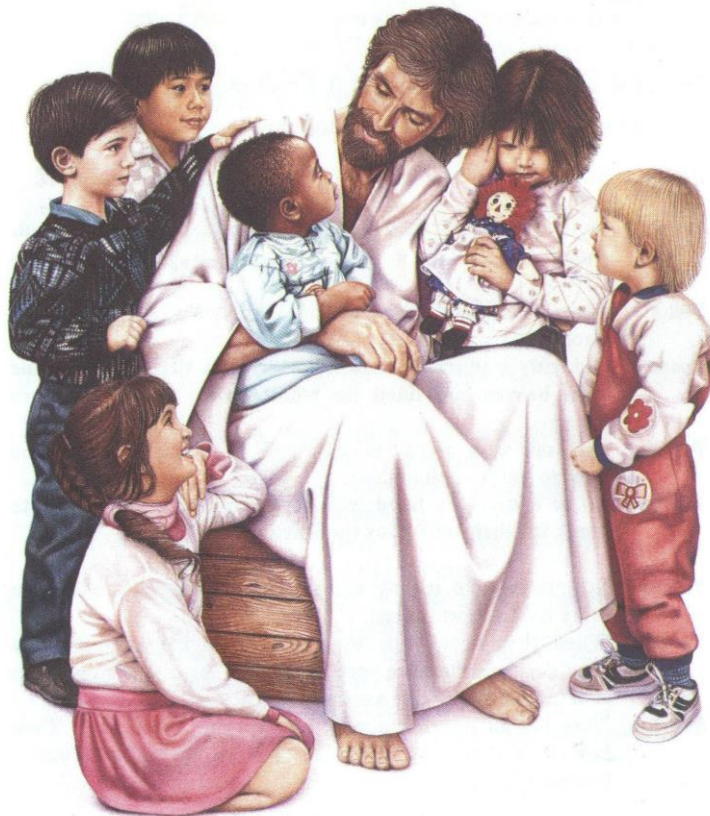


*Mount Olive Lutheran
Early Childhood Education
Center*

*10310 Scarsdale Boulevard
Houston, Texas 77089
281-922-4453*



**Parent Handbook
2023-2024**

Table of Contents

Welcome	4
Mission Statements and Philosophy	4
Policies	5
Enrollment Requirements	5
Ages	
Registration Forms	
Registration Fee	
Birth Certificate	
Current Health Records	
Facility Management	6-8
Hours	
Registration	
Summer Registration	
Attendance	
Change in Days of Attendance	
Absentees	
Late Arrival	
Holidays and Play Days	
Withdrawal	
Dress Code	
Illness and Medical Emergencies	
Medications	
Classroom Management	8-10
Staff Security	
Sign In and Sign Out Log	
Class Schedule	
Curriculum	
Parent Conferences	
Supplies	
Folders	
Mark All Belongings	
Toys	
Rest Time	
Toddler Requirements	
Potty Training	
Biting	
Discipline	
Birthdays	
Special Events	

Extended Day Management	11
Hours	
Breakfast and PM Snack	
Signing Out	
Food Service	11
Center Procedures.	11-12
Parent Visitation	
Release of Students	
Fire/Disaster Drills	
Disaster Preparedness Plan	
School Weather Closure	
Evacuation Plan	
No Guns or Weapons	
Gang-free Zone	
Financial Procedures	12-13
Fees	
Payments	
Daily Fee	
Vacation Time Credit	
Exceptions for Full Tuition Payment	
Fundraising	
Receipts	
Method of Payment	

Mount Olive Lutheran Church

Welcomes you to our Early Childhood Education Center

Mount Olive Early Childhood Education Center is an extension of Mount Olive Lutheran Church. We provide a program where parents can enroll their preschool children in a loving Christian atmosphere. In our daily curriculum we include a time for Bible stories and activities written and produced by the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod.

Our staff is committed to providing a caring and supportive environment where your children can work, play and share with one another.

We feel privileged that you have chosen our program. Each child is a special child of God and we thank Him for bringing these children to our program. We look forward to working with you and your child.

Mount Olive Mission Statement

We are placed here by God to preach His Word and administer the Sacraments, encouraging our members to use their time and talents to minister to our congregation and our neighbors.

Texas District – LCMS Mission Statement

To seek the lost, disciple the saved, care for people locally and globally.

Program Philosophy

It is our commitment to share the love of Christ with every child who comes to our program and to provide a highly enriched, developmentally and age appropriate curriculum. We strive to provide a Christ-centered, nurturing environment where each child can express his/her uniqueness, while being encouraged and guided with love, kindness and respect.

Early Childhood Center Office – (281) 922-4453

Fax # (281) 922-5914

Director – Ashley Staley

School Board Chairperson – Kendra Koester

Interim Pastor – John Raddatz

POLICIES

Mount Olive Lutheran Early Childhood Center does not discriminate against any child based on the child's race, national origin, sex or religion.

Policies are set by the Board of Early Childhood Ministry of Mount Olive Lutheran Church. In consultation with the Director the policies are reviewed yearly and amended as needed. Handbooks are available yearly.

Mount Olive Early Childhood Center is licensed under the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services. You may view a copy of the Minimum Standards under which we operate our facility upon request or from the DFPS website: www.dfps.state.tx.us. Once a year our facility is inspected by the state and a copy of the report is posted on the bulletin board outside the director's office. If you ever need to report an offense concerning our center or another center you may contact the Licensing Office at 713-940-3009 or to report child abuse you can contact the DFPS child abuse hotline 1-800-252-5400.

ENROLLMENT REQUIREMENTS

Ages: Children are admitted between the ages of 18 months and 5 years and grouped by their age as of September 1.

Registration Forms: All registration forms must be completed before admission to the classroom.

Registration Fee: A non-refundable registration fee is due upon enrollment and assessed each September.

Birth Certificate: A copy of the birth certificate from the Bureau of Vital Statistics is needed.

Current Health Records including:

1. Current immunization records
2. A written statement within the last year from a licensed health professional stating that the child is able to participate in the program
 - OR A signed statement from the parent which includes the address of a licensed health professional who has examined the child or with whom the child has been examined within the past year and stating that the child is able to participate in the program. This must be followed within 12 months by a physician's written statement AND the name and address of the licensed health professional with whom an appointment for an examination has been made.
 - OR A statement that medical diagnosis and treatment conflict with the tenants and practices of a recognized religious organization of which the parent is an adherent or member.
3. First-time enrollees who are four years of age or older and all children in programs who are four years of age by September 1 of each year must be screened for possible vision and hearing problems prior to completion of the first semester of enrollment or within 120 calendar days of enrollment, whichever is longest, or present evidence of screening conducted one year prior to enrollment. This is state mandated.
4. Within the state of Texas there are varying requirements for a tuberculosis examination. Harris County is exempt from this requirement and therefore children are not required to have a TB test.

FACILITY MANAGEMENT

Hours

Mount Olive Early Childhood Center is open from 7:00 AM until 6:00 PM Monday through Friday. You may choose one of 6 different schedules to which suits your family's needs. Please see the enrollment form for complete information.

Registration

A registration fee is required to begin registration procedures and is assessed when a child registers and at the beginning of each school year (September). If your child is a returning student and you register for the following year by the end of June, your registration fee will be reduced by 50%. After June you will be required to pay the regular registration fee. A new child registering after April 15 will not be required to pay the re-registration fee the following September.

Summer Registration

Attendance in our summer program is optional and does not require an additional registration fee for current students. A new student paying the registration fee for the summer session will not be required to pay an additional registration fee for the new school term.

Attendance

At the time of enrollment there is a choice of days of attendance. *Once you have chosen the days you need, any other days your child attends will be considered as a daily fee day.* In order to change your choice of days, a Change of Attendance form must be submitted to the director.

Occasionally you may request an additional day at the daily fee rate (9:00 am to 2pm.). Additional hours for extended care are charged separately. **Daily fees are due on the day of attendance.**

It is highly recommended that a child entering PreK-4 attend a minimum of 4 days per week. The Pre-K 4 curriculum is designed to be taught in a 5-day week in order to prepare your child to enter Kindergarten. Each day your child is not in attendance he/she misses 20% of the instruction for that week.

In order for a child to be ready for Pre-K 4 we strongly recommend that a child enrolled for Pre-K 3 attend a minimum of 3 days per week. However, the curriculum in Pre-K 3 is also designed for a 5-day week.

If a party or other special event is held on a day your child is not scheduled to attend, you may request that the child be allowed to attend the event at no charge. If the child stays for lunch, there will be a daily fee payable on the day of attendance.

If there is a scheduled CLOSED Day on the child's regular day of attendance, the child may not "make up" that day or change the days of attendance for the week. (Example: We are CLOSED on Memorial Day which is a Monday. The Monday children will simply miss that day of school along with all the other children.)

Please call the office if your child is sick or will not attend on the regularly scheduled day.

Change in Days of Attendance

You may change your child's days of attendance by completing the "Change of Attendance Request" form. If you add an extra day before the end of the month, you will be charged the daily fee for the extra days

Signing In/Out

All parents or persons designated by the parents must sign the child in or out noting the time of entering or departure from the center. *Anyone who picks up a child must give us a copy of his/her drivers licensing or another picture identification.* A legible signature must appear next to the child's name on the Sign In/Out Book. These Sign In or Out sheets may be used as legal documentation for time of attendance and who picked up the child at the end of the day.

The staff also documents when the child's caregiver changes for the morning and afternoon Extended Care.

***FOR SAFETY PURPOSES- once a child is signed in the child may not go back outside or to parking lot until signed back out.**

Absentees

Please notify the office when your child will be absent if possible. Email Ashley@mountolivehouston.org.

When a child has been absent for two weeks and the office has not been notified of the reason for non-attendance, the child will be considered withdrawn. **However, the parent is still responsible for the entire monthly tuition.** In order for the child to return for care the tuition for the month must be paid in full before returning.

If a child is absent for four weeks or more and wishes to return, the child is considered withdrawn and must pay any outstanding fees and complete the registration process including the registration fee.

Late Arrival

If your child arrives after 10:00 unless prior arrangements have been made with the director, he/she will not be allowed to come to school that day. Our school curriculum schedules begin at 9 am. If children are not on time, it disrupts the entire class. The children that are late have a hard time adjusting as well because they have missed many activities they are used too. If you know you are going to arrive after 9:30 please call the office so it can be arranged with your child's teacher to prepare for them to arrive.

Holidays and Play Days

Holidays - Our center will be closed on the following holidays:

New Year's Eve early release, New Year's Day closed

Good Friday

Memorial Day

July 4th

Thanksgiving Day and the day after Thanksgiving

Christmas Eve, Christmas Day and either the day before or after (3 days total)

We are also closed for required staff training in May (the Tuesday after Memorial Day) and again in August (the last Thursday and Friday prior to Labor Day) Please see Calendar.

Play Days

There are several weeks during the year when our attendance is low and we relax our schedule to allow extra time for "just play". These are called our Play Days. Play days are listed on the Yearly Calendar but usually include Thanksgiving week, the weeks between Christmas and New Year, and Spring Break week.

Withdrawal

The center is required to keep record of registration, attendance and withdrawals. A withdrawal form must be submitted to the director at least 2 weeks prior to the date of withdrawal. If you withdraw before the end of the month you are still responsible for the entire month's tuition.

Dress Code

All personal items should be clearly marked with the child's name. Dress should be comfortable but appropriate for a school setting. Please send an extra set of clothes in the event an accident occurs. Place extra clothes in a zip lock bag with your child's name written on the outside. For safety on the playground, slide-on shoes, flipflops, or shoes with high heels are not allowed. Shoes should have closed-in toes with backs.

Illness and Medical Emergencies

For the protection of your child, and other children, parents are required **not** to bring a child who appears ill with any of the following:

- Oral temperature of 101 degrees or greater; rectal temperature of 102 degrees or greater; armpit temperature of 100 degrees or greater accompanied by behavior changes or other symptoms of illness until medical evaluation indicates that the child can be included in the program activities.
- Symptoms and signs of possible severe illness such as lethargy, uncontrolled breathing, uncontrolled diarrhea, vomiting illness (two or more episodes in 24 hours), rash with fever, mouth sores with drooling, wheezing, behavior change, or other unusual signs. Child should remain at home until a medical evaluation indicates that the child can be included in the program activities.
- The child has been diagnosed with a communicable disease, until medical evaluation determines that the child is no longer communicable and is able to participate in the program activities.
- An illness that prevents the child from participating comfortably in program activities. The illness results in a greater need for care, than the staff can provide without compromising the health, safety, and supervision of the other children.
- The child should not return to school until there are no symptoms of fever, cough or other illness.

If a child develops any of the above symptoms during the day, the parent will be notified to pick up the child as soon as possible. If parents cannot be reached someone on the emergency call list will be notified.

In case of a medical emergency, parents will be notified by phone. In the event a parent cannot be reached we will call the person on the emergency call list filled out by each parent.

Medication

According to Minimum Standards "medication" means prescription medication and non-prescription medicine, excluding topical ointments such as diaper ointment or sunscreen. The following guidelines for administering medication are reprinted from the Minimum Standards for Child Care Centers:

1. Parents must sign an authorization form and include the times child-care center employees are to administer each medication according to label directions.
2. The medication is in the original container labeled with the child's full name and the date brought to the child-care center.
3. Medication is administered in amounts according to the label directions or as amended by a physician.
4. Medication is administered only to the child for whom it is intended; and
5. Medication is not administered after its expiration date.

CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT

Staff Security

All staff members are required to have a background check and fingerprinting before having access to the children in our care. He/she must complete 8 hours of Pre-Service instruction before entering the classroom alone and must receive 16 additional hours within the first 90 days of employment.

Vaccines for preventable diseases are not required for staff members by Minimum Standards nor are they required by Mount Olive ECE.

Class Schedule

Teachers prepare the classroom for the day between 8:30 and 9:00 AM. Anyone arriving before 9:00 AM must report to the Extended Care room. We encourage all children to arrive no later than 9:00AM in order to be present for the day's entire curriculum. Daily schedules are posted in each classroom.

Curriculum

The children in the Pre-K 2, 3 and 4 classes are introduced to phonics, early math concepts, units in social studies and health, Bible stories, small muscle development through coloring, cutting and drawing and large muscle development through outdoor play. They also spend time in both student and teacher directed play encouraging social development. The toddler's instruction is done almost entirely on a one-to-one basis and is done on a more personal level through conversation. All classes have daily Bible stories and activities and Chapel once a week.

ALL CLASSES USE THE TEXAS APPROVED CURRICULUM FROG STREET.

Parent Conferences

Each day the parent will receive a "Cuddlegram" for Toddler and Two's students and a "Daily Report" for the Pre-K 3&4 students. These reports give you input as to what the child did for the day and general behavior and activities during the day. Parents are encouraged to speak to the teacher if there are any concerns. Parents may ask for a special conference time with the child's teacher and/or Director if necessary.

Supplies

All children need a sleeping mat, blanket, an extra change of clothes and disposable diapers and wipes if not potty trained. A small travel pillow may be included at your discretion. Torn mats should be replaced as soon as possible. Although not required, it would be helpful if you send a box of Kleenex, a roll of paper towels, a box of quart or gallon plastic bags, and a can of disinfectant spray.

School Folders

Every student registered in our Early Childhood Center will be given a folder labeled with the child's name. Folders play a very important communication role between school and home. Daily work and newsletters are sent home in these folders so that you may be aware of and involved in your child's school day. You may send notes and/or payments to the office in the folder. Please take all materials, except the weekly "Cuddlegram" or "Daily Report", from the folder nightly.

Mark all belongings clearly with your child's name using a permanent marker.

Toys from home are not allowed. Children have a difficult time sharing a toy they bring from home. The teachers would have a difficult time keeping track of all the extra toys if all children were allowed to bring them. If a child brings a toy from home, it will be put in the director's office until the end of the day.

Rest Time

The State of Texas requires rest time for all children, including the 4-year-olds. Please provide a sleeping mat and blanket for your child. Since the mats are plastic, please send a pillowcase or other type of bag to cover the mat. Mats are sanitized at the center and other items are sent home weekly for laundering.

Toddler Requirements

Toddlers must be able to feed themselves. Bottles or sippy cups are not permitted. Special cups are used for meals and snacks and personal cups must be left at home. Pacifiers are not allowed during the day or at rest time.

Potty Training

Potty Training is a “team effort”. Since consistency is very important in this process, communication between home and school is very important. The child should be able to verbally communicate that he/she needs to use the restroom. Caregivers will not force students to use the restroom. If a student says “no potty,” yells, or cries when going to the restroom the teachers will not force him/her to remain on the potty. Please make sure your child has several extra changes of clothing during this time.

All children entering the 3-year old classroom in September should be potty trained. By age 4 a child should be totally trained with basically no accidents. If your child has a specific medical problem please discuss it with the teacher and the director.

Biting

Biting is a developmental stage in infants and toddlers. It is **NOT** a developmental stage for three’s and older. Biting usually occurs because a child’s inability to express his feelings and desires through oral communication causes frustrations. A child who is teething often bites to sooth his sore and irritated gums.

The child receiving the bite will be comforted, the bite area cleaned, and ice applied. The biter will be redirected to another activity and told, “We do not bite our friends.” If the toddler is old enough, we talk about using our words instead of biting when frustrated, wanting a toy, etc. Staff will prepare an Incident Report for the parent of each of the children that is to be signed by the parent and a copy put in each child’s folder. The children are not to be identified by name in the report.

Continuous biting is defined as multiple biting episodes in a weekly period. Children with multiple biting episodes will have an action plan written, discussed with parents and implemented in the center. If the child continues to bite, it may become necessary to remove the child from the classroom for a short while until the child matures enough to be in a child development environment

Discipline

In order to establish a safe and structured environment, general class rules are explained and reviewed often within the classroom setting. Our discipline is built on the foundation of courtesy, respect and a love of our fellowman. If a child chooses not to follow the rules, the staff will try to redirect the child. A “time out” period may be given to allow the child to reflect on his/her behavior. (An appropriate time out period is one minute for each year of age.) If the child is still having difficulty, he/she may be sent to the Director’s office. Parents will be notified if the teacher feels that parental involvement is needed. If a behavior problem is recurring and is not able to be corrected with guidance strategies, prayer and parental involvement, or if a parent chooses not to assist the staff the child may be asked to withdraw from the program.

Birthdays

Parents wishing to celebrate their child's birthday in the classroom with a treat should consult with the teacher. Please make sure there are enough treats for all the children and teachers in the class. We find that cookies or cupcakes with a very light layer of icing or a cookie are the easiest items to serve.

Special Events

Class parties for various holidays include Christmas, Valentine's Day and Easter. There may be other special events that occur throughout the year. If your child is not scheduled to attend on the day of a special activity, you may request that the child be allowed to attend the event at no charge. If the child stays for lunch, you will be charged a daily fee unless lunch is a part of the event. Parents may be contacted for assistance at these events.

EXTENDED DAY MANAGEMENT

Hours

Extended Day is the hours before and after the Half Day Program (9:00-2:00). Extended Day includes morning care from 7am to 9 am and afternoon care from 2 pm to 6 pm. Any child arriving before 9:00 am or leaving after 2:00 pm is required to stay with the Extended Day teacher.

Children who have a regular schedule for using the extended day may choose one of the monthly tuition choices which include the Extended Day. Children who are occasional users of the Extended Day will be charged \$8.00 per hour or any part of an hour. The 10% discount for a second child does not apply to the Extended Day.

Extended care ends at 6:00 pm. After 6:00 there is a late fee of \$8.00 per every 15 minutes or portion of 15 minutes for each child in attendance.

Occasional users of the Extended Day are required to pay the extra fee on the day of use. You may pay by check or money order.

Extended Day Breakfast and PM Snack

Breakfast is served to children who arrive between 7:00 and 8:30 am and an afternoon snack is served around 3:30 pm.

Signing Out

All students must be signed out by a parent or person designated by the parent and listed on the enrollment form.

LUNCH

Parents are to send a lunch and a snack with your child every day. Milk and water are served. If you forget to send a lunch, please notify the school as soon as possible so other lunch arrangements can be made.

CENTER PROCEDURES

COVID- 19

During COVID-19 all CDC and TXDPFS procedures and protocols are followed strictly. Please take note of these procedures as they are in place to help slow the spread/ keep our center healthy and safe. Safety of children, staff and families are our top priority. If you have been exposed to COVID-19, tested positive for COVID-19 or are experiencing any of the symptoms please notify the staff as soon as possible. A direct exposure requires a 7 day quarantine. Children/Staff will be sent home experiencing any symptoms in effort to keep our center healthy as possible. Any positive results will be reported to Childcare Licensing and the local health Department.

Release of Students

For your child's protection he/she may only be released to a parent or designated individuals who have been listed on the enrollment form. DFPS requires that any person taking a child from the center must have a copy of picture identification on file in the ECE office. Please update your child's release form and make additions as needed. When having someone new pick up your child, you must call the school and inform the teacher. A copy of the person's driver's license or other picture identification will need to be made at the office before your child is released to them.

Fire/Disaster Drills

We are required by the Sate of Texas to have monthly fire drills and disaster drills every 3 months. We also practice safe room zones. Each class has a safe place to go if needed if there is danger in the area.

Disaster Preparedness Plan

In the back of this handbook you will find our Disaster Preparedness Plan. The following paragraphs summarize the information in our Plan. There are additional pages for staff members in our complete plan located in the ECE office and in each teacher's classroom notebook.

The Center has a NOAA radio that alerts us to any weather-related problems. Mount Olive ECE will be closed if Clear Creek Independent School District or Lutheran South Academy closes their schools due to weather related problems. Please tune into local TV or radio stations if weather is threatening. In case of quick-rising water the children would be taken to the choir loft in the church sanctuary.

In the event of fire, chemical spill, explosion, or any other serious damage to our facility, we will evacuate the Early Childhood Center area, taking the children to Lutheran South Academy, located at 12555 Ryewater (located at I-45 and Dixie Farm Road). They will be cared for until a parent or designated adult arrives. Please pick your child up at the Lower School, Building C, of Lutheran South Academy. The phone number there is 281-464-9320.

You will be contacted by phone in case of evacuation so PLEASE be sure we have your correct numbers. A more detailed Disaster Preparedness Plan is available in the ECE Office.

SCHOOL CLOSING DUE TO WEATHER:

Mount Olive ECE will be closed if Clear Creek Independent School District or Lutheran South Academy closes their schools due to weather related problems. Please tune into local TV or radio stations if weather is threatening. Please make sure you are subscribed to the remind app to receive our automated text updates. The director will try to notify you by phone, email and the Remind App when possible.

No Guns or Weapons

No guns or weapons of any type are allowed on the church campus. *The only exemption is the police, FBI, or someone that is hired to keep us safe.* Neither do we allow children to bring toy guns or weapons for play. We make opportunities for children to share special items in a group for show and tell, but we will not allow toys that promote aggressive behavior.

Gang-free Zone for Child Care Centers

Gang-related criminal activity or engaging in organized criminal activity within 1000 feet of our center is a violation of Texas law and is subject to increased penalty under state law.

FINANCIAL PROCEDURES

Fees

Registration, Tuition, Daily Fees and Extended Care fees are included in the registration package. All fees must be paid by Paypal, check, money order issued to Mount Olive ECE, or by credit card online at Mountolivehouston.org

Payments

Tuition statements are sent home in the folders around the 25th of the month for the up-coming month. It is the Parent's/Guardian's responsibility to pay the full tuition for the entire month on the first day of each month. If there is an outstanding balance on the 10th of the month, there will be a fine of \$25.00 added to your monthly statement. If all charges haven't been paid by the 15th of that month, the child will not be allowed to return until account is caught up.

Occasional Use of the Extended Care is due on the day the care is given.

Tuition paid in full for the year is eligible for a 15% discount.

Beginning September 2019 a \$3.50 credit card fee will be added to all credit card transactions.

We now offer automated payments that draft on the 1st of every month, no credit card fees. See office for sign up form.

Mount Olive provides a yearly statement for income tax purposes in January.

Daily Fee

Occasionally a child may request an extra day of attendance. The parent must relay a written message to the teacher or the director as soon as you know there will be a need. The \$30.00 Daily Fee (9:00-2:00) and any extended care must be paid the day of attendance. There is no discount for siblings for a daily fee or extended care.

Method of Payment

Payments may be made by check or money order and made payable to Mount Olive Lutheran Education. No cash is kept in the office, therefore no change can be made. Payments can also be made online at mountolivehouston.org, click the early childhood tab and the blue pay now button. We also offer reoccurring payments.

A \$25.00 fee will be charged for a non-sufficient funds check. Cancelled checks should be saved as receipts.

Exceptions for Full Tuition Payment

If your child is hospitalized or seriously ill for 3 weeks consecutive during a month, you will only be charged for the days of attendance if you have a written statement from the doctor. If a child is absent for any other reason, tuition will not be refunded or discounted.

Summer Session

If your child does not attend the summer session, the re-enrollment and the registration must be paid by June 30, in order to hold a place for the up-coming fall session.

Vacation Time Credit

Once a year you may request a "Vacation Time" discount to be credited to your following month's statement under the following guidelines:

1. The child must have been enrolled in our program for at least 6 months.
2. Vacation credit is not given for days we are closed.
3. Complete the "Vacation Time Credit" form at least 2 weeks before the planned vacation.
4. There are no outstanding balances on your statement.
5. Pay the entire fees due for the month in which you will be on vacation and the discount will be credited to the following month's statement.
6. Vacation payments are non-refundable.
7. You may request one of the following:
 - A 1 or 2-week vacation credit of \$10.00 per day for the number of days your child is registered to attend. These weeks must be taken consecutively, and the discount will be credited to your next month's tuition.
 - An "extended vacation" of 3 or more consecutive weeks requires full payment for the vacation month and two-thirds of that payment will be credited to the next month's tuition.

Fundraising

Fundraising is an important part of supporting our school and it allows us to keep our tuition at a competitive rate. Also, it helps us to purchase curriculum and special items for the classrooms. We encourage each family to participate in all fundraisers. If you choose not to participate one-time donations are acceptable/encouraged in lieu of.

Revised May 2023