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# *Parent Handbook*

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[www.pasoroblescooppreschool.com](http://www.pasoroblescooppreschool.com)  
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# Who We Are

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## HISTORY

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Paso Robles Co-op Preschool (PRCP) was founded by a group of parents who recognized the importance of family involvement in the education of young children. Since 1969, we have served the families who have had a special desire to share in their children's first school experience. We believe the efforts, individual talents, and the direct involvement of parents during the school day make for a unique educational endeavor.

Paso Robles Cooperative Preschool, Inc. is a state licensed preschool (#406-210-901). We must follow all California laws and Title 22 Regulations. Failure to do so could result in the loss of our license.

## MISSION STATEMENT

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The Paso Robles Cooperative Preschool is made up of families who recognize the importance of quality preschool experience in a cooperative environment through an active, educational partnership between school administration, teachers, parents, and children.

## GOVERNANCE

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The Paso Robles Cooperative Preschool is a non-profit cooperative preschool, administered by the parents. It is your input and energy that make our school possible.

The professional head of PRCP is the Executive Director. We require the Director to hold a Bachelor's or Associate's Degree with a concentration in Early Childhood Education or Child Development and have at least one year teaching experience.

The Director is responsible for overseeing all programs, staffing, operation of school, registration, and investigates all matters of controversies between pupils, parents, patrons, or preschool employees when controversies relate to preschool professional affairs.

The Director is also responsible for overseeing all Support Jobs, Classroom Aide Calendars and the annual school calendar. Because we are a cooperative preschool, the financial responsibilities of the school belong to the Parent Board of Directors. The Board of Directors is responsible for managing

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the finances, advocating for PRCP, ensuring compliance of by-laws, and making decisions to further the purpose of PRCP. The Executive Director serves as an advisor to the Board of Directors.

Board of Directors meetings are held once a month and are open to the general membership until the closed session begins. Minutes of all open Board meetings are recorded by the Recording Secretary and posted for the general membership after approval by the Board of Directors.

## Goals

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- *To help the child develop a **good self-image** and **positive feelings** about themselves, for we believe that every child is special and unique.*
- *To help the child **grow in independence**-- to help them make better decisions and choices so that he or she begins to think of themselves as a capable independent individual.*
- *To help the child **learn among others**. We want the child's first school experience to be rewarding. Through guidance, he or she will learn techniques of interaction that will bring positive responses from others and help the child develop listening skills.*
- *To guide the child toward becoming **self-directed** and **self-disciplined**.*
- *To help the child **develop large and fine motor skills**. Our program is designed to challenge the child's small and large muscles.*
- *To help the child **understand and control their physical world**.*
- *To **develop the child's intelligence and cognitive development** by encouraging **curiosity, thinking, and the gathering and using of information**. Our preschool will provide a background of experiences and attitudes that will make living and learning more meaningful.*
- *To develop the child's **sensory and perceptual acuity, language ability, concept formation ability, and problem-solving skills**. Every opportunity possible will be used to foster the child's use of language and understanding of his or her surroundings. Encouragement will be provided for all aspects of learning.*
- *To provide each child with a **spark for learning** and a **thirst for knowledge** that will stay with them long after they leave preschool. The relationship between the child and the teacher will be a bond developed through trust, love, and understanding.*
- *To provide **parent education opportunities**.*

# School Policies

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## ALLERGIES

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The Director and teachers should be made aware of any allergies your child may have. Please prepare a list of allergies, restrictions, remedies prior to the start of school. This will be posted in the classroom and kitchen.

## BIRTHDAYS

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Special recognition is given to the birthday child during group and/ or snack time. Please arrange with the teacher if you would like to celebrate your child's birthday. You might want to work in the classroom that day and bring snack. A sweet treat is completely acceptable for birthday celebrations and special parties. **Be aware of special dietary restrictions in class/ at school.**

If you are planning to invite children to a birthday party, please be sensitive to the feelings of both the uninvited children and parents. Please do not discuss the party at school. Do not pass out invitations unless the entire class is invited. We understand and appreciate that not everyone can be invited, but hurt feelings related to birthday parties are a real issue.

## EMERGENCY ACTION PLAN

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PRCP follows all State and Local guidelines for emergency procedure and evacuation in contact with emergency and/or disaster agencies as soon as possible.

Located in each classroom and the Director's office are copies of the detailed Safety Program followed by all staff and parent volunteers at PRCP. Below are the guidelines set forth by PRCP for Parents/ Guardians in the event of an emergency:

### DO:

- **Keep your phone lines open.** If your lines are not down, use the phone only to get medical aid if you need it. We will contact you as soon as possible.
- **Trust us.** We have an emergency plan and staff trained in first aid and CPR. We will stay and do everything we can until we reunite you and your child.
- **Be patient.** As much as can be done, will be done for each child. Schools will have a priority on emergency medical help and children will be taken to hospitals when necessary.

### DON'T

- **Try to get to school to pick up your child.** You will be in more danger on the street than your child will be here, and emergency equipment will not be able to get through. You would probably be stopped by roadblocks and may not be able to get here or back home.
- **Call the school.** If you and others are jamming communication lines, no one will get through and more important, we will not be able to get a call out for emergency help we might need.
- **Panic.** We know you may have an anxious time waiting before you are sure your child is OK but panicking usually leads to mistakes.
- **Send strangers to pick up your child.** When all is clear, please don't expect us to release a child to someone not authorized on your form to pick up your child.

## FIELD TRIPS

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Two field trip permission slips must be signed upon entering preschool for the child to attend school field trips. Families will be notified in advance of all field trips. Any parent/ guardian or designated party may accompany our preschool on field trips. Siblings may also accompany our students on field trips. All children need to be in a restrained car seat in accordance with State Law. If you will not be accompanying your child on the field trip, please leave a DOT approved child restraint seat.

All drivers who wish to accompany our classes on field trips must provide a copy of their car insurance and a valid driver's license prior to the first field trip and keep update through the school year.

## GIVING TREE

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The Giving Tree is a list of supplies and other items that we could use at PRCP. These might include egg cartons, hand sanitizer, shoe boxes, paper towels, jars, dish soap, paint, printer ink, butcher paper, vinegar and glue. See 'Giving Tree' on porch for needs. We appreciate any donation to PRCP and remind members that all donations are tax deductible (please complete the Tax-Deductible Donation form; copies are in the Office.)

## GRIEVANCES

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If parents have any problems or have concerns, we ask that the following procedures be followed:

1. For student/ classroom issues discuss with your child's teacher **first**. If the parent feels that the issue was not properly addressed, it was dismissed, or uncomfortable doing so then:
2. Discuss with the Executive Director. The Director will then work with the parents to resolve the problem.
3. If a financial matter, the Director will bring in the Board President for discussion, who will follow By-Law set procedure.
4. Once exhausted, the above steps are final.

## ILLNESS

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Notify Director immediately if any Family member is exposed to, or tests positive for, any contagious disease or infection.

DO NOT bring sick children to the school. Daily health inspections will be performed and children who are not well enough to participate in all preschool activities will be sent home.

If your child has any of the following symptoms, please keep them home:

- Fever
- Persistent raspy cough
- Runny nose that is not clear
- Unexplained rash

If the teachers or the Director identify symptoms, the following plan of action will go into effect:

1. Isolate the child in the Director's office as necessary, resting comfortably until parent or guardian arrives. Call the child's parents or adults listed on the ID sheet kept in his/her file to have the child removed from the school.
2. Disinfect the classroom, as necessary.
3. Only allow readmission of child if symptoms have subsided for 24 hours or upon receiving a doctor's note when dealing with communicable diseases.
4. Post anonymous notification to parents when a communicable disease or illness is documented.
5. Send school wide notification of anonymous infection.

## PARENT INFORMATION CENTER

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The front porch of PRCP is an Information Center. There is a bulletin board, monthly calendar, family folders, and the Giving Tree. **Please check your folder daily** and review the bulletin board and calendar regularly. Announcements outside of PRCP business may be posted on the bulletin board, with the Director's approval.

## PRIVACY POLICY

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PRCP does not sell or disclose any of your personal information to any other organization and PRCP will not transmit personal information to third parties without first obtaining your consent to do so. PRCP will never sell our member information. Phone number/ email address directories are handed out to active members with the understanding that the information is to be used for school business **only**.

## APPLICATION/ REGISTRATION

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The application, registration/ contract, health questionnaires, identification and emergency forms, field trip waivers, photo release forms and parent's and personal rights documents can be downloaded from our website: [www.pasoroblescooppreschool.com](http://www.pasoroblescooppreschool.com) under **Forms** or can be picked up from the Director. Completed packets including registration fees must be given to the Director prior to your child attending school.

**Applications are accepted year-round. Registration Contracts for the new school year are submitted on a first-come, first-served basis and registration fees are only refunded if yours is not accepted.** Registration Contracts for the following school year from families with children currently enrolled at PRCP and siblings of alumni are taken in mid-March. For Waiting List Families with an approved application, enrollment begins shortly after.

## TOBACCO/ ALCOHOL/ HOT & ADULT BEVERAGES

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No tobacco products or drinks containing alcohol are allowed on the school premises or at school activities. Hot & other adult drinks must be kept out of reach and contained in spill proof containers.

## SNACKS

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Every child is responsible to bring their own snack to school each day. We encourage nutritious snacks with small portions. Sharing of snacks is discouraged. Special celebrations or parties requiring families to bring snacks for the whole class will have specific sign-up sheets posted in advance. **We maintain a school ban on all peanut, tree nut, and sesame products. Please read labels and do not send these to school at any time. Please remember dietary restrictions when bringing shared items.**

## TERMINATION

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PRCP reserves the right to refuse service if:

- PRCP is unable to meet child's needs (lack of specialized training or lack of consistent classroom staff.)
- There are safety issues for child's self or others.
- There is non- payment of tuition.
- Parents/ Guardians do not demonstrate or fulfill compatible interest in our school community.

## TOILETING POLICY

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We encourage all children to be toilet trained at the start of preschool. Please be aware that we do not have a changing facility. In the event your child has an accident we will need to work with you to develop a plan that you and your child will be comfortable with.

Each class will set aside time to go as a group to the restrooms. Children, after using the facility, must wash their hands with soap and running water. Each child will be allowed to use the facility when necessary. Supervising adults must also sanitize &/ or wash their hands with soap and running water after using the restroom facility, after wiping noses and before snack.

## WITHDRAWAL

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A written two-week notice is required prior to your child's removal from the preschool program. If we do not receive two weeks' notice of termination you will be responsible for two weeks of tuition after your child leaves the preschool.

## CLASSROOM AIDES

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According to State requirements, children not enrolled in the Preschool's program may not accompany a Classroom Aide to school on the Aide's workday.

Our Cooperative preschool strives to maintain a ratio of 1 adult to every 4 children or less, therefore it is imperative that Classroom Aides do not fail to show up for their scheduled workday. A \$50 fine will be imposed on families who either fail to show up on their workday or fail to find a substitute or other authorized worker.

A negative TB skin test is required for all adults who work in the classroom with the children. TB skin tests can be obtained for a small fee at the Health Department or through your General Practitioner. In addition, proof of pertussis ( in DTAP/TDAP) and measles ( in MMR) vaccines are needed and flu shots annually between August 1 – December 1. May waiver flu shot.

# Tuition/ Fees & Fines

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To cover the operating cost of the preschool, or to create funds for special preschool related purposes, regular tuition and fundraising obligations are required.

## TUITION

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*Current Tuition Schedule is located on the Registration page of our website: [www.pasoroblescoopreschool.com](http://www.pasoroblescoopreschool.com)*

**Tuition is due and payable upon the 1st of every month and delinquent after the 10th, beginning in September.** Please make checks payable to Paso Robles Cooperative Preschool or PRCP and include your child's name on the check. Payments can be placed in the Tuition mailbox in the Director's office.

Nonpayment of tuition by the delinquent date (10th) will result in a late fee. If the tuition is not received by the 15th of the month, the child will not be allowed to attend, unless a payment arrangement has been made with the Director.

Full tuition is charged each month regardless of the number of days' school is missed because of holiday, illness, or personal absence. Tuition is based on the number of class days available to your child for the school year and divided into payments over a nine-month period of September through May; no payments in August or June. Allowances for holidays and breaks are built into the tuition structure.

If annual tuition is paid in full by the 2<sup>nd</sup> monthly tuition's due date, a 5% discount will be given. This discount will also apply to students entering school later in the year.

Families with more than one child attending from the same family and in the same year will receive a 10% discount on overall tuition for each child.

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## FEES

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### *Fundraising*

Each family is required to fully participate in mandatory fundraisers each year. There is a \$400 fee for non-participation per fundraiser, however families may choose to opt out of all fundraisers and pay \$750 prior to the first mandatory fundraiser.

### *Registration*

A non-refundable fee of \$75 is paid with registration. Current and alumni families will be given priority on a first-come, first-served basis.

### *Withdrawal*

A two-week written notice is required prior to your child's removal from the preschool program. If we do not receive two weeks' notice of termination you will be responsible for two weeks' tuition after your child leaves the preschool.

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## FINES

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### *Clean Up Day*

A \$100 fine will be assessed for families missing a mandatory clean-up day.

### *Fundraising*

Families who do not meet fundraising requirements will be fined \$400 per fundraising event. Late payment fine \$30 unless arrangements are made.

### *Mandatory Meetings*

Missing mandatory meetings (2 per year) will result in a fine of \$50 assessed for each missed meeting.

### *Support Jobs*

A \$50 fine will be assessed per month for families failing to complete their Support Job by the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month.

### *Returned Checks*

There is a \$50 charge for all returned checks.

### *Tuition*

Tuition that is not paid by the 10th of the month, without prior arrangements made with the Director, will result in a \$30 fine.

### *Classroom Aides*

Level I & 1.5 families who fail to show up for their Workday, or fail to find a substitute, will be fined \$50.

# Daily Procedures

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## DROP OFF & PICK UP

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- **Escort your child into class.** DO NOT drop off in the parking lot, porch, or yard.
- Remember to **keep the gates closed and latched.**
- **Classroom doors are locked at 9:00am.** If you are running later, you must use the Office Entrance (through the red gate, on the west side of the building).
- **Make eye contact with your child's teacher before you leave** in the morning and when you pick up your child in the afternoon.
- **Never allow a child to leave the porch unattended.**
- Unsupervised children are not allowed on the playground.

## ATTENDANCE VERIFICATION

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**Always sign your child in the Attendance binder upon arrival at school and sign them out upon departure.** If you have arrangements for someone other than yourself to pick up your child from school, please give that person's name and phone number, in writing, to your teacher. Otherwise, children will be released only to those adults whose names appear on your enrollment card as authorized agents. In the case of families who have any person that is not allowed to pick up a child from school, we will need to have a copy of the court order on file in the office.

## CORRESPONDENCE

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**You must check the information sources daily.** All information and changes will be posted on the front porch information boards, on the doors to the classrooms, and in your information file. Email newsletters go out with details of upcoming dates and other news. It is your responsibility to keep updated on preschool information.

## STUDENT CUBBIES

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**Please provide an extra pair of clothes (labeled with your child's name) in a gallon Ziploc bag and keep it in your child's cubby, in case of an emergency.** When leaving for the day please be sure to check your child's cubby and the coat rack for his/her belongings and art projects.

# What is Expected of Me?

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## A GUIDE TO PRCP

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### *Choose a Level of Participation*

#### **Level I & 1.5**

Work in the classroom according to the monthly work schedule 1-4 times per month from 8:20 until 12:10. In addition to working in the classroom, Level I/ 1.5 families must attend all mandatory meetings, hold a Support Job, participate in fundraising, and participate in two school clean up days.

#### **Level II**

Level II families must attend all mandatory Meetings, hold a Support Job, participate in fundraising, and participate in two school clean up days.

### *Attend Mandatory Meetings*

Each family is required to attend mandatory Meetings held 2 times per year (or as needed). The meetings address business of the preschool, include voting agenda items, and will occasionally have guest speakers. All family representatives must sign in for attendance.

Minutes from these Meetings will be posted on the front porch information board.

### *Hold a Support Job*

As a cooperative preschool, responsibilities of the administration and upkeep of PRCP belong to the families. Each family is responsible for a Support Job. Most Support Jobs require a couple of hours each month. A fine will be assessed for non-completion. Our school works best when we all work together.

### *Participate in Fundraising*

Each family is required to fully participate in all mandatory fundraisers each year. Participation in the fundraisers typically includes participating on a committee, working a shift at the fundraiser, selling a certain number of tickets and/or passes, and other responsibilities should they become necessary. For families who do not wish to fundraise, there is a \$400 fee for non-participation per fundraiser, however; families may choose to opt out of all fundraisers and pay \$750 prior to the first mandatory fundraiser.



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# *Guide for Level I/1.5 Classroom Aides*

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## *Participate in School Clean Up Days*

Each family is responsible for participating in two school clean up days per year. A fine will be assessed for non-participation.

## *Classroom Responsibilities*

No matter what tuition level parents choose to participate at, PRCP relies on its families to provide help during field trips, special holiday events, and party days. Teachers provide adequate notice and are usually in need of chaperones and helpers.

### **A Level I & 1.5 Aide will:**

- Arrive 10 minutes early
- NEVER leave children unsupervised
- Assist the teacher whenever needed.
- Do not visit with other adults. Please be actively involved with the children. During free time join in the game, read a book, or help the children where needed. During group time help those who may be having difficulties with listening, etc.
- Encourage children to help clean up manipulatives, art supplies, outdoor equipment, etc. rather than doing it all yourself.
- Complete the daily clean up. See checklists in classrooms and kitchen.
- Not talk about the children, families, or teachers with other aides as children may be listening.
- Use appropriate (no foul) language while on the school premises and while attending preschool functions.
- Use the adult bathrooms. This is a licensing requirement.
- Report any concern (dripping faucets, shortage of supplies, children's behaviors, etc.) to the teacher or director as soon as possible.
- Make changes to classroom aide calendar as they happen, pertaining to their involvement.

### **When working with children remember to:**

- State suggestions or directions in a positive manner rather than a negative manner.
- Give a child a choice only when you intend to allow them to choose.
- Avoid making comparisons or encourage competition when trying to motivate a child.

- **Do not** talk about the children, families, or teachers with other adults on school premises as children may be listening.
- Go quietly to the child and speak to him. Do not call across the classroom or yard. Get down to the child's eye level.
- Redirect behavior before it escalates into a problem. Model appropriate responses for the child. Example: "When you are angry, Sarah, you can tell Mary, I don't like it when you push me. Please stop."
- Use your voice as a teaching tool, using tone or words that will help the child feel confident and reassured not afraid, guilty, or ashamed. Never use sarcasm.
- Give the child a minimum of help so that she can develop independence. Do help the child if she asks or requires it.
- Use the most strategic position in supervision. If you are chatting with the other adults, you are not supervising. Remember, you are responsible for the children.
- Be alert to the total situation, not just your area.
- Do not answer the questions the teachers pose to the children. The teachers are trying to help the children think for themselves and will not allow the child to become frustrated.

Feel free to discuss any questions, concerns, problems, or comments you may have with the teacher or director. Open communication is vital to the operation of our preschool.

## TEACHING PHILOSOPHY AT PRCP

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The best way a child learns is through interaction with his peers. If a child tells you that another child is pushing, grabbing, throwing rocks, etc. tell the child to talk with the offender. Go with the child and make sure the message is conveyed. Make sure that both parties get to express their side of the situation. If you have questions or want further guidance, always consult your child's teacher.

Remember, one of our main goals is to help children develop social skills. For some children it takes repeated reminders of how to conduct themselves. Never form the opinion that a child is "bad". Always use patience and consistency and watch for something you may praise the child for.