



## BY-LAWS OF GEIST ORCHARD COOPERATIVE PRESCHOOL, INC (GOCP)

### ARTICLE I. IDENTIFICATION

The name of the corporation shall be Geist Orchard Cooperative Preschool, Inc., hereinafter referred to as the "GOCP". Its principal office is in the St. Thekla House on the campus of the St. George Orthodox Church located at 10748 E. 116th St. Fishers, IN 46037, but meetings of the Board of Directors may be held at such places within the State of Indiana, County of Hamilton or any other counties within the State of Indiana, as may be designated by the Board of Directors. The Federal identification number is 35-1294366. A preschool cooperative is a non-profit, non-discriminatory organization owned, maintained and administered by the parents of the children enrolled.

### ARTICLE II. PURPOSE

The cooperative preschool is established to provide a developmentally appropriate program for children; meeting their social, emotional, intellectual and physical needs. It shall also assist the education of the parent through classroom participation and parent educational programs. The Corporation shall support the goals and abide by the Standards of the Indianapolis Council of Preschool Cooperatives (ICPC).

### ARTICLE III. SCHOOL TERM

The school term shall be similar to a Community School Corporation. Class sessions, vacations, and holidays shall be determined yearly by the Executive Board.

### ARTICLE IV. MEMBERSHIP

#### Section 1. Eligibility of Membership

- A. Non-discriminatory. Membership is open to parents or legal guardians of preschool children regardless of age, religion, race, color, ethnic or national origin, gender, sexual orientation, or disability.
- B. Special needs children. The only reason for non-acceptance shall be the school's inability to meet the child's needs.
- C. Children's age. The eligibility age shall be in accordance to guidelines set by ICPC and in congruence with State Law.

#### Section 2. Application for Membership

- A. Registration. Parents shall make an application for registration of their child. A registration fee and last month's tuition shall be due with each application. (Families with two preschoolers see ARTICLE VI. Section 2.)
- B. Registration Fees. Registration fees and tuition shall not be refunded unless the child is not accepted by the school, or at the discretion of the Board.
- C. Order of Acceptance. Applications will be accepted on a first received, first enrolled basis in the following order:
  - 1) Families currently enrolled in school, co-op alumni, and St. George Orthodox Church members – January 1 through January 31. Currently enrolled families in good standing will have priority through January 31.
  - 2) Open to public – February 1
  - 3) All applications after February 1 will be on a first received, first enrolled basis
  - 4) Applications must be complete, and include appropriate payment, in order to be accepted

- D. Acceptance of Application. Notification of acceptance of application to Geist Orchard shall be made by letter, telephone, or in person
- E. Total Enrollment. Total enrollment (for each class) shall not exceed that recommended by the ICPC. Any remaining applications will be placed on a waiting list in the event vacancies should occur.

### **Section 3. Members in Good Standing**

Participating adults are defined as any parents, grandparents, babysitter, guardian, or other caring adult who participates three (3) or more times during the school year. All participating adults must meet terms and conditions prescribed by the corporation, to be considered members in good standing. Those terms and conditions are as follows:

- A. Tuition and Fees. Payment of tuition and fees are due and payable as prescribed in these BY-LAWS under ARTICLE VI.
- B. Annual Orientation. Attendance at one teacher-led orientation and one officer-led orientation is required each year.
- C. ICPC Orientation. Participating parents are mandated to attend a minimum of six hours of professionally-led orientation, sponsored by ICPC. Re-orientation is required after six years of non-participation in a cooperative school.
- D. Parent Education Requirements. It is required that all participating parents attend a minimum of three hours of parent education meetings. These meetings can include CPT Training, GOCP sponsored Parent Education Programs, and parent education meetings offered by other cooperative preschools. Attendance will be taken at each parent education meeting. Failure to meet parent education standards means a loss of good standing. To regain "good standing" a parent may take on a special task designated by the Board.
- E. Classroom Participation. Assist the teacher in daily activities according to the individual class participation schedules. Extra participation for field trips or special events are to be shared among participating parents or guardians.
- F. Leave of Absence. A leave of absence may be granted by the Board. A pregnant mother may be excused from participation for up to six weeks at her discretion.
- G. School Maintenance. Each member must share the responsibility of maintaining the school's equipment and facility.
- H. Fundraising. Each member is required to assist with fundraising projects.
- I. Arrival and Departure. A child is not to be left or dropped off. Parents are to accompany the children into the building and stay with them until the classroom doors are opened. At departure, parents shall pick up children inside the building.

## **ARTICLE V. ENROLLMENT**

### **Section 1. Parent Agreement**

Parents will sign two copies of the parent agreement. One copy, signed by the president, shall be returned to the parent before the start of school. The duplicate will be retained by the Membership Chairperson. All terms of the contract are binding. Enforcement or exceptions of the parent agreement shall be at the discretion of the Board.

### **Section 2. Medical Requirements**

Each cooperative must meet the licensing requirements of the county in which it is located. GOCP shall follow licensing requirements as a nursery school by the Hamilton County Health and Hospital Corporation.

- A. Child. Each child's health history must be submitted prior to the first day of school. The history must include the child's general health, special problems and immunization record.
- B. Participating Parent. The parent must have a TB skin test annually.
- C. Teacher. Each teacher must have a TB skin test annually
- D. Exemption. Students must be up-to-date on age-appropriate vaccinations as determined by the CDC schedule unless a medical exemption is deemed necessary by the child's physician.

### **Section 3. Withdrawal**

The school reserves the right to request the withdrawal of a child at the recommendation of the teacher and/or at the discretion of the Board.

#### **Section 4. Discipline**

- A. GOCP believes in the use of positive guidance, redirection and the setting of clearly defined limits that foster a child's own ability to become self-disciplined.
- B. Each teacher shall be responsible for developing guidelines for the use of discipline in his/her classroom that are appropriate for the age of the children in that class. Such guidelines shall be reviewed, annually, by the Board and presented, in writing, and discussed with parents at the teacher-led orientation that occurs prior to the start of the school year. A copy of the classroom discipline plan must be signed by each family.
- C. Teacher-developed guidelines shall always focus on maintaining a safe and comfortable environment for all children and adults in the classroom. Teachers and parents will never use corporal or cruel, harsh, or unusual punishment, or any humiliating or frightening method to control the actions of any child or groups of children. Further, teachers and parents will never spank, hit, or shake a child, or associate punishment with food, rest, or toilet training.
- D. To the best of their ability, teachers shall report the use of discipline to a child's parent immediately following the class session and shall document the behavior and use of discipline.
- E. If a teacher finds the use of discipline to be a continuing issue with a child, then he/she shall request and conduct a conference with the child's parent(s) to discuss what actions can be taken cooperatively to address the situation.
- F. If, after a reasonable period of time following a parent conference, a teacher continues to believe there is a discipline issue with a child, the teacher shall request a conference with the child's parent(s), the appropriate Class Representative, and the President to discuss what further actions can be taken to address the situation.
- G. Termination of enrollment is a last resort when all possibilities of meeting a child's needs have been exhausted. Termination of enrollment will only occur with the agreement of the teacher, Class Representative, and President.

#### **Section 5. Safety/Behavioral Policy**

The age range of 2-5 comes with many challenges! This is such a rapid rate of growth for them and sometimes, there are circumstances that require more than a quick go-over. During conversations with children regarding discipline situations the following guidelines are used:

- Children are never embarrassed or humiliated in front of others. Conversations are as private and discreet as possible
- Corporal punishment is never used, nor is snatching, pulling, or yelling
- On rare occasions it might be necessary to remove a child from the classroom due to extreme disruptions. An adult will always be with them and will work toward successfully re-entering that child into the routine of the classroom
- Withholding of food for punishment is not permitted
- Children are not punished for toileting accidents
- We request families to follow the same requirement while they are in the school facility

In instances where a child is having ongoing trouble (after 2nd infraction) in our program's environment, we will request the family meet to discuss and work toward a mutual approach to helping the child develop their self-control and to having positive experiences at preschool.

### **ARTICLE VI. TUITION AND FEES**

#### **Section 1. Tuition**

- A. Amount. Tuition for each class shall be determined by the Board prior to the upcoming school year.
- B. Payment. May tuition shall be due at registration. Other monthly tuition shall be due on the first day of each month with the exception of September, which will be due at the start of school. Tuition may be paid in advance on a monthly, semester or annual basis. Tuition shall be paid to the treasurer.

- C. Delinquency Charge. Failure to pay tuition by the 10th day of the month in which it is due will result in the assessment of a \$50.00 late charge. After thirty days of non-payment, membership may be suspended at the discretion of the Board. After sixty days of non-payment, membership may be terminated by a vote of the Board.
- D. Teacher Tuition: If a teacher has a child enrolled in the preschool and is teaching at GOCP, then that child shall attend at no cost.

**Section 2. Two or More Preschool Children**

- A. Registration. One registration fee shall be paid per family upon enrollment.
- B. Sibling discount. In an event that two or more children from the same family attend the school, one registration will be assessed. Full tuition shall be made for the oldest child and a \$10 discount shall be made for each additional child.

**Section 3. Missing Class Time**

- A. Absence of Child. No refunds or reductions of tuition shall be made for absences. However, in case of an extended illness, a reduction may be allowed at the discretion of the Board.
- B. Late Enrollment of Child. With the exception of September, if a child is enrolled after the 15th day of the month, only half of that month's tuition shall be due. Parents who enroll a child on or after November 1st during fall semester or on or after March 1st during the spring semester will only be responsible for half of the supply fee for the semester already in progress at the time of enrollment. The parents will then be responsible for the full supply fee for all subsequent semesters during which the child is enrolled in school.

**Section 4. Fees**

- A. Registration Fee. The parents shall pay a registration fee with each application for registration. This fee is non-refundable unless the application is denied by the GOCP.
- B. Accident Insurance. This coverage, required by ICPC, is included in the registration fee. This fee covers both participating parent or guardian, and child.
- C. ICPC Orientation Fee. Parents who are required under ARTICLE IV., Section 3 of these BY-LAWS to attend the professionally-led orientation, shall pay the fee established by ICPC. This fee shall be paid with the month's tuition in which orientation is held.
- D. Returned Check Fee. Parents shall pay a fee, as established by the Board, for any check returned for insufficient funds.

**ARTICLE VII. BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

**Section 1. Members of the Board**

The Board of Directors shall be composed of six elected officers, an advisor, assigned committee chairpersons, teacher(s), and other chairpersons as deemed necessary by the elected officers each year.

- A. Elected. The six elected officers shall be: President, Vice President/Membership, Vice President/Parent Ed, Secretary, Treasurer, and Fundraising Chairperson
- B. Advisor. The immediate past president shall serve on the Board in an advisory capacity.
- C. Assigned. Additional members of the Board shall be one class representative per class and publicity chairperson
- D. Teachers. Teachers shall serve in an advisory capacity
- E. Committee. Committee chairpersons shall be appointed by the elected officers and shall attend board meetings as deemed necessary

**Section 2. Board Purpose**

The Board of Directors should administer all affairs of the Corporation, including selecting and contracting with professional personnel, subject to the approval of the Corporation membership in good standing

**Section 3. Election of Officers**

- A. Election. A slate of officers shall be posted two weeks prior to election. The election of officers shall take place at least by the May parent meeting. A majority vote of the members present shall constitute one election. If necessary, a written ballot may be used during the meeting or by use of a ballot box.

- B. Term of Office. The term of office shall be for one year. No person shall occupy an office for more than two years.

#### **Section 4. Meetings**

- A. Board Meetings. The Board shall meet monthly and/or at the discretion of the President.
- B. Members. All members of the Corporation have the right to attend board meetings. Notice of all regular board meetings shall be announced at least one week in advance.

#### **Section 5. Vacancies**

Any vacancy occurring on the Board shall be filled by a majority vote of the remaining members of the Board.

#### **Section 6. Voting**

The Board of Directors will be the voting body. The Board will be required to attend meetings when there is an issue on which to vote. Occasionally, issues will arise or discussions will be needed that are easier handled via email. GOCP does allow for this by following these steps:

1. Email is to be sent out to all Executive Board Members, explaining, in full, the issue at hand
2. Voting will take place by each Executive Board Member "Replying to All" and responding with questions, comments, or other criteria.
3. After all proper discussion, each Executive Board Member must "Reply to All" with either an "Approve" or "Oppose." A 2/3 majority vote is required to move forward with an approved decision
4. Copies of approval and back-up email information will be kept with Secretary's and/or President's file.

#### **Section 7. Quorum**

The presence of two-thirds of the members of the board is necessary to constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

#### **Section 8. Duties of the Officers**

- A. President. The duties of the President shall be:
1. Preside at all meetings of the membership and the Board.
  2. Coordinate the activities of all officers and committees.
  3. Sign all contracts and leases
  4. Sign checks in the absence of the Treasurer
  5. Act as liaison between the Church and School
  6. Hold all pertinent papers, i.e., leases, contracts, certificates, records, with the exception of membership papers.
  7. Represent Geist Orchard at monthly meetings of ICPC
- B. Vice President/Membership. The duties of the Vice President/Membership Chairperson shall be:
1. Preside at all meetings of the membership and the Board in the absence of the President.
  2. Perform all duties relating to the enrollment of membership in coordination with the teacher
- C. Vice President/Parent Ed Chairperson. The duties of the Vice President/Parent Ed Chairperson shall be:
1. Plan the parent education program and regular parent meetings
  2. Set-up and maintain a reference library for use by the teachers and membership
  3. Plan all necessary orientation meetings including CPT.
  4. Assist late enrollers in attending make-up CPT sessions as well as those parents who were unable to complete the fall session
  5. Attend all meetings relevant to this office
- D. Secretary. The duties of the Secretary shall be:
1. Record minutes of all membership meetings and Board meetings
  2. Post a copy of all membership meeting minutes on the parent portal of the website and send to parents via email after each meeting
  3. Keep record of attendance for all membership and Board meetings
  4. Handle all correspondence for the school
- E. Treasurer. The duties of the treasurer shall be:
1. Collect and deposit the fees and tuitions and sign all checks

2. Keep an up-to-date financial record to be presented at all meetings of the membership and Board.
  3. Be responsible for drawing up the yearly budget for approval at the spring membership meeting
  4. Prepare all tax forms, unless contracted to outside services
  5. Notify Board of any delinquent payments
- F. Advisor. The duties of the advisor shall be:
1. To be the immediate past president of the preschool
  2. To assist the current Board in an advisory
- G. Fundraising Chairperson. The duties of the Fundraising Chairperson shall be:
1. To be in charge of arranging the annual fundraiser(s).
  2. Chair the committee to determine how the funds raised shall be allocated

#### **ARTICLE VIII. AMENDMENT OF THE BY-LAWS**

These BY-LAWS may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the members present at any meeting of the membership. Said members must be furnished with a two-week written notice of the proposed amendments prior to the voting.

#### **ARTICLE IX. AFFILIATIONS**

The Corporation shall maintain in and fully support the goals of the Preschool Cooperatives and shall abide by the professional requirements of these organizations, subject to approval by the corporation members in good standing.

#### **ARTICLE X. DISSOLUTION**

In the event of dissolution, all assets of the Corporation, with the exception of advance tuition, shall be transferred to any organization operating for tax exempt purposes. The Board shall then take such legal steps as may be necessary to dissolve the Corporation.

**DATED, February 5, 2020.**

**In Witness Whereof, we, being all of the Board of Directors of the GOCP, have hereunto set our hands this 5th day of February, 2020.**

President: Sara Sturm  
Vice President / Membership:  
Vice President/Parent Ed Chairperson: Erin Hacker  
Secretary: Carylin Perry  
Treasurer: Becky Davidson  
Fundraising Chairperson: Rajeane Chastain  
Twigs Class Representative: Vikki Foggin  
Sprouts Class Representative: Sara Sturm  
Publicity: Laine Hummer  
Advisor: