the victim first.
  6. Help children brainstorm solutions. Without offering your own solutions, ask the children, *What could we do to . . .* (fill in the blank) (e.g., *What could we do to make sure everyone gets a turn with the monkey?*) If the children need more intervention, then you could offer some solutions of your own. (Jalongo & Isenberg 2000)
  7. Do not force a child to say, "I'm sorry." Often this is forcing them to lie. Children are developing empathy and may not cognitively understand what it means to feel sorry. Instead, have the child come up with a way to make the other child feel better by making restitution. (For example, possible solutions could be to help rebuild the tower that was knocked down, or bring your friend a special lovey if they are sad.)
  8. Give the child a choice if you intend on leaving it up to them. (e.g., *You may either wear your hat or your hood.*) AND don't give them an option if there truly is not an option. For example, if asked *Do you have to go to the bathroom?* Most often the child would say no. Instead say, *It's time to go to the bathroom.* Or give them a different choice that is related to the issue but does not leave an option out of the desired behavior. (e.g., *Would you like to use the big stall or the little stall in the bathroom?*)
  9. Redirect children's behavior. Consistently suggest alternatives to unacceptable behavior. (e.g., *You cannot throw stones, but you can throw these beanbags at a target.*)
  10. Give children a warning of what consequence will result from breaking a rule and follow through on the stated consequence if children continue to break the rule. (e.g., *If you do not walk out to the playground, we will have to come back inside and try again;* if necessary, followed by, *Remember I said you had to walk out to the playground or we would have to come back in and try again? Now I need everyone to come back inside so we can practice walking out to the playground again.*)
  11. When directing children's behavior, use statements rather than questions, and avoid tagging *OK?* on the end of sentences. (e.g., say *It's time to come in now.* rather than, *Do you want to come in now?* or *It's time to come in now, OK?*)

12. When necessary to prevent harm, use gentle restraint. (e.g., Hold the child back from hitting another child.)
13. Use painless removal from the situation (cooling down time (Gartrell 2001)) as a last resort.

### **Cooling Down Time:**

Children can experience very intense feelings such as anger, sorrow, or excitement. Some times these feelings are so strong that children can no longer control their behavior. They may kick, scream, hit or sob uncontrollably in an effort to express their emotions.

When this happens you must be patient, supportive and firm in your efforts to help children regain control. In these situations, teachers usually implement a cooling down procedure. Cooling down means just what its name implies: children take a break from the busy classroom to regain their composure privately.

The cooling down time works as follows:

1. The teacher will take the child to a quiet place in the room, or immediately outside of it. This will be a safe place where the child has few distractions, will be less disturbing to other children, and where classmates have little opportunity to stare at or tease the child. When children are upset privacy helps calm them down. An audience prolongs the difficulty.
2. Once the child is in the quiet area the teacher will say something like *You're still very upset. When you are calm we can talk about what's bothering you.*
3. The teacher will remain with the child and if necessary carefully restrain the child from hurting himself/herself or the teacher.
4. Once the child has calmed down, the teacher will discuss the original concern with the child and accompany the child back into the classroom.
5. Later in the day the teacher will make sure to have some positive contact with the child to show that the teacher does not dislike the child because he or she lost control. Thus the purpose of the cooling down time is to help children regain control, not to punish, shame or blame children in any way.
6. Cooling Down Time is the ultimate discipline strategy used. Adults DO NOT slap, spank or ridicule children in an effort to maintain order in the classroom.

### **How Can You Help?**

Parental support of the guidance strategies listed above is the key to creating a caring classroom. You are encouraged to become familiar with the encouragement and guidance strategies and practice them at home and when you assist at school. We all make mistakes and it can be difficult to use the strategies at first, but with practice they will become second nature. The children will really benefit from consistency in the classroom and at home.

You are also encouraged to work with the teacher as a partner in guiding your child. Through communication of ideas, suggestions, and feedback, we can work together to guide your child's social development.

#### References

Gartrell, Daniel (2001 November). Replacing Time-Out: Part One: Using Guidance to Build an Encouraging Classroom. *Young Children*. pp. 8-16.

Jalongo, M. Renck & Isenberg, J. P. (2000). *Exploring Your Role, A Practitioners Introduction to Early Childhood Education*. Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall

#### **You May Be Surprised at What You See at Preschool:**

The children may be more active and noisy than you expected. This is normal at this age; therefore, we don't interfere unless shouting and running are keeping other children from enjoying their play. We can tell the children to use indoor voices, and to keep their outdoor voices for the playground.

You may be puzzled by the emphasis that is put on the value of active, physical play and rhythmic activity. The school equipment has been carefully chosen to encourage the use of large muscles to develop the sense of balance and to help a child learn to manage in general. This is essential before a child can become skilled in coordinating small muscles as in the fingers and eyes. At this age, learning how to use their larger body is the best possible preparation for finer skills needed in cutting, drawing, reading, etc.

You may expect the teacher to do more instructing than she does; how to draw, paint build with blocks, etc. We do very little of this, feeling that young children need to explore and express themselves freely and experience the joy of using materials in their own way. When they ask for help or are obviously in need of encouragement, we try to find ways to help them explore and solve the problem of how themselves. A child wanting help in making a picture of a rabbit may be asked, What does a rabbit have?, What do rabbits eat?, Where do rabbits keep their tails?. In this way, the child has a learning experience, which would not be possible if we did it for the child, or made a model for them to copy. When these children enter public school later, they will have more than enough formal instruction in these matters.

You may see the teacher spending a great deal of time with one particular child. They know that this child needs extra help at that time in order to have a satisfying school experience, or may need to be diverted from interfering with the play of other children for their sakes. The other children understand this and know, *When I am in trouble, my teacher will see this and I will get help*. No child is overlooked; the teacher tries to give each child the attention they need, when they need it.

You will see children struggling to put on coats, work zippers and buttons, tie shoelaces by themselves when an adults help would make the task easier and quicker. We try not

to step in unless the child is obviously frustrated and desires help. Sometimes this will be hard to remember when we ourselves get into a rush.

You may sometimes hear children use undesirable words. The teacher generally ignores this, knowing as a rule the child will not continue the behavior if their words do not have Shock Value they counted on.

You may be surprised when the teacher does not insist that the child join in the play with other children. Just as a child must learn to sit up before they walk, they must be able to play alone and beside others before they are really able to play with others.

In general, cooperation in routine is expected of the children, however, here again the teacher may not insist that a child join the others and come to story or music time. Many of the children will not be ready to join in a song or finger play, and we can help them most by encouragement without pushing or making them perform. There is no use in trying to make a child walk before they are physically ready; likewise they must be socially and emotionally ready for new experiences before we insist they have them. They will become ready most quickly if we permit them to develop at their own speed rather than pushing them through one stage and into another. Each child is different and we cannot expect them all to be ready for the same experience at the same time.

### **Parents' Responsibilities:**

- Parents are responsible for making tuition and all other payments according to the operational policies of the preschool, as specified on the School Calendar.
- You are responsible for assisting in the classroom 2-3 times per month. This is your primary obligation. The work schedule is made in accordance with the membership list. If you are unable to work on your assigned day, it is your responsibility to find your own substitute. After doing so, you must change the posted schedule at the preschool. Contact your Session Representative for further information. It is your responsibility to assure that a substitute is available.
- You are responsible for providing a nutritious snack when scheduled for your preschool session. You will be scheduled to provide a snack on approximately half of the days on which you assist in the classroom.
- Each parent and child must conform to the Health and Safety rules.
- Each participating parent must serve actively on a committee.
- Each family is responsible for supporting preschool fundraisers.
- Parents are expected to attend orientation and the General Membership Meeting.
- Both parents are encouraged to contribute their time and talents to the needs of the co-operative preschool.
- The assisting parent, or approved substitute, is required to be present at the preschool *no less than 15 minutes before the session begins and is expected to remain after the session in order to clean the school.*
- Siblings or other guests are not allowed to attend the preschool session (although they are welcome at gathering time and field trips).

- Parents and children should dress in clothes that are comfortable and can get messy.
- Parents must dress children appropriately for outdoor play. We go outside as a class everyday when the temperature is over 20 degrees. On chilly days, boots, mittens, hats and warm winter coats are a must.

### **V.I.P.'s (Very Important Particulars):**

#### **Birthday Celebrations**

Parents are assigned to assist and bring snack on or near their child's birthday. If you prefer to celebrate another day, let your Session Representative know. We encourage healthful, nutritious snacks. If your child has a birthday when school is not in session, you may celebrate a half birthday in order to give your child a chance to celebrate with the other children.

#### **Birthday Books**

If you are interested, you may donate a new book to the children's library on your child's birthday. If the book is wrapped, your child can open it during Gathering Time. The book will be read to the children sometime during the day. A bookplate will be inserted in the book to commemorate your donation.

#### **Library Books**

Check out books by following the procedures posted in the library. Up to three books may be checked out at a time. Please note that we will gladly accept any donations of children's books.

#### **Field Trips**

Field trips are an integral part of the Chelsea Children's Co-op Preschool curriculum. The children really look forward to these special days. We must have a sufficient number of parents for the number of children. At a minimum we must have one parent for every two children. Carpooling is encouraged. If a child requires a car seat or booster seat, the child's parent is responsible for installing that seat in the car in which their child is traveling. Siblings are always welcome to attend field trips.

#### **Mailboxes**

Please check your child's mailbox each time you come into school. This is an important means of communicating among Co-op members. If you carpool, remember to check the folders of your carpool members.

#### **Bulletin Boards**

The bulletin board is used for important notes, minutes from the Executive Board meetings, special dates, assist and snack schedules, etc. Be sure to check the bulletin board each time you come in. Each carpool parent is responsible for relaying messages to other carpool parents.

### **Share Time**

There will be an opportunity for your child to bring favorite possessions to share with others. Your Session Representative will let you know the dates and themes (if any) of share days for your class. Please, no weapon-like toys.

### **Outdoors Play**

Parents are responsible for equipping their children with proper attire for outdoor activities. We will be going outside as a class as often as possible, weather permitting (20 degrees or warmer). Parents will be responsible for picking up their child 20 minutes early if they prefer that their child not play outside.

### **Snow Days**

There are always those unexpected snow days each year that will mean the last minute cancellation of school. On those days, we will follow the Chelsea School District cancellation. Listen to the radio for cancellation of Chelsea schools. If for some reason Chelsea Children's Co-op Preschool is cancelled, but Chelsea is having school, you will be called by your session representative. Also, please use your own discretion. If the conditions are such that you would really rather not be on the roads, STAY HOME.

### **General Membership Meeting**

The General Membership Meeting (GMM) is held once a year (see school calendar). When called, this meeting is mandatory and your participation is necessary to ensure the smooth running of the school. Crucial information is shared and possible elections are held during this meeting. As in real life, every vote counts. Members play an important role by providing their valuable input in the workings of the cooperative. If you are unable to attend a GMM, you must notify the Co-op President prior to the meeting. (Executive Board meetings are held monthly. All Co-op members are welcome to attend.)

### **Insurance**

The school has accident insurance that covers teachers, parents, and children while at preschool. Further details of this insurance policy may be obtained from the Treasurer.

### **Fundraising**

Fundraising events will be planned for the year. All members must participate (see section on Fundraising).

### **Parking**

Street parking is available on the side streets near the building. Parking is not allowed in the playground area from 8:00 a.m.-2:45 p.m.

### **Health**

Do not send your child to school if you have any indication that he/she is not feeling well. Children are naturally exposed to more viruses and illnesses their first year as social beings. Sending a sick child to school would unnecessarily expose others. Likewise, a parent should not work if he/she is not feeling well. The parent is

responsible for finding a substitute in case of illness. Perhaps, with a little consideration and concern, we could do our part to minimize the children's exposure to various illnesses. BE ALERT to your child's physical state. With the exception of allergies, please DO NOT SEND YOUR CHILD TO SCHOOL IF HE/SHE IS ILL. Likewise, make every attempt not to bring sick siblings into the classroom.

### **Newsletter**

A newsletter will be emailed monthly or quarterly. Hard copies will be available by request. Please contact the Publicity Chairperson if you wish to receive a hardcopy of the newsletters. The Publicity Chairperson welcomes any ideas, photos, articles, and assistance you may offer.

## **Fundraising**

Fundraising is an ongoing activity throughout the year, including summer. Participating in these activities is a great way to meet other Co-op families and to help raise money for your child's school. Here are some of the most commonly asked questions and the answers to them.

### **Why do we fundraise?**

We fundraise in order to meet the operating expenses of the Co-op. Ways and Means is responsible for approximately 9% of the budget each year. This amount raised helps keep tuition affordable.

The long-term goal of fundraising is to create a stable financial present and future for the school. Chelsea Children's Cooperative Preschool has operated for over 35 years completely by parent volunteerism and an excellent teaching staff!

### **Where does the money go?**

The money goes directly into the operating budget. This includes financing rent, insurance, taxes, salaries, equipment, books, classroom needs, etc. Occasionally a fundraiser is earmarked for a specific objective and then the money goes toward this objective. Ideally enough money is raised each year to place some into the savings account for the school's future.

### **What determines which fundraisers are used?**

A Ways and Means main criterion for choosing a fundraiser is if the fundraiser will bring in a net profit of 50% or more.

Ways and Means also considers what is asked of the members by way of time and effort. The efforts of the membership should equal the benefits to the Cooperative.

### **What types of fundraisers are used?**

The Co-op strives to make fundraisers family-focused, fun, creative, and chooses those that best utilize the talents of its members.

Possibilities of fundraisers may include, but are not limited to raffles, bake sales, garage sales, auctions, U of M concessions, etc. Ways and Means always welcomes and considers new ideas.

### **Who determines which fundraisers are done?**

The Ways and Means Committee discusses different fundraising ideas. The Chairperson of Ways and Means then brings the ideas to the Board. The Board then either approves or disapproves of the ideas.

### **To whom do I present a fundraising idea?**

You may present any of your ideas to a Ways and Means chairperson, committee member or any member of the Executive Board.

### **If I do not want to be directly involved in fundraising, are there other options?**

As stated in the Handbook, participation in fundraisers is mandatory. If there is a valid reason as to why you cannot be involved in a fundraiser there are options for helping indirectly with the fundraiser. These options may include such things as baby-sitting for members who are directly involved, making posters or doing other things for the fundraisers. These options are decided upon by the Ways and Means Chairperson, and will be handled on an individual basis. You could also consider making a donation to the Co-op.

### **How do I find information on when and what fundraisers are being done?**

1. Attend the General Membership Meetings.
2. Read the Newsletters and check your mailbox for information.
3. Ask your session rep. If they do not know, they will find out for you or direct you to someone who can answer your questions.
4. Talk to any Ways and Means committee member.

### **How do I become a Ways and Means Committee Member?**

You can contact your Ways and Means committee. We always welcome new ideas and input for fundraising. Here's to a successful year!

### **Session Coffees:**

Session Coffees are informal meetings with the other parents in your child's session. They are an important part of your cooperative responsibility. These meetings are usually held the week following the Executive Board Meeting or at the discretion of the Session Representative. These coffees are used to keep the session informed as to the decisions made by the Board. Valuable information and ideas are discussed at these meetings. The coffees are also a great way to get know the other parents in your group. These get-togethers can be social, but are business oriented as well. The more you know about what is happening, the more you can support the preschool.

### **Annual Executive Board Election Procedures:**

The Executive Board Secretary executes the following procedure related to the annual Executive Board Election.

Notification of open nomination for officers will be posted on the Co-op bulletin board no later than the third week of January. A box will be set up to receive confidential written nominations for board positions. A person may nominate himself or herself or may be nominated by someone else.

To be nominated for an officer position, the person must have a child enrolled in the preschool for the following school year. In addition, the person nominated for the position of President must be a current or past member of the Co-op. No member will hold more than one office during the year, and no one member will be eligible to serve more than two consecutive terms in the same office.

Nominated members will be notified. The nominated member may remove undesired nominations from the slate.

Nominated members will be asked to submit a brief written statement concerning themselves, i.e. background, interests, ideas for preschool, and qualifications for serving on the board.

A final slate of all nominations for officers will be presented to the general membership either at the General Membership Meeting in February or in an informational packet delivered to their classroom mailbox in mid-February.

Voting will be done by secret ballot two weeks after the slate is presented. Each officer will be elected by a plurality vote of the members voting for each office.

All candidates and members at large will be notified of the results.

**Whom to Contact about What**

<b>If your concern is:</b>	<b>Contact:</b>
Your child’s behavior or development, the curriculum, methods of dealing with preschoolers, or daily program	Teacher
The administration of the school, desire to serve on a particular committee, any problem you might have	President
Suggestions for by-law revision, orientation, or suggestions for family social involvement (i.e., luncheons, coffee hours, etc.)	President
Clarification of something that happened at a meeting (a check with the minutes), or you want to attend a board meeting.	Secretary
Payment of tuition, fees, or fines. For information on tuition Assistance and scholarships	Assistant Treasurer
Questions about the budget or reimbursement of authorized expenses (the school’s tax exempt ID: #38-2032822)	Treasurer
The assist parent schedule, your questions, suggestions, complaints, and feelings about any aspect of your involvement.	Session Rep.
Cleaning or snack supplies are running low	Room Manager

**Eleanor and Bill Shute’s Assistance Fund:**

A tuition fund was set up in the fall of 1974 and maintained by the Chelsea Children’s Cooperative Preschool, Inc., in the name of Eleanor and Leon (Bill) Shute’s. The purpose of the fund was to enable a Co-op family to remain active members in the event that they fell on financial hardship.

The fund began by a donation from the North Lake Co-op Nursery, Inc., and by anonymous donations in appreciation of the help that the Shute family had given to the Cooperative. The fund remained dependent on individual donations and occasionally from the profits of fundraising events. Do we consider the scholarship fund this? Or should we give our current scholarship request procedure here?

**Where to find Scholarship Applications:**

- From Membership Chairperson

- In mailbox slot
- On the Co-op's website at <http://chelseacoop.org/wp-content/uploads/2010-Scholarship-Application-1.pdf>

### **Who is on the Scholarship Review Board?**

The President, Membership Chairperson, Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer make up the Scholarship Review board. All information will be kept confidential.

### **The History of Chelsea Children's Cooperative Preschool:**

The Chelsea Children's Cooperative Preschool began with a phone call from Camie Noah to the North Lake United Methodist Church's Minister's wife, Rose Weeks, suggesting that there was a need for rural children to play together. Following this phone call, a group of several friends and their children began working together, meeting at each other's homes on Tuesday and Thursday mornings. The group started on March 1, 1972. The future dream was to start a cooperative preschool at the North Lake United Methodist Church Youth Building in September of 1972.

By September of 1972, the group had grown to twelve families with Camie Noah as the teacher and Rose Weeks as the Treasurer. This was a volunteer project, and all the funds went toward the future occupancy of the Youth Building. The church building wasn't completed until January of 1973, so the children met at the Noah home. Then in January, came the disheartening news that, although the church building had met all county and state requirements, the State Fire Inspector insisted on another exit for the building to issue a day care license. The church agreed to take on the project, with the financial support from members of the preschool so that the preschool could open the fall of 1973.

Loree Stafford took over as a volunteer teacher in March of 1973 and gave constant help and encouragement in setting up the North Lake Co-op Preschool.

In 1975, North Lake Co-op Preschool applied for, and received the status of Non-Profit organization and became incorporated.

During the summer of 1981, new fire safety regulations again became a problem. The necessary building alterations would have been financially imprudent, so North Lake Cooperative Preschool had to move to a new site.

St. Barnabas Episcopal Church on Old U.S. 12 became the school's new home. With the church's cooperation and extensive work from members, the facility was ready for occupancy in September of 1981.

Loree Stafford retired in 1986 after the school year ended in May. Marilyn Van Gunst was hired as teacher and director of the program. She was employed from the summer of 1986 until 1987 when her husband's job forced them to relocate out of state.

The move from North Lake to St. Barnabas lead to the decision to rename the school. On March 8, 1988 the school officially became Chelsea Children's Cooperative, Incorporated.

Jane Brooks joined the staff in 1987 and has served as director and teacher until her retirement in May, 2006. Janie was instrumental in starting the Early Childhood Coalition in Chelsea and has been an active member of that organization. She has her Bachelors degree in education and has attended graduate school at Michigan State University in the area of Child Development. In August of 2006, Janie had one last trip down Main Street in the Chelsea Fair Parade. Instead of wearing a costume and holding a bunch of preschoolers on the Co-op's annual float, Janie was the guest of honor in the parade as the recipient of Chelsea's first Lifetime Achievement Award. Sue Gillikin became a part time employee in 1987. She acted as a paid assist to help parents who were unable to work in the classroom. The following year she helped develop the two-year-old program and also team-taught the three-year-old program with Janie. Sue and Janie worked together until Sue left in 1994.

Nancy Hanselman and Janie Bowdish were involved in the Co-op as classroom aides.

In 1998, the school changed its location once again. They moved from the church to the Washington Street Education Center (the old Chelsea High School). The move itself was completed in less than two weeks and before school was scheduled to start.

In May of 2004 Courtney Aldrich was hired as co-director to teach the 3-year old program while Janie Brooks continued to teach the 4-year old program. Courtney was a six-year co-op member, and served on the preschool board for four years, twice as president. Courtney began her professional career as a mechanical engineer at Ford, but soon realized her true love was teaching, and earned her teaching certificate at Eastern Michigan University in 1996. While caring for her young children she worked part-time teaching adult community education classes in Chelsea, and tutored inmates working on their G.E.D. at the Cassidy Lake Special Alternative Incarceration facility. Her work with children includes teaching preschoolers at Chelsea First United Methodist Church's Creative Play playgroup, teaching Chelsea Community Education Super Saturday classes, teaching an advanced math extension program for second graders at North Creek Elementary, and teaching Sunday school at Chelsea First United Methodist Church.

In September of 2004, the school moved to the Chelsea Center for the Arts (CCA) building, located on the corner of Congdon and Summit streets in the neighborhood just west of the downtown area. This lovely old building for many years served as a parochial school for St. Mary's Catholic Church. The building was built in 1908, suffered a fire in 1925, and was re-built shortly afterward. In 1998, the church sold the building to actor Jeff Daniel's and his wife Kathleen, who then donated the building to the Chelsea Center for the Arts. During the summer of 2004 the Co-op conducted

extensive renovation of two first floor classrooms, and converted the parking lot into a combined playground and parking lot area.

Upon Janie Brook's retirement, Kendra Ford was hired as co-director in May 2006. Kendra is a past co-op parent. She has a BA from Michigan State, with a major in Social Work (child and family welfare) and a minor in Child Development. Kendra has worked for years with children in Washtenaw and Jackson counties, assessing their needs and finding ways to meet those needs.

In the fall of 2007, Courtney Aldrich became Director and the full time teacher for both the 3-year-old and 4-year-old classes. Deb Hubbard, a former parent and Co-op President, was hired in as a teacher aide to help assist Courtney with her day-to-day planning and prepping and to assist in the classroom as called upon by Courtney Aldrich. The partnership between Courtney Aldrich and Deb Hubbard has shown how our organization has successfully continued to move forward to meet the needs of our preschool.

Past and present cooperative families are proud of our school's fine reputation and tradition of excellence. Not only do we provide a solid and sound first experience for children in our community, but we support parents by giving them opportunities to network with each other and practice developmentally appropriate parenting techniques while they interact with children and other adults in the classroom. Many parents have gone on to become extremely active and involved in school and community affairs. A few mothers have become teachers in other early childhood programs. Chelsea Children's Cooperative Preschool is thriving today because of the commitment of its members.

In the Fall of 2008, the Co-op began offering a brand new Young 5's program in addition to its 2, 3 and 4 year old programs. This program is unique in that it serves children who are eligible for Kindergarten but need one more year of preschool, or who may be ready for Kindergarten but don't meet the age cutoff. This is the first time the Co-op has offered two classes taught simultaneously by different teachers. Michelle Hochrein was the first to lead this class.

## **Safety Rules**

### **General:**

1. The Co-op has initiated a sign-in and sign-out sheet. Please remember to sign your child(ren) at the beginning of the session and out again at the end. Assisting parents need to help remind others to do this.

2. Make sure that children are well supervised at all times. Never leave a child unattended.
3. Familiarize yourself with the emergency drill procedures (fire, tornado, serious accident, etc.,)
4. Notify the teacher if a child is hurt.
5. Use your judgment regarding safe play.

### **Inside Equipment:**

- Blocks: Large wooden and cardboard blocks are to be stacked only as high as the children's chests.
- Cooking: Done only under the direct supervision of a parent or teacher.
- Water/Sand Tables: Sand and other materials are to be kept in the sand box. Throwing sand or other materials is not allowed. Four children at a time are allowed at the sand table unless instructed otherwise.
- Large Muscle Equipment (i.e. wooden climber, large cars and trucks, wooden boat, etc.): Learn rules for each piece of equipment. Rules for the current equipment will be given to the children each day during gathering time and to the assist parents prior to class. As a general rule, children are not allowed on the equipment while wearing clothes and/or shoes from the Dramatic Play area.
- Art Area: Children need to be watched to make sure that the equipment and supplies are being used appropriately and safely.

### **Outside Equipment:**

- Sand Box: Basically the same rules apply outside as inside except more than four children can be at this area at one time. Check the sand when you're out on the playground, during rainy weather, it quickly turns into a lake.
- Slide: Children are to go down feet first. One child is allowed on each slide at a time. (Note: On occasion the slide may be an up-slide rather than a down-slide. You will be informed in this case.)
- Play Structure: Supervise children on this equipment. Encourage walking and being careful on the stairs.
- Bikes: The teacher will determine if our tricycles will be used on any given day. Tricycles are to stay on the trike track. Crashing into other bikes is not safe, and is not allowed. Also please remember that there should be only one rider per bike.
- Fence Gates: Keep closed. Parents and siblings may enter playground when they arrive at the end of a session. Help remind parents to sign their children out when leaving.
- Bathroom: If a child has to use the bathroom while playing outside, an adult needs to accompany them inside.
- Outdoor Clothing: Children need to be appropriately dressed for outdoor play. Please help by making sure that boots and mittens are on securely, and that there are no loose drawstrings that could get tangled in a piece of equipment.

### **Miscellaneous:**

- No weapons (guns, swords, sticks, etc.,) at school.
- Please do not send your child to school chewing gum or eating hard candy.

- All children should wear rubber-soled shoes with enclosed heels for safety while climbing.
- Be an active and observant participant in children's play. Remember that the safety of our students is our number one priority.
- The first aid kit is stored in the bathroom (an additional kit is in the hot water heater room).
- The file box with the Emergency cards is in the room by the playground exit door and in the cabinet above the microwave (young 5's room).
- A list of food or any other allergies, specific medical restrictions or guidelines will be posted in the kitchen. This information can also be found in the Allergy Action Plan binder found in the back room. This information will also be shared (with parent permission) with other members of that session. See the Snacks section for the plan to accommodate children with special dietary or other special needs.

### **Health Care Plan:**

The preschool desires to provide conditions that encourage cleanliness and good health habits among the children. Children and assisting adults are required to wash their hands with soap and water after using the bathroom (or wiping a child's bottom) or wiping noses (hand sanitizer can be used as a temporary solution until the teacher or assist parent can wash their hands with soap and water). Assist parents, teachers and children should also wash their hands with soap and water prior to preparing, consuming or working with food products. Assist parents should also wash their hands after working with potentially hazardous chemicals.

### **Cleaning of toys:**

As part of our on-going health care plan, all toys and equipment will be cleaned on a continuous basis throughout the year. A rotation of toy and equipment cleaning will be established and recorded by the Room Manager. A bleach and water combination should be used whenever possible. A bleach/water solution, Lysol or similar sanitizing wipe should be used daily to wipe down tables and door knobs.

### **Dispensing of Medication:**

State law does not allow us to dispense medication of any sort to children without written permission from the parents or guardians of the child. Prescription drugs given to a child must be in the original container and a consent note must be filled out and signed by the parent. Please do not put medication of any form (including sunscreen) into lunch pails or backpacks, but give directly to the teacher. Non prescription drugs must also have a consent note signed by a parent or guardian. All medications and consent forms will remain in a secure location not accessible by children.

If a child becomes ill after arrival at school, we will immediately notify parents or the emergency contacts provided by parents.

### **Please Keep Your Child Home if He/She:**

1. Has a fever or has had a fever within the past 24 hours.
2. Has a heavy nasal discharge (colored).

3. Has a persistent cough.
4. Has symptoms of communicable disease (red eyes, sore throat, headache, abdominal pains or fever).
5. Has diarrhea or vomiting or has had within 24 hours.
6. Has head lice-- may return after treatment and must be completely nit-less.

Please notify the school if your child has a communicable disease or head lice.

**Exposure Control Plan:**

Employee/job classifications considered being at risk for occupational exposure to blood or other potentially infectious materials resulting from performance of their duties are as follows:

- Teacher/Director
- Teacher
- Assisting Parent

**Procedure for Treating Surface Scratches and Scrapes (no blood or bodily fluid is present):**

The area will be washed with soap and water and bandaged. Any further need of medical attention will be assessed and parents will be notified immediately in the event of an emergency. If parents cannot be reached, help will be sought immediately from an emergency clinic or local hospital or dentist as listed on the emergency disaster plan.

**Procedure for Treating More Serious Incidents (where blood or bodily fluid is present):**

All children attending and all adults working at the preschool will be considered potentially infectious and all employees and parents shall follow universal precautions.

Protective barriers will be worn when there is potential for exposure to blood and other potentially infectious materials. These barriers shall include:

1. Gloves, when coming in contact with blood or moist body fluids. They shall be changed between individuals and hands will be washed.
2. Masks and eye protection, when there is a potential for splashing, spraying, or splattering.
3. Smocks, which shall be worn where splashes of blood or body fluids are likely to occur. If an employee's clothing becomes contaminated, that employee shall be sent home to change and launder clothing and return to school.

**Serious Accident Procedure:**

1. The child will not be moved. The teacher is in charge. The teacher will stay with the child.
2. An assisting parent or the teacher will summon an ambulance. If the ambulance arrives before the parent or designee and the ambulance personnel determine that the child requires immediate hospital care, the teacher will accompany the child to the hospital. The Child Emergency Card located in the Black Box shall accompany the child; this card authorizes the school to obtain emergency medical

- care for the child. The term designee refers to the person named on the Child Information Card as the person to be notified in an emergency situation.
3. An assisting parent will immediately contact the child's parent or guardian by phone. If they cannot be reached, the designee will be called. The preschool will use the services of law enforcement agencies to locate the parent(s), guardian(s) or designee, if necessary.
  4. The teacher will prepare an Accident Report for the incident. The report will be signed by the parent and kept on file at the preschool.
  5. The preschool shall notify the Department of Health and Human Services within five (5) days of the incident.

In the event of an accident, which does not require hospitalization, but is more serious or unusual than an every day accident as determined by the teacher, the teacher will also fill out and file an Accident Report (the same kind as we use in serious accident reporting above). This can then be used for future reference and future improvement of the health and safety of the preschool children.

#### **Procedure for Clean-up:**

1. Broken Glass will be disposed of using mechanical means (e.g., vacuum, broom, and dust pan).
2. Contaminated Material will be disposed of in Biohazard container lined in plastic and kept in the bathroom. Bag is then removed, tied off and then placed in the trash.
3. Eating, drinking, smoking, applying cosmetics and putting in contact lenses are prohibited in work areas where blood or other potentially infectious materials are likely to be present. Hand washing facilities shall be made accessible to employees. If this is not feasible, an appropriate antiseptic hand cleaner will be provided.
4. The Hepatitis B Vaccine will be offered free of charge to employees after appropriate training. If an employee chooses to decline the vaccine, they will sign a waiver, stating so (copy below). If an employee decides at a later date to get the vaccine, the vaccine will be made available. Working parents will be offered the hepatitis B vaccine after exposure.

#### **Training for employees and working parents:**

Training will be offered to all employees and parents at the time of hire and annually, thereafter. Records of training will be kept for three years and will include:

1. the date of training,
2. names and qualifications of those who conducted the training, and a list of those who attended the training. Training will include: Epidemiology and Symptoms of blood borne diseases.
3. Modes of transmission
4. Explanation of ways to recognize possible exposure and ways to reduce exposure
5. Information on hazardous signs and color-coding
6. Action to be taken if an exposure occurs

7. Explanation of the Exposure Control Plan and where to get a copy of OSHA regulations

**Plan for Hepatitis Vaccine:**

- After an Exposure Incident, the employee/parent will be counseled about the illness reporting and risk reduction. A physician will evaluate the exposed worker. Results of the evaluation and lab test will be given to employee/parent within 15 days.
- Investigation of the Exposure Incident will include route and circumstances of the exposure.
- An HIV and HBV blood test will be offered to the employee/parent after an exposure. If the worker consents to a baseline test for HBV, but does not give consent at the time for HIV, the sample will be preserved for 90 days.
- If the source victim is known at the time of exposure, every attempt will be made to get informed consent from the victim to do a HBV and HIV test.
- An annual review will be done of the Exposure Control Plan.
- Employees and parents will be monitored of compliance with the protective procedures outlined in this plan.

**Hepatitis B Vaccine Declination (waiver):**

(The following wording is mandatory)

I understand that due to my occupational exposure to blood or other potentially infectious materials, I may be at risk of acquiring Hepatitis B Virus (HBV) infection. I have been given the opportunity to be vaccinated with the Hepatitis B Vaccine at no charge to myself. However, I decline Hepatitis B vaccination at this time. I understand that by declining this vaccine, I continue to be at risk of acquiring Hepatitis B, a serious disease. If in the future I continue to have occupational exposure to blood or other potentially infectious materials, and I want to be vaccinated with Hepatitis B Vaccine, I can receive the vaccination series at no charge to me.

**Smoking Restrictions:**

Smoking is prohibited in the Preschool Building, on the school grounds, and at any preschool function involving our children. If a person is seen smoking, the person who witnesses this should ask them to extinguish the smoking material and remind them that smoking is prohibited. Failure to comply will result in Board of Directors action.

**Fire Policy:**

The teacher will conduct three fire drills, one per season, for each session.

In the event of a fire or fire drill, the teacher will initiate the evacuation procedure by blowing the fire whistle and saying FIRE EVACUATION. The teacher will be in charge of the entire procedure.

1. The teacher will tell one of the assisting parents to guide the main body of children out the nearest exit.
2. The teacher will tell another assisting parent to check the other areas of the preschool building including the bathroom, hallway and kitchen. This parent will enter all the rooms that can safely be entered, announce " FIRE EVACUATION" in each room, and lead any people that are found to the nearest exit.
3. The teacher will take the attendance sheet with her to the outdoors.
4. Do not stop for sweaters or coats on the way out.
5. Parents should take children to the parking area located in the preschool playground where the teacher, using the attendance sheet, will check that they are all present.
6. In the case of a real fire, the teacher will send one of the assisting parents to call the fire department.
7. The children are to remain outdoors until directed to return to the building by the teacher.

After a fire drill, the teacher will report to the President of the Preschool's Executive Board that the event did occur, and she will report any particular problems and give any suggestions for improvement. The teacher will keep a log of the fire drills.

### **Tornado Policy:**

The teacher will conduct a tornado drill in the fall and spring for each session of preschool.

Teachers and parents need to be knowledgeable of the Chelsea tornado warning system. It is a 3 to 5 minute steady blast of the tornado siren. (There is no all-clear signal.) If the Chelsea warning is heard, the teacher should initiate the tornado procedure. However, parents and teachers must also watch the weather as tornadoes often come without warning.

In the event of a tornado or tornado drill, the teacher will initiate the evacuation procedure by shouting TORNADO PROCEDURE. The teacher will be in charge of the entire procedure.

1. The teacher will tell one of the assisting parents to guide the main body of children to the hallway and have them sit down on the floor. If coming in from outside, a parent should be sure to shut all doors.
2. The teacher will tell the other assisting parent to check all other areas where children or parents might be. This parent will enter each area announcing TORNADO PROCEDURE, and lead any people that are found to the hallway.
3. The teacher will take the attendance sheet with her to the hallway. Using it she will check that all children are present.

4. Children and parents are to remain in the hallway until directed by the teacher to resume normal activity.

After a tornado drill the teacher will report to the President of the Preschool's Executive Board that the event did occur, and she will report any particular problems and give any suggestions for improvement. The teacher will keep a log of the tornado drills.

### **Crisis Management Policy:**

In order to quickly seek help in emergency situations, the teacher should carry his/her personal cell phone (if they own one) on their person at all times.

An emergency kit (clear plastic storage box with a white top) should be kept in the water heater room at all times to access in case of emergency. This box should always be stocked with a working flashlight with spare batteries, a first aid kit, water (and cups) and a current member phone number list.

### **Lock-Down with a Dangerous Individual Outside of the Building:**

In a case where the school has reason to believe a suspicious person is headed in the direction of the school, the following procedures should be implemented immediately:

1. One assist parent should first call the police and then CCA (the phone number is posted by the telephone) to quickly notify them of a lock down order. This parent should keep the phone with them after making the two calls.
2. This same parent should make sure our two outside doors are locked (one in the copy room and one in the Young 5's classroom).
3. The other parent should aid the teacher in rounding up the children so they can be escorted safely into the the hot water heater room located between the boiler room and the preschool coat room. This room is accessible by both a door in the Young 5's room and a door in the preschool coat room.
4. The teacher should grab the attendance sheet. Once all children and parents are accounted for, both doors to the water heater room should be locked.

### **Lock-Down with a Dangerous Individual Already Inside the Building:**

In a case where an intruder has already entered the building, the teacher and both assist parents should round up the children as fast as possible and escort them to the water heater room and lock both doors of the water heater room to prevent outside entry. Once inside, the teacher or an assist parent can call the police from the teacher's cell phone.

### **Suspicious Individuals:**

Any individual in or near the preschool building who are acting in a suspicious manner should be reported immediately to the police.

## **Bomb Threat Policy:**

In the event of a bomb threat, the teacher will initiate the evacuation procedure by blowing the fire whistle and saying EVACUATION. The teacher will be in charge of the entire procedure.

1. The teacher will tell one of the assisting parents to guide the main body of children out the nearest exit. This will depend on the location of the potential bomb.
2. The teacher will tell another assisting parent to check the other areas of the preschool building including the bathroom, hallway and kitchen. This parent will enter all the rooms that can safely be entered, announce, "EVACUATION" in each room, and lead any people that are found to the nearest exit.
3. The teacher will take the attendance sheet with her to the outdoors.
4. Do not stop for sweaters or coats on the way out.
5. The teacher and parents should take children at least 300-400 ft. from the school in the opposite direction of the perceived threat.
6. The children are to remain outdoors until directed to return to the building by the teacher.

## **Chemical Spill:**

1. If a chemical or hazardous material spill takes place outside, towels and rugs should be rolled and placed at the base of doors. If need be, windows should also be covered with available towels.
2. If a chemical or hazardous material spill occurs inside the building, children should be evacuated in the same manner as stated in the Bomb Threat Policy (above).

## **Sexual Misconduct or Molestation Policy:**

### **Statement of Policy**

Our school requires that all teachers, administrators, volunteers and others on school premises maintain the integrity of the appropriate relationships at all times. Sexual misconduct is a violation of this principle and is never permissible. Our school will not tolerate, condone or allow sexual misconduct.

### **Definitions**

Child Sexual Abuse includes, but is not limited to, any contact or interaction between a child and an adult when the child is being used for the sexual stimulation of the adult person or a third person. The behavior between a child and an adult is always considered forced whether or not consent was given by the child.

Sexual Misconduct is the comprehensive term used in this policy to include, for example: Child Sexual Abuse as defined above: Sexual Harassment: Rape or Sexual Contact by force, threat or intimidation.

## **Prohibited Conduct**

It is unlawful to retaliate in any way against anyone who has complained about sexual misconduct, whether the complaint relates to abuse against the individual raising the complaint or against another individual.

Prohibited acts of sexual misconduct can take a variety of forms ranging from subtle to overt conduct. At times, the offender may be unaware that his or her conduct is offensive or abusive to others. Examples of conduct which may be prohibited include, but may not be limited to, any physical touching which could be construed by an observer and/or the minor as inappropriate, threatening, intimidating, forceful, or unwelcome.

## **Persons Covered**

Persons covered by this policy include teachers, administrators, Board members, volunteers or others on school premises.

## **Reporting Procedures**

Caregivers are mandated by law to report abuse and neglect.

Our school supports and encourages reporting of all incidents of sexual misconduct, regardless of the identity of the offender. If you believe you have been subjected to sexual misconduct, you should promptly report the incident to the President of the Board of Directors. If you witness conduct that you believe is sexual misconduct, that conduct should be reported as well. All complaints of sexual misconduct will be investigated and treated seriously.

Because the school cannot control to whom the accuser of sexual misconduct will speak first it is important that officers, employees and persons highly visible in the school understand that reports of sexual misconduct must be reported to the President. The person(s) receiving the initial report is considered a mandated report and shall report the incident to civil or criminal authorities as required by state or federal law.

## **Response to Reports of Alleged Sexual Misconduct**

The school upon receiving the information will establish a response committee, which will promptly conduct an investigation into, and review of the allegations. The response committee will investigate complaints of sexual misconduct. Investigations will be conducted expeditiously, with due regard for the sensitive and serious nature of the allegations. A thorough investigation will be conducted, which may include interviewing the alleged victim, potential witnesses and the alleged harasser. The response committee may also receive any documents or other evidence produced by the investigation. Upon completion of the investigation of alleged sexual misconduct, the response committee will conclude with a report as to the nature of the complaint and any recommended actions involving the parties involved.

All incidents must be reported to the President of the Board of Directors immediately.

## **Committee Descriptions**

### ***Summer Activities: Duck pond, Trike Pull and Chelsea Fair Parade Float***

- Help run Duck Pond booth for minimum of 2 hours during the SummerFest and/or Trike Pull during fair week
- Help Set-up and tear down booths as needed on event days
- Attend float planning and building meetings weekly during late July and August
- Assist in the gathering, creating and assembling of float decorations
- Assist in final preparation on parade day and float demolition immediately following the parade
- Potentially help in transportation of float from building area to parade line-up
- Potentially donate use of tractor to pull float in the parade

### ***Maintenance Committee\****

- Work with teachers to prepare, clean and organize classroom before school begins
- Assist on preparation of the playground including weeding, laying mulch, etc...
- Make sure indoor and outdoor equipment is out of storage and in safe working condition
- Shoveling and salt application on back playground stairs and walkways on snow days
- Assist with additional needs throughout the year (i.e. installing shelving, minor repairs, painting)

### ***Picture Day Committee\****

- Organize and run picture day activities
- Distribute photos and organize the collection of money and returned photos

### ***General Fundraising Committee***

- Assist the Ways and Means board chair in running small fundraisers throughout the year
- Help organize and run the annual scholarship event, including set-up and tear down

### ***Hometown Holidays Committee\****

- Plan ideas for craft tables for the night of the event
- Gather needed craft materials
- Organize actual event including helping to run a craft table, set-up and tear down

### ***Mother's Day Luncheon Committee\****

- Assist the teachers and session reps with all necessary preparations
- Help with set-up and tear down of classroom
- Help run luncheons (except one's own class luncheon)

### ***Ice Cream Social/Hospitality Committee\****

- Help secure location
- Create and post all flyers and sign-up sheets prior to event
- Purchase all necessary supplies including ice cream
- Distribute Ice Cream at the social
- Help with set-up and clean-up
- Organize and provide snacks and refreshments for open houses, general membership meeting, art show/auction and other events

### ***Dramatic Play Committee\****

- Encouraging members with creative talents as carpenter, graphic designer, prop design, seamstress, etc...
- Work with teacher guidance to develop and design dramatic play area in the classroom on a rotating basis- approximately six different "themes" per year

### ***Farmer's Market Committee\****

- Set-up table at Saturday Farmer's market to sell cookbooks
- Prepare sample recipes from the cookbook
- Distribute promotional materials and samples
- Plan small craft area for children, such as playdoh
- Make commitment to run two Saturday tables during the summer and fall (8:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.)

### ***Toy Cleaning Committee\****

- Take home a toy bin weekly to clean at home and return to school
- Assist in removing broken toys and replacing "orphan toys" into correct bins
- Assist in weekly cleaning of toys from the "dirty toy bin"
- Sign up to come to school a minimum of twice a year outside of the school day to clean and disinfect large classroom play areas, such as play kitchen equipment, slide, etc... in the 3/4 and young 5's classrooms

### ***Art Show/Musical Committee\****

- Assist teachers in organization of all aspects of this special event
- Duties may include handling refreshment donations, set-up and tear down, stage preparation, hanging artwork, etc...

### ***Publicity Committee***

- Reports directly to Publicity Chair board member
- Assist in distribution and development of promotional materials throughout the year
- Solicit pictures from membership to include in newsletters and on the website throughout the year
- Take additional photos at special events
- Assist the Publicity Chair in organization of information for newsletters, website and Chelsea Standard articles

**\*Please note that a Co-op member is needed to chair/head these committees. This person will act as a liaison between the teachers/board members and the other members of the committee. Please note your willingness to chair a committee next to your preferences.**

## **Bylaws of Chelsea Children’s Cooperative, Incorporated**

### **ARTICLE I**

#### Offices

- 1.01 Principle Offices-- The principle office of the cooperative will be at such within the State of Michigan as the Executive Board may determine from time to time.

### **ARTICLE II**

#### Members

- 1.01 Eligibility for Membership-- Membership in the cooperative’s school will be upon a non-discriminatory basis without regard to race, religion, color, creed, national origin, ancestry, sex, age, height, weight, familial status or marital status. The cooperative’s school will be operated upon such a non-discriminatory basis and all rights and privileges of the school will be afforded to all students upon such non-discriminatory basis.

Each family of a child enrolled in the 3 year old, 4 year old or 5 year old preschool session is a member. When used in these bylaws, the word “member” means the custodial parent(s) or guardian from the family may perform the duty for the family “member”. Membership extends from June 1, or from date enrollment, whichever is later, to May 31. All families wishing to become members must submit a completed application form, including registration fees, to the Membership Chairperson. Children will be considered enrolled and the family a member on the date that their application is approved by the Membership Chairperson, or June 1, prior to the school year, whichever is later.

- 1.02 Financial Responsibility

- a. Registration Fees--The Executive Board will set a registration fee for each child enrolled for each school year. The registration fee is payable to the Assistant Treasurer upon registration. If a member enrolls more than one

- child in any school year, the member will pay the full registration fee for the first child and \$5.00 for each subsequent child. Registration fees for enrolled members are non-refundable. Registration fees remain constant throughout the year.
- b. Tuition—The Executive Board will set the tuition rate for each child and the late payment fee for each school year based on the budget prepared by the Treasurer each spring. Tuition must be paid in advance and to the Assistant Treasurer on the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month, but no later than the 25<sup>th</sup> of each due month. A member will be assessed a late fee for each month that each tuition payment is late. If a member knows that a tuition payment is likely to be late, the member must contact the Assistant Treasurer to discuss payment plans. If a member enrolls two or more children during the same school year, that member may receive a reduction in the total tuition due for all children enrolled; to be decided by the Executive Board. No refunds on tuition will be given except for prolonged illness of more than one month. Members must notify the Executive Board for review of requested sickness-related refunds. Members enrolling a child after the first of any month will pay tuition for that month on a prorated basis as determined by the Assistant Treasurer.
  - c. Field Trip Fees—The Executive Board will set a one-time, non-refundable fieldtrip fee for each child, for each school year. The field trip fee is payable on the first day of school.

1.03 Member Duties The following member duties are mandatory.

- a. All children must comply with state health and immunization requirements. Members must submit the Michigan Department of Community Health, Health Form, in duplicate, to the Membership Chairperson no later than the child's first day of attendance at school. Children will not be allowed to attend school until the health form is completed and submitted.
- b. Members must notify the cooperative of any communicable diseases contracted by their child. Readmission to the school after a communicable disease will be permitted only under the rules in the Michigan Administrative Code, Department of Community Health. The cooperative may also further exclude any child who continues to appear ill after the specified communicability period for any illness.
- c. All fees, tuition and assessments must be paid when due.
- d. At least one parent or guardian must participate in the cooperative's orientation program.
- e. Members are responsible for making themselves aware of how the cooperative operates and to receive pertinent information and notices; this includes:

1. Reading the Cooperative's Restated Articles of Incorporation, Bylaws, Handbook and Newsletter
  2. Reading the material placed in their child(ren)'s mailbox or folder
  3. Regularly checking the Cooperative's bulletin board
- f. A parent or guardian must assist in the classroom as scheduled, unless enrolled under the "non-assist" option. Members who have more than one child enrolled in the cooperative are expected to participate for each child individually. Members who are unable to regularly assist may nominate another adult, such as a babysitter, neighbor or relative to serve as the regular assisting adult for the member. The member's nominee must be approved by the Executive Board and cleared by the Family Independence Agency.

If a member is unable to assist on his or her scheduled day, the member must make arrangements to switch days with another session member or use one of the paid assists.

In either of the above events a substitute must be present on the scheduled day if the member cannot be present. Notification of all changes in schedule must be made to the Session Representative and changes will be marked on the calendar posted on the cooperative's bulletin board. A paid assist substitutes for a member.

Responsibilities of the assisting adults are as follows:

1. Arrive at least fifteen (15) minutes before class begins
  2. Set up the preschool classroom for their session (Set up procedures are covered in orientation)
  3. Do not bring a child's siblings or a visiting child to the session
  4. Follow the directions of the teacher
- g. Members must serve on at least one (1) committee.
- h. Members must participate in fundraising projects approved by the Executive Board.
- i. Any parent or guardian delivering children to the school must accompany the children into the preschool classroom.
- j. No person will spend any amount of money on behalf of the cooperative without the approval of the President or Treasurer. In addition, any expenditure exceeding fifty dollars (\$50.00), which is not in the cooperative's budget, must be approved by the Executive Board in advance.

#### 1.04 Termination of Membership

- a. A member may terminate membership in the cooperative by giving written notification of withdrawal to the Membership Chairperson or to the member's

- Session Representative at least two weeks before a child's last expected day of attendance. If proper notification is given, tuition will be refunded on a prorated basis. If proper notification is not given by the member, tuition for the final month will not be refunded.
- b. Membership may be terminated by the Executive Board on the occurrence of the following events:
1. Failure of a member to pay fees, tuition or assessments, in full, for two consecutive months. In such a case, the Assistance Treasurer will mail, by first class U.S. Postage, a notice for payment to the member at the member's last known address. If within ten (10) days of the date of the notice full payment is not received by the Assistant Treasurer, or if the member has not signed a written plan for payment, membership will be automatically terminated.
  2. Failure of a member to fulfill the responsibilities and duties itemized in Section 2.03, or failure to satisfactorily adjust to the cooperative as a participant. In such a case, the Executive Board will mail, by first class U. S. Postage, a notice of unsatisfactory participation to the member at the member's last known address. The notice of unsatisfactory participation will outline the ways that the member's participation is deemed to be unsatisfactory. The member must respond to the notice either in writing or in person before the Executive Board. Failure to respond will result in automatic termination of membership and immediate withdrawal of the member's child, or children, from the school. If the member wishes to respond in writing, the response must be received by the President within two weeks of the date of the notice of unsatisfactory participation and discuss the situation and its possible remedy. The member will be informed of the time and location of the Executive Board's meeting regarding notice of unsatisfactory participation and every reasonable effort will be made to ensure that the member is able to attend and participate. The President will report to the Executive Board concerning the effort that the situation is having on the cooperative as a whole. If the membership is terminated, a pro-rated tuition refund will be made to the member.
  3. Failure of a child to make a satisfactory adjustment to the preschool. In such a case, the teacher will inform the parent(s), the child's Session Representative and the Executive Board of the Teacher's concerns regarding the child's adjustment. The Session Representative will report to the Executive Board concerning the effect of the child's adjustment upon the environment of the school session. The Executive Board will then schedule a special meeting to review the question of continued

enrollment. The parent(s) will be notified of the Session Representative's report and of the Executive Board's meeting so that the parent(s) can attend and participate. Every reasonable effort will be made to ensure that the parent(s) can attend and participate. If the child's enrollment is terminated, a pro-rated tuition refund will be made to the member.

- 1.05 Annual Meetings—The annual meeting of the members will be held on the second Wednesday of February of each year at 7:00 p.m., or on such a date and time thereafter as the Executive Board finds fitting. The annual meeting shall only be held if a majority of the current Executive Board deems it essential and necessary.
- 1.06 General Membership Meetings—A General Membership meeting will be held on the second Wednesday of October of each year at 7:00 p.m. or at such a date and time thereafter as the Executive Board finds fitting. The Executive Board may also call additional general membership meetings at such dates and times as it find fitting. Any business that is presented to the Executive Board will be acted upon. Attendance at the general membership meeting is mandatory.
- 1.07 Place of Meetings— all membership meetings will be held at the cooperative's classroom or at any other place determined by the Executive Board and stated in the notice of meeting.
- 1.08 Notice of Meetings—Written notice of the time and place of a membership meeting will be given no less than ten (10) days, nor more than 60 days before the date of the meeting. Notice will be posted on the cooperative's bulletin board.
- 1.09 Record Dates—The Executive Board may fix, in advance, a record date for the purpose of determining members entitled to vote at a membership meeting or an adjournment of the meeting. The date fixed will not be more than 60 days, nor less than ten (10) days before the date of the meeting.
- 1.10 List of Members—The Membership Chairperson will make and certify a complete list of the member entitled to vote at a membership meeting or any adjournment. The list will be arranged alphabetically, by session, with the address of each member and produced at the time and place of the membership meeting and will be *prima facie* evidence of the member entitled to examine the list or vote at the meeting.
- 1.11 Quorum— unless a greater or lesser quorum is required by statute, a simple majority of the members of the Executive Board then in office shall constitute a quorum at the meeting. Whether or not a quorum is present, the meeting may be adjourned by vote of the members present.
- 1.12 Voting— each member is entitled to one vote regardless of the number of children the member has enrolled in the con by a cooperative's school. When an action is to be taken by a vote of the members, it will be authorized by a simple majority of

the votes cast by the members entitled to vote, unless a greater vote is required by the statute.

- 1.13 Honorary Members—honorary members are those who, for their service to the cooperative, are invited to honorary membership in the cooperative by a unanimous vote of the Executive Board. Honorary members may participate in all school activities, but they may not vote or hold office unless they are also regular members.

### **ARTICLE III**

#### Teachers and Director

- 3.01 Teachers—Teachers will be employed by the Executive Board as provided in Article IV. Each teacher will be responsible for the daily program for his or her sessions with the advice and consent of the Director and Executive Board. Each teacher will be in complete charge of his or her students and assistants during sessions and fieldtrips.
- 3.02 Director—the Director must be a teacher and will be appointed by the Executive Board. The Director will be in charge of the administrative and operational aspects of the preschool sessions and will supervise the teachers.

### **ARTICLE IV**

#### Executive Board

- 4.01 General Powers—the business, property and affairs of the cooperative will be managed by the Executive Board.
- 4.02 Number and Identity—There will be no less than eight (8) members of the Executive Board as will be fixed from time to time by the Executive Board will consist of the President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer, Membership Chairperson, Ways and Means Committee Chairperson and Session Representatives (one representative from each session). The Room Manager and Publicity Chairperson continues to be elected officers of the Executive Board, but no longer need to attend monthly board meetings, nor are they voting members of the Executive Board.
- 4.03 Tenure and Transfer Duties—the outgoing Executive Board will meet jointly with the incoming Executive Board in the month of May and will turn over all materials to the incoming Executive Board during the month of May. The incoming Executive Board, with the exception of the Membership Chairperson, Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer, will take office and assume their duties at the end of the joint Executive Board Meeting. The incoming Membership Chairperson will take office and assume his or her duties when elected. The outgoing Membership Chairperson will assist the incoming Membership Chairperson for a period of no longer than 30 days. The incoming Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer will assist

the outgoing Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer from March through June 30, to go over the cooperative books. The incoming Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer will then take office and assume their duties effective July 1, for the new fiscal year of the cooperative (July 1-June 30). The outgoing President and Treasurer, with the incoming President present, will negotiate contracts for classroom space with the landlord for the next fiscal year. The outgoing Executive Board members will be responsible for the final storage of all preschool equipment at the close of the school year. The incoming Executive Board will be responsible to set up school in August, before orientation sessions. The incoming members of the Executive Board will then hold office until the Executive Board Member' death, resignation or removal. The outgoing members of the Executive Board will serve as advisory members to the incoming Executive Board for a period of six months whenever possible.

- 4.04 Resignation— a member of the Executive Board may resign at any time by giving the Executive Board one month written notice of resignation. A member of the Executive Board may be asked to resign if he or she is unable to fulfill assigned duties or if he or she has missed two Executive Board meetings, unexcused.
- 4.05 Removal—any elected officer or member of the Executive Board may be removed with or without cause by a simple majority vote of the Executive Board.
- 4.06 Board Vacancies—The President will appoint a member to fill any vacancy on the Executive Board subject to the approval of the Executive Board.
- 4.07 Meetings—Regular meetings of the Executive Board will be called by the President as needed. Special meetings of the Executive Board may be called by the President, or any three members of the Executive Board. Notice of the time and place of all meetings will be posted on the cooperative's bulletin board at least three business days in advance of the meeting, stating the time and place of the meeting. All meetings of the Executive Board are open to the general membership for advice or recommendations. Any employee or any general committee chairperson may be called upon to attend Executive Board meetings in an advisory capacity whenever deemed necessary by the Executive Board.
- 4.08 Statement of Meeting Purpose—neither the business to be transacted at, nor the purpose of, any regular or special meeting of the Executive Board need be specified in the notice of that meeting.
- 4.09 Waiver of Notice—the attendance of a member of the Executive Board at an Executive Board meeting will constitute a waiver of the meeting, except where an Executive board member attends a meeting for the express purpose of objecting to the transaction of any business because the meeting is not lawfully called or convened. In addition, an Executive Board member may submit a signed waiver of notice that shall constitute a waiver of notice of the meeting.

- 4.10 Meeting by Telephone of Similar Equipment—An Executive Board member may participate in a meeting by conference telephone or any similar communications equipment through which all persons participating in the meeting can communicate with each other. Participation in a meeting pursuant to this section constitutes presence in person at the meeting.
- 4.11 Quorum—a simple majority of the members of the Executive Board then in office constitutes a quorum for the transaction of any business at any meeting of the Executive Board. Actions voted upon by a simple majority of members of the Executive Board present at a meeting where a quorum is present shall constitute authorized actions of the Executive Board.
- 4.12 Consent to Corporate Action—any action required or permitted to be taken pursuant to Executive Board authorization may be taken without a meeting if, before or after the action, all members of the Executive Board consent to the action in writing. Written consents shall be filed with the minutes of the Executive Board’s proceedings.
- 4.13 Other Duties—the Executive Board will recruit community members or past members of the cooperative for the position of Trustee for a term of no less than one year. These trustees will serve as part of an advisory council to the cooperative to help in long-range planning, specific projects and to serve as liaisons to the community.

## **ARTICLE V**

### **Committees**

5.01 Standing Committees and Powers—The Membership Committee, the Ways and Means Committee and the Audit Committee are standing committees of the cooperative. These committees report and serve at the pleasure of the Executive Board. The Audit Committee will consist of the incoming President, the incoming Treasurer and the outgoing Assistant Treasurer. In the event that a member of the Audit Committee is an incumbent board member with check signing privileges, an alternative committee member will be chosen from the incoming Membership Chairperson or the incoming Secretary. The Audit Committee will audit all accounts of the cooperative at the end of each fiscal year.

5.02 General Committees and Powers—The Executive Board may designate one or more committees, each committee consisting of at least a chairperson selected from the members of the cooperative. All committees designated by the Executive Board shall be charged with managing a specific area of the cooperative’s affairs for the time and to the extent provided by resolution of the Executive Board.

5.03 Meeting—Committees will meet as directed by the Executive Board and will be governed by the rules provided in Article IV for Meetings of the Executive Board. Minutes will be recorded at each committee meeting and will be presented to the Executive Board.

## ARTICLE VI

### Officers

6.01 Number and Identity—the officers of the cooperative will be elected by the general membership as provided in this article. The officers will be a President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer, Membership Chairperson, Ways and Means Committee Chairperson, Session Representatives, , Room Manager and Publicity Chairperson.

6.02 Nomination and Election—Notification of open nomination for officers will be posted on the cooperative's bulletin board no later than the second week of February. To be nominated for an officer's position, the person's child (ren) must be enrolled in the school at the first available enrollment date for the following school year. In addition, the person nominated for the position of President must be a current member or past member. No member will hold more than one office during an Executive Board year and no member will be eligible to serve more than two consecutive terms in the same office. No later than the second week of March, the slate for all nominations for officers will be presented to the general membership in an information packet delivered to their classroom mailbox. Voting will be done by secret ballot. Each member will have one week to vote. Each officer will be elected by a plurality vote of the members voting for each office. [The deadlines for nominations and presenting the slate are set at the second week of February and March, respectively, to avoid a foreshortened week, which often occurs at the beginning of a month (e.g. if the first is a Friday, there will be fewer days for people to nominate than if the first was on a Monday)]

6.03 Tenure and Transfer of Duties—the tenure and transfer duties of the newly elected officers will be governed by the rules provided in Article IV for tenure and transfer duties of Executive Board members.

6.04 Resignation, Removal and Vacancies—Resignation by officers, removal of officers and the filling of vacancies for any office will be governed by the rules provided in Article IV for resignation, removal and vacancies of Executive Board members.

6.05 The President—The President will be the Chief Executive Officer of the cooperative and will have authority over the general control and management of the business and affairs of the cooperative. The President will sign all documents and agreements on behalf of the cooperative, unless the President or the Executive Board instructs that the signing be done with or by some other officer or agent. The President will see that all actions taken by the Executive Board are executed and will perform all other duties incident to the office. This is subject, however, to the President's right and the right of the Executive Board to delegate any specific power to any other officer or member of the cooperative.

6.06 The Vice President—The Vice President will have the power to perform duties that may be assigned by the President or the Executive Board. If the President is absent or unable to perform his or her duties, the Vice President will perform the President's duties until the Executive Board directs otherwise. The Vice President will assign members to committees and is responsible for overseeing Summer Co-op events and committees throughout the year; and will perform all other duties incident to the office.

6.07 The Secretary—The Secretary will (a) keep minutes of the Executive Board meetings, annual meetings and general membership meetings and post those minutes on the cooperative's bulletin board; (b) be responsible for providing notice to each member of Executive Board member as required by law, the restated articles of incorporation, or these bylaws; (c) be the custodian of the cooperative records; (d) will support President in updating the handbook; and (e) perform all duties incident to the office and other duties assigned by the President or the Executive Board.

6.08 The Treasurer—The Treasurer must have a working knowledge of bookkeeping and will (a) have charge and custody over the cooperative's funds and securities; (b) keep accurate books and records of the cooperative's receipts and disbursements; (c) deposit all monies and securities received by the cooperative in the cooperative's name at such depositories that may be designated by the Executive Board; (d) perform all duties incident to the office and other duties assigned by the President or the Executive Board.

6.09 The Assistant Treasurer—The Assistant Treasurer will collect, deposit and record all tuition, fees and assessments. The Assistant Treasurer will have the power to perform duties that may be assigned by the President, Treasurer or the Executive Board. The Assistant Treasurer will perform all duties incident to the office.

6.10 The Membership Chairperson—The Membership Committee Chairperson will have the power to perform all duties relating to membership. The Membership Chairperson will (a) handle all membership inquiries, arrange visits for prospective members and handle all membership communication to all new members during the summer; (b) process all applications for membership and maintain waiting lists; (c) be the custodian of the complete file for each member; (d) maintain an accurate register of all members in alphabetical order, by session; (e) assist with orientation; and (f) perform all duties incident to the office and other duties assigned by the President or Executive Board.

6.11 The Ways and Means Committee Chairperson—The Ways and Means Committee Chairperson will have the power to perform all duties relating to fundraising. The Ways and Means Committee Chairperson will (a) oversee and coordinate all fundraising events; (b) recommend fundraising ideas or events and member assessments to the Executive Board; and (c) perform all duties incident to the office and other duties assigned by the President or Executive Board.

6.12 The Session Representative(s)—The Session Representative will have the power to perform all duties relating to organizing, scheduling and acting as liaison for his or her session. Session Representative must be (a) an assisting parent (i.e. his or her child classroom assist, special event assist and materials for special projects; (b) maintain records of member participation and paid assist; (c) represent his or her session at the Executive Board meetings; (d) act as a liaison between the members in his or her session, the Executive Board and the teaching staff; (e) orient new members and (f) perform all duties incident to the office and other duties assigned by the President or Executive Board.

6.13 The Room Manager—the Room Manager is to be responsible for the inventory of all cleaning and snack supplies. This includes paper towels, soap, napkins. The Room Manager will oversee the weekly room cleaning. The Room Manager is also responsible for the school's library. The Room Manager shall report monthly to the President on

matters relevant to this position. Attendance at meetings of the Executive Board is not required for this office. This position is a non-voting member of the Executive Board.

6.14 The Publicity Chairperson—The Publicity Chairperson will have the power to perform all duties relating to publicity. The Publicity Chairperson will (a) publish a summer preschool newsletter; (b) at a minimum, publish a quarterly newsletter; (c) organize the annual T-Shirt sales; (d) oversee and coordinate all local advertising; (e) maintain website. The Publicity Chairperson shall report monthly to the President on matters relevant to this position. Attendance at meetings of the Executive Board is not required for this office. This position is a non-voting member of the Executive Board.

## **ARTICLE VII**

### **Cooperative Sessions**

7.01 Children Qualifications—The children in the three year old session will be three years old by December 1 of the current school year. The children in the four year old session will be four years old by December 1 of the current school year; an exception may be made for a child whose birthday falls between December 1 and March 1 of the current school year with a director's consultation. The children in the Young 5's session will be five years old by March 1 of the current school year. Children in all sessions will be toilet-trained. Adjustments may be made at the discretion of the Teacher and Director.

7.02 Session Meetings—Sessions for each age group shall be determined by the Executive Board.

7.03 Sessions Numbers—the number of children in each session will be recommended by the Teacher and Director and approved by the Executive Board. Each session will not exceed the State of Michigan licensing requirements.

7.04 Other Programs—when a two year old program is offered, children in this group must be accompanied by a parent or guardian to each session. Participants in this group will not be eligible for membership, but will receive a copy of the newsletter, will be invited to attend the annual and general membership meetings without voting privileges and will be able to participate in fundraising events. Children in the two year old session must be in their second year or be too young for the three year old class. The number of children in the two year old group will be recommended by the Teacher and Director and approved by the Executive Board.

## **ARTICLE VIII**

### **Amendments**

8.01 Amendments—these bylaws may be amended by a simple majority vote of the members attending a general membership meeting.

## **ARTICLE IX**

### **Parliamentary Procedures**

9.01 Procedural Rules—the rules contained in the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order will govern the meeting of the cooperative in all cases to which they apply.

