**THE IMPORTANCE OF PARENTS AT LEARNING TREE COOPERATIVE PRESCHOOL**

Have you ever wondered what it takes to run a preschool? Dedicated parents are crucial to making our preschool successful!

Our preschool is a non-profit, parent-run organization, licensed by the State of Michigan.

St. John’s Episcopal Church graciously contributes the use of the facilities and helps subsidize scholarships for families with need, but the operation of the preschool is solely the responsibility of the parents and teachers.

Tuition schedules are set to cover the salaries of the teachers and assistants, who are the only paid employees of the preschool. The preschool has no administrative or maintenance staff so activities such as cleaning and repairs depend on the volunteer efforts of parents.

The Preschool Board is staffed by 4 officers (President, Administrator, Treasurer, and Secretary) and 4 committee chairs (Publicity, Family Events, Ways and Means, and Communications). This volunteer group of parents is responsible for making all budget and policy decisions regarding the preschool. The teachers serve as non-voting advisors. Under each of the committee chairs lay a vast number of specific job responsibilities that are necessary in order to keep the school running smoothly.

So as you can see, we need the support of each and every one of you. Whether you’ve volunteered to be a Board member or to make playdough, your role is critical to the successful operation of the school. Thank you for your commitment to the school and your child!

**PRESCHOOL BOARD POSITIONS**

* **President** – Preside at monthly Board meetings; take temporary action for the Board; oversee scholarship applications with Licensing Director; serves as the liaison to the Church; prepare applications and materials for Open House and attend the event; direct work for all officers; ultimately responsible for the preschool running smoothly.
* **Administrator** – Attend monthly Board meetings; coordinate/conduct interviews for open staff positions during the summer; responsible for staff contracts including hiring, dismissal, and substitutes; handle all insurance and helps the Director with licensing issues involving safety, health and documentation; ensure health department reporting requirements are fulfilled.
* **Treasurer** – Attend monthly Board meetings; requires computer and some business acumen; familiarity with Excel software; responsible for issuing checks for bills and reimbursements; serves as the liaison with our CPA.
* **Secretary** – Attend monthly meetings; record and issue meeting minutes; handle all official preschool correspondence (i.e. thank you notes, etc.); responsible for updating and compiling handbooks; helps assemble summer packets and sends them out to all enrolled families.
* **Publicity Coordinator** – Attend monthly Board meetings; coordinate external advertising; coordinate with others on publicity needs; prepare and post flyers; update our Facebook page.
* **Family Event Coordinator** – Attend monthly Board meetings; plans and makes arrangements for all family events; plans and coordinates the Santa Parade.
* **Ways & Means Coordinator** – Attend monthly Board meetings; oversee activities of all fundraising efforts; identify and coordinate fundraisers for the school year.
* **Newsletter Coordinator** – Attend monthly Board meetings; attend Open House to answer questions related to the preschool; prepare Job list; assist President with grant writing; assist with email/telephone communications, as needed.

**PARENT JOBS NECESSARY IN RUNNING THE PRESCHOOL**

* **Laundry Assistant** - Washing towels, art smocks, doll clothes and dress up clothes on a bi-weekly basis. Washing the Oakie suits and wiping down the boots as needed/requested by the teachers throughout the year.
* **Playdough** **Maker** - Making homemade playdough for the classrooms throughout the year upon the teachers’ requests.
* **Toy Washer** – Washing the toys in the classrooms upon the teachers’ requests.
* **Ways & Means Helper** – Helping the Ways & Means chair person with fundraisers.
* **Fish Tank Helper** – Responsible for the care and monthly cleaning of the fish tank at the school.
* **Refrigerator Cleaner** – Clean the fridge on a monthly basis, or as needed if visibly soiled.
* **Cubby Cleaner** – Clean the cubbies on a weekly basis.
* **Photographer** – Documents class events and field trips. Submits all photos to teachers for distribution to families and for use in publicity.

**RESPONSIBILITIES OF ALL PRESCHOOL PARENTS**

**CLASS ORIENTATION:** Parents are required to attend their class orientation before school begins in the fall. A great deal of information is covered regarding individual classes and preschool policies. Children may not attend this orientation.

**JOB RESPONSIBILITIES:** All parents are required to select and fulfill job responsibilities in support of the preschool. Descriptions of these job responsibilities can be found in the parent handbook. Selection of jobs occurs at orientation as a lottery.

**SNACKS:** LTCP provides a daily snack for the children; a fee is included in the monthly invoice to cover these costs. All efforts will be made to provide a snack taking into account children’s allergies, but parents of children with special needs are free to provide their child with a daily snack. Birthday snacks are provided by parents, keeping in mind classroom allergies.

**FUNDRAISING:** All parents are requested to participate in at least three of our fundraisers throughout the year. An opt-out option is available for $100 a year for families wishing to not participate in fundraisers.

**SCHOOL CLEANING:** A representative from each family is required to participate once a year in a cleaning of the preschool (once in the Fall or once in Winter). You are expected to arrive on time and to stay until cleaning is finished. If you have a conflict, you are responsible for finding someone to switch with you. Failure to perform this responsibility will result in a $25 fine.

**SCREENING QUESTIONS:** It is required by the MDHHS that all parents answer the following screening questions:

1. Have you ever been convicted of an offense other than a minor traffic violation?
2. Have you ever been involved in the abuse or neglect of children?

These are on the application and must be answered, signed, and dated. The forms will be kept on file during the period of time the child is enrolled at Learning Tree. Failure to answer the questions may result in:

1. Not being able to attend preschool with the child.
2. Child’s dismissal from the preschool.

A positive answer of the abuse or neglect of a child question will result in the parent/parents not being able to volunteer with children in the preschool classes.

All attempts will be made to keep the information given confidential, but access to said information will be given to the MDHHS.

**CONSEQUENCES OF NEGLECTING PRESCHOOL JOBS**

Learning Tree Cooperative Preschool provides a cooperative preschool experience for children and their families, and relies on parents to be actively involved in their child’s education. Without parents’ involvement, we could not provide the superior early childhood experience each family has come to expect from Learning Tree. Therefore, when parents neglect their assigned preschool jobs, they can expect any or a combination of the following:

1. A phone call from the Learning Tree Cooperative Preschool Board.
2. A monetary fine of $100.00 per job or for lack of fundraising participation. ($100 for neglect of Board member duties per Board contracts).
3. Expulsion from the Learning Tree Cooperative Preschool program.