



# HANDBOOK

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# **PHILOSOPHIES**

## **PHILOSOPHIES**

### **INTRODUCTION**

The Soquel Parent Education Nursery School (Soquel PENS) is the oldest co-op preschool in Santa Cruz County. We are very proud to say that we've been facilitating parents in understanding what children need for a wholesome development since 1949. By offering parents the opportunity of cooperating with other parents as well as working creatively with the teachers, we believe that we are creating one of the best learning environments possible for the both the children and the parents.

Soquel PENS is a non-profit organization funded in part by Santa Cruz City Schools Adult Education Program. Adult attendance is the basis for the state reimbursement for the Santa Cruz Adult Education, and is the cornerstone of the cooperative. When parents enroll their children in Soquel PENS, they will also enroll themselves as a student of the Santa Cruz Adult School. The Soquel PENS is considered to be a parent education class with the parent enrolled as the student. As a student, you are required to:

- Drop off and pick up your child
- Participate in the classroom on your workday – see page 12
- Earn lab hours outside the classroom – see page 16
- Fulfill support job duties – see page 17
- Attend monthly parent education meetings – see page 18

### **PHILOSOPHY**

At the Soquel Parent Education Nursery School, we provide a wonderful, supportive, stimulating learning environment for children and parents.

Our program is designed to meet the developmental needs of each child. We offer varied activities that encourage growth in all areas such as fine and large motor skills, language development, creative expression, social and emotional development, sensory-motor development and cognitive development. We believe children and parents learn best through active, hands-on discovery. We also believe that play is the child's medium—the way they make sense and learn about their complex world. Children freely choose their activities and participate in two circle times that feature storytelling, music, puppetry and dance. We tune in to each individual child, offering guidance and support

to continuously build on their strengths and assist them with their unique developmental needs. The heart of the program consists of truly listening to both children and parents. By doing so, we encourage their thinking, creativity and growth. The flow of teaching and learning is mutual and dynamic.

We believe that the most important part of the parent education program is the parent's participation. In the cooperative school, parents take part in the program based on the child's natural pace. After experiencing the unhurried, matter of fact flow of events at school, parents may find themselves making adjustments in the family routine to meet the needs of the child more realistically.

In addition to the enrichment gained from observing and participating in the children's group, the parent's awareness grows through daily seminar time, group meetings, and other educational meetings. Our hope is that this varied approach to parent education will increase both the parent's and the child's understanding and enjoyment of each other.

### **What Can You Gain Through Participation in Soquel PENS?**

- Share your child's preschool experience by playing together and fostering budding friendships.
- Learning new ways to handle situations that may initially seem difficult by observing and conferring with trained teachers.
- Participate, watch and listen as growth takes place, and so become more equipped to understand and meet your child's needs.
- Find support and recognition for your parenting skills and knowledge.
- Build a community of support for your child and family.
- Gain insight into child behavior:
  - Observe your child with other children her age, thus gaining perspective in how she is like others, how she's unique
  - Participate in seminars designed to increase your knowledge of development of your child
  - Discuss your questions to teachers and parents; discovering new ideas and methods of parenting
  - Try out new ideas through your participation in the classroom
- Attend evening meetings that provide opportunities to discuss observations and other subjects relating to preschool education.
- Learn about community resources and services available to children and families.
- Learn new skills through the actual planning and operation of the nursery school

## **What Can Your Child Gain From Participation in Soquel PENS?**

A chance to:

- Learn to be away from home and her parents, to feel safe and comfortable in a new environment and to accept guidance from other adults.
- Experience being with and enjoying other children, sharing play materials, ideas, and activities.
- Explore ways of expressing his feelings and understanding the feelings of others.
- Develop social skills for interacting and building friendships.
- Gain an understanding of the world through social interactions and developmentally appropriate material and activities.
- Experience the excitement and pleasure of learning, laying the foundation for lifelong learning.
- Make gains in physical skills: develop large and fine motor skills through movement and play both indoors and outdoors.
- Discover the satisfaction of creating, of expressing her own ideas in her own way.
- Learn more about himself and what he can do.
- Benefit from participating in a community of caring families.

### **Nature of Play**

While all children learn through play, each child has their own learning style – their own playing style. Learning is taking place whether or not we understand it; whether or not a child conforms to someone else's notion of learning. We need to meet their present needs as they are revealed to us, for only as their needs as a young child are met can they take the steps in reaching greater maturity.

Children sit before they walk, they scribble before they paint, and they play with one or two children before functioning in a larger group. Children develop these abilities in their own style and when they are ready. The philosophy of Soquel PENS is to be in a place where a child can develop in many ways simultaneously, at his own rate and in his own style, through the experience of guided play or non-directed play.

A good school wants children to play. It wants to capitalize on play. A good school gives them the space and the materials and the experiences so they can play. Children want raw materials: sand, water, blocks, paints, clay, boards, barrels, and boxes (unshaped materials that they can give their own forms to). Children want supplies that go along with these raw materials: boats, cars, and planes, tricycles, and wagons, tools of all kinds, dolls and costumes (supplies that they can use in their own way to shape the play as they want to). Children want new ideas flowing into them: trips, stories, music they hear, new events and ideas and pictures (a framework for their play). And children

want permission. They want to be left alone. They want to work out their own ideas and be on their own and sometimes they want the parents to watch without interruption.

Play is play, but play is also learning. Play teaches children to talk. Language grows and stretches while they make-believe. Play teaches children to plan. They learn to think ahead and organize while they are pretending. Play teaches children to work with others. They wait and share; they give and take while the fun goes on. Play makes the body strong. Children are active during their building, their spur-of-the-moment games and their outside play. Play makes children curious and gives them facts. Play is the work of children.

## **Expected Schoolwide Learning Results**

The staff of Santa Cruz Adult School is committed to academic excellence and the development of the whole student as a productive citizen and worker, effective family member and life long learner. At graduation, or completion of one's Adult School program, the student will be a:

### **Problem Solver**

- 1 Critical thinker
- 2 Goal Setter
- 3 Strategizer
- 4 Self-starter

### **Communicator**

- 1 Has mastered basic skills
- 2 Competent in written and oral language expression
- 3 A good listener
- 4 A mentor to others
- 5 Has developed leadership skills

### **Creative Individual**

- 1 Confident and positive self-image
- 2 Seeks to develop one's own gifts, talents and interests

### **Productive Citizen**

- 1 Respect for self and others
- 2 Team Player
- 3 Responsible family member
- 4 Socially and environmentally aware and proactive
- 5

### **Life Long Learner**

- 1 Stays current with technology and new information
- 2 Has learned how to adapt to change
- 3 Can access resources for further growth

These School Wide Learning Expectations will be achieved within a positive, challenging and cooperative learning environment where every student counts and every student succeeds.

**PARENT  
PARTICIPATION  
AND  
RESPONSIBILITIES**

## **PARENT PARTICIPATION AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

These are the participation requirements that must be fulfilled for membership in Soquel PENS. Parent participation and education are the cornerstones of our program. Attendance requirements and fulfillment status will be tracked regularly. If you find yourself having a requirement problem, please talk with your teacher. Failure to fulfill these requirements will affect your membership status in this and coming years.

## **CLASSROOM WORKDAYS**

Each family will have a parent/domestic partner or family member assist the teacher in the classroom.

- 1 Minimum 1 work day per week
- 2 Arrive 15 minutes before the program (See school hours for exact times)
- 3 Get a substitute if you will be absent

All members are required to work at the school a minimum of one day per week and a maximum of two days per week. If you are ill or unable to work, you are responsible for trading a workday with another member or paying a substitute.

### **Monthly Calendar**

At the end of every month, the class representative will hand out a monthly calendar for the upcoming month. This calendar will give the job responsibilities and snack days for the parents' on their workdays throughout the month. The child watch day will be put on the calendar as well. The calendar will also display any holidays, monthly general meetings and field trips.

### **Assignment of Classroom Duties During Workday**

There are four parents that work each day at the school. Each parent will be assigned a duty through a number system of 1 to 4. The description of the duties is located in an area of the preschool that is easily accessible for the parents to review. Each parent will have a card explaining his/her job responsibilities throughout the workday.

As stated above, if you are unable to work, you are responsible for trading a workday with another member or finding a substitute.

## **CHILD WATCH/ WORKDAY BACK UP**

Approximately once a month, members are required to watch the children of those doing their work day, during clean up and seminar time, which lasts about 45 minutes after the end of regular school hours. **In an emergency, the child watch sitter is required to be available to work in the classroom that day, on a trade basis.** If you are unable to child watch, you must work out a trade or have other arrangements to have someone cover your session for you.

- Watch children during cleanup and teacher-worker seminar meetings. This will occur on one of your non-working days.
- Minimum: 1-2 days per month. Families with 2 children enrolled in 1 class may be asked to do additional child watch.
- Arrive 10 minutes before the end of the school day.

### **Need for Help and Challenges:**

Many parents can feel overwhelmed at child watch. If this is the case, feel free to ask the teacher for assistance even if it is in the middle of seminar session. If there are more than 6 children at a child watch sitting, then the teacher will assign an additional workday parent to assist the child watch sitter.

Parents with younger siblings, (usually 2 years and younger) who may not be able to play or move safely outside, please check in with the child watch parent to make sure this parent is not overwhelmed with watching ALL of the children (yours included). If needed, please bring your child back into the classroom with you. All the parents are students at Soquel PENS and we want them to be able to benefit from being a part of seminar, but we also need to make sure the child watch parent is comfortable watching the younger siblings.

There will be times when the children will want to go inside to see his/her parent that is cleaning or in the middle of the teacher session. The child watch parent can let the child go inside but must stay outside to watch the rest of the children. In order for the working parent to have a successful seminar with his/her peers and the teacher, it is helpful that for the child go back outside with the other children, if possible. The working parent will work on getting the child back outside and not the child watch parent. If the child is younger, then it is fine for the child to stay with the working parent.

If the child is younger (2 years or younger), then it is fine for the child to stay with the working parent. When the child is older (3 to 5 years), it is inappropriate for the child to stay indoors and hear the adult conversation about adult concerns, other children, concerns at home, etc... that take place during the seminar. This is why we encourage all children to go outside during the child watch time. We want to establish a routine and an expectation.

Each class has the flexibility to decide how they want to organize their child watch. The class should be trying to find a balance between keeping the child watch parent from being overwhelmed and letting the parents, who are students, have a chance to be a part of the seminar.

## **SNACK**

Each parent will be responsible for bringing a snack to school. The monthly calendar will notify the parents of their snack day. The snack must be nutritious, avoiding refined sugars and processed foods. Snack should emphasize fruits, vegetables, grains and non-meat proteins.

### **Snack Guidelines**

Snack is a wonderful sensory experience for children. When preparing the snack and putting it on serving plates, remember to make it pleasing to look at. Think about textures, colors, food types, etc. If possible, be creative, and arrange the food in a pleasing way.

Snack for the members of the Soquel PENS must be prepared on site at the school, and meat may not be served, as required by the Santa Cruz County Public Health Department.

The snack person must thoroughly wash their hands with soap and warm water and before they start snack preparation. If the snack person leaves the kitchen during snack preparation, they must wash their hands with soap and warm water again, before returning to snack preparation.

## **YARD DAYS**

Twice a year and usually on a Saturday, the parents come together to do yard maintenance and special projects.

- Participate in two (2) yard maintenance days per year.
- Each member is expected to participate for a minimum of two hours.
  - Any member who cannot meet this obligation must contact the Yard Day Coordinator for alternative work or pay a fee at the rate of \$10.00/hour, by the following month, after which an additional \$10.00 late fee will be added.
  - Paying the fee of \$10.00/hour is a last resort and should not be used as a simple option for the yard day. We need everyone's help to maintain our site.
- Either parent can participate in the yard day as long as they are enrolled in the Santa Cruz Adult Education Program.

As an option, special projects can be approved by the teacher or board and done on a voluntary basis and will be completed on a separate day other than the scheduled yard day. These projects will count for yard day credit but may exceed the four-hour yearly requirement.

## **FUNDRAISING**

Participation in yearly fundraising event is mandatory, and includes a total time commitment of 4 hours per year plus a financial commitment to be discussed at the beginning of the year.

- The nature and number of fundraisers, and any specific additional financial commitment will be decided by the general membership based on the recommendation of the fundraising coordinators, by the second general meeting of the school year.
- Fundraising commitments must be met by the due date as defined by the fundraising coordinator. If the monies are not received within 20 days after that date, an additional \$10.00 late fee will be added. If this responsibility is not met, it will be brought to the board's attention.

## **LAB HOURS**

A requirement under the Santa Cruz Adult Education is to have 15 hours of lab and class time per week. The class hours are the hours spent in the Co-op while your child is in school. The lab hours are hours where the parents practice the skills learned in the Parent Co-op and are done outside the classroom time.

- Each hour of your participation in these activities is reimbursed by the state and allows for the operation of this program. Without these activities, there would be no verification of the parent participation component and the Soquel PENS could not continue.
- The teacher records the class hours and the parents are responsible for recording the lab hours.\_

### **Class Hours**

Here is an example of how a parent may receive their class hours.

Class Hours for MWF Program:

4 hours for one workday  
2 hours for second (2<sup>nd</sup>) non-work day  
2 hours for third (3<sup>rd</sup>) non-work day  
1 hour for Child Watch

9 hours total - The parent will then be responsible for recording 6 additional lab hours outside the classroom for the week.

### **Lab Hours**

Each class is given a lab form to fill out their hours each week.

- The lab hours must be recorded in exact hours and minutes and cannot be rounded off to the nearest quarter hour.
- No more than 4 lab hours can be recorded each day.

- Some examples of what a parent can do for their lab hours are:
  - Reading to their children
  - Artwork activities
  - Taking them to museums or libraries
  - Any environment that provides a positive education for their child
  - Parenting skill development – i.e. reading, lectures or videos
  - Practicing parent skills at park, playgroup or field trips
  - Working with older child’s classroom

<b>PARENT SUPPORT JOB OR BOARD POSITIONS</b>
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All members are required to hold a Board position or a Soquel PENS support job. See the Soquel PENS Bylaws for a complete description of Board positions. The Support Job Coordinator will assign members support jobs based on their preferences listed at the first general meeting. Cleaning scholarships are in addition to a regular support job.

During the summer time, a list of the different job positions will be sent to each family to review. You will be asked to write down your top three preferences of job positions. This list will be returned at the beginning of school where the Support Job Coordinator will do their best to assign a job position based on your preference.

For a description of any of the jobs, please contact the Support Job Coordinator.

**Board Positions**

- President
- Vice President
- Secretary
- Fundraising Chairperson
- Membership Coordinator
- Treasurer
- Class Representatives

## **EVENING MEETINGS**

A registered adult family member must attend the scheduled monthly evening. The meetings are a part of the parent education component. While they may include school business or decisions about the program, they emphasize child development and helpful information for the parent.

- Two or 3 times a year, we have speakers on relevant topics
- There is only one membership meeting per month.
- Only one absence from the meetings is allowed.
- All other absences must be made up by completing an assigned project approved by the teacher
- The meetings are for adults and young babies only.

## **TUITION**

Tuition is an annual fee divided into 9 months. Members can pay the full tuition at the beginning of the year or choose the monthly fee. If choosing the monthly fee, tuition is due on the first of the month. A late fee of \$10.00 is charged if tuition is not paid by the 10<sup>th</sup> of the month.

- There is a non-refundable one-time registration fee due at time of registration.
- Ongoing unpaid tuition concerns will be brought to the board's attention.
- There is no tuition deduction for taking vacations.

# **CHILDREN AT SCHOOL**

## **CHILDREN AT SCHOOL**

### **BEGINNING SCHOOL: GETTING YOUR CHILD READY**

Bring your child on time, since it is important for your child to experience all of the routines of preschool. Pick your child up promptly when the school day is over. It can be really scary for children when they feel forgotten.

Your child will be offered many experiences, some which are messy and some that require free body movement. Make sure that clothing is washable and easily managed by children. To make sure that your child's clothing is not lost, label your child's belongings. Always have a change of clothes on hand at school in case of an accident. Please remember that the weather changes abruptly, please bring layers for warmth. Put the clothes in a shoebox size container that will fit in your cubby, and put your child's picture and name on the box. Please bring a picture of your child to tape inside his/her cubby. This helps the children find their cubby.

Prepare a package of emergency food to leave at the nursery school. Use a zip lock bag. Write your child's name on the bag. Fill it with non-perishable food such as dry fruit, crackers, and canned or boxed juice. Many parents choose to include a family photograph and a note to their child to help calm the child in case an emergency situation arises (such as an earthquake). The package of emergency food is placed in an emergency bin within the classroom.

### **TIPS AND GUIDELINES FOR WORKDAY**

During your first times of participation, do not worry that too much will be expected of you. It takes a while to know where things are kept, the children's names and characteristics and all of the other things which one will learn as time goes on. Your first job is to get to know the children and to let them to know you and each other.

You may not be accustomed to large groups of children or to a number of their activities. Do not worry about this. The other parents who have been in the program before knew as little as you do when they started.

The following tips will help you on your workday:

- Wear serviceable clothes. You may be active and may be mixing water paints or involved in mud. Be prepared for wet or cold weather.
- Learn where things are kept, the daily schedule and the names of the children so that you will be increasingly useful and comfortable as a staff member.
- Do not allow conversation with other adults to interfere with your job. Your job is to supervise children's play, help with their activities and watch out for their safety.
- Remember to check the bulletin boards on this day, as well as at other times when you come to school, for notices of meetings, schedules, health matters and other announcements. Also, check your pocket in the parent's area for any messages or notices.
- In order to be fully focused on the children, please do not use your cell phone except for emergencies. Hearing a cell phone ring can be disruptive and it is inappropriate for a parent to be talking on a cell phone while working at the school.

## **GUIDELINES FOR PARENTS WITH SIBLINGS ON THEIR WORKDAY**

Here are some guidelines for parents who bring siblings to their workday.

- The parent is ultimately responsible for the sibling. They need to make sure the sibling is safe from choking or getting harmed in the class and when the child is outside. If the working parent is inside and the sibling wants to go outside, the working parent needs to ask another parent to watch the sibling for them or switch positions with another working parent so you can make sure the sibling is safe.
- During circle time, parents with siblings need to make sure the sibling is not disruptive during circle time. If the sibling is disruptive, the parent needs to remove the child from circle time area.
- The level of play for children who are starting first grade (approximately 6 or 7 years old) is more physical than children in preschool. Therefore, please contact your teacher to discuss if the child can attend on your workday or at child watch.

## **SIBLINGS DURING NON-WORKDAY**

At Soquel PENS, we offer a unique opportunity for siblings to come with their parents on their workday. There are times when parents would like to stay at the school with their child on their non-workday. This can be challenging for the school if the parents have siblings who are mobile (walking and/or crawling). It is the school preference that parents with mobile siblings not attend the school on their non-workday for the following reasons:

- Siblings are not ready for some of the more complicated curriculum, they could choke on items or fall in the class.
- The sibling can be disruptive in circle and snack time.
- The class size (including the siblings of the workday parents) and temperament of the existing class may make it difficult to accommodate one more child.
- Working parents may get overwhelmed with the additional, younger children in the classroom.

However, we do realize that enrolled children may not be ready for their parent to leave especially if it is their first year at the school. The following is the school policy for the different classes.

### **T/TH classes**

If the child is uncomfortable with the parent leaving, then the parent can stay at the school. The parents with the siblings are ultimately responsible for the safety of the sibling and need to be watch them at all times.

### **MWF classes**

Children in the class may need time to get comfortable with their parents not being at the school on their non-workday. Parents with mobile siblings (crawling or walking) can be there with their enrolled child to help get them acclimated until the end of October. After the end of October, it is the school's policy that parents with the mobile siblings not be at the school on their non-workday.

## **SCHEDULE OF A TYPICAL WORKDAY**

More important than doing any specific task **is to be where the children need you.** The teacher arrives and sets up craft/art area, games, manipulatives, etc with the help of working parents.

- Working parents arrive 15 minutes early to help teacher to set up environment
- Sign in

- Parent and his/her child WASH HANDS as soon as arriving.
- Check schedule and clip boards for jobs responsibility and teacher's plans for the day.
- Assist incoming children with washing hands.
- Free play.
- Circle time (music, songs and movement)
- WASH HANDS then sit for snack
- Free Play
- Clean up time. Yard and play areas can be done with children's help.
- Goodbye circle
- Clean up time. Adults clean bathroom, kitchen, etc. Child watch sitter watches workers' children.
- Seminar time. Clean up and seminar time is approximately 45 minutes.

## INITIAL SUPPORT THROUGH GUIDES TO SPEECH AND ACTION

The following guidelines are suggestions for the interaction between adults and children. They can be helpful in directing children and working through difficult situations. It is important when communicating with children to physically get down on their level and to have eye contact with the children.

(Taken from the Early Childhood Programs: Human Relationship and Learning by Katherine Read, et al.)

### **Speech**

1. State suggestions in positive rather than negative form, i.e. "Drive the bike on the sidewalk" instead of "Don't drive on the grass."
2. Give the child a choice only when you are prepared to leave the choice up to him, i.e. "Do you want to park your bike here or there before snack?" Child must come to snack, but choice of parking place is his.

For example:

- "Will you pick up your toys?" If answer is not, it should be respected without any further attempt to encourage it.
- "Put the toy on the table" means just that. Offer as many choices as you can but be sure they are truly choices.

3. Use only words and tone of voice that will help the child to feel confident and reassured. Speak quietly and on his level (bend or kneel). Walk to him rather than shouting across the room or yard. Never shame or humiliate the child for his feelings or himself – the negative act may be criticized only.

For example:

- “Hitting hurts. You may not hit Johnny.” To be more supportive, you can acknowledge his feeling while condemning his act.
  - “I know you’re mad because Johnny did that.”
4. Avoid comparison and competition among children. It damages self-image AND friendly feelings between children. Attention and approval should not depend on being first or best.
  5. Use voice as a teaching tool. Quiet voice is more effective than shouting.
  6. Redirection is most effective when consistent with the child’s motives or interests. Frantic play from over fatigue—suggest book, water play, or other relaxing, quite activity.
    - 1 Throwing or hitting in anger – outlet in kicking balls, pounding nails, hitting pillows (knows the child and what activity is most helpful to him). Consider individual interest and cause of behavior when must redirect.

For example:

- A child who is disrupting the play of the others may just wish to be included in the group. In this case, help him to find a role in his group or with another group, if necessary. When you must say no, give an alternative.
- “You may have a turn after Billy. Would you like to swing (dig, paint, etc. while you are waiting?”

## **Action**

1. Avoid making models in any art medium for children to copy (in language, too). Art is for self-expression. Child needs to explore the media before creating a product. Models are frustrating to the child who hasn’t the skills to copy the adult. “What are you making?” suggests to the child that he must make something recognizable and may cancel out his own sense of freedom and

2. Give the child the minimum help in order that he may have the maximum chance to grow in independence. Give him time to solve his problems, but give the child help when he needs it.
3. Make your directions effective by reinforcing them when necessary. Make suggestions simple, clear, and one at a time. If direction is to go somewhere, move in that direction with the child.
  - a. "I'll help you park your bike" could reinforce "it's time for rest now."
4. The timing of a suggestion may be as important as the suggestion itself. Help too soon deprives the child of the satisfaction of doing it himself – help too late may cause him to be frustrated or failing.
5. When limits are necessary, they should be clearly defined and consistently maintained. Child feels freer and safer if he knows the adult takes this responsibility.
6. Use the most strategic positions for supervising. Sit down whenever you can so that you are not towering above them. Be where you can see the entire area and where you will most likely be needed.
7. The health and safety of the children are a primary concern
8. Encourage and ask parents to play with the children at nursery school. When you play, get down on their level. Remember that winning and losing is not the point of your interaction. Monster games are not a good idea. Play games where children can take the incentive, and adults become followers. In games of house construction or jumping off high places, it may be necessary to referee to ensure the children's safety.

# **HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICIES AND GUIDELINES**

# HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICIES AND GUIDELINES

## SCHOOL HEALTH POLICIES

All members are required to comply with all the state health standards required of the school with respect to physical examinations. All school forms must be turned in by the first day of school.

### **In Case of Illness**

If Soquel PENS is your child's first experience with a large group of children, you will probably discover that he/she picks up more colds and other illness than previously.

If your child becomes ill at school, he/she must go home. The teacher must have a number of someone to call to get your child if you cannot be reached.

While it is impossible to prevent all illnesses, we can all stay more healthy if we follow these guidelines: CHILDREN, PARENTS and SIBLINGS must stay home if they have any of the following:

- FEVER
- FIRST SIGN OF COLD:
  - Fever
  - Colored or clear nasal discharge
  - Cough
  - Rash
  - Vomiting and/or diarrhea
  - "off" feeling or lethargy

After 3 days of a simple cold (if all else seems fine), the child/parent/sibling can return to school. Continued green mucous or fever should be checked by a doctor before returning to school.

- COUGH – Wet, wheezy cough or seal-like coughing should be checked by your doctor. A dry hacking cough with no other symptoms is okay.
- MISCELLANEOUS
  - Rash, skin infections (first stages of poison oak, ring worm, head lice, etc.)  
Children can come to school with food allergy rash or diaper rash.
  - Vomiting and /or diarrhea
  - Pink eye or conjunctivitis (until 48 hours after treatment).
- COMMUNICABLE DISEASES  
We follow Santa Cruz County health guidelines for procedures on communicable

diseases. See teachers for specifics on this. Some examples of communicable diseases are: chicken pox, measles, rubella and mumps. **ALL EXPOSURES TO COMMUNICABLE DISEASE MUST BE REPORTED TO THE TEACHER.**

Please observe your child (and yourself) for signs of illness in the time before your program. Watch for signs of your child being “off” or out of sorts (without any simple explanations). This is often the first symptom of illness and is the time that children are the most contagious. The teacher and other working parents will do a preliminary screening at the beginning of each class period and make decisions if there are any questions about health. After an extended illness, check with your doctor and check in with the teacher before your child returns to school. Ask for help if you are sick and your child is not. Often other parents can help your child get to and from school and give you some much-needed rest.

**AT SCHOOL:** Consistent hand washing (did you wash your hands again after you went out to your car?), toy washing, and wiping/disinfecting of tables (particularly edges) and chairs will go a long way in keeping us all healthy.

## **UNIVERSAL PRECAUTIONS**

Exposure to Blood and Other Potentially Infected Body Fluids:

Parents and teachers will follow the universal precautions recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in handling any fluid that might contain blood or other body fluids. Universal precautions require treating all blood and fluids that may contain blood or blood products as potentially infectious. The precautions should be followed in treating all children and adults.

The universal precautions are:

1. Wash hands for 30 seconds after diapering and wiping a child’s nose, before preparing or eating foods, after using the bathroom and after any contact with blood and other body fluids.
2. Spills of body fluids, feces, nasal and eye discharges, saliva, urine and vomit should be cleaned up immediately with 1 tablespoon bleach solution to 1 quart of water.
3. Wear non-porous gloves (e.g. latex or vinyl) unless the material being used to clean it up can easily contain the fluid. Wash your hands as soon as you take off the gloves.

4. Be careful not to get any of the fluid you are handling in your eyes, nose, mouth, or any open sores you may have.
5. Clean and disinfect with bleach solution any surfaces, such as countertops and floors, on to which body fluids have been spilled.
6. Discard fluid contaminated material such as disposable diapers in a plastic bag that has been securely sealed and placed in a lined, covered garbage container.
7. Put bloodstained laundry in sealed plastic bags.
8. Mops used to clean up body fluids should be cleaned, rinsed with disinfecting bleach solution, wrung as dry as possible, and hung to dry completely.
9. Be sure to wash your hands after cleaning any spill.

Soquel PENS uses non-chlorine bleach in our daily cleaning, but we believe that chlorine bleach is the most effective at cleaning in extreme instances where body fluids have been spilled.

## CLASSROOM SAFETY

To do our best to ensure the safety of all children and adults at school, we have put together these safety policies. It is our hope that attention to these areas will create an environment where we are free to enjoy the process of learning with children.

### **Inside Area**

#### **1. Front Door:**

It is vital that the front door be securely closed each time it is used. It must never be propped open when any children are present.

#### **2. Cubbies:**

- a. Adult purses and materials should be stored in the adult bathroom or on top of the cubbies. Purses, diaper bags, etc, securely closed or left in the car.
- b. All of us must be vigilant about what is inside cubbies. Toys with small parts, drawstrings from clothing, plastic bags could all be safety issues when they are stored in a cubby. For this reason, we ask that you use

small, zip-top plastic bags in lunch boxes.

- c. Working adults should periodically check this area for “hidden” children and for any dangerous materials.

### **3. Blocks:**

- a. Buildings should be children’s shoulder height or lower.
- b. Supervision is critical in this area (when children are building here), both for safety of children and safety of the building-in-progress.

### **4. Fantasy Area:**

Because this area changes most throughout the year, be sure to familiarize yourself with the materials presented. Because we have programs that serve children of differing ages, it is important to check for age-appropriateness of the materials. Older children may use paper clips, sharp scissors and hole punches while these may be hazardous to younger students and siblings. With dress-up materials this might include belts, purses with clip clasps (and perhaps especially, materials hidden inside the purses).

### **5. Bathrooms:**

- a. Like the cubbies, bathrooms should be checked periodically for children.
- b. Diapering procedure is posted in the children’s bathroom. It is vital, however, that we keep all diapering materials away from children. Please use plastic bags to dispose of soiled diapers immediately (in the outside dumpsters), and be sure that any other plastic bags are stored where they are not available to curious children.
- c. It is important to check the adult bathroom periodically in case children were to enter it.

### **6. Manipulatives:**

When bringing out a game or new set-up, please check for small pieces. These can be choking hazards for younger children and siblings. These types of materials can be used with older children but then put back in the storage room immediately after use. It can be useful and fun to count pieces to be used both before playing and while cleaning up to ensure safety for our younger members and siblings. Check with the teacher if you have questions about this.

## **7. Art:**

- a. Always check through the art areas for potential hazards. Sharp scissors (which are used extensively with our older children) may not be safe for our younger ones. Marbles (for marble painting) are a huge hazard and must be counted before and after this kind of project. Watch for things like over-sharpened pencils, beads for collage, etc.
- b. In checking the art area, be sure to look at the edges of shelves and under tables.

## **8. Kitchen:**

- a. A child may be in the kitchen only with an adult.
- b. Be sure that sharp knives are NEVER left unattended or in the reach of children
- c. Avoid the use of plastic bags in this area also. Be sure to watch for items stored in plastic bags, which might be within a child's reach.
- d. Cooking with children is very fun and offers many potential hazards. There must always be continuous vigilant supervision when there are knives or when there is anything hot.
  1. Electric skillets, for example, must have an adult in direct attendance until that skillet is removed from the reach of any child.
  2. In addition, hygiene is very important here. Hands need to be washed before any cooking project, or even mid-way if mouths or noses are rubbed, or a taste is taken.

## **9. Other inside information:**

- a. Children are to be redirected when climbing on tables, cubbies, shelving, etc.
- b. Pushpins, thumbtacks, etc. are stored in small, labeled containers in the teachers' desk. Do not leave these items out! If found, please return them to those containers.
- c. Electric outlets must have covers at all times, except, of course, when in use. Be sure to replace the cover when you are finished with the outlet.
- d. Please encourage your child to leave toys from home at home or in the car. Toys from home can create issues between children and distract from the play environment our teachers work to create. Also, toys from home may have small parts that are unsafe at school (even if placed in a cubby, it is available to curious children).

- e. Each of us is responsible for the continuous scanning of the environment at school. When you are in the classroom, please be vigilant about all these areas.

## **Outside Area**

### **1. Back Door:**

- a. The door to the outside area is opened at the teacher's discretion. At circle-time (or snack), children come inside and the door is closed (count children to make sure all are accounted for).
- b. At closing circle, the outside door is closed to allow for clean up of the yard. It is re-opened when the child watch sitter is on-site and ready to be with the children.
- c. It is fine for a child to be with his/her parent outside. During initial set up, check with the parent regarding extra children.

### **2. Bicycles:**

- a. Shoes must be worn when riding bicycles.
- b. Encourage safety learning with concepts of speed, stopping safely, collision, one-way travel, and problem solving.
- c. Be sure to sweep up any sand that spills onto the bike path. It becomes very slippery (especially for runners).

### **3. Rainbow climber:**

- a. There must be an adult in attendance when children are climbing on this structure.
- b. Ask for supervision help if there are many children climbing.

### **4. Large climbing structure:**

- a. There is NO climbing on the upper levels of this structure. Feet must be on the platform.
- b. If children are playing on the slide (or any of the far side of the structure), an adult should be able to see the slide area. Supervision is essential as this can be a "hidden" area.
- c. Please tell children heavy items need to stay on the ground. Sand also falls through, so watch for play underneath any sand play ON the structure.

## **5. Sand Areas:**

- a. Sand is for pouring, sifting, molding, mounding, etc. It is never for throwing. Remind children to keep sand low.
- b. Keep sand in sand areas. It becomes very slippery on the bike paths.
- c. Sweep down the structure from the top down and the paths after every program to ensure continued safety.

## **6. Large motor set ups:**

- a. Always test large motor set ups yourself before allowing children on them. Look for wobbling (uneven ground, for example) or any places a child could catch clothing, fingers, etc. Check with teachers if you are unsure about a set up.
- b. Here again is an area that requires constant supervision when a child (or children) is (are) present. If you must leave this area, call for assistance from another parent or teacher or take down the set up.

## **7. Hollow blocks:**

- a. Shoes must be worn when building or playing around these blocks (not needed when there is tumbling or something set up in this area).
- b. Constructions must be lower than shoulder height
- c. Supervision is critical here as well. Difficulties can rise quickly and speedy interception is important. Sit off to the side (but nearby) if children are not in need of adult assistance at that time.
- d. At clean up time, group the blocks according to size (there may be labels) and do not stack over 3 feet high.

## **8. Carpentry:**

- a. When the carpentry area is set up, nails, carpentry tools and adult tools are to be monitored continuously by the adult in that area.
- b. Teach safe use of tools at all times. This might mean limiting the number of children at this project. A waiting list is useful for this.
- c. Always put tools, etc. away from the reach of children at circle or snack times.
- d. At clean up time, be sure to secure the equipment in the carpentry/tools shed, locking the padlock afterward. Only adults should access this shed. Be sure to carefully scan the ground and bench crevasses for nails, screw,

etc.

**9. Outside Art/Sink Area:**

- a. Children are not to access stored paints etc. on their own.
- b. Art materials must stay in the art area unless specifically directed by the teacher.
- c. Dump out any water that accumulates in containers, with the obvious exception of the water table. This includes buckets and tubs in the sink area. Even the water table must be supervised carefully and covered when not in use. All buckets etc. should be stored upside down until absolutely dry. Drowning can happen in less than an inch of water.
- d. Please return cups, paint containers, spoons, brushes, etc. to their appropriate places after washing. They are more accessible to curious children on the ledge above the sink.

**10. Gate:**

All gates need to be locked and secured at all times.

**11. Sheds:**

Sheds should be locked at all times. **BE SURE TO PUT THE KEYS BACK!!!**  
Shed access is for adults only.

**12. Parking Lot:**

- a. It is important for the parents to be able to ensure the safety of their children while walking to their cars. Please ask for assistance in carrying items to your car if needed.
- b. If a child is sleeping in a car when arriving at school or a parent wants their child to nap in the car, it is necessary for a parent/adult to supervise the child at all times.

**13. Field Trips:**

1. Drivers must have insurance that will cover children riding in their cars.
2. Child restraint car seats are required for all children under 6 years of age and under 60 pounds. Individual seat belts are required for children over 6 years of age and 60 pounds.
3. Emergency forms must accompany all children on field trips.
4. Drivers must not leave cars running with children in them.
5. Drivers should load and unload children safely on the curb-side of the car.

*Some general comments:*

Child safety is fundamental to our program. All of us work hard to provide an environment that is safe, challenging, and stimulating for our children. For this reason, please be sure to check with a parent (or teacher if a parent is not at school) before ever taking a child out of the classroom for any reason. If you are doing set up outside and children other than your own want to join you, please alert the teacher about who will be under your supervision (provided this is OK with you). On a similar note, always check in with the teacher before allowing a child to leave the program with an adult other than the custodial parent. If your child is to go home with another adult, please write it on the sign up sheet and alert the teacher to the change in routine.

Each of us is responsible for the safety of our school. Both working and non-working parents, along with the teacher, are actively responsible for the safety of our program. If you are unclear about a situation, ACTIVELY seek assistance from another adult. If each of us assumes personal responsibility for the physical and emotional safety of the children and adults in this program then we are free to creatively explore our environment together.

# COMMUNICATION

## **COMMUNICATION**

### **POSITIVE COMMUNICATION AND COMMUNITY BUILDING**

Soquel PENS is an Adult Education class, and a unique one. A very important aspect is the learning that takes place for parents. Often the learning involves finding out just what it is we expect from our children and from each other. If we decide that we want our children to grow, we may be forced to grow considerably ourselves. One of the hardest things we have to do is to SPEAK OUT, to ask why, to share our thoughts.

The way this is handled is very crucial for the smooth running of Soquel PENS. For a cooperative to function well, for a group of people to work well together, people need to be thoughtful about communicating with each other. The more we can make our communication positive to our children and other adults, the more we can learn from each other.

Soquel PENS is an exciting place that is constantly evolving through the ideas and participation of everyone. Please share your thoughts, ideas and talents to make this a rich learning environment for all of us.

### **YOU HAVE A VOICE**

With a large group of people making and executing decisions, open communication is essential for our school to function successfully. It is important to effectively communicate our ideas, suggestions and concerns about any aspect of the nursery school program. If you do have questions, please ask your teachers, your class representative, a board member, or another parent.

#### **Decision Making Process:**

At the Soquel PENS, many of the detailed decisions will be made by the board members. Board meetings are open to all members (though only board members can vote). All members are welcome to express their ideas and concerns either in person to the board or through their class representative.

When appropriate, some decisions will be put forth before the membership at the general meetings. After a brief period of discussion, a vote will be made by the membership and will be decided by simple majority.

### **Whom to Talk to:**

Below is a list of different individuals and the resources they can help you with at Soquel PENS.

#### **Talk to Teacher About:**

- Parent Education
- Daily Program/Curriculum
- Your Child or another child
- Your workday
- Making up time if you can't get a substitute on your workday

#### **Talk to Class Representative About:**

- Main resource contact
- Concerns or problems
- Leaves (of absence)
- Changes in work days
- Orientation
- Parent Responsibilities

#### **Talk to President About:**

- General Functioning of the school
- Scholarships
- Agendas for general membership meetings and board meetings

#### **Talk to Vice President About:**

- Ideas, suggestions, questions concerning speakers at general membership meetings
- General functioning of the school
- Attendance issues and missed evening meetings

#### **Talk to Treasurers About:**

- Tuition
- Budget
- Financial Reports
- Reimbursements
- Scholarships

**Talk to Membership Coordinator About:**

- Leaves (of absence)
- Resignation
- Registration or medical forms
- Dropping or adding attendance days
- Concerns/problems complaints in enrollment

**Talk to Job Coordinator About:**

- Support Job Responsibilities
- Changing Jobs

**Talk to Yard Day Coordinator About:**

- Your participation in yard days
- Suggestions for repairs, etc

**Talk to Board About:**

- It is the responsibility of each board member to be familiar with the Bylaws and Policies and Procedures of the Nursery School. Ask them anything!

## **PARENT CODE OF CONDUCT**

### **For Santa Cruz Adult Education Parent Co-op Nursery School**

The Santa Cruz Adult Education Program provides comprehensive parent education programs through parent co-operative nurseries at the Soquel, Westside and Live Oak Parent Nursery Schools. In order for parents to take full advantage of this service, it is important to establish a code of conduct, which incorporates the parenting philosophy of the Co-ops. This philosophy determines educational activities that provide parents with skills including positive discipline, options for exploration and discovery, and constructive interaction with peers to help children develop positive social and cognitive skills. The educational program focuses on assisting parents in raising children who have high self-esteem and a sense of personal growth.

The appropriate behavior for parents and family members in the Co-op are as follows:

1. Participation in assigned responsibilities as outlined in the Parents Handbook.
2. Appropriate and positive communication of issues and concerns with the teacher and the Board. It is the intent of the Co-op members that issues should be discussed outside of class time between the parent and staff.
3. Modeling of appropriate behavior during the supervision of children, at seminars and during meetings. Parents should strive to exhibit positive, co-operative behavior at all times for the benefit of the children and adult members of the Co-op.
4. Co-operation and support with other member families in Co-op activities.

The parent co-op nurseries are educational programs for parents as students. The behaviors addressed above are goals for each parent/student to strive for with the assistance of the Co-op teacher. Parents/students who experience difficulty in complying with these behaviors will receive notification from their teacher of the specific difficulties. This notification will be in the form of a written Progress Report which identifies the problem(s) the parent is experiencing and sets a time for a conference between the parent/student and teacher.

At the conference, the student and teacher will develop a plan to improve the behavior to comply with the school's code within a specified time frame. The student's progress will be evaluated at the progress review date. A student who has not made the necessary improvements will be placed on probation for a period of one week to make the recommended changes. Parent/students who do not make improvements by the end of the probationary period will be subjected to involuntary termination from the Co-op according to the Bylaws.

## CONFLICT RESOLUTION FOR ADULTS

By Barbara Riverwoman

The art of giving constructive feedback can be a very empowering or intimidating experience. It is not easy to confront someone on matters that can reflect values or call into question a person's behavior. When feedback is given effectively, everyone should leave the interaction feeling understood and empowered to come to a resolution that meets the needs of the individuals involved. When feedback is not given effectively, a person can leave the interaction feeling as if there was no progress made and feeling intimidated to confront a situation like that again. All in all, giving feedback is a form of communication used regularly in our daily lives, and with a basic knowledge of the skills used it can be a very useful tool rather than a burdensome task.

### **Suggestions for Creating a Positive Feedback Setting and a Positive Outcome**

1. **Spend time examining your feelings and attitude.** Ask yourself if you are approaching the concerns as a mutual problem solver. Will your attitude help in creating solutions that will meet the needs of those involved? Before approaching the other person spend time thinking about what your interests and needs are, as well as what the interests and needs of the other person may be. Plan how you will say what you want to say in a positive way, eliminating assumptions and accusatory language.
2. **Appropriate time and place.** Feedback needs to be given in a timely manner. If you expect a change or a resolution, it is important for the other person to know before too much time has gone by to change the situation. Remaining focused on the issue at hand will help to keep the discussion clear and fair. Choose a time and place where you can talk respectfully. Having a discussion publicly versus privately can change the dynamics and can involve others who may complicate the situation. Once engaged in the conversation, show the same courtesy you would expect. Listen without interrupting. Don't assume you understand another's viewpoint – ask for clarification.
3. **The use of "I" statements.** The use of an "I" statement, rather than a "You" statement, allows you to express how you feel and take ownership of your feelings without placing blame on the other person. A "You" statement can cause defensiveness and hurt feelings, creating a win/lose versus a win/win environment. For example: "I don't understand why..." rather than "You always do this..." It is important to focus on the behavior in question and not the person. A person is not a bad person because their behavior is being called into question. Just like with a child who behaves inappropriately, we focus on changing their

- behavior without making them feel like a “bad” child.
4. Once you have reviewed your feelings, established the appropriate settings and are engaged in a discussion where each person is listening and explaining their feelings in a positive, non-judgmental way, you will find that it is much easier to move to a point of mutual resolution.
  5. **Say what you want, offering ideas for solutions.** If people don’t know what we want, they can’t help us get it. You must decide what you want with the best intentions in mind for all involved. Offering ideas that create a positive solution will show your commitment to the situation. It also keeps the other person from having to come up with a solution by him/herself. In this way you have created a setting that focuses on a positive outcome and demonstrates the interconnectedness of your mutual needs.

Giving effective and constructive feedback is a skill that can take time and practice. However, in the long run it can help to make you feel more empowered and your life more rewarding.

## **GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES**

By using positive communication at Soquel PENS, we are able to successfully resolve most concerns and disputes. On the rare occasions that we are unsuccessful, we follow the Santa Cruz Adult School grievance procedure.

A parent/student or family member of the Parent Co-op may file a grievance with the Co-op for the following reasons:

1. A violation, misinterpretation or misapplication of the Co-op Bylaws by a teacher, a member of the Co-op or another parent/student.
2. A dispute of probationary status and/or involuntary termination.
3. A safety issue which has not been addressed by the Co-op Board
4. Violation of the code of Conduct by another student which has not been addressed by the Co-op Board

Every effort shall be made to resolve the grievances within the time frames specified below for each grievance level.

### Informal Level

Within five (5) working days after the parent/student knew of an event or circumstances of the alleged grievance, the parent/student shall initially meet with his/her co-op teacher in an attempt to resolve the alleged grievance informally.

Level I:

1. If the informal discussion fails to resolve the grievance to the satisfaction of the parent/student, a formal grievance may be initiated in writing no later than five (5) working days after the informal discussion
2. The formal document shall be clear, concise statement of the grievance citing specific sections of the Co-op bylaws or other categories in the code of Conduct allegedly violated, misinterpreted or misapplied, the circumstances involved, and the specific remedy sought.
3. Within five (5) working days after filing of the formal grievance, the Grievance Committee of the Co-op Board shall investigate the grievance and give his/her decision in writing to the grievance. This Grievance Committee will be nominated as the situation arises. The Committee will be comprised of four members from each of the four programs (MWF AM and PM and T-TH AM and PM). Members of the committee shall not be Board Members.

Level II:

1. If the parent/student is not satisfied with the decision rendered at Level I, he/she may appeal the decision within seven (7) working days to the Principal of Santa Cruz Adult Education.
2. The appeal shall include a copy of the original grievance, the decision rendered at the Level I, and a clear, concise statement of the reason for the appeal.
3. Within five (5) working days after the appeal is filed, the Principal of Santa Cruz Adult Education shall investigate the grievance and give his/her decision in writing to the parent/student.
4. The parent/student may request a hearing with the Principal and the Co-op board to appeal the Principal's decision.
6. Within two (2) working days after consideration of the appeal, the Principal and Co-op Board shall render a final decision on the disposition of the grievance. The parent/student shall receive a written statement of the final decision.

## **PROBATION/TERMINATION**

### **Probation:**

Any member who, after due warning, fails to perform his or her responsibilities will be placed on probation by the Board. The terms of probation will be at the discretion of the Board and will be commensurate with the offense. Members who fail to comply with the terms of their probation will meet the Board or members of the Board with membership termination as a possible result.

### **Involuntary Termination:**

Family membership may be terminated if the requirements and conditions of the Bylaws and Policies and Procedures of the Nursery School are not met.

### **Termination/Special Children**

Any child with special needs will be reviewed at regular intervals by the parent, teacher and Board. Family membership may be terminated by the Board if the teachers and/or Board feel that the needs of the child cannot be met by the school and/or there may be adverse effect upon the other children. (This policy is subject to the rules of the Bureau of Adult Education, a division of the State Department of Education).

### **Voluntary Termination:**

Two week written notice must be given to the Membership Chairperson. All responsibilities must be met and tuition paid during the two-week period.

## **E-mail, Mail and Phone**

At Soquel PENS, we distribute a directory in order to communicate school-wide and class information. Please do not use this directory for solicitation for your business or any other interests. It must be used solely for school related information only.

# **ENROLLMENT**

## **ENROLLMENT**

### **ADMITTANCE OF NEW MEMBERS**

The following steps describe the method by which new members may enroll in Soquel PENS:

1. Contact the membership coordinator. The candidate's name will be placed on the waiting list and questions about the school will be answered. The membership coordinator makes certain that the candidate is informed of the school's philosophy and the rules and responsibilities.
2. When an opening becomes available, an eligible candidate will be invited to visit and observe the class. If the candidate decides to accept the opening, he/she must contact the Membership Coordinator. They must turn in a registration form, contract form, and pay a non-refundable registration fee and follow the Membership Entrance Requirements (see page 47).

### **WAITING LIST PROCEDURE**

All openings will be filled by selection from the waiting list. Current members wishing to change classes should contact the Membership Coordinator and request to be added to the list.

When the opening occurs and before school begins, an eligible candidate will be chosen in the following manner:

1. A currently enrolled member who wishes to change a class.
2. The next eligible candidate on the waiting list.

Eligible candidates will be offered openings that are appropriate with respect to their child's age, gender and other needs. The candidate has one week to accept the opening before it is offered to the next family on the waiting list. If the candidate is unable to respond within one week, they may lose that particular opening but will maintain their place on the waiting list. If the candidate wishes to wait for a different class than the one offered, they will retain their position on the waiting list. Any questions regarding waiting list procedures may be brought to the board.

## **MEMBERSHIP ENTRANCE REQUIREMENTS**

The following membership entrance requirements must be met before the child may attend school. Please ask the membership chairperson for any explanations if there is something you do not understand.

### **Child's Age:**

The AM programs will be age separated and the PM programs have a preferred age separation as follows:

- M/W/F: 3 years, 9 months old to 5 years old
- T/TH: 2 ½ years old to 3 years, 9 months old

Children must be 2 ½ years old by the time school begins or 3 years old by the date of enrollment if enrolling later in the year.

### **Registration:**

All membership forms must be completed and returned by the first day of school. A non-refundable registration fee must be paid. Forms to be completed include:

- Registration Form
- Requirement Contract
- Waiver, Release and Hold Harmless Agreement
- Waiver (within County)
- Statement to Physician
- Field Trip Information
- Emergency Card
- Parent Registration form for the Santa Cruz Adult Education Program

### **Orientation:**

One parent must attend an orientation before the child may come to the school. Both parents are encouraged to attend.

## **ENTRANCE POLICIES**

### **Eligibility:**

Parents and children of all backgrounds and cultures are welcome. It is our purpose to promote and operate a pre-school that is multi-racial, non-religious and non-sexist in belief and practice.

### **Non-enrolled Siblings:**

A total of two (2) non-enrolled siblings per day per class will be allowed to accompany working parents, preferably one infant and one toddler, without charge. Families will not be required to pay for siblings accompanying a parent on a workday. If you have 2 non-enrolled siblings, it may not be possible to bring both non-enrolled siblings on your workday.

### **Scholarships:**

Additional scholarships may be established by the Board, as needed and as finances allow, based on the recommendation of the Treasurer.

Four 1- day cleaning scholarships will be reviewed and granted by the Executive Board, as available. After the scholarships have been granted, those receiving the scholarships will be responsible for creating a rotating cleaning schedule and arranging trades when necessary so all weekend schedules are covered. Housekeeping can be done from Friday night until Midnight on Sunday.

If school housekeeping commitments are not met on time, full tuition will be charged for the month.

### **Twins and Multi-Child Families**

Soquel PENS has a limited number of openings for families with two children enrolled in the school.

If the siblings are split into two classes, the family may work a regular workload in the MWF class and a may have a reduced workload in the TTH class. This is providing there is no great burden on the schedule created by maternity leave, sick leaves or leaves of absence.

If the children are both enrolled in the same class (twins or siblings who are both age

appropriate for the class) it may be possible, if the class has 12 adults, for the parent to carry the workload equal to a family with only 1 child enrolled. If not, the parent may be asked to work 1 ½ times the workload, i.e. 6 times per month (see box below).

Families with 2 children enrolled in the same class work the following days per month:

<b>Adults Class Size</b>	<b>MWF classes</b>	<b>T/TH classes</b>
Not full with adults	6 working days per month	6 working days per month
Full with adults	4 working days per month	4 working days per month

## CLASS PLACEMENT POLICIES

As previously stated, children are assigned to classes based on age. The teacher may also be consulted to recommend class placement balancing the needs of the individual children and their families with the needs of the class as a whole. These considerations may include gender balance of the class, special needs of the families and the developmental levels of the children.

- Class size is normally 12 children per class, with a maximum of 2 non-enrolled siblings per day.
- Once the school year has begun, existing members will not be able to transfer into another class. This is to help with the continuity of the class for the children and parents. This is also to allow our school to increase the number of families we serve in our community. Special circumstances will be taken into consideration and brought to the attention of the board.
- Priority among current members will be determined by length of membership. Priority among members returning after an absence will be determined by length of prior membership. New members will be admitted in order of placement on the waiting list, which will be maintained on a first come, first served basis by the membership coordinator.
- Parents may also occasionally use the “drop in” option for their children for an additional fee per day. This is dependent on the availability of space in the class and the prior approval of the teacher. A maximum of 2 drop-ins per month is allowed. The “drop-in” option means to bring your child to an additional co-op class other than the one he/she is enrolled in.

## **RE-ENROLLMENT POLICIES**

Soquel PENS will make an effort to clearly communicate registration information to all members. Special attention will be given to communicating the information to members whose first language is not English.

All registration forms received before the re-enrollment deadline in the spring will be considered using the following criteria:

1. Members must be in good standing for re-enrollment (up-to-date on tuition, meeting requirements, work hours and support job requirements). If a member is not in good standing, they must have a plan in place to fulfill their requirements before re-enrollment.
2. Priority among current members will be determined by length of membership. Priority among members returning after an absence will be determined by length of prior membership.
3. Members must be enrolled through the current year to be eligible for re-enrollment. Members not completing the year will be considered members returning after an absence (see page 48, Class Placement Policies).

Discretion of the teacher will be taken into account for class placements. Considerations include age, maturity, peer relationships, ease of separation, stability issues, group dynamics, etc.

1. Teachers will use their judgment in determining whether a child is mature enough to move to the older class or will remain in the T/TH class.
2. In the MWF AM class, enrollment priority is given to older children and those who will be attending kindergarten the following year.
3. Teachers will consider kindergarten readiness and may support a family's decision to attend an additional year in the MWF class.

## **TUITION**

Tuition is an annual fee divided into 9 months. Members can pay the full tuition at the beginning of the year or choose the monthly fee. If choosing the monthly fee, tuition is due on the first of the month. A late fee of \$10.00 is charged if tuition is not paid by the 10<sup>th</sup> of the month.

- There is a non-refundable one-time registration fee due at the time of registration.
- Ongoing unpaid tuition concerns will be brought to the board's attention.
- There is no tuition deduction for taking vacations.

## **LEAVE OF ABSENCE**

Vacations are not included in leave of absence.

Leave of absence of not less than two (2) weeks, not more than 2 months may be granted by the Board.

- Request for the proposed leave must be given to the Board two (2) weeks in advance of the proposed leave of absence (unless it is an emergency)
- Dues shall be one-half of the regular monthly fees, payable during leave of absence.
- Children of parents on leave of absence are not entitled to attend school during leave.
- Members of leave of absence are not required to participate in any Nursery School meetings or functions.

## **MEDICAL, MATERNITY AND EMERGENCY LEAVE**

Leave of not less than two (2) weeks, not more than six (6) weeks may be granted upon written notice to the school when accompanied by a doctor's note.

- The Class Representative upon being notified by the sick or pregnant member of a needed leave must notify the President, Treasurer, Membership Chairpersons and teacher. Any exceptions must be granted by the Nursery School Board.
- Notice shall be given two (2) weeks in advance when possible. Children of parents on sick or maternity leave are entitled to attend Nursery School and the members must pay full tuition.
- Members on sick or maternity leave are not required to participate in any Nursery School Meetings or functions, but are required to make temporary arrangements for any position they hold.
- No more than three (3) members may be on sick or maternity leave at any one time except with special permission of the Nursery School Board.

## **VOLUNTARY TERMINATION**

Two weeks written notice shall be given to the Membership Chairperson and the teacher by a member who is withdrawing from the school. Such withdrawal notice will not relieve the member of his/her obligation to pay dues and participate up to the day of the withdrawal. All monies owed the school must accompany the notice of withdrawal.