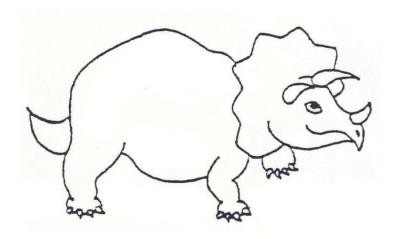
# West Side Preschool Parent Handbook

2024-2025



## **Building the Foundation for a Lifetime of Learning**

"I hear and I forget. I see and I remember. I do and I understand." Confucius

Serving the Tri-Cities since 1964

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West Side Preschool is a ministry of West Side Church, under the care of Session, and does not discriminate based on race, color, religion, gender, national or ethnic origin in the administration of its educational offerings, admission policies, scholarship or other school administered programs.

Enrollment is open to all provided we can meet the needs of the child. Should an aide be required to personally guide the child for the safety and management of the class, the cost of the aide will be passed along to the family. We will work with the family to address and support the needs of the child.

There are no Washington State Licensing Requirements for our program because West Side Preschool is a part-day, part-week private preschool. We are, however, in voluntary compliance with the Washington State Child Day Care Licensing Requirements. A copy of these requirements is available in the preschool office.

## **West Side Preschool Contact Information**

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## **Statement of Philosophy**

West Side Cooperative Preschool welcomes all children and their families to be a part of the preschool experience. We strive to build confidence and trust in the parents and their children by providing a loving, nurturing environment in the context of a co-op experience.

### We believe...

- The home is the most important factor in a child's development. We will always strive to support and complement the family in order to promote the healthy development of children and parents.
- The dignity and worth of each child and family is important.
- It is important to meet each child's need for spiritual, physical, social, emotional and intellectual growth.
- Children deserve a nurturing, safe and happy environment that promotes their natural curiosity and desire to learn.
- Children deserve to have teachers who are capable and caring and whose values enable them to be excellent role models.

Free play encourages the development of the two skills that no robot can replace:

Creativity and Teamwork.

Jaak Panksepp

### **Our Program**

Children in our care are provided with a balanced program of both teacher-directed and child-directed activities and social interaction with others. The daily schedule includes independent choice activities, group times, music, lots of messy art, story times, and outdoor large muscle play.

Our child-centered program is based on the belief that play is the best way for children to learn. Each classroom is organized with areas for creative art, science, language arts, dramatic play, small and large motor development and cognitive growth. The environment stimulates imagination and creativity, socialization, exploration and discovery, while challenging the use of muscles important to developing bodies.

Learning of mathematical concepts, recognition of letters, numbers, shapes, colors and scientific understanding is supported through exploration, trial and error and ah-hah moments as the children play. This allows each child to learn at his/her own developmental pace and style.

"I hear and I forget.

I see and I remember.

I do and I understand."

Confucius

#### Goals

### General Program Goals

- To provide a developmentally appropriate preschool experience for children.
- To provide parents with the opportunity to participate in the preschool experience with their child, to observe their child among his peers, and to learn and grow with him.

### Specific Goals for Your Child

- Social-Emotional Development: Our program will support the development of your child's positive social and emotional growth through the fostering of friendships, self-regulation skills, empathy, and the ability to resolve conflict in positive ways.
- Physical development: Opportunities will be provided for your child to gain age appropriate large and small motor development.
- Language Development and Early Literacy: Your child's language development, both verbal and nonverbal communication will benefit from class experiences and the high adult to child ratio we can provide as a coop preschool program. Early literacy will develop through experiences with songs, rhymes, games, books, and immersion in a print rich environment.
- Early Mathematics: Opportunities will be provided to support your child's acquisition of early math skills such as sorting, categorizing, patterning, one-to-one correlation and numeral recognition.
- *Science:* Experiences will be provided to stimulate your child's scientific curiosity,

- and promote his understanding of the world we live in.
- Creative Expression: Our program will help develop and support your child's creative expression through art, music, movement, and dramatic play.
- *Health and Safety:* Experiences will be offered to foster and reinforce your child's understanding and performance of sound health, nutrition, and safety practices.
- Social Studies: Opportunities will be provided to support children's understanding of social roles and rules relating to self, family, community, and our world.

### Specific Goals for Parents

- To enable parents to give their child a meaningful preschool experience.
- To provide parents with hands-on classroom time where they will gain a deeper understanding of child developmental needs and can share their experiences with other parents.

We shall never know all the good that a simple smile can do.

Mother Teresa

### **General Yearly Schedule**

- Preschool will begin after the Labor Day holiday and close with playdates at the park during the week before Memorial Day.
- West Side Preschool will observe Richland Public School holidays, vacation, professional days and snow days.
- Classes may not be in session for two or three days in the fall when all the Preschool Staff attend either the National NAEYC Preschool Convention, the State WAEYC or spend time offsite in teacher training and development.

### 2 year old class schedule

• 9:10 – 11:20 am

## 3-4 year old and PreK class schedule

- Morning classes meet from 9:00 11:30 AM.
- Afternoon classes meet from 12:30 3:00 PM.

"When you are dealing with a child, keep all your wits about you, and sit on the floor."

Austin O'Malley

### **Discipline**

Positive discipline techniques are used to help children learn to make good choices, develop independent problem solving skills, and to internalize basic human values of respect, trust, responsibility, honesty, and caring for others. Desirable social and individual behaviors will be reinforced. We have two rules at preschool: Be Kind & Be Safe. These rules and consistent routines will be communicated in a positive way.

Inappropriate behavior is dealt with through redirection, the reliance on logical and natural consequences, and/or, in conflict situations, directed negotiations and problem solving. A child who is consistently unable to demonstrate self-controlling behavior may be given a brief time-out in order to regain control.

If challenging behavior is repeated and/or severe, the parent will be informed and a consultation will be requested between parent, teacher and preschool director. Severe and/or repeated uncontrollable behavior by a child may result in his/her permanent removal from West Side Preschool.

It is a happy talent to know how to play.

Ralph Waldo Emerson

## Reports, Communication and Conferences

A monthly newsletter will be sent out via email. The newsletters will provide information about upcoming events, share some current rhymes & songs being used in the classrooms and impart parenting tips. Information regarding special events will also be posted on the Class Dojo app.

Parents may request a conference with the teacher to discuss their child's progress at any time during the school year. Teachers welcome phone calls after school hours when a question or concern arises, as it is difficult to find quality time for such conversations during class hours.

Parents are encouraged to ask questions and express concerns of any kind first to their child's teacher. The director is also always available for further help or intervention, as are the Co-op Parent Liaison, the Preschool Advisory Committee and the Pastors of West Side Church.

A bulletin board is provided for parents to use for posting items of interest. Announcements and flyers may *not* be sent home to families enrolled in the school. The class lists may *not* be used for business purposes.

If delivering party invitations, please invite all class members. If not including everyone, please deal with them outside of Preschool. Invitations delivered at school are easily lost and can cause hurt feelings if not everyone is invited.

## **Co-Op Obligations for Parents**

- 1. Families participate in their child's class on a regularly scheduled basis. Parents will receive a list of all their scheduled helping days at the Meet & Greet held the week of Labor Day. Mothers, fathers, grandparents, and other adult family members who are 18 years of age and physically capable are welcome to be helpers and fulfill their family's participation requirement.
- 2. Family helpers are to be on time and ready to work at class start time. Plan to stay for the whole class period.
- 3. Parents need to make childcare arrangements for their preschool student's siblings on their helping days. A child not registered in the class is not covered by our insurance.
- 4. If a family cannot provide a helper when it is their turn, they must trade their helping day with another family OR they may hire a Paid Parent Helper from the list on their class roster. It is their sole responsibility to make certain there is someone to help the teacher on their assigned day.
  - a. Whenever a change is made in the helping schedule, the *Parent Coordinator should be told* what arrangements have been made.
  - b. If you hire a Paid Parent Helper from the list provided, please provide the \$43 payment to the preschool office the next class day or with next month's tuition.

- 5. Parents are welcome in the classroom any time in addition to their helping days.
- 6. In cases of child custody restrictions, the custodial parent must inform the school, *in writing*, who may pick the child up and who may visit the child in class.
- 7. Children in the PreK class must be toilet trained, unless there is a medical reason. This is *not* a requirement for children in the younger classes.
- 8. West Side Preschool is a <u>peanut/nut free program</u>. The entire church building, which houses our program, is a peanut/nut free area. **Please, do not bring peanuts or nuts of any kind, or any substance with even trace amounts of peanut product in them into the building.** Please read product labels before bringing them to school. Even a small amount of any of these substances brought into the building could be fatal to a severely allergic child.
- 9. Please inform your child's teacher of any special needs your child may have, such as allergies, or of family situations that may impact your child's sense of well-being.
- 10. Clean-up Nights: Each family will pay a \$30 Clean-Up Night Deposit with their first month's tuition. Each family will sign up for and participate in one Clean-Up Night during the school year. We deep clean the rooms, remove finger paint from the wall, and wash toys, chairs and other equipment. When a family member comes and cleans for one hour (7-8pm) we return the \$30 deposit to them.

### **Finances / Tuition**

- 1. There is a \$125 fee per child when a child is registered in a class. Additional children in the same family may register for \$75 each. This registration fee assures the child's placement in the Preschool class and is not refundable.
- 2. Your tuition payments will be used to pay teachers' salaries and all Preschool
- 3. expenses. West Side Church generously provides the rooms, utilities, janitorial services and office assistance.
- 4. Tuition is due by the 1st of each month.

### Monthly Tuition per child:

2 sessions per week \$205 3 sessions per week \$280

- 5. Monthly tuition payment may be made by check, cash, auto pay through your bank or online. Checks are to be made payable to West Side Preschool. Cash payments should be enclosed in an envelope stating the child's name and class. The QR code for online payments is on the website. Always include your child's first and last names on the "memo line" on your check.
- 6. Tuition will be paid on a nine-month schedule, September through May, regardless of the number of days attended in that month. Tuition is not refundable if your child is absent from class or if there are "no school" days in a particular month. Your monthly tuition charge reflects the cost for your child to attend class for the entire school year, including teacher's salary, supplies, insurance, maintenance, etc., divided by nine months.
- 7. Tuition may be paid in advance.

- 8. **Two weeks' notice** is required if you intend to withdraw your child from Preschool. *You are responsible for tuition and helping days for that two-week period.*
- 9. A \$25 late fee will be assessed for payments received after the 10th of the month, unless other arrangements have been made with the preschool office. A child's enrollment may be terminated if tuition becomes delinquent for more than 30 days.
- 10. If a check is returned for insufficient funds, you will be asked to make the rest of your payments on a cash basis, unless another arrangement is made with the director. A \$35 charge will be made for each returned check to cover the fee we are charged by the bank.

### **Health & Safety**

## **Inclement Weather Policy**

West Side Preschool always follows the Richland Public School District closure decision when there is bad weather. Please listen to your Radio – KONA 610 AM or look on the RSD website: rsd.edu for school closure information.

- If Richland Schools are delayed 2 hours, morning preschool classes will be canceled, and afternoon classes will be on time.
- If Richland Schools are closed for the day, West Side Preschool will be closed also.

Your child's teacher will post any changes about class on Class Dojo. West Side Preschool will also post class changes on our website and Facebook. If you have questions, you may call/text your child's teacher.

We don't like to cancel school but we don't want you driving to school if the roads are unsafe.

## Ways to stay informed about school closures and delays:

- Listen to KONA 610 AM Radio
- Check the RSD website: rsd.edu
- Sign up for the Richland School District weather closure/delay announcements via email or push notification. You can sign up by going to: flashalert.net/id/RSD

### **Snow Days Reimbursement Policy**

Up to three canceled days per class will be allowed without any compensation. After three canceled classes, an adjustment will be made toward tuition.

## **Emergency Policy**

West Side Preschool has emergency procedures in place that all staff are familiar with. All classes practice emergency exit drills on a monthly basis so that students will be familiar with exiting the building should an emergency arise that requires us to leave the building.

"Every time I pick up the phone, I'm suddenly irresistible."

Anonymous Mother

## **General School Policy**

- A child, parent or teacher may not attend school sick or with a fever. He/she may not attend school if there is a lot of thick, and/or colored discharge from the nose or persistent and productive cough. Please keep your child home for 24 hours after a fever has broken or after the last episode of vomiting or diarrhea. Teachers will not dispense medication and may send a sick child home, at her discretion.
- 2. Children must be fully immunized to attend West Side Preschool, unless a medical, religious or personal exemption is filed. There can be NO personal exemption for the MMR as ordered by the Washington Department of Health.
- 3. In the case of **lice**, children must be declared nit free by a health care professional before returning to school.
- 4. All of the teachers at West Side Preschool are certified in Pediatric CPR and First Aide. All of the staff, including Paid Parent Helpers, have undergone West Side Church's Child Security Training and Screening which includes a nation-wide criminal background check under the Child/Adult Abuse Information Act. A copy of the Church's Child Security Policy is in the preschool office for your viewing.
- 5. Your child's teacher, the classroom aide, a paid parent helper or one of the preschool office staff will change your child's diaper as needed and/or assist your child in the bathroom, encouraging him to be as independent as possible. They will also deal with any bumps, nosebleeds or other situations involving body fluids.

- 6. Children may *not* be left unattended in the car while older children are brought to class.
- 7. Never let a child you are not responsible for out through the building's doors.
- 8. Please do not let your child bring weapons (toy or otherwise), candy, or money to school. If weapons are brought, they will be put out of reach of the children and returned at the end of class. Money brought to school gets lost and that causes tears.
- 9. Please send your children in play clothes and non-slip shoes.
  - Play can be messy! We do a lot of creative art and even "washable" paints may stain clothing.
  - Children are able to use the toilet more easily when wearing pull-up style pants like sweat pants. Belts, suspenders, and overalls are difficult for the children to manage themselves and can be the cause of wet pants.
- 10. **Dress your child for the weather.** We always go outside! An extra sweater or sweatshirt tucked in the tote bag is handy. As Fall approaches, a coat may be just right when you come, but a sweater would be more comfortable outside as the day warms up. Be prepared! Write names in coats, sweaters and sweatshirts. You do not need to send mittens for your child as we have mittens for the children to use.

"I dream of a world where you can laugh, dance, sing, learn, live in peace and be happy."

Malala Yousafzai

### **Allergy Alert!**

West Side Preschool and this West Side Church building are Peanut and Nut free Areas.

Please do not bring or allow your child to bring peanuts, nuts, or anything containing peanuts or nuts as an ingredient into the school building.

We have several children enrolled in our preschool classes this year who are allergic to peanuts and/or all nuts. This is a <u>serious</u> health hazard for these children.

We also ask that you wash your child's hands and face thoroughly, and even change their shirt if necessary, before entering the building when they have eaten anything that might contain nuts or a peanut product. Several of the children are known to be allergic to any contact with a peanut or nut substance. A little smear of peanut butter transferred from a child's finger onto a toy or doorknob could be potentially fatal. We have placed a tub of "handy wipes" outside the classroom door for last minute scrubs.

Snacks

We will not be serving snacks during class time except for a few special occasions. Cups will be available for students to get water when they are thirsty.

We keep birthday celebrations very simple in the 3-4 yr old and Pre-K classes. We will sing the birthday song when it is a child's birthday and give them a birthday card, but will not be serving any special snacks in class. In the 2-3 yr old classes, the teacher will give the birthday child a card, but will not sing the birthday song.

If you must bring something to share, please ask your teacher before bringing a special treat for your child's birthday. We recommend non-edible treats such as stickers, pencils, small toy, etc. Snacks are encouraged to be prepackaged.

Thank you for your care and understanding in helping us make preschool a safe and happy experience for all the children and families enrolled in our program. *Questions?* Talk to your teacher in class or at home or the Director.

West Side Preschool and this West Side Church building are Peanut and Nut free Areas.

"It is paradoxical that many educators and parents still differentiate between a time for learning and a time for play without seeing the vital connection between them."

Leo F. Buscaglia

# Guide for Helping Parents And Other Family Members:

Helpful Suggestions

- 1. When it is your helping day, line up as usual with your child. As you enter the classroom, you may put away your personal belongings: keys, purse, and phone in a cupboard designated for that purpose. Please wash your hands before starting the day.
- 2. **Wear comfortable clothes** and shoes that can get messy Play Clothes!
- 3. Please leave your cell phone in your purse &/or with the sound turned off. We appreciate your full attention when you are working with the children.
- 4. The classroom teacher will assign you places/areas in the classroom to supervise. Try to sit where you can see all the room. Engage in conversation with the children. Speech, language, and vocabulary, as well as personal skills, are learned from your conversation during play.
- 5. **Do not over direct the children's play.** Give them freedom to relate in their own way and own rate of speed to the play situation, materials, equipment, and the other children and to you. Remember, "the process is what is important, not the product."
- 6. When speaking to a child, kneel to be at eye level, use a quiet, clear positive voice. Do not call across the room or playground to get a child's attention. Rather, go to the child.
- 7. When re-directing children, put emphasis on what they may do, not on what they may not do. Say, "The sand stays in the sandbox," rather than, "We

- don't pour sand on the ground." "Use your inside voice." "Teacher said to sit on your star."
- 8. Please stop inappropriate behavior when it happens. Do not wait for the teacher to see it and respond. Our teachers are amazing, but they cannot be in 20 different places at the same time! If you are uncomfortable about a situation, tell the child (children), "Let's go talk to teacher."
- 9. When inappropriate behavior is happening, get the child's attention by saying his/her name in a calm voice. Tell him why you are stopping his behavior and what you want him to do. "I cannot allow you to hit. Hitting hurts."
- 10. Encourage students to verbalize their feelings and needs to one another, especially when a conflict arises. "What words could you use to ask Sue if you could have a turn with the green tricycle?" (May I have a turn with the tricycle when you are done?) "What words could you say to Peter when he hits you?" (Stop hitting me. Hitting hurts.")
- 11. Make requests in the form of a statement. "You need to sit on your chair, please" instead of asking, "Would you sit on your chair?" (No!)
- 12. Offer a choice only when there truly is one and offer only acceptable choices. Instead of asking, "Do you want to wash your hands" after a child has finished toileting, ask "Do you want to wash your hands all by yourself or may I help you?"
- 13. When the teacher is leading the class in a group activity, **please join in**. When the class recites a rhyme, say the rhyme with them; when the class is dancing, dance;

- when the class is singing, sing. If you are engaged and having fun, the kids will too.
- 14. During group activities when a student is having difficulty listening or following directions, the **teacher can use your help**. Please move near the student, place a gentle touch on their shoulder and whisper words stating what they should be doing and/or words of encouragement. "You need to sit on your star." "You need to wait your turn. Everybody will get a turn." "It's teacher's turn to talk."
- 15. When supervising outside, **position yourself where you can see the entire area.** Please spread out from other adults and stay focused on the children. We want to keep everyone safe.
- 16. The Teacher or classroom aide will be the one to change a diaper or help a child in the bathroom, encouraging him to be as independent as possible. Please notify the teacher or classroom aide if you notice a child that needs assistance in the bathroom.
- 17. The teacher/classroom aide will deal with bloody noses or with any other situation involving bodily fluids and will wear gloves.
- 18. Above all, let's have fun! We hope you will enjoy the children and enjoy the preschool experience.

If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to talk with the classroom teacher or the preschool office.

# What Do I Do If I Can't Work On My Helping Day?

If, for some reason you can't be at preschool on the day you are assigned to help, here are some suggestions for a replacement:

- Can another **family member** (at least 18 years of age) work for you?
- Contact a family from your child's class and ask if they will trade helping days with you. If you are
- Hire a Paid Parent Helper for \$40 to take your place in the classroom. There is a list of these special people at the bottom of your child's class list. It may take several attempts before you find someone!
  - **❖ Let your Parent Coordinator** know who is working for you.
  - You may bring the payment for the paid parent helper on your next class day.

If you have exhausted all of the above options.... call your teacher. Her phone number is on the class roster.

Please remember that West Side Preschool is a co-op, and we rely on all families to do their part to have someone present for each helping day assigned. When you don't provide a helper, you are letting down all the other families in your child's class. Your teacher has organized your child's school day with the expectation of having helpers in the classroom. It makes a very big difference in the quality of everyone's experience when we are short of help.

If you do not find a replacement for yourself, and the teacher is left shorthanded in the classroom, a <u>\$60 fee</u> will be charged to your account.

### What is "Play-Based Learning?"

We believe West Side's play based curriculum, customized to the developmental needs of children, offers the most successful learning environment for children. Children are active learners, and we provide an active environment for children to learn!

Below is a child's view of play-based learning:

### What I Learn at the Sand Table

I learn about weight and volume.

I learn to pour, dig and measure.

I develop social skills.

I learn through imaginative play.

I develop hand eye coordination.

### What I Learn at the Block Center

I learn the concept of placement.

I learn the concepts of location.

I learn how to create things.

I exercise my imagination.

I learn how to solve problems.

I learn how to cooperate.

I learn how to sort and organize.

### What I learn in Social Studies and Science

I learn that I am like other people.

I learn that I am also different from others and special.

I learn how to communicate.

I learn that everything changes.

I learn to follow important rules.

I learn about water and land.

I learn how to compare.

I learn how to follow directions.

### What I Learn in Mathematics

I learn to count, by counting cows as I build a fence for them in the block corner.

I learn to sort and organize dinosaurs.

I learn to compare and contrast.

I learn to follow directions.

I learn to follow rules.

I learn how to solve problems.

I learn about weight and volume.

I learn to measure things.

### What I Learn at the Playdoh Table

I learn I can create.

I use small and large muscles.

I let out aggression and frustration.

I learn about textures.

I develop my vocabulary.

### What I Learn in Dramatic Play

I learn to express myself in words.

I try different child/adult roles.

I learn how to negotiate.

I learn how to sort and organize.

I learn how to make decisions.

I learn how to use language.

I learn how to be creative and imaginative.

I learn how to use symbols.

### What I Learn in Music

My sense of rhythm develops.

I learn how to sing.

I learn about musical patterns.

I create simple melodies.

I learn where sound comes from.

I distinguish high and low sounds.

I distinguish loud and soft sounds.

I learn how to imitate sounds.

#### What I Learn in Language Arts

When I read picture books, and am read to...

I learn that books contain meaningful symbols.

I learn about characters.

I learn about beginning, end, and sequence.

I create my own stories.

I learn how to listen to a story in a group.

I learn about the letters in my name.

I am building the foundation for a lifetime of learning.

### YOUR FAMILY'S CO-OP AGREEMENT with West Side Preschool

West Side Preschool is a Cooperative Preschool and the participation of the child's family is essential to its function. Therefore, the following agreement is necessary.

### I HEREBY AGREE TO:

- 1. Providing a family member to *participate regularly* in my child's classroom for the entire class period on the days I am assigned.
  - a. I will arrange childcare for my other children when I am participating in the classroom.
  - b. When I am unable to be present on the day I am assigned:
    - I will arrange for another adult member of my immediate family to do so, or
    - I will trade my workday with another family in the class, or
    - I will arrange for a Paid Parent Helper to take my place for a fee of \$43
    - If I fail to find a replacement for myself on my assigned workday and the teacher is left shorthanded in the classroom, I will pay a **\$60** penalty fee.
- 2. Full tuition is required for each month my child is registered to attend, regardless of the number of days he/she actually attends. Tuition is due on the first of each month. A \$25.00 late fee will be assessed for payments received after the 10th of the month.
  - Tuition may be paid by cash, check, online or automatic bill pay or online. If a check should be returned for insufficient funds, a \$35 fee will be charged. My child's enrollment may be terminated if tuition becomes delinquent over 30 days.
  - Two weeks' notice is required if I decide to withdraw my child from Preschool. I am responsible for tuition and helping days up to and including the period when such notice is given.
- 3. **Participate in ONE of the designated Clean-Up Nights (1 hour long)** scheduled at Preschool throughout the school year. I will include a \$30 clean-Up Night deposit *with my first month's tuition* and understand that the **\$30 will be refunded** when an adult member of my family attends one of the hour-long clean-up nights.
- 4. WS Preschool reserves the right to determine the best placement for my child in order to provide the best learning environment possible and keep within our limit of one child with special needs per class.
- 5. Allow WS Preschool to use my child's picture on the West Side Preschool social media pages. No names are posted. Inform the preschool office if I do not want my child or my picture on social media. As a parent, please only post pictures of your child.
- 6. Release West Side Church, West Side Preschool Advisory Committee, and West Side Preschool and its teachers from any liability in case of accident. It is understood that all due care will be taken for the safety of all children.
- 7. Should an aide be necessary for an individual child for the safety and management of the class, the cost will be covered by the parent.

#### I UNDERSTAND THAT:

- 8. West Side Preschool follows the **Richland Public School Calendar** for vacations, holidays, professional days and school closures due to bad weather.
- 9. West Side Preschool will not hold classes for 1-2 days during <u>one</u> of the following: Teacher Planning Retreat (October), or the National NAEYC Preschool Convention (November).

This is a copy of the agreement that is approved at the time of registration.