

# DENVER COOPERATIVE PRESCHOOL

## 2019-2020 FAMILY HANDBOOK



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Hours 8:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. Monday through Friday

Dear DCP Families and Cooperative Community,

Welcome to the 2019-20 school year at the Denver Cooperative Preschool!

This September will mark our 59<sup>th</sup> “back-to-school season” at DCP! We are so very proud to be stewards of this incredible early childhood community. Our school has been a place of connection and growth for countless Denver children and their families. When you walk through our gate with your child that first week of school, you may notice our wooden sign that says, “A great place for your child, yourself, our community.” We truly believe that DCP is all of those things.

A core value of our school is to maintain a space that fully honors young children. We are a place where children are respected, curiosity and questioning are encouraged, and imaginations are stoked. We believe in allowing children to fully be themselves, for some of the most important skills we can bestow in them are self-confidence, self-advocacy, and self-reliance.

Through generations of shared vision and commitment, DCP has become a space not only for children, but for their families as well. Parents and caregivers come to DCP for their children, and time and time again we are told they have found a community for themselves. We are seeking to engage one another in conversation about the lives of our children, cooperative work for the betterment of our school, and true intentionality and passion for the space we are creating for our youngest community members.

In this handbook, you will find a lot of information about what it is like to be a family at our preschool, both for caregivers and children. You will learn what to expect, and how to best prepare your child for their experience at our school. So much of what makes DCP unique is found in the time you spend in our classrooms, on the playground, engaged in committee work, and connecting with other families and staff. We encourage you to find your place in our community, dive in, and make this experience your own. Welcome!

Warmly,

Mary Nelson  
Executive Director

Katie Sullivan  
Assistant Director

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*Denver Cooperative Preschool is a nonprofit, nondenominational preschool that does not discriminate in providing services to children and their families or in its employment practices on the basis of race, color, age, national or ethnic origin, religion, cultural heritage, political beliefs, disability or handicap, gender identity and expression, sex, sexual orientation, marital status and veteran status or any other characteristic protected under applicable federal, state, or local law. Denver Cooperative Preschool's core values include a commitment to equal opportunity and inclusion. All DCP employees and community members are expected to join with and uphold this commitment. All personnel who are responsible for hiring and promoting employees and for the development and implementation of school programs or activities are charged to support this effort and to respond promptly and appropriately to any concerns that are brought to their attention.*

*Our school is actively supported by the member families, is incorporated, and is a nonprofit 501(c)3 organization. Denver Cooperative Preschool is inspected by the local fire department, health department, and the Colorado Department of Human Services Division of Childcare.*

Important Information: Tax Exempt # 9800723 Federal Tax ID # 840535656

License # 47126

**[www.dcpplay.org](http://www.dcpplay.org)**

**Please Note: The Denver Cooperative Preschool handbook is published by the school for confidential, non-commercial use by members and staff in order to increase the quality of communication within our community. Please respect everyone's privacy by not using the information in this handbook for any commercial purpose or solicitation and by treating the handbook as a confidential document.**

## Who We Are

Denver Cooperative Preschool, DCP, is a play-based, parent cooperative preschool. The joy, instinctive sense of wonder, and delight that play brings validates it as the most central, natural and important aspect of childhood. Operating under a play-based philosophy is simply accepting that children naturally engage in and enjoy play as a means of learning on their terms and at their own pace. Our job as teachers and parents is to provide a safe, nurturing environment with developmentally appropriate activities and opportunities for children to creatively explore and learn through play.

### History

Denver Cooperative Preschool has a long and interesting history. We were founded in 1960 by a group of parents from the discontinued Colorado Women's College Nursery School. The head teacher of that school, Mrs. Kim Randolph, helped us to get started in a space at Montview Presbyterian Church. By 1962, the preschool had grown and a group of parents from south Denver branched off to establish the University Park Cooperative Nursery School near Denver University. In 1964 the preschool split again: Montview Community Preschool remained at the church and our preschool moved to 8th and Cherry. It was then named the Medical Center Cooperative Nursery School. The name "Denver Cooperative Preschool" was adopted in 1966. We moved to our current location in 1983. As we prepare to celebrate 60 years of excellence in early childhood education in Denver, we are reminded of and thankful for the families who began DCP.

### Mission

Denver Cooperative Preschool guides young children on the adventure of self-discovery through play.

### Vision

Denver Cooperative Preschool envisions an active society where children and adults join in the exploration of life, the quest for understanding, and the journey towards wisdom. We believe that a child's early experiences are the foundation for adult potential, that parents are key to a child's unique development, and that play is essential in the learning process of a child.

### Philosophy and Curriculum

DCP strives to provide an environment in which children know that people care for them and accept them as they are. We hope that our children will become confident in themselves and their ability to do things and make appropriate choices as they learn about their world and themselves. To achieve these goals, we use the Colorado Early Learning and Development Guidelines and individual student portfolios to assist in curriculum building and student assessment.

#### **Your child will be learning and growing through:**

Developing an awareness of their current knowledge in a variety of areas

Celebrating their independence and learning how to get their needs met in a group setting

Learning, Practicing and Repeating important skills and knowledge

Developing an awareness of their thinking processes and different approaches to learning

Developing curiosity through investigation and experimentation

Learning how to ask questions and solve problems

Working with classroom teachers (both directly and indirectly) to enhance their thinking and learning through play

Modeling for, and learning from, their peers.

Participating in a supportive class community

**Our preschool day incorporates a balance of guided and self-initiated, group and individual, active and less active experiences. Our goal is to encourage growth for each child in the following areas:**

### **Parent Toddlers & 2 / 3 Classes**

- *Social/Emotional Development (peer interaction, social understanding, regulating emotions, self-concept)*
- *Physical Development (gross motor, fine motor, & perceptual development)*
- *Language & Literacy Development (receptive/expressive language, communication, interest in print)*
- *Cognitive Development (symbolic play, classification, number sense, spatial relationships, cause & effect)*
- *Approaches to Learning (problem solving, memory, & attention maintenance)*

### **3 / 4 & Pre-K Classes**

- *Social/Emotional Development (social relationships, self-concept, self-regulation, emotional/behavioral health)*
- *Physical Development (gross motor, fine motor, coordination, self-care, healthy habits)*
- *Language Development (receptive/expressive language, vocabulary, comprehension, storytelling & conversation)*
- *Approaches to Learning (initiative, curiosity, persistence, attentiveness, and cooperation)*
- *Creative Arts Expression (music, creative movement & dance, art, drama & theater arts)*
- Cognitive Development is expanded into three additional domains:
  - *Literacy Knowledge & Skills (appreciation of books, phonological awareness, alphabet knowledge, print concepts & conventions, early writing skills)*
  - *Math Knowledge & Skills (number concepts, number relationships & quantities, spatial sense, patterns, measurement & comparison)*
  - *Science Knowledge & Skills (scientific skills & method, conceptual knowledge of the natural & physical world)*

Carefully chosen toys, equipment and activities in all classes allow the children to learn in a relaxed and joyful atmosphere. Through concrete and manipulative materials, we can refine the child's senses of touch, sight, and sound and ready her/him for future academic learning.

### **Free Form Fridays**

Free Form Friday, FFF, is available to children ages 3-5 years and is a time to explore beyond the curriculum taught during regular classes and guided by the group's curiosity and interests. FFF focuses on enrichment topics such as art, movement, language, and outdoor experiences and does not require a parent helper. In this class, we hope to explore the many things that will take us far beyond the four walls of our classroom. As our only multi-age classroom at DCP, Free Form Friday is available to children currently enrolled in the AM or PM Pre-Kindergarten classrooms or the Tuesday/Thursday AM 3/4's classroom.

## Cooperative Model

As a cooperative preschool, DCP requires participation from all of our member families in order to maintain quality programming for our children and their families. By choosing to be members of our preschool, we commit ourselves as parents to be a part of a team with the classroom teachers, the administrative staff, our children, and fellow parents in the community.

The following list includes eight areas of responsibility in which each family is required to participate as a member of the cooperative.

### **1. Classroom Parent Helper**

At least one parent will assist the classroom teachers in the classroom on your family's designated parent helper day, according to a prearranged schedule for the class. Please plan for your parent helper days well in advance. Helping days are special days for you and your child. Nannies and other caregivers are not appropriate as substitutes and will not be accepted. Additionally, parents may not bring siblings to class on parent helper days. Once the parent helper schedule has been released by the class liaisons, individuals are responsible for working with the class liaisons and fellow class parents in order to get their parent helper days covered when they are unable to fulfill their duties.

*\*\*When you are in the classroom as a parent helper, we ask that your cell phone remains on silent/vibrate and that you step out of the classroom should you need to make a phone call. Once again, this is a special time for you and your child, and you are expected to be fully present as a member of the classroom during this time.*

### **2. Committee Work**

Each family will participate in an assigned committee by attending any and all necessary meetings and executing all assigned tasks as communicated by the assigned committee chairperson. Please make sure that you have read and provided input on the selection of a committee from the Family Enrollment - Parent Participation Form. All committee members should expect to work 10-15 hours throughout the year. Governing Board Members and Special Committee Organizers should expect to spend more hours meeting their specific responsibilities.

### **3. School Cleanup Day**

Each family will participate in one School Cleanup Day per child enrolled in the school (up to two children). Please be sure that you have read through and selected a cleanup option on the Family Enrollment - Parent Participation Form. This form was sent in your enrollment packet over the summer, or after enrollment confirmation for late-enrolling families

*\*\*Please be aware that families who have a conflict with their assigned cleanup day will be given the opportunity to switch to another scheduled day **before October 15th**. **After October 15th we request you honor the assigned day for scheduling purposes**. Should an unavoidable change after October 15th be necessary please contact the Secretary at [secretary@dcpplay.org](mailto:secretary@dcpplay.org) for approval and assistance in changing your cleanup day. Families who fail to appear for a scheduled cleanup day during the school year will have a \$350 fine assessed to their account.*

### **4. Fundraising**

Each year, our fundraising committees work hard to plan events that aid in the important work of raising funds for our school. This is a vital component to how we are able to provide quality programming, take care of indoor and outdoor spaces, and meet 100% of our demonstrated need for families requesting scholarships. There are a variety of ways to participate and we ask that each family agrees to participate in the events that make sense to their family and to the best of their ability.

### **5. Annual Auction**

As the biggest (and one of the most fun!) fundraiser of the year, our annual auction is a very important event for our school. Our goal is for this event to be a fun night out for all friends and family of DCP. We ask that each family

contribute to the success of the auction by providing items/donations as requested by the auction committee each year. Additionally, we love seeing as many members of our school community at this event as possible. We strongly encourage attendance. If making a contribution to, or attending, the annual auction presents a financial challenge for your family, please see the Executive Director. **The annual auction for the 2019-2020 school year is scheduled for Saturday, March 21, 2020.**

#### **6. All Parent Meetings**

At least one parent from each family **must** attend **BOTH** of the scheduled All Parent Meetings every year. For the 2019-20 school year, the Fall All Parent Meeting will be held on **Thursday, September 5 at 7:00 PM** and the Spring All Parent Meeting will be held on **Thursday, April 16 at 7:00 PM.**

#### **7. Communications**

Communication in a cooperative preschool is a cooperative effort in every way. Each family has a “parent pocket” at the school where notices and communication between families may be distributed. Families are expected to check their parent pocket each day that their child attends class. There are bulletin boards in the hall on which notices of meetings and other announcements are posted. Notices are also posted on the walls outside of the classrooms. The school’s Weekly Blast is distributed to families via email and contains notices of upcoming meetings and events, summaries of Governing Board and Town Hall meetings, and other school news.

Email is a source for ongoing communication. All staff members may be emailed by their-first-name@dcpplay.org.

Our website, <http://denvercooperativepreschool.org>, also provides parents with important information regarding the preschool including calendars with important dates.

#### **8. Additional Obligations**

Families agree to be bound by the policies and procedures of Denver Cooperative Preschool as they are stated in the school’s handbook, including any additions or amendments that may have been voted on by the parent body since its most recent publication, as well as any rules and regulations applicable to DCP as issued by the State of Colorado and the City and County of Denver.

### **Governing Board**

The preschool is managed by a Governing Board, also known as the Board of Directors. Each position is a two-year term, with the exception of the President-Elect, President and Past President which are each held for one year. The members of the Governing Board are voted on annually by the parent body at the Spring All Parent Meeting. You may serve two terms. Anyone interested in being a part of the Governing Board is welcome to join. Every January, the President-Elect will form the Nomination Committee and advertise open positions for the following school year in the Weekly Blast, parent pockets, and/or public posting as deemed appropriate. Nominees are to write a letter to the Nomination Committee that explains why they would like to perform the duties of the specific Governing Board position. Nominees will also ask one DCP teacher and one DCP community member to write a letter of recommendation. In the case of two or more people interested in the same position, the nominees’ letters and letters of recommendation will be given to the Governing Board to decide who will perform the duties of that specific position for the following school year. The Nomination Committee consists of the President-Elect, a DCP teacher, and two or three community members.

**President** - Takes the lead on the supervision and management of the business operations of the Governing Board. Chairs meetings of the Governing Board and Town Halls. Serves as chairperson of the Personnel Committee. Takes responsibility for Governing Board development. Makes sure all committee chairs are training their committee members. Works closely with the Executive Director and Assistant Director to ensure long-term viability of the

school. Meets weekly with the Personnel Committee. Attends all Governing Board and Town Hall meetings. **Alexis Cobb can be reached at [president@dcppplay.org](mailto:president@dcppplay.org).**

**President-Elect** - Supports the President and, in his/her absence, performs the duties of the President. Assumes a “president-in-training” role. Exercises oversight of the Vice President of Communications and Community Engagement Chair. Serves as the Chair of the Nomination Committee. Meets weekly with the Personnel Committee. Attends all Governing Board and Town Hall meetings. **Amy Berlin can be reached at [preselect@dcppplay.org](mailto:preselect@dcppplay.org).**

**Executive Director** - Takes responsibility for program development including curriculum, staff professional development and training, and parent and community education. Oversees the hiring, development, and evaluation of staff. Ensures smooth daily operations of the school and supports currently enrolled and prospective families. Oversees the admissions process, led by the Assistant Director. Meets weekly with the Personnel Committee. Attends all Governing Board and Town Hall meetings. **Mary Nelson can be reached at [mary@dcppplay.org](mailto:mary@dcppplay.org).**

**Assistant Director** - Administers and maintains the admissions process. Supports currently enrolled and prospective families and the Executive Director, as needed. Maintains all records that pertain to students, families, and the facility. Meets weekly with the Personnel Committee. If the position of Assistant Director is not currently filled, the Executive Director assumes these responsibilities. Attends all Governing Board and Town Hall meetings. **Katie Sullivan can be reached at [katie@dcppplay.org](mailto:katie@dcppplay.org).**

**Secretary** - Oversees and interprets all legal matters to the Governing Board. Records the minutes of the Governing Board and Town Hall meetings. Ensures compliance with bylaws and acts as custodian of the corporate records. Works with DCP Office Manager and community members to track all volunteer hours on a monthly basis to ensure engagement and family cooperative duties are met. Attends all Governing Board and Town Hall meetings. **Natalie Payne can be reached at [secretary@dcppplay.org](mailto:secretary@dcppplay.org).**

**Treasurer** - Oversees all financial matters to ensure financial stability of the school. Has ultimate responsibility for all funds through chairing the Finance Committee. Takes the lead on developing the budget with staff needs in mind and assists the board in reviewing it for approval. Meets monthly with the office manager. Attends all Governing Board and Town Hall meetings. **Melissa Quirk can be reached at [treasurer@dcppplay.org](mailto:treasurer@dcppplay.org).**

**Vice President of Facilities** - Oversees the work of the Facilities Co-Chairs and Facilities Committee at large. Plans and organizes cleanup days and maintenance of the school. Attends all Governing Board and Town Hall meetings. **Greg Gibb can be reached at [facilities@dcppplay.org](mailto:facilities@dcppplay.org).**

**Vice President of Fundraising** - Supervises and coordinates all aspects of fundraising. Oversees Social Fundraising, Colorado Gives Day, and Auction Committees. Attends all Governing Board and Town Hall meetings. **Casey Selover can be reached at [fundraising@dcppplay.org](mailto:fundraising@dcppplay.org).**

**Vice President of Communications** - Responsible for all systems of communication within the Denver Cooperative Preschool parent body as well as managing the marketing and publicity of the school to the broader community. Attends all Governing Board and Town Hall meetings. **Kristy Jones can be reached at [communications@dcppplay.org](mailto:communications@dcppplay.org).**

**Past President** - Supports the President and Governing Board with focused efforts on continuing special projects for the school. The presence of the Past President also provides greater longevity and context on decisions of the recent past for new Governing Board members. **Austin Sibley can be reached at [pastpresident@dcppplay.org](mailto:pastpresident@dcppplay.org).**

**Staff Representative** - Represents the staff on the Governing Board. Attends all Governing Board and Town Hall

meetings. **Jade Anderson can be reached at [jade@dcppplay.org](mailto:jade@dcppplay.org).**

**Alumni Representative** - Represents DCP Alumni Families on the Governing Board. Attends all Governing Board and Town Hall meetings. The position is unfilled at this time, please contact the President with questions.

**Community at Large Representative** - Represents the greater Denver community on the Governing Board. Attends all Governing Board and Town Hall meetings. The position is unfilled at this time, please contact the President with questions.

**\*\*Whenever the Executive Director, Assistant Director or another school officer has a financial or personal interest in any matter coming before the board, the affected person shall a) fully disclose the nature of the interest and b) withdraw from discussion, lobbying, and voting on the matter. Additionally, if any parent, staff member, immediate family of a parent or staff member, or organization in which any of these stated parties holds an ownership stake greater than ten percent (10%) enters into a financial agreement with the school in excess of one thousand dollars (\$1,000) in aggregate for a financial year, the owner must be disclosed by the Executive Director or Assistant Director to the Governing Board. Any transaction or vote involving a potential conflict of interest shall be approved only when a majority of disinterested officers determine that it is in the best interest of the school to do so. The minutes of meetings at which such votes are taken shall record such disclosure, abstention and rationale for approval.**

## Committee Chairs

Each position is a two-year term and appointed annually by the Governing Board. You may serve two terms. Anyone interested in being a Committee Chair is welcome to join. Every January, the President-Elect will form the Nomination Committee and advertise open positions for the following school year in the Weekly Blast, parent pockets or public posting as deemed appropriate. Nominees are to write a letter to the Nomination Committee that explains why they would like to perform the duties of the specific Committee Chair position. In the case of two or more people interested in the same position, the nominees' letters and letters of recommendation will be given to the Governing Board to decide who will perform the duties of that specific position for the following school year. The Nomination Committee consists of the President-Elect, a DCP teacher, and two or three community members.

**Community Engagement Chair** - Oversees the Classroom Liaisons, Conference Meal Coordinators, Circle of Friends, and New Family Mentor volunteers. The community engagement team works together to strengthen the community bond within our school through strong class communication among parents in each classroom and the Governing Board, supporting our families and staff in times of need, and welcoming new families into our community. Attends all Town Hall meetings. **Tiffany Boughton can be reached at [classroom@dcppplay.org](mailto:classroom@dcppplay.org).**

**Facilities Chair(s)** - Supervises and coordinates all aspects of indoor and outdoor facilities upkeep and improvement. Communicates with staff to determine maintenance issues, special projects, and supply needs. Delegates and communicates work to the Facilities Committee members including scheduling all sub-committee rotations and organizing teams for special projects. Responsible for organizing and supervising all cleanup days. Must attend all cleanup days. Attends all Town Hall meetings. **Sarah Haigney, Robin Miller, Raquel Hartzell and Matthew Ballantine can be reached at [indoor@dcppplay.org](mailto:indoor@dcppplay.org).**

**Technology Chair** - Responsible for the assessment and maintenance of the technological needs of DCP, including information technology services, systems, equipment, and website. Attends all Town Hall meetings. **Michelle Virta can be reached at [tech@dcppplay.org](mailto:tech@dcppplay.org).**

**Family Activities Chair(s)** - Responsible for the organization of educational events for the parent body and social

events for the families of DCP. Attends all Town Hall meetings. **Mia Mindel can be reached at family@dcppplay.org.**

**Auction Chair(s)** - Responsible for the planning and execution of DCP's annual auction. Coordinates all aspects of the Annual Fundraiser as head(s) of a parent committee including but not limited to: securing sponsorships and donations and working directly with other fundraising chairs to coordinate the same, selecting venue, bidding platform, and theme, marketing and communications, ticketing, collecting and packaging donations, fulfilling sponsorship obligations, securing food, beverage, and entertainment, and creating and reporting on budget. The Auction Chair(s) will be asked to attend all Town Hall meetings to give updates. Reports to the VP of Fundraising. **Katie Fogarty can be reached at auction@dcppplay.org.**

**Social Fundraising Chair(s)** - Responsible for the planning and execution of all social fundraising events. Works and meets with the VP of Fundraising regularly. Attends all Town Hall meetings. **Sara Leitch can be reached at socialfund@dcppplay.org.**

## Personnel Committee

**The Personnel Committee** consists of the Executive Director, Assistant Director, Governing Board President and President-Elect, other parents or staff members may be added to this committee as deemed necessary by any standing member of the committee at any point during the year. This committee is responsible for all employment related matters at the school. These responsibilities include but are not limited to staff hiring, termination, disciplinary action, contract offerings, employee benefits, and determination of bonuses and tuition reimbursement. The Personnel Committee also works with the Executive Director on employee performance evaluations, review of school surveys, Executive Director recommendations, and general parent feedback.

## Staff

**Executive Director** - Takes responsibility for program development including curriculum, staff professional development and training, and parent and community education. Oversees the hiring, development, and evaluation of staff. Ensures smooth daily operations of the school and supports currently enrolled and prospective families. Oversees the admissions process, led by the Assistant Director. Meets weekly with the Personnel Committee. Attends all Governing Board and Town Hall meetings. **Mary Nelson can be reached at mary@dcppplay.org.**

**Assistant Director** - Administers and maintains the admissions process. Supports currently enrolled and prospective families and the Executive Director, as needed. Maintains all records that pertain to students, families, and the facility. Meets weekly with the Personnel Committee. If the position of Assistant Director is not currently filled, the Executive Director assumes these responsibilities. Attends all Governing Board and Town Hall meetings. **Katie Sullivan can be reached at katie@dcppplay.org.**

**Classroom Teachers** - We are proud of the exceptional teachers who are a part of our DCP community. They delight in every discovery the children make and have a deep commitment to each student's growth and well-being. By observing the children in group and individual activities, they set up an appropriate learning environment, which encourages children to grow physically, emotionally, intellectually, and socially. Within the framework of the class, the specific details and approaches may vary from group to group, individual to individual, and season to season, creating a freshness of program content as unique as the individual children and teachers involved.

**Office Manager** - Manages all accounts payable and receivable, including tuition payment, supports the staff with supply needs, works with the Treasurer on budget to actuals and the Secretary to ensure families fulfill their cooperative duties. Oversees the Lunch Bunch program and summer camp enrollment, acts as the main point of

contact for the school's relationship with the Denver Preschool Program, and supports the Director(s) in additional projects on an as needed basis. **Shandon Wells can be reached at [shandon@dcppplay.org](mailto:shandon@dcppplay.org).**

### Classroom Liaisons

The classroom liaison serves as a bridge of communication and support between the families, staff, and governing board at DCP. Each class is assigned one classroom liaison who is responsible for creating the parent helper calendar, organizing a Fall Class Social, communicating class information in the weekly class email, collecting winter and end-of-year classroom teacher gifts, and being a friendly source of information about the school. This is a committee position.

### Organizational Chart

#### **DCP Community**

Students – Staff – Parents

#### **Governing Board**

Matters of policy, finance, legality, and community

**Executive Director & Assistant Director:** Administration and Admissions, Administrative Staff, Teaching Staff

**President:** Governing Board, Committee Chairs at Large, Personnel, Family Activities

**President-Elect:** Communications, Technology, Nominations, Community Engagement Chair

**Secretary:** Legal and Bylaws, Family Cooperative Duties

**Treasurer:** Finance, Scholarship

**VP Facilities:** Facility maintenance

**VP Fundraising:** Social Fundraising, Colorado Gives Day, Auction

**VP Communications:** Communications, marketing, publicity

**Past President:** Supports President and new Governing Board members as needed.

**Staff Representative:** Represents staff on Governing Board

**Alumni Representative:** Represents alumni on Governing Board.

**Community Member at Large:** Represents community at large on Governing Board.

## All School “Whom to Contact”

<b>Matters Regarding:</b>	<b>First Resource</b>	<b>Second Resource</b>
Admissions / Marketing	Website	Assistant Director
Attendance	Classroom Teachers	Office Manager
Billing	Office Manager	Assistant Director or Executive Director
Child Development/ Developmentally Appropriate Practice	Classroom Teachers	Assistant Director or Executive Director
Classroom Activities	Classroom Teachers	Assistant Director or Executive Director
Conflict Resolution within Classroom	Classroom Teachers	Assistant Director or Executive Director
Conflict Resolution within Cooperative	Committee Chair	Secretary or President
Cooperative Responsibilities	Secretary	President
Early Intervention Resources	Classroom Teachers	Assistant Director or Executive Director
Financial Policies/Tuition Questions	Office Manager	Assistant Director or Executive Director
Fundraising	Individual Chairs of Social Fundraising, COGD or Auction	VP of Fundraising
Parent Helper Calendar	Class Liaison	
Parent Helper Change Requests	Class Parents	Class Liaison
Resources for Young Families	Parent Resource Area/Weekly Email Blast	Assistant Director or Executive Director
School Snack Calendar	Website	Class Liaison Emails
School Calendar and Events	Website	Handbook
School Clean-Up Day	Facility Co-Chairs	VP of Facilities
School Closures (Weather & Safety)	Local News and corresponding websites	Special Edition Email Blast Facebook
School Policies	Handbook	Assistant Director or Executive Director or President (cooperative policies)
Tuition Assistance/Financial Aid	Office Manager	Assistant Director or Executive Director
Your Child’s Progress	Classroom Teachers	Assistant Director or Executive Director

# The School Day At DCP

## Arrival and Departure

Morning classes are held from 8:30 to 11:30 a.m. and afternoon classes are held from 12:30 to 3:30 p.m.

At the beginning of class, each child is signed in by the adult who brings the child to school. This adult should designate on the sign-in sheet the person who is authorized to pick up that child on that day and the phone number where they can be reached in case of an emergency during class.

DCP will only release children to parents or legal guardians or the adult(s) for whom written authorization has been given by a parent or legal guardian. This information is maintained in the child's record. In the event of an emergency or a change in pick up plans, the child may also be released to an adult for whom the child's parent or guardian has given written or verbal authorization. If the staff member who releases the child does not know the adult, identification will be required to ensure that the adult is authorized to pick up the child, in accordance with the school's policies stated above.

If an unauthorized person arrives to pick up a child without prior notification, a school employee will call the parent or legal guardian to get permission to release the child.

Parents must pick up their child no later than when the class is scheduled to end. We ask that parents and guardians be mindful of timing, as our classroom teachers often have obligations after class time has ended. As a school community, we elect to not fine parents monetarily for late pick-ups, as we understand that life circumstances do occasionally cause parents of young children to run behind. If you are running late, please make every effort to contact the office so that we can let your child know that you are on the way and staff can plan accordingly.

In the event a child is picked up late from school, or not picked up at all, a staff member will stay with the child until the child's parent or emergency contact comes for him or her. In the event no one can be reached on the contact lists, licensing requires that we notify the authorities after one hour has passed.

## Access to the Building/Parking

All families and staff should enter DCP through the main front door of the building. The front door code changes before every school year and will be given to parents and guardians at the beginning of the year. *For safety reasons, we ask that you please do not give the door code to your child.* Only adults should be opening the main door to the building, and all children should be accompanied by an adult. Please only share the front door code with those individuals who are authorized to pick up your child.

Please do not enter or exit the building from any of the doors at the back of the classrooms, or the front door to the sanctuary of the church.

As we are a community modeling for young children, we ask that you practice street safety skills when walking to and from the school from your home or car. Holding hands, looking both ways before crossing the street, and using the crosswalk are important skills to teach, practice, and model. Please supervise children carefully on the sidewalk and hill close to 5th Avenue and Marion Street.

When parking, we respectfully request that you do not park in the no parking areas, even for a few minutes. When cars are parked in these areas, it makes it very difficult for pedestrians and cars to have open lines of sight at crosswalks. Additionally, these spaces are to be reserved for emergency vehicles should the need arise.

Please drive carefully around the school and be considerate of the Marion Street neighborhood when you drop off or pick up your child(ren).

### Clothing and Personal Care Items

DCP embraces hands-on, explorative, and often messy play in the classrooms. Children should come dressed accordingly, in clothing that is “okay to play” or easily washable. Please provide a dry change of clothes in your child’s backpack, as children will often become wet or messy during classroom activities. The school does keep extra clothing should a change of clothes be unavailable.

Children enjoy daily outdoor play at DCP. Children are expected to come prepared and be properly dressed for outside play in all weather, including inclement weather. The Executive Director will decide if the weather is not favorable for outdoor activity. Should the weather prevent outdoor play then outdoor time will be replaced by additional time in the classroom or in the fellowship hall.

Students often have special things that they want to share with their classmates. We recommend that any personal objects of value not be brought to school. An adult may bring in the item and take it home immediately. However, children are welcome to bring comfort objects to school (lovies, blankets, etc.) for ease in separation and comfort away from home. DCP provides small cubbies for storage of personal belongings while at school. While we make every effort to keep track of children’s personal items, we cannot be responsible for any loss or damage to students’ personal property. Please do not send any extra money to school with your child.

### Handwashing Procedure

Children should wash their hands each day when they arrive at school, either in the classroom or in the children’s bathroom before the door is opened for the day. Parent helpers in the classroom should also wash their hands when they arrive for the day, as well as before and after snack preparation, before and after cleaning and sanitizing tables, after coming in from outdoors, after playing in the sensory table, and any other time hands become soiled. Classroom teachers will assist children with handwashing at appropriate times and transitions throughout the school day. DCP staff, students, and parent helpers should practice the following handwashing procedure:

1. Moisten hands with warm running water.
2. Apply soap.
3. Rub hands vigorously until a soapy lather appears.
4. Continue washing for at least 20 seconds outside of the water, rubbing areas between the fingers, around nail beds, under fingernails, under jewelry, and the backs of hands.
5. Rinse hands under warm, running water until they are free of soap and dirt.
6. Dry hands with a disposable towel, cloth towel laundered after use, or a mechanical drying device.

### Bathroom, Diapering, and Independent Use of the Toilet

All children will be supervised when using the restroom by a classroom teacher and at least one other adult. Only classroom teachers and other staff members who have completed the Universal Precautions training will provide bathroom and diapering assistance. Parent helpers will only be used as a second supervisory presence in the bathroom or to help with the diapering and toileting of their own child. Children are diapered as needed. Classroom teachers will also be responsible for facilitating appropriate handwashing techniques with all students at all times.

If a parent should need to change their child’s diaper during a parent helper day or during drop off or pick up at school, we ask that parents disinfect the changing table after diapering according the following procedure:

1. Please dispose of all soiled diapers, wipes, and disposable changing pads in the lidded diaper disposal container provided in each of the children's bathrooms.
2. Please spray and disinfect the table with the provided Oxivir solution (located in a child-locked cabinet next to each changing table).
3. Please allow the Oxivir to sit on the table for one minute.
4. After one minute, dry any remaining Oxivir with a disposable paper towel.
5. Dispose of the paper towel in the lidded diaper disposal container.
6. Please place Oxivir, wipes, and diaper cream back into the child-locked cabinet next to the changing table.

*Wipes, diaper cream, and extra diapers are provided for your use should you need them. Please wear clean gloves when using diaper cream. Gloves, wipes, and diaper cream are in the child-locked cabinet next to each changing table.*

DCP does not require that children use the toilet independently at any specific age or age-group. It is our belief that a child's development is individual as this milestone occurs across a broad age-range. We support each child and their family as individuals. Classroom teachers are happy to be a supportive part of this process for your child and will work to mimic toileting routines at home to the best of their ability.

## Snacks

DCP is committed to offering nutritious snacks for our children to enjoy. Our parent helpers provide snack each day for their child's class.

### **USDA Guidelines**

It is important that the children receive offerings from at least two different food groups in their snack each day. If a sweet treat is served because of a birthday or other special celebration, two food groups will still need to be represented. The following are the various food groups recommended by the USDA:

- Bread/Cereal/Rice and Pasta
- Fruits
- Vegetables
- Milk/Yogurt & Cheese
- Meat/Poultry & Fish
- With the exception of appropriate Field Trips or special occasions, water will be the beverage served.

In order to keep students safe and healthy, DCP provides a monthly snack calendar on our website that takes into consideration the diagnosed food allergies and food sensitivities in each classroom on any given day of the week. This way, parent helpers who are bringing snack to school each day can be assured that the choices listed on the snack calendar are safe for all students in the class.

*Please note, DCP can only consider medically diagnosed food allergies and sensitivities accompanied by a care plan signed by your child's physician. Due to the number of children in our care, we ask that for any food preferences that are not of medical concern, parents check the snack calendar and provide an alternative selection for their child if the approved snack does not meet their family's preference.*

Due to the nature of how snack is provided at our school, we cannot *guarantee* that DCP is "nut-free" but we do strongly discourage any nuts or nut products from entering the school.

The snack calendar is a suggested schedule. In the event that you need to make substitutions, please try and select

comparable items if possible and always be sure to check with the Executive Director, Assistant Director or classroom teachers regarding allergies when choosing substitutions. This list will also be distributed in the Weekly Blast. Additionally, class liaisons will share a list of approved alternative snacks that are *class specific* depending on allergies in the class.

Classroom teachers will always check to see that the snack provided by the parent helper is in accordance with the monthly DCP Snack Calendar.

Please choose at least two of the four items listed for each day. State licensing regulations require that any part of snack other than fresh fruits and vegetables be prepackaged. Note that fruits and vegetables need to be washed in the sink labeled “Snack Cleaning Station” in the basement kitchen and cut on DCP premises. All materials are provided to clean and cut the food. Place all used tools in the labeled tub to be washed by DCP staff. For licensing reasons, please do not cut fruit or vegetables at home.

In classrooms where there are several life threatening and major allergies, the classroom teachers may elect to set up snack with the assistance of the parent helper. Classroom teachers will be in charge of preparing snack for any children who are specifically providing their own snack due to allergies and/or medical conditions.

Please remember that parents and staff must utilize proper handwashing procedures prior to serving snack. Additionally, they must support the children with handwashing before they sit down to enjoy snacks. Please see the [Handwashing Procedure](#) section of this handbook for reference.

When preparing and serving snacks, parents and staff should always use the food service gloves provided.

As required by the health department, staff members will assist parents in completing the recommended table cleaning and sanitation procedures prior to eating snacks and afterward as well. To clean tables, please adhere to the following steps:

1. Remove any debris, playdough, paint, food, etc. from the table.
2. Spray tables down using the provided soapy water solution.
3. Wipe the soapy water solution with a disposable paper towel.
4. Sanitize all tables with SaniDate.
5. Allow SaniDate to sit on each table for one minute before drying any remaining sanitizer with a disposable paper towel.
6. Please use **\*\*DISPOSABLE PAPER TOWELS ONLY\*\***
7. Tables should be cleaned following this procedure BEFORE and AFTER snack.

## Cell Phones

When caring for children, all staff, classroom teachers and parent helpers shall refrain from using personal electronics including cell phones and MP3 players. During parent helper days, parents and guardians may feel free to provide the number in the office to employers or caregivers for siblings. We are happy to come get you in the classroom should you receive a call. If you need to make an urgent phone call, we ask that you please step out of the classroom so as not to be a distraction to the classroom community.

When taking pictures of your child(ren), please do not post any pictures that contain other students in them on any social media site without permission from the students' parents.

### Parent Helper Background Checks

Because our school is a parent cooperative community in which parents take an active role in their child's education during parent helper days and committee work, it is our policy to complete background checks on parents and legal guardians who are volunteering with children.

As a community that places an emphasis on valuing our children, we believe in the importance of this policy for the safety of your child as well as all the children we care for. This background check will be strictly confidential, but will look for any history of violent crimes, sexual crimes, or child abuse convictions. DCP follows the Colorado Department of Human Services list of disqualifying actions for employment in a childcare center in determining if a parent or legal guardian cannot volunteer in the classroom.

Background check forms must be completed before a parent volunteers in the classroom. While families may plan for one parent or legal guardian to do all parent helper days, we strongly recommend that families with more than one parent or legal guardian have both individuals complete the check so that your family has flexibility should a change in plans arise. Parents/guardians are responsible for their individual background check fee. Should the individual criminal background check fee present a financial hardship for your family, please contact the office.

### Guidelines for the Parent Helper

Parent helper days are a unique feature of the cooperative nature of the school and serve as a wonderful opportunity for connection between your child, you, and the classroom teachers. As a helping parent, you are an assistant and a support to the classroom teachers. Guidelines for helping parents are listed below, however classroom-specific details may be adjusted by the classroom teachers:

- If possible, please plan to arrive 15 minutes before class begins and to stay 15 minutes after class ends.
- If you are unable to make your parent helper day, it is your responsibility to find a replacement parent helper. Please be sure to notify the classroom liaison of any changes in advance if you are switching days. In the event of an emergency or illness, please contact fellow class parents to see if coverage may be available. Please let the classroom teachers and class liaison know as soon as possible if you are unable to find coverage.
- Parent helpers are responsible for providing snack on helping days. Please read the Snack Procedures and Protocols section in the handbook to familiarize yourself with this process.
- Siblings are not allowed to attend class with you on your parent helper day as per state licensing regulations. The parent helper day is intended to be a special day for your child and it is distracting for you, your child, the class, and the classroom teacher when siblings are present. This dedicated time for your child is a rewarding experience.
- The daily presence of a parent helper in each classroom is a wonderful feature of our cooperative community. We encourage parents to view the role as more than simply helping the classroom teachers with daily routines, but rather an opportunity to more fully understand our constructivist, play-based model, emergent curriculum, and the growth and development of young children. You are a vital member of each unique classroom community of teachers, children, and their caregivers. Embracing the parent-helper experience is rewarding for both you and the children.
- The parent helper is expected to follow DCP's school policy and procedure with regard to classroom guidance and discipline. Generally, the classroom teachers will handle any behavioral challenges that should arise in the classroom, and the helping parent should defer to the teachers. The classroom teachers are responsible for behavioral intervention consistent with our guidance and discipline policy (see [Guidance and Discipline](#) and/or [Developmentally Appropriate Guidance Techniques](#) sections in this handbook).

- Special skills, interests, and hobbies are a rich and wonderful addition to the classroom. Both professional and personal interests appeal to the children. Playing an instrument, potting plants, playing special games, doing crafts, job-related skills, etc. are all important in the classroom. At all times, however, the responsibility for daily planning rests with the classroom teachers. Please clear special activities with him or her in advance of your parent helper day.
- Before the children arrive, check in with the classroom teachers on how you can best help and if there are any final duties or tasks to be completed before the day begins.
- Free play is an unstructured time when the classroom teachers and parent helpers act as facilitators of activities. You may be engaging on a one-to-one basis with a child, assisting restless children in guided play, helping a child who is alone to find a companion, sitting with children and observing, helping children to put names on their artwork, or talking with a child about their work and deepening their connection and understanding. Jump right in and enjoy this busy and engaging time in the classroom!
- During cleanup time, help support children in finding an area of the classroom to clean up. Becoming involved with the children and providing choices can often inspire reluctant children: “How fast can we put these blocks away if we all work together? Which size blocks would you like to take care of?”
- Snack time offers a change of pace and a chance to renew the children’s energy after busy play. The experience of eating at preschool with peers is an important step in the social development of the child. Snack time provides an opportunity for relaxed conversation with the children, parent helper, and classroom teachers. Snack time also gives children experience with preparing food, setting the table, serving, sharing, pouring, and cleaning up. Parent helpers assist the classroom teachers during snack by helping to serve and sitting with the children at the snack table. Parent helpers and classroom teachers together model appropriate eating habits and cleanup routines and facilitate language and conversation. After snack, the parent helper is responsible for cleaning the tables and sweeping the floor. Please read the Snack Procedures and Protocols section above to know the parent helper’s specific responsibilities regarding setting up snack, and the procedure for cleaning and sanitizing tables.
- In preparation for outside playtime, the parent helper will help children with boots, jackets, hats and mittens, when necessary. State licensing requires that one adult be on the playground with the children at all times and that children are accompanied to and from the classroom by an adult.
- After children leave for the day, please be sure to check-in with the classroom teachers as to how you can help support clean up and any preparations for the next class.
- The Parent/Toddler classes are structured differently because a parent or legal guardian attends class with each child. There will be a parent helper assigned for each class session and that individual will be responsible for the parent-helper duties listed above. During parent discussion time, the classroom teachers will let the assigned parent helper know whether they need to remain in the classroom during the breakout session or whether they will join the other parents.
- Only staff members who have completed the Universal Precautions training are allowed to diaper and assist with toileting of children. Parent helpers may only diaper and assist with toileting of their own child. Parent helpers may be asked to serve as a second set of adult eyes during diapering and toileting (See [Bathroom, Diapering, and Independent Use of the Toilet](#)).

### Lunch Bunch

Lunch bunch is a program that gives students an opportunity to socialize with children from other classes. It is a way to have fun and feel good about having lunch away from home in a supportive environment. The lunch bunch program is open to children three-years-old and older. Due to staffing, children must be using the toilet independently to attend lunch bunch.

**For the first semester, drop-in lunch bunch will begin the second week of school, and permanent fall**

**semester spots will begin September 30, 2019. For the second semester, drop-in lunch bunch will occur for the first two weeks after returning from winter break, and permanent spring semester spots will begin January 21, 2020. There is no lunch bunch the last week of school.**

Children bring their lunch and are supervised by DCP staff members from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. each day. If your child attends a PM class, a lunch bunch teacher will take them to class at 12:30. If your child attends an AM class, they must be picked up promptly at 12:30, as staff members need to attend afternoon classes. If parents are consistently late for pick up, participation in the lunch bunch program may be restricted.

There are two types of lunch bunch slots; **permanent** and **drop-in** slots. Depending on the level of interest, permanent lunch bunch slots may be limited to two days a week per child. This is to give all families the opportunity to participate. Families may sign up for as many drop-in lunch bunch slots as are available in any given week.

Permanent slots give a child permanent weekly slot(s) in lunch bunch for the term. These slots are normally offered from October – December and again from mid-January – May. Sign-up usually takes place in September for the fall term and in January for the spring term. Permanent lunch bunch spots are available to those children who are 3, 4 or 5 years old, regardless of their class. Permanent slots must be paid in full prior to the start of the semester. Like a child's space in class, permanent slots are non-transferable and non-refundable. **Permanent slots are paid in a lump sum at the rate of \$12/session - amounts vary depending on which days of the week your child enrolls for their permanent spot.**

For drop-in slots, sign-up is required. Sign-up sheets are posted in the lobby of the school. Sheets are put out on Monday morning for the following week and sign-up is on a first-come, first-served basis. **Drop-in slots are charged at a rate of \$15/session.**

The DCP office manager will email all families at the end of each month to let them know what they owe for any drop-in spots that month. Families are asked to leave a check for the amount they owe in the Tuition Box located in the front entryway of the school.

Should you need to cancel your child's space in a drop-in or permanent lunch bunch slot due to absence or illness, we ask that you notify the office via phone or email as soon as possible. This allows families who might be waiting for a lunch bunch spot that day to take advantage of the program. No-shows (children who are signed up but do not attend, with no notification made to the office) will be charged.

Parents are welcome to enjoy the playground with their children while lunch bunch is occurring. We ask that children not enrolled in lunch bunch are supervised by a parent at all times - lunch bunch teachers are only maintaining ratio for those children signed into lunch bunch. Families enjoying the playground at lunch time are asked to be mindful of cleaning up any trash brought to the playground and putting away any toys they have used at the end of their playtime.

Please be mindful of sending a healthy, well balanced lunch with your child for lunch bunch, and do not pack any peanut or nut products (see [Snacks](#) for more information).

*\*Any changes to the lunch bunch program are made at the discretion of the Executive Director and the Governing Board.*

## Visitors

DCP welcomes visitors to our school. All visitors must sign in on the visitor's log in the front of the school. If parents wish to visit a classroom other than their child's, they need to make prior arrangements with the classroom

teacher.

Parents are welcome to show friends our school by making prior arrangements with the Executive Director. Formal tours for interested families are held at least once a month. Please contact the Assistant Director for more information on these tours.

On occasion, the Executive Director will be contacted by a college student needing to observe in an early childhood classroom for a course requirement. Permission will be granted with proper documentation of coursework and the agreement that actual student names will not be utilized or any other personal identifying information. Students conducting observations will need approval from the Executive Director and follow the visitor protocol. The classroom teachers will also be informed of the observation taking place.

At times, parents may give permission for an early childhood professional from Child Find or other agency to observe his or her child. If this decision is made, please contact the Executive Director and classroom teacher. Professionals entering DCP for this purpose will also need to follow the visitor protocol. Written authorization will need to be obtained for any sharing of information about a child.

### Media Use/Viewing of Television and Video

DCP does not generally view television or videos in the classrooms. An iPad may be utilized in the classroom as an extension of learning or to support discussions. An example of this might be a group discussion of the ocean and the creatures who live there. A classroom teacher may then use the classroom iPad to show students images of ocean life.

### Guidance and Discipline

Our policy is to interact with each child in a way that promotes a sense of self-worth, while reinforcing classroom guidelines and behavioral standards. The underlying goal of discipline is to help a child make more appropriate choices and learn better skills for interacting with others and their environment.

Our approach is to have an enriching environment for children, establish classroom guidelines that are reasonable and promote a safe environment, and interact with children in a manner that promotes positive self-esteem.

A positive approach to discipline recognizes the development of children at varying ages and stages. Expectations for a two-year-old differ from those for a four-year-old. This is taken into consideration in the planning of the environment, the activities offered, and implementation in the classroom of such times as transitions, cleanup time and group time.

We prohibit the use of physical touch as a method of discipline except in the case of needing to restrain a child from injuring him/herself or others. Spanking or physical punishment is an unacceptable method of discipline and will result in immediate expulsion or termination. Discipline that blames, criticizes, discourages, and creates barriers to the development of a positive self-image is not appropriate.

The role of the classroom teacher at DCP is unique. She or he is assisted in the classroom by the parents who rotate parent helper responsibilities on a scheduled basis throughout the year. The role of the classroom teacher is particularly important as they are the primary adults in the classroom every day. To assure consistency in approach, the classroom teachers have the responsibility to model appropriate discipline for children and parents alike.

If the classroom teacher notices a child is having difficulties with behavior or is causing extreme disruption in class, the parents will be notified by the classroom teacher or the Executive Director. The Executive Director, classroom teacher, and parents will then work together to develop a strategy to address the areas of concern. If repeated

behavior challenges or disruptions cause concern that a child is showing signs or symptoms of a physical or developmental delay or emotional, social, or behavioral challenges, DCP Staff will support the parent with contacting the appropriate agency for further observation and evaluation. (See the section of this handbook on [Early Intervention and Enrollment of Students with Special Needs](#)).

### Developmentally Appropriate Guidance Techniques

- Helping children to identify and label emotions
- Helping children learn to identify the emotions and feelings of others (empathy)
- Helping children to learn to identify body cues such as facial expressions
- Utilizing puppets or dolls or other props to act out common situations
- Utilizing photos, books, and/or posters to discuss feelings
- Working towards building the child's emotional vocabulary
- Creating opportunities for role playing
- Offering a cozy corner/private space when a child wants some alone time to work out his or her feelings (space in complete view of the classroom teacher)
- Teaching children the steps to calm their bodies down
- Teaching children the 3 basic safety rules: I will keep myself safe, I will keep my friends safe and I will keep our things safe
- Redirecting children to other activities when appropriate
- Coaching children in social situations when necessary
- Using words of encouragement to build self-confidence
- Facilitating regular class meetings to discuss common problems
- Encouraging children to brainstorm ideas
- Teaching children the five steps of peaceful conflict resolution: What is the problem? What can I do? What might happen if I...? Choose a solution, use it and ask: Is it working? If not, what can I do now?

### Violent Pretend Play

Experimenting with pretend play using guns, shooting, and violence can be developmentally appropriate and typical behavior for young children, and it can be healthy to explore this play in a safe space. Some children find this type of play to be very frightening and become uncomfortable when it is present in the classroom or on the playground. Our classrooms are safe places for all students, and therefore DCP has chosen to practice a policy that pretend play involving guns, shooting, and other weapons is best explored outside of school. We will redirect the children when we see pretend play involving weapons and remind them that this play is not appropriate for the classroom or playground. We strongly encourage you to discuss this as a family and answer your child's questions. As always, your classroom teaching team as well as the Executive Director and Assistant Director are here and available to serve as a resource and address any questions or concerns.

## The School Year At DCP

### DCP 2019-2020 School Calendar of Important Dates

**\*\*\*Please note: the dates for some Family Activities events (e.g. Dance) have not been set, but these favorite events will occur! Please reference the DCP calendar on the website for the most up to date calendar.\*\*\***

Day	Date	Event
	August 5-9	Regular office hours resume
Monday	August 12	Staff Retreat
Wednesday	August 14	Governing Board Meeting - Executive Session 6:30 PM
Saturday	August 17	Classroom set-up day with Indoor Committee and all lead teachers
Monday	August 19	Staff Orientation
	August 22-23	Class Meet and Greet
	August 26-30	Home visits
Wednesday	August 28	Governing Board Meeting - Executive Session - 6:30 PM
Thursday	August 29	New Parent Orientation - 7:00 PM
Tuesday	September 3	First day of school!
Thursday	September 5	Fall All Parent Meeting - 7:00 PM
Wednesday	September 18	Town Hall Meeting - 7:00 PM*
Tuesday	September 24	Kindergarten Information Night - 6:30 PM
Wednesday	October 2	Governing Board Meeting - Executive Session - 6:30 PM
Thursday	October 3	Grandparents and Special Friends Day - 4:00-6:00 PM
Monday	October 15	Final day to switch School Clean Up Day
Thursday	October 17	Parent Education Evening - Topic TBD
Monday	October 21	NO SCHOOL - Staff Professional Development Day
Saturday	October 26	DCP Family Fall Festival
	October 31-November 1	NO SCHOOL - Parent/Teacher Conferences
Wednesday	November 6	Governing Board Meeting - Executive Session - 6:30 PM

Saturday	November 9	All School Cleanup Day
Thursday	November 14	Parent Education Evening - Topic TBD
Wednesday	November 20	Town Hall Meeting - 7:00 PM*
	November 25-29	NO SCHOOL - Fall Break
Wednesday	December 4	Governing Board Meeting - Executive Session - 6:30 PM
Saturday	December 7	DCP Family Pancake Breakfast
Wednesday	December 18	Winter Performance Day - NO LUNCH BUNCH
	December 19-January 7	NO SCHOOL - Winter Break
Monday	January 6	NO SCHOOL - Staff Professional Development Day
Tuesday	January 7	School Resumes
Wednesday	January 8	Governing Board Meeting - Executive Session - 6:30 PM
Thursday	January 9	All School Cleanup Day - EVENING OPTION
Wednesday	January 15	Annual Open House - 6:00 - 8:00 PM Lottery Opens for 2020-21 School Year - 6:00 PM
Monday	January 20	NO SCHOOL - Martin Luther King Jr. Day
Wednesday	January 22	Town Hall Meeting - 7:00 PM*
Friday	January 24	Lottery Closes for 2020-21 School Year - 5:00 PM
Wednesday	January 31	Lottery Results Posted for 2020-21 School Year - 5:00 PM
Wednesday	February 5	Governing Board Meeting - Executive Session - 6:30 PM
Friday	February 14	2020-21 Enrollment Confirmation Fee Due - 5:00 PM
Monday	February 17	NO SCHOOL - Presidents' Day
Thursday	February 20	Parent Education Evening - Topic TBD
Friday	February 28	2020-21 Financial Aid Applications DUE - 5:00 PM
Wednesday	March 4	Governing Board Meeting - Executive Session - 6:30 PM
Saturday	March 7	All School Cleanup Day

Friday	March 13	NO SCHOOL - Staff Professional Development Day
Wednesday	March 18	Town Hall Meeting - 7:00 PM*
	March 30-April 3	NO SCHOOL - Spring Break
Wednesday	April 8	Governing Board Meeting - Executive Session - 6:30 PM
Thursday	April 16	Spring All Parent Meeting - 7:00 PM
	April 22-24	NO SCHOOL - Parent/Teacher Conferences
Thursday	April 30	Parent Education Evening - Topic TBD
Friday	May 1	First and Last Month's Tuition for 2020-21 School Year - DUE
Wednesday	May 6	Governing Board Meeting - Executive Session - 6:30 PM
Friday	May 8	DCP Annual All School Art Show - 5:00-7:00 PM
Wednesday	May 13	Town Hall End of Year Celebration - 7:00 PM
Thursday	May 14	Last Day of School
Friday	May 15	Pre-Kindergarten Graduation Celebration
Saturday	May 16	All School Cleanup Day

## DCP Annual Events

### **Class Meet and Greets**

This event occurs before school begins in order for children to have a chance to see their classroom and meet their new teachers. Families and students come to socialize with their new friends as well as to learn important information to be ready for the start of the school year. The classroom liaisons will be distributing parent helper calendars at this event.

### **Home Visits**

At the class meet and greets, families will sign up to receive a home visit from one of the lead classroom teachers in your child's class. This visit lasts 20 minutes and is a chance for your child to become more comfortable with one of his or her new teachers before the first day of school. During this visit, your child might want to show his or her teacher a favorite place in the home, a favorite toy or game, or a family pet.

### **New Parent Orientation**

This event is a chance for new parents to learn all about what it means to be part of the DCP family and to gain information they need to begin the school year.

### **All Parent Meetings (Fall and Spring)**

All Parent Meetings occur once in the fall and once in the spring each year. During these meetings, the Executive Director gives a state of the school address. Any new Governing Board members and/or changes in by-laws are

voted on by the DCP community. These meetings are important to ensure that all families receive important information regarding the school budget and any planned changes. This is also an opportunity for each family to use their voice in the governance of DCP. DCP asks that at least one parent from each family attend **both** the Fall and Spring All Parent Meetings. If you are unable to attend, please notify the Secretary at [secretary@dcpplay.org](mailto:secretary@dcpplay.org).

### **Class Social**

This event will occur on a Saturday, typically in September, on the DCP playground in order for families to have an opportunity to socialize with their classmates, families and teachers outside the classroom. The class liaison will organize a shared snack. Additional class socials, adult only class socials, playdates, etc. are encouraged and may be planned as desired.

### **Kindergarten Information Night**

The Executive Director, Assistant Director, and Pre-Kindergarten teachers will present information about the process of choosing a kindergarten program for your child. Many questions will be answered such as, “What questions should I ask the school about their kindergarten program?” and “What is the process of enrolling in public and private kindergarten programs?” This event is open to all families in the school, not just those with a current Pre-K student.

### **Grandparents and Special Friends Day**

DCP students spend special time with their grandparents or special friends as they enjoy sharing their favorite activities with their loved ones. Parents are encouraged to go off campus while the students and grandparents or special friends enjoy quality play time together.

### **Fall Festival**

One of the favorite socials and traditions of the year, the DCP Fall Festival is an opportunity to gather as families display their Halloween costumes, play games, enjoy treats, and end the event with a trick or treat walk from teacher to teacher around the block.

### **Annual Open House**

Every year before the lottery opens, DCP opens its doors to its community and interested parents who would like to learn more about the incredible programs. Governing Board members support the classroom teachers by meeting prospective families and sharing the magic of DCP. Current families are encouraged to attend if they would like to spend time learning more about the classroom their child will be joining the following year.

### **All School Art Show**

Another beloved DCP tradition, student artwork from throughout the year is proudly displayed at the All School Art Show at the end of the school year. Families and staff come to see the creations, have a picnic, and enjoy this community gathering.

### **Town Hall Meetings**

Town Hall meetings are open to the community and occur four times during the school year. The Governing Board and Committee Chair members gather to discuss important information regarding DCP. Parents are highly encouraged to attend these meetings. The meetings are generally held on the third Wednesday of the month from 7:00 - 9:00 p.m. in the basement of DCP. **For the 2019-2020 school year, the schedule is as follows: September 18th, 2019, November 20th, 2019, January 22nd, 2020, and March 18th, 2020.**

## **Cleanup Days**

The Cooperative Agreement that each parent signs prior to enrollment requires that each DCP family participate in one school cleanup day per child enrolled in the school. One parent is required to attend cleanup day for each child

enrolled. If your family has two children enrolled, you are obligated to participate in two cleanup days. If you have two children enrolled, either: 1) two parents need to participate in one day OR 2) a parent needs to participate in two different cleanup days.

School cleanups are very important to the quality of our school and it is very important for families to participate in their assigned cleaning days. DCP hires a year-round maintenance service to take care of daily cleaning. However, four times a year, we ask parents to spend a few hours at the school setting up or cleaning specific areas and toys that are not taken care of thoroughly by the daily cleaning service. In keeping with the cooperative nature of DCP, we need parents to carry out this important task to help keep our school safe, clean and healthy.

Cleanup days are held four times a school year; three Saturdays from 9:00 a.m. to 12 noon and one evening option available in January to accommodate the different schedules of our families. Please bring your own gloves for cleaning.

Please be sure that you have read through and selected cleanup day options to fulfill this commitment on the Family Enrollment - Parent Participation Form included in your Enrollment Paperwork. Be aware that families who have a conflict with their assigned cleanup day will be given the opportunity to switch to another scheduled day before October 15th. After October 15th we request you honor the assigned day for scheduling purposes. Should an unavoidable change after October 15th be necessary please contact the Secretary at [secretary@dcpplay.org](mailto:secretary@dcpplay.org) for approval and assistance in changing your cleanup day.

Families must work one of the four cleanup events per child (up to two children). **If you do not attend any of the four cleanup days, a \$350 fine will be assessed and billed on May 31st, 2020 to the EFT and/or credit card on file.**

## Fundraising

In keeping with the cooperative nature of the school, a portion of the balance of the annual operating budget is to be raised by parents, guided by the Colorado Gives Day, Social Fundraising, and Auction Committees. There are several fundraisers each year, one of which is the Annual Auction. Parents are expected to donate items for the auction and to support fundraising efforts however possible. These events are not only profitable, they are fun. Any fundraising income above what is budgeted will be used to directly enhance the school program. It is important to note that fundraising helps to support our operating budget. Every year, there is a financial gap between the amount collected from tuition and other fees and the school's operating budget. By filling this gap with financial contributions, DCP is able to keep tuition affordable. A variety of fun community events that support our fundraising efforts occur throughout the year. These events include:

**Colorado Gives Day:** This annual statewide movement celebrates and increases philanthropy in Colorado through online giving. The \$1 Million Incentive Fund supported by Community First Foundation and FirstBank is one of the largest giving-day incentive funds in the country. Donations can be scheduled ahead of time at [www.coloradogives.org](http://www.coloradogives.org) beginning the middle of November. Donations support DCP's tuition assistance program, DCP classroom teachers' professional development opportunities, and closing the gap between the amount collected from tuition and fees and the amount it costs to run DCP annually.

**Dine Outs:** Dine outs will occur throughout the year. These events are hosted by neighborhood restaurants that invite our community to gather together for a meal while gifting a percentage of the meal's cost to DCP. These events support gathering as a community as well as supporting DCP.

**DCP Annual Auction:** Each year, DCP's community, friends, and families gather together for an adult party to celebrate DCP. Food, drinks, fun games of chance, a silent auction, and a live auction all make this event a night to

remember! Please mark your calendars for **Saturday, March 21st, 2020** for this year's auction.

**Grocery Cards:** Raise funds for DCP without spending an extra dime of your own through purchases from these partners:

- King Soopers - Please register your loyalty number and community rewards with King Soopers. Every time you use your loyalty number a portion of your purchases will be received by DCP! Please visit the Social Fundraising page on DCP's website for additional details.
- Safeway provide easy-to-use, reloadable grocery gift cards that you can manage when you buy your groceries. Using these cards gives 5% of your purchase back to the school! Start by making a one-time purchase of a \$10 reloadable gift card in the school office and then add funds at the store from there.

**Shop with Scrip:** A no-selling fundraising program that enables ALL families to raise money for DCP without any change to their current budget. Scrip is another way to pay for everyday purchases using gift cards in place of cash, checks, and credit cards. Please take a look at how Scrip can fit in with your current spending.

The program works by purchasing eGift cards or physical gift cards from DCP at face value then our Social Fundraising Chair orders those cards from Scrip at a reduced price. The difference is a rebate of 2% - 16% (depending on the retailer) that immediately comes back to DCP. It really is that simple! Orders can be placed easily on **ShopWithScrip.com** or the mobile website **MyScripWallet.com**. EGift cards are easily stored and accessed using the mobile website on your phone - no need to plan ahead or bring a stack of gift cards along when you are out shopping. Scrip offers more than 750 of the country's biggest retailers, including grocery stores, department stores, gas stations, restaurants, hotels, home improvement, and more. Simply by using Scrip to pay for your normal weekly purchases, your family can easily raise \$1000 or more per year. It's time to put your shopping dollars to work! For more information, or for help getting started, please contact [scrip@dcpplay.org](mailto:scrip@dcpplay.org). More detailed information on enrollment can also be found at <http://denvercooperativeschool.org/fundraising/social-fundraising/>.

## Field Trips

Field trips are organized by classroom teachers as learning opportunities for their students away from the school grounds. The intention of field trips is to enhance students' experiences at DCP. Since these experiences take place outside the classroom, parents are responsible for transportation to and from the field trip and expected to attend the field trip with their children. The classroom teachers are not permitted to transport students to and from field trips. The classroom teachers are responsible for planning and communicating prior to the trip, as well as facilitating the learning process during the trip. The following guidelines should be followed whenever a field trip is planned:

- Parents will be given a minimum of three weeks' notice prior to any field trip. Classroom teachers will include field trip dates and driving directions in their monthly calendars or newsletters.
- All field trips for all classes must have relevance to topics and learning opportunities that have been presented in the classroom leading up to the field trip.
- The Executive Director must be informed by the classroom teachers of all field trips a minimum of three weeks prior to the field trip taking place.
- Classroom teachers will post a sign-up sheet at least one week prior to the scheduled field trip.
- Parents who plan to have their child attend the field trip should sign up for the trip, indicating whether they or a designated adult will be responsible for the transportation and supervision of their children.
- Classes will meet at the field trip destination and leave from there when the trip is completed, as opposed to

meeting at school, unless the classroom teacher indicates otherwise.

- Children and their parents who arrive at DCP on a field trip day will be directed to the location of the event because the class will not be meeting at the preschool. Classroom teachers will post a notice on their classroom door on the day of each field trip, explaining the field trip location, including directions, along with the start and end time of the field trip. It is then the parent's responsibility to transport and accompany the child to the field trip location or make other arrangements for the child.
- On the field trip day, the children's regularly scheduled class will not meet in their classroom. Parents will have to make other arrangements for their children should they choose not to attend the field trip.
- Typically, field trips will not be scheduled during the last three weeks of the school year in order to respect families with school-aged children whom are expected to help at their children's elementary school during the last three weeks of the school year. The exception to this may be in a culminating end-of-year experience in the Pre-K classroom prior to graduation.

### Transportation

DCP does not provide transportation for children to and from school or field trips. It is each family's responsibility to provide for the transportation of their children. Please read the section on [Field Trips](#).

### Birthday Parties and Special Events

Birthdays are a special time for young children and sharing this milestone with their classroom community is important. Each classroom teaching team will come up with a way to celebrate and honor children's birthdays that feels unique and integral to their classroom culture. In classrooms where children have allergies or dietary restrictions, teachers may ask that birthday celebrations do not include food so that all children can be included.

Please refrain from bringing party or favor bags to distribute to classmates for your child's birthday. These items often create distraction, remove the focus from the birthday child and the celebration in the classroom, and can provide challenges at extended programs such as lunch bunch. These items can be enjoyed at celebrations outside of school.

When planning birthday celebrations outside of school, please be sensitive to a culture of inclusion. If all members of the class are not invited to the party, please refrain from distributing party invitations at school.

### Parent/Teacher Conferences

Scheduled Parent/Teacher Conferences are held in the fall and spring, as noted in the school calendar. Typically, the Fall Conference takes the form of a goal setting meeting to outline both the parent and teacher's collective goals for the child. The intent of the Spring Conference is to discuss progress toward the established goals and age-appropriate objectives. Parents are welcome to schedule additional conference time with their child's classroom teacher or with the Executive Director at any time during the year. **The scheduled conference dates for the 2019-20 school year are October 31-November 1, 2019 for fall conferences, and April 22-24, 2020 for spring conferences.**

### Health Screenings

Annually, DCP will offer developmental health screenings, which may include vision, hearing, and developmental screenings. These screenings will be arranged through third-party organizations, and parents will have the opportunity to decide whether or not their child(ren) will participate.

As outlined in our [Early Intervention and Enrollment of Students with Special Needs](#) policy, DCP is committed to identifying physical and developmental issues that may affect a child's success in school and later in their adult life. Early intervention is key to mediating any issues that may arise for a child. For this reason, DCP works to make physical and developmental screenings available and easily accessible to its families.

## Communication

Communication between parents and staff members is of the highest importance. If you need to get information to staff members, please call the office from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. We check voicemail messages often throughout the day, making communication by telephone easy and timely. Be assured that messages at the school will be passed along and calls will be returned.

Please do not call staff members at home about DCP-related matters. Our valued teaching staff gives their all at work. Please respect their private time so that they can rejuvenate and be 100% present for their families.

You may also email staff members or leave notes for staff members in the office. Remember, however, that some staff members work only one day a week. If you leave a message on a day that they are out, it will take them a bit longer to respond.

Drop off and pick up times can be a great time to communicate pertinent information that may affect your child's day at school. If you want to converse with the classroom teacher longer than a quick exchange, please leave a note or phone message stating that you would like to schedule a time to talk. Your classroom teacher will be happy to meet with you.

Governing Board members and your classroom liaison can be wonderful sources of information about the school. Contact information for classroom liaisons will be distributed early in the school year. Take it upon yourself to keep informed and be a parent in the know!

## End of Year Parties

The last day of school is a special time for the classroom community as it marks the closing of the school year and our time together. End of year celebrations will be held in the classroom. In some cases, parents and caregivers may be asked to join the class for a portion of the day. Teachers will communicate specifics about last day plans three weeks prior to your child's last day of class.

The Pre-K end of year party will immediately follow graduation. Teachers will communicate information about this event at least three weeks prior to graduation day.

## Enrollment and Admissions Policies

### Enrollment

Denver Cooperative Preschool is licensed for students ages 12 months to 6 years of age. Specific age guidelines for each class are published annually in this Handbook (see [Admissions](#) below).

If a class enrollment is not sufficient, as determined by the Executive Director and the Personnel Committee, the preschool reserves the right to cancel the class.

No child can begin preschool until all of the required enrollment paperwork is submitted, including medical forms. Parents are asked to complete forms in a timely manner, turning them in by the due date specific in enrollment packets.

To withdraw your child from DCP you must notify the Assistant Director. This notification should be made in writing or in person 30 days in advance of the child's departure from school.

Registration for the following school year's classes occurs at the end of January through our annual lottery. No one student may enroll for more than one age-level class unless the second class is not fully enrolled by the start of school and the Executive Director has approved the second enrollment. For more information on being enrolled in two classes and the licensing restrictions related to this type of enrollment at DCP, please see the Executive Director.

Families of students enrolled in more than one class must fulfill the parent helper and cleanup day responsibilities for both classes.

### Admissions

#### Age Guidelines for the 2019-2020 Classes

<i>Class</i>	<i>Birthday Ranges</i>
Parent-Tot	12 months-23 months by September 1, 2019
2/3s	23 months-35 months by September 1, 2019
3/4s	36 months-47 months by September 1, 2019
Pre-Kindergarten	4 years of age by October 1, 2019* <sup>+</sup>

*\*The cutoff date for Pre-Kindergarten moves back to October 1 to align with Denver Public Schools. Local kindergartens have varied cut-off dates for starting. Parents are encouraged to explore their options.*

**Children who will turn six-years-old before the end of the DCP calendar year cannot enroll in Pre-Kindergarten as our program is only licensed for children up to age 6.**

### Lottery

The method for placing children into classes at DCP is a lottery system. The lottery is held each January in order to fill classes for the following school year. A lottery form for each student (including twins) must be completed and submitted in order for that student to participate in the lottery. A non-refundable lottery fee will be collected with each form. See [Fees and Tuition Rates](#) for more information.

A family currently enrolled at DCP must be in good standing with regard to financial obligations and the terms of the Cooperative Agreement prior to participating in the lottery. If a family is delinquent to either of the above, the Executive Director will contact the family to make sure they are aware of their obligation.

Online lottery forms, with specific age guidelines, will give families the opportunity to indicate a first, second and, where appropriate, third or fourth choice for class placements for each child. If a student does not get his or her first choice in the lottery, he or she will be placed in the second choice and put on a waiting list for the first choice. If the second choice is also not available, he or she will be placed in the third choice and put on a waiting list for both the first and second choice, and so on. If only one choice is indicated on the lottery form and it is not available, the student will be put on a waiting list for that class.

Upon entering DCP, each student receives a preference status designation which determines the order in which that student will be chosen during the lottery. Current students and children of staff are granted the highest preference (1), followed by siblings of current students (2), students from DCP alumnae families (3\*), students from families belonging to the church where the preschool is located (4), and students who are new to DCP (5).

\*In order to receive DCP alumnae status in the lottery a family must have left the school in good standing with regard to financial obligations and the terms of the Cooperative Agreement and completed the most recent school year in attendance at DCP. Disenrollment mid-year from the program will reduce your preference status for following years without prior Executive Director-approval.

Children who are age-inappropriate may lottery for a specific class only with prior Executive Director-approval. With Executive Director-approval, a family may request that an age-inappropriate child with a birth date close to the class cutoff be placed on a separate waiting list for that specific class while they are enrolled in an age-appropriate class. If a spot should become available for that child, the Executive Director and current classroom teachers along with the child's family will make the determination of whether it is appropriate for the child to move to the age-inappropriate age group. All licensing regulations must be taken into consideration, and the ultimate determination rests with the Executive Director.

Families who are considering placing their child in the Pre-K program for a second year may lottery for this placement only with prior Executive Director-approval. The Executive Director and current classroom teachers along with the child's family will make the determination of whether it is in the best interests of the child to complete another year in this program. Only upon mutual agreement will a Pre-K placement be offered. Depending on enrollment numbers for the rising Pre-Kindergarten class, placements for repeat Pre-Kindergarten students may be limited, at the discretion of the Executive Director. Priority will be given to current DCP students enrolling in Pre-Kindergarten for the first time.

Families who have participated in the lottery may subsequently request placement on any additional waiting lists. The lottery number assigned to the child during the lottery or waiting list process will be used to determine placement on the waiting list. Families who miss the lottery may request placement on any waiting list of their choice. They will be assigned a lottery number as a waiting list family and be placed into their status category using that lottery number to determine placement.

Following the lottery, class lists and waiting lists will be available on the DCP website and new families will be notified as to whether or not their children were placed in classes. Posted lists will include the child's name, preference status designation and the number representing the order in which they were chosen in the lottery. Please note that lottery numbers do not dictate future movement on waiting lists.

In order to secure a spot in a class, families must complete all necessary forms and pay all fees by the due dates.

Each year, the incoming Board President is guaranteed his or her first choice for classes for any children he or she has enrolled at DCP for his or her upcoming year as President, as voted on by the Governing Board. The incoming President-Elect is placed at the top of any waiting lists for his or her first choice for classes for any children he or she has enrolled at DCP for his or her upcoming year as President-Elect, as voted on by the Governing Board.

## Waiting Lists

A waiting list for each class will be maintained for the purpose of filling openings as they arise.

As with the lottery, preference status designations apply to all waiting lists. Current students (those students who have attended school and satisfied all appropriate financial and cooperative requirements) and children of staff (1) are granted the highest preference, followed by siblings of current students (2), students from DCP alumnae families (3), students from families belonging to the church where the preschool is located (4), new current students and, finally, new families (5), who are defined as those new students who are on a waiting list but have not yet been offered a placement in a class.

When there is an opening in a class, the spot will be offered to the student at the top of the appropriate waiting list.

When a student from a new family is placed in a class, any siblings of that student who are on waiting lists for other classes will be changed from new status (5) to sibling status (3). The siblings will then be moved into the last position on any waiting list given this new preference status designation.

If a family from the waiting list declines to take a spot when offered, they will be asked if they wish to be taken off the waiting list. If they choose to remain on the waiting list, they will continue to be offered spots until they request to be removed.

If a current student participating in the lottery does not get their first choice and chooses not to commit to the spot in their second choice (by paying appropriate fees); they will be changed to alumni status on the waiting list for their first choice upon the end of the current school year or upon withdrawal from the school.

## Early Intervention and Enrollment of Students with Special Needs

Denver Cooperative Preschool is committed to identifying developmental issues that may affect a child's success in school and later in their adult life. Early intervention is key to mediating any issues that may arise for a child. Families with children with special needs are welcome to apply for enrollment. Denver Cooperative Preschool is an environment that strives to accommodate the needs of all children. In some cases, the administrative staff in consultation with our nurse consultant will determine if we are able to meet the child's needs and if the child will benefit from the program. Denver Cooperative Preschool makes every effort to accommodate children with special challenges or disabilities in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act ("ADA"). Childcare programs are required to make "readily achievable accommodations" for all children with disabilities. "Readily achievable" is defined as being "able to accomplish easily and without much difficulty or expense or increasing safety or crime considerations."

Each child who has identified special needs and an Individualized Education Plan (IEP), Individual Education Plan (IFSP), or other documentation related to diagnosis from a medical professional must provide a copy of the plan to the administrative team (Executive Director and Assistant Director) of the Denver Cooperative Preschool. This form must be filled out by agency staff (Child Find or other) or physician and clearly state a child's diagnosis, special instructions for care, and necessary medication. Each parent is responsible for giving this form to the administrative staff at the time of enrollment. The DCP administrative team will be responsible for sharing the plan with the child's

classroom teaching team. The administrative team and school nurse (if necessary) will develop a plan for care while the child is at school.

If the parent or teacher of an enrolled child has a concern that a child has or is showing signs or symptoms of a physical or developmental delay or emotional, social, or behavioral challenges, the DCP staff will support the parent with contacting the appropriate agency for further observation and evaluation. After an assessment from a physician or other professional, the parents and agency representative will develop a plan for the services the child needs, working with the DCP administrative and teaching teams for appropriate accommodations in the classroom setting. If, at any point, a parent refuses to seek the additional support recommended by the physician, referring agency, or Denver Cooperative Preschool staff, or chooses not to participate in meetings or conferences regarding their child's care, this may indicate to the administration that the parent is not willing or ready to work cooperatively with DCP at that time and the family may be asked to find alternative care.

It is important to note that although Denver Cooperative Preschool will work with all children to address a variety of disabilities, our staff does not have specialized degrees or expertise that may be needed to address every disability or health need. In the event the parents or the classroom teachers have a concern regarding any one child's development, the child's parents and classroom teachers will meet and discuss all the available options that will provide the child with necessary help and interventions. This is a collaborative venture; participation and cooperation of all involved parties is required.

If it is determined that the child is not progressing as expected or that the child needs more comprehensive services than the Denver Cooperative Preschool is able to provide, the family will need to find an alternative educational placement.

### Withdrawal of Enrollment

Although Denver Cooperative Preschool makes every effort to avoid discontinuing enrollment for a child and their family, occasionally the Denver Cooperative Preschool is not able to provide for children with needs that are beyond the scope of the experience and education of our staff. As detailed in this handbook, there are many practices and policies in place for the Denver Cooperative Preschool to work with families and outside agencies to keep a child in our program. If for some reason it is necessary to discontinue enrollment for a child in our care, we will provide as much notice as possible. If a child will no longer be placed in our program, we will make every effort to assist with placement in a program that is better able to continue working with outside support agencies to assist the child.

At any time during the school year when the relationship between the preschool and the family is not found to be mutually satisfactory, continued enrollment shall be reviewed jointly by the family and involved representatives from Denver Cooperative Preschool. The final decision rests with the Personnel Committee (comprised of the President, President-Elect, Executive Director, and Assistant Director). Parents will be notified in writing if preschool services are to be withdrawn.

## Financial Policies

The DCP Governing Board is responsible for setting the financial policies of the preschool. Several of these policies follow. These policies are carried out by the Treasurer, who serves for two fiscal years, beginning August 1st.

### Reimbursements

Reimbursement is made for actual cash expenditures on behalf of the preschool. All reimbursement checks must be approved by the Executive Director or Assistant Director.

Reimbursement requests must first be submitted to and approved by the Executive Director or the Board President. Requests are then submitted to the Office Manager. Reimbursement forms are available in the office. Any items purchased for use by the school must have receipts submitted with them, even if the intent is to donate the item. Please collect your receipts throughout the month and submit one reimbursement request, but please do itemize your expenditures on the request form and make clear on the form the reason for the expenditure and the name of your committee.

We are a tax-exempt organization and our tax-exempt number is 98-00723. Please use this number when making purchases for the school.

### 2019-2020 Fees and Tuition Rates

<b>Description</b>	<b>Fee</b>
Lottery Fee	\$75 per child *increasing to \$80 for 2020/21 school year
Enrollment/Registration Fee	\$175 per child *increasing to \$180 for 2020/21 school year
Waiting List Fee (after lottery closes)	\$50 per child (\$50 for the 2019-2020 admission season) *increasing to \$60 for 2020/21 school year
Facilities Fee	\$75 per child *increasing to \$80 for 2020/21 school year
Failure To Appear Cleanup Day Fine	\$350 per occurrence (see <a href="#">Cooperative Model</a> )
Lunch Bunch Fee	\$12 per day for semester sign up, \$15 drop in
Late Payment Fee	\$20 per month late
Returned Check Fee	\$20

### 2019-2020 Tuition Rates

Class	Day(s)	Time	Hours	Amount
Parent/Tot	Friday	8:30-10:30 am	2	\$165/month
Parent/Tot	Friday	11:00-1:00 pm	2	\$165/month
Parent/Tot	Friday	1:30-3:30 pm	2	\$165/month
2/3s	Mon/Wed	8:30-11:30 am	3	\$350/month
2/3s	Mon/Wed	12:30-3:30 pm	3	\$350/month
2/3s	Tues/Thurs	8:30-11:30 am	3	\$350/month
2/3s	Tues/Thurs	12:30-3:30 pm	3	\$350/month
3/4s	Tues/Thurs	8:30-12:30 pm	4	\$410/month

3/4s	Mon/Wed/Fri	8:30-11:30 am	3	\$460/month
3/4s	Mon/Wed/Fri	12:30-3:30 pm	3	\$460/month
Pre-K*	Mon-Thurs	8:30-11:30 am	3	\$595/month
Pre-K*	Mon-Thurs	12:30-3:30 pm	3	\$595/month
Free Form Friday**	Friday	8:30-12:30 pm	4	\$200/month †
Lunch Bunch**	Mon-Fri	11:30-12:30 pm	1	\$12/session for permanent \$15/session for drop in
Summer Camp	Tues-Fri	8:30-11:30 am	3	\$200

\*Pre-K tuition is eligible for tuition credit through the Denver Preschool Program.

\*\*FFF and Lunch Bunch will begin the 2nd week of school, end the week before the last week of school, and are priced accordingly.

† FFF tuition is due in three, three-month installments. Tuition payments are non-refundable. Please see the payment schedule below:

- September-November: **\$600 DUE June 1, 2019**
- December-February: **\$600 DUE September 1, 2019**
- March-May: **\$600 DUE January 1, 2020**

An enrollment/registration fee is required for each child enrolled at DCP. There is also a fee for participation in the Lunch Bunch Program and any enrichment program. These fees and tuition rates are determined by the Governing Board and published annually.

Checks are payable to Denver Cooperative Preschool or 'DCP'. Families may make tuition payments monthly through direct debit (EFT) in the Sandbox registration system, or they may drop a check in the tuition box at school. Families may also elect to prepay tuition at any time. The monthly tuition fees are prorated over the year to account for holidays, staff professional days, and partial months.

Tuition payments are due on the first (1<sup>st</sup>) of each month (October through April) and are considered late after the tenth (10<sup>th</sup>) of the month. If late, a \$20 late fee should be submitted with the tuition check or it will be added to your family's account in Sandbox. If tuition and late fees are not paid by the 10<sup>th</sup> of the following month, this may impact the family's enrollment status at DCP. If you have any problem concerning payments, please contact the Treasurer at [treasurer@dcppplay.org](mailto:treasurer@dcppplay.org) or the Office Manager at [shandon@dcppplay.org](mailto:shandon@dcppplay.org).

Tuition checks should be put in the tuition box (black mailbox) near the entrance area of our lobby or sent to the Office Manager: DCP, Attn: Office Manager, 480 Marion St., Denver, CO 80218

Prepayments help the school with its cash planning and can help you avoid late fees. Tuition may be prepaid at any time throughout the year. Full prepayment amounts are:

<i>Class</i>	<i>Per Child</i>
Parent Tot	\$1,485
2/3s	\$3,150
3/4s (Tues/Thurs)	\$3,690
3/4s (MWF)	\$4,140
Pre-K	\$5,355

FFF

\$1,800

### Late Entrants

When a family enrolls at Denver Cooperative Preschool after the official start date of the school year, tuition payment and registration paperwork requirements will be as follows: Once a verbal acceptance is made, the family has 48 business hours to pay their enrollment confirmation fee. First and last months' tuition and the facilities fee must be paid within two weeks of the enrollment confirmation fee. All required enrollment paperwork must be completed and submitted to the school prior to the child's first day in the classroom.

The cost for the month the child enters the school may be prorated. This will be done based on the number of classes remaining in the month the child enters the school. Fees will not be prorated. If a family fails to provide the necessary paperwork and payments during the stated period, the spot for their child will be forfeited.

### Delinquent Fees

A late charge of \$20 per month for delinquent fees will be assessed. A family may not register for the next preschool year until all current tuition fees and any other fees due have been paid. A child may not begin the second semester classes if first semester fees are outstanding. In the event of a financial problem during the year, it is the responsibility of the parents to contact the Treasurer or the Executive Director to make arrangements for payment. (Also, see Scholarships, below). Tuition is non-transferable. Any unpaid tuition, fees or assessed fees will be billed on May 31, 2020 to the EFT and/or credit card on file.

### Refunds

Type of Fee	Amount	Refund Available
Enrollment/Registration	\$175.00 (\$180.00 for 2020/21)	No
Facilities Fee	\$75.00 (\$80.00 for 2020/21)	No
Lottery Fee	\$75.00 (\$80.00 for 2020/21)	No
Waiting List Fee	\$50.00 (\$60.00 for 2020/21)	No
First & Last Month's Tuition	Monthly tuition x 2	No
Oct - April Tuition	Monthly tuition	Refundable with a 30 days written notice of withdrawal from DCP given to Director.
Free Form Friday Tuition	Paid in three, three-month installments of \$600.00	Three-month installments are non-refundable once they are paid. Tuition installments that have not yet been paid are not due after 30 days written notice of withdrawal from the class given to Director.
Enrichment Fees such as Lunch Bunch and Summer Camp	Posted fees	No

DCP does not refund or prorate any tuition or fees for planned or unplanned absences. Tuition and enrichment fees are non-refundable regardless of absences. We do prorate tuition and enrichment fees for families who are accepted after school begins and experience a late start date (see 2019-2020 Tuition and Fees, Late Entrants). **We do not prorate any fees.** Families who disenroll mid-year, with 30 days written notice to the Executive Director, may also request proration/refund of tuition payments already made as detailed in the Refunds table. Tuition and

fees are non-transferable.

## Scholarships

The policy of DCP is that a percentage of fundraising and private donations be placed in a scholarship fund for confidential awards by a Scholarship Committee to families in need. This fund is designed to assist families who might otherwise not be able to enroll and to support preschool families who encounter financial difficulties during the school year. Scholarships do not include any discount of lottery, enrollment/registration, or any other fees or any enrichment program. Scholarship applications for the following school year are due on February 28th.

In the event a need for scholarship arises during the school year, it is the responsibility of the parents to contact the Office Manager at [shandon@dcppplay.org](mailto:shandon@dcppplay.org) or the Executive Director at [mary@dcppplay.org](mailto:mary@dcppplay.org) for a scholarship application. The scholarship application is also available on the DCP website.

If scholarship needs within a fiscal year exceed the amount budgeted, variances can be made to accommodate such requests by appeal to the Governing Board by the Scholarship Committee.

## Financials

<b>Denver Cooperative Preschool</b>				
<b>2019-2020 Summary Budget</b>				
<b>2019-2020 Budget</b>	<b>18-19 Budget</b>	<b>19-20 Budget</b>	<b>Change from 18-19 Budget</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<b>Revenue - Total Tuition and Fees</b>	<b>\$652,677</b>	<b>\$701,604</b>	<b>\$48,927</b>	7.5%
<b>Operating Expenses</b>				
Payroll & Staff Benefits	\$585,037	\$632,192	\$47,155	8.1% Of the \$46,000 increase, \$25,000 relates to the fact that 2018-2019 budget used 2017-2018 salaries (\$10,000 difference) plus did not include full bonus potential of 2018-2019 (\$15,000 difference). If budget change between last year and this year reflected actual salaries paid & budget potential, then the increase year-over-year would only be \$23,000 or 3.6%. For purposes of comparing budgets, the \$20,000 amount is more relevant.
Rent and Facility costs	\$71,144	\$75,979	\$4,835	6.8%
Classroom & Office Supplies	\$22,686	\$23,690	\$1,004	4.4%
Insurance, Taxes, Professional Services	\$28,792	\$27,754	-\$1,038	-3.6%
Other Overhead Costs	\$5,700	\$5,871	\$171	3.0%
<b>Total Operating Expenses</b>	<b>\$713,359</b>	<b>\$765,486</b>	<b>\$52,127</b>	<b>7.31%</b>
<b>Net Shortfall from Operations</b>	<b>-\$60,682</b>	<b>-\$63,882</b>		
<b>2019-2020 Budget</b>	<b>18-19 Budget</b>	<b>19-20 Budget</b>	<b>Change from 18-19 Budget</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<b>Scholarships &amp; Unrestricted Fundraising</b>				
Scholarships & Teacher Discounts (Net of DPP)	(\$30,000)	(\$31,200)	-\$1,200	4.0%
CO Gives Day	\$32,000	\$26,000	-\$6,000	-18.8% 2019-2020 budget number adjusted to reflect historical amount received at CO gives day.
Social Fundraising	\$12,000	\$12,600	\$600	5.0%
Auction Net (except Paddle Raiser)	\$38,000	\$38,000	\$0	0.0% 2019-2020 budget number adjusted to reflect historical amount received from the Auction
Miscellaneous Donations (incl. Grandparents)	\$6,000	\$6,300	\$300	5.0%
<b>Total Scholarships &amp; Fundraising</b>	<b>\$58,000</b>	<b>\$51,700</b>	<b>-\$6,300</b>	
<b>Net Surplus/Deficing from Fundraising &amp; Operations</b>	<b>-\$2,682</b>	<b>-\$12,182</b>	<b>-\$9,500</b>	
<b>Paddle Raiser &amp; Funded Programs</b>				
Paddle Raiser revenue	\$15,000	\$15,750	\$750	5.0%
Applied towards Continuing Education supplement	-\$2,000	-\$2,000	\$0	0.0%
<b>Applied to other Funded Programs or Savings</b>	<b>\$10,318</b>	<b>\$1,568</b>	<b>(\$8,750)</b>	

## **School Policies**

### **Confidentiality**

As advocates of both students and families in our community, we are dedicated to respecting the privacy of all members of DCP - students, their families, and staff as well. As a helping parent in the classroom, you may notice, make observations, have thoughts, opinions, or questions about behaviors you observe from children in the classroom. Out of respect for the children in our care and their families, please refrain from asking classroom teachers and staff to engage in private or sensitive conversations regarding children other than your own. If you have questions or concerns of a sensitive nature that need to be addressed, please feel free to speak with the Executive Director or Assistant Director in the office. It is not appropriate to gossip about a child, ever.

Through committee work for the school, parents may have access to a substantial amount of confidential or personal information regarding donors or prospective donors to the school. We ask that parents refrain from using any confidential or personal information regarding any donor or potential donor to the school other than for the purpose of fundraising for the school. Transferring, sharing, or in any way divulging (directly or indirectly) any such information under any circumstances or by any means to any third party other than other members of the committee specifically involved with soliciting the donor or potential donor in question will not be tolerated.

Employees, volunteers and board members of DCP may be exposed to information which is confidential and/or privileged and proprietary in nature. It is the policy of DCP that such information must be kept confidential both during and after employment or volunteer service. Staff and volunteers, including board members, are expected to return materials containing sensitive, privileged or confidential information at the time of separation from employment or completion of volunteer service.

Unauthorized disclosure of confidential or privileged information is a serious violation of this policy and will subject the person(s) who made the unauthorized disclosure to appropriate action, including removal/dismissal.

### **Translators and Interpreters**

Denver Cooperative Preschool understands that some families speak languages other than English in the home, and we are sensitive to those needs. Should a family require it, Denver Cooperative Preschool is willing to provide translated versions of our parent handbook and all registration and enrollment forms.

Should the need for an interpreter during a parent meeting or conference arise, Denver Cooperative Preschool will make every effort to assist families with interpreter resources. Interpreter services may be provided in-person or over-the-phone, depending on requirements and availability. Families who speak languages other than English are also welcomed to bring their own interpreter to any preschool functions, conferences, or phone calls.

### **Home Language**

DCP believes in honoring a child's home language whenever possible. Should more than 50% of children in any given class speak a language other than English at home, DCP will strive to hire at least one bilingual educator for the room who is fluent in the dominant language.

### **Transitions Between Age Groups**

Denver Cooperative Preschool believes strongly that stability and consistency are important for a child's development. Our program follows a school year schedule in which school begins in September and ends in May. Children are placed into age-appropriate classrooms according to the following guidelines:

## **Age Guidelines for 2019-2020 School Year**

<b>Class</b>	<b>Birthday Ranges</b>
Parent-Tot	12 months - 23 months by September 1, 2019
2/3s	24 months - 35 months by September 1, 2019
3/4s	36 months - 47 months by September 1, 2019
Pre-Kindergarten	4 years of age by October 1, 2019*+

\*The cutoff date for Pre-Kindergarten moves back to October 1 to align with Denver Public Schools. Local kindergartens have varied cut-off dates for starting. Parents are encouraged to explore their options.

+Children who will turn six-years-old before the end of the DCP calendar year cannot enroll in Pre-Kindergarten as our program is only licensed for children up to age 6.

DCP does not transition children to classrooms designated for older children when they celebrate a birthday. Rather, all children placed into a classroom will fall within the specific age range, remain in the classroom for the school year together, and transition to the next age group the following school year.

All families participate in our annual lottery in January and February to determine class placement for the following school year. Class lists for each age level will be posted at the school and shared with families via email. Staffing announcements for the following school year are typically made in late May/early June of the school year prior.

If a child's birth date is within one week of the age cutoff, they may be considered for an older classroom if the determination is made that it would be a more developmentally appropriate placement. Input from the parent, classroom teachers of both classes, and the directors will be considered. The decision for an age-ineligible placement will ultimately rest with the directors. Should a child be placed in an age-ineligible class, the child's parent will need to plan to attend class with them during the one-week period of ineligibility due to licensing and fire code.

As children prepare to transition out of DCP to attend kindergarten, DCP classroom teachers and directors offer multiple supports to both ease and inform the process. A Kindergarten Information Night is scheduled every fall and is open to all families in the program. Pre-Kindergarten classroom teachers are available for one-on-one conferencing regarding the transition to elementary school, and typically offer additional conferencing opportunities outside of the regularly scheduled fall and spring conferences. Pre-Kindergarten classroom teachers are also available to complete kindergarten recommendation forms for programs that require them. The Executive Director and Assistant Director are available for individual meetings with families to discuss the kindergarten transition process. Resource materials are available in the office, including a list of families who have graduated from DCP and are currently attending elementary schools in the Denver metro area. These families have offered to be an additional resource for families transitioning a child from DCP.

### **Continuity of Care**

DCP recognizes the value and importance of continuity of care in early childhood settings. Due to the way we staff each year, we cannot guarantee that a staff member will remain with a group of children for two years. We do take continuity of care into consideration when making our staffing plan for the school year and try to create continuity of care when possible. Currently, we practice continuity of care in our parent-tot and twos-threes classes, as one teacher from parent-tot follows the children as a lead teacher in twos-threes. We believe that this is particularly supportive in the year in which a child is transitioning from regularly having a parent attend class with them.

Additionally, DCP practices continuity of care in our transition practices with age ranges of children. Students at DCP do not transition to the next age group when celebrating a birthday, but rather fall within an age range and transition once a year with their entire peer group to the next age group.

### Primary Caregiving

DCP practices the primary caregiving model in all of our classrooms. This means that a set team of educators is allocated to each classroom and group of children, and this educational team remains consistent throughout your child’s day at school, from the time they arrive until the end of their preschool day. In all of our classrooms, we have two lead teachers and an assistant teacher. This same educational team will remain with the same group of children for the entire school year.

The primary caregiving model reduces stress and is supportive of the emotional well-being of the children. It enables young children to form a secure attachment with an individual who will support the child and their needs when they are away from their parent or guardian. Maintaining consistency for the children allows them to develop a secure attachment with the educators, achieved by sharing loving and respectful care routines or moments. Care routines and moments may include playful interactions, activities, support during separation, diapering or toileting, and comforting a child after they have hurt themselves.

By maintaining a consistent teaching team with all three educators in the classroom, children are supported should a regular member of the classroom team be absent due to illness or paid time off. Additionally, DCP maintains a float teacher on staff on Wednesdays and Fridays to support classrooms in the event of a teacher absence. Children develop relationships with these individuals over the course of the year. Finally, DCP sources substitute teachers, when needed, from our own internal substitute list, ensuring that children are familiar with each of the adults in the room whenever possible. Float teachers and substitute teachers covering staff absences also remain in the classroom for the duration of the session, just as the regular educator would.

### Group Size and Adult/Child Ratio

DCP supports three teachers in each of our classrooms, two lead teachers and an assistant teacher. Additionally, educators are supported by a parent helper each day, though this individual is not counted for ratio.

DCP maintains group size and adult: child ratios that are aligned with NAEYC (National Association for the Education of Young Children). The following staff-to-child ratios are suggested best practice according to NAEYC. DCP exceeds the NAEYC recommended staff-to-child ratio in all classes:

Age Category	NAEYC Ratio	DCP Ratio	NAEYC Maximum Class Size	DCP Class Size
Toddler/Two	1:6	1:4	12	12
Preschool (3/4)	1:10	1:5	20	15
Preschool (Pre-K)	1:10	1:7	20	20*

\*On some years, the total group size in PreK may exceed the NAEYC recommendation of 20 to accommodate students returning to DCP for a second year of Pre-K due to being young to begin Kindergarten. DCP will make every effort to balance our two Pre-K classes to keep the total group size in each as close to 20 students as possible. In this case, the staff-to-child ratio will always exceed NAEYC recommendations.

## Medication Storage and Administration

In Compliance with the Nurse Practice Act, all prescription and non-prescription medication given in preschool settings require a written authorization from your healthcare provider, as well as parent written consent. This is a childcare licensing requirement. The medication authorization forms are available from the directors and must be completed by both the parent and the physician. The instructions from your health care provider must include information regarding the medication, reason for the medication, the specific time of administration, route of medication, and the length of time the medication needs to be given. All medications must be brought in the original labeled container.

Preschool staff members involved in medication administration receive special training and are supervised by a nurse consultant. Preschool staff is not authorized to determine when an “as needed” medication is to be given. Specific instructions are necessary. For children with chronic health conditions, this can be determined in collaboration with the consulting registered nurse.

The use of medication at school is discouraged. Since most medications are available in longer acting forms, parents are encouraged to administer such medication at home. Non-prescription medications are not to be brought to school (including cough drops). In the rare instance that a child needs to take a non-prescription drug at school, it requires the same prescription medication form signed by both the parent and the physician.

Only medications that are in the pharmacy container, with a current prescription label that matches the physician’s medical directive will be accepted at school. Any medication dispensed will be done by staff members who have completed medication training required by the state and have been delegated to do so by our school nurse.

## Quality Rating, Accreditation, Regulations, Community Partnerships, & Collaborations

### **Classroom Assessment Scoring System™ (CLASS™) Rating**

The Classroom Assessment Scoring System™ (CLASS™) is an observational tool that provides a common lens and language focused on what matters - the classroom interactions between teachers and students that boost student learning. The CLASS™ tool...

- focuses on effective teaching
- helps teachers recognize and understand the power of their interactions with students
- works across age levels and subjects

The CLASS™ tool has been shown to increase teacher effectiveness. Students in classrooms with higher CLASS™ scores achieve at higher levels than their peers in classrooms with lower CLASS™ scores.

The CLASS™ assessment is conducted in our Pre-Kindergarten classroom every other year and teachers receive coaching to help with continuous improvement. Our Pre-Kindergarten teachers most recently participated in the CLASS™ assessment in March 2018, receiving one of the highest overall scores in the Denver Preschool Program, with an average rating of 17.39. DCP will voluntarily participate in a CLASS™ rating for our Threes-Fours and Twos-Threes classrooms in Fall, 2018.

### **Colorado Shines**

Colorado Shines, Colorado’s quality rating and improvement system (QRIS), is required for licensed childcare providers supporting children prior to entering kindergarten and helps early learning programs offer high-quality care. It offers support and resources to childcare providers so they may support each child’s learning and development. Research shows this kind of assistance helps providers improve the quality of their programs. When more young children are ready for school, we all benefit.

- Colorado Shines rates the quality of programs on a scale of 1 to 5.
- At level 1, licensed childcare programs must meet Colorado’s licensing requirements for health and safety.
- Programs with higher rating have strong classroom instruction, training for staff and family engagement to support children’s success.
- Participants who are working on or who have been rated Level 2 are recognized as “Participating in Quality Improvement.”
- Child care programs rated at Levels 3, 4, or 5 are recognized as having achieved “High Quality.”

**Denver Cooperative Preschool received a quality rating of 4 in May 2019.**

### **Denver Preschool Program**

Denver Cooperative Preschool is a proud participant in the Denver Preschool Program (DPP). DPP is a voter approved initiative that provides tuition credit to parents and quality-improvement grants to participating preschools for professional development and program improvement. The DPP program is open and optional to all families living in Denver county to help with preschool tuition the 12 months prior to a student beginning kindergarten (Pre-Kindergarten students). Tuition credit amounts are determined by the school’s quality rating, family size, and income.

The DPP tuition credit calculator, application, and other valuable information about the program is available online at [www.dpp.org](http://www.dpp.org). Families also have the option of donating their monthly tuition credit to the preschool their child attends. Should you have any questions about the DPP program and how to sign up, please see the Executive Director.

### **National Association for the Education of Young Children**

Denver Cooperative Preschool is an active member of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) as well as the Colorado chapter, known as CAEYC. While maintaining this membership, DCP is not accredited by NAEYC at this time.

### **Quality Improvement Plan**

Denver Cooperative Preschool maintains an ongoing quality improvement plan and coordinated strategic plan to ensure that we are providing the best experience possible for our children and families. This includes program improvements, long-range goals, and ongoing development of our staff. Our quality improvement plan is always available for viewing in the office by parents and caregivers.

## **Child Care Licensing**

### **Colorado Department of Human Services - Child Care Licensing**

The Colorado Department of Human Services licenses Denver Cooperative Preschool. Our licensing reports, fire inspections and other documentation are conveniently located in the Directors’ Office for your review. DCP is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment. Please feel welcome to address any and all concerns with the Executive Director, Assistant Director, or Board Member. Parents may also contact the Colorado Department of Human Services at 1575 Sherman Street Denver, CO 80203: 303-866-5700

To review provider files: 303-866-5088

To file a complaint or report licensing violations: 303-866-3755

To obtain licensing information: 303-866-5958

DCP's license number is 47126.

The Office of Early Care and Learning at the Department of Human Services sets regulations that maintain standards related to the safety, health, protection, and well-being of all children. To verify compliance with the standards, the Department requires thorough and ongoing annual audits of childcare facilities and persons working in the childcare profession. For more information about licensing, please visit the website at [www.cdhs.state.co.us](http://www.cdhs.state.co.us).

In addition, the Denver Department of Human Services Child Care Licensing Division requires that all employees submit to a background check through the Colorado Bureau of Investigation (CBI) as well as a background check through the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). In addition, a prospective employee must submit to a check through the Central Registry for the Prevention of Child Abuse (TRAILS check). The employee must receive clearance and remain in good standing from both sources to be employed by the school. The school requires satisfactory personal and professional references as well as written proof of education and experience prior to the start of employment.

### Child Abuse Reporting

Under the "Child Protection Act of 1987" (C.R.S. 19-3-301) in the Colorado Children's Code, childcare center workers are required to report suspected child abuse or neglect. The law at 19-3-304 states that if a child care worker has "reasonable cause to know or suspect that a child has been subjected to abuse or neglect or who has observed the child being subjected to circumstances or conditions which would reasonably result in abuse or neglect shall immediately report or cause a report to be made of such fact to the county department or local law enforcement agency."

"Abuse" or "child abuse or neglect" means an act or omission in one of the following categories which threatens the health or welfare of a child: skin bruising, bleeding, tissue swelling or death; any cause in which a child is subjected to sexual assault or molestation, sexual exploitation or prostitution; in any case in which a child is in need of services because the child's parents, legal guardian, or custodian fails to take the same actions to provide adequate food, clothing, shelter, medical care or supervision that a prudent parent would take.

If at any time a staff member reasonably suspects child abuse, it is the responsibility of that staff member to report or to cause a report to be made of this suspicion to the local county department of social or human services at 720-944-3000 or the police department. It is not the staff's role to investigate suspected abuse, only to report it. Persons who make a good faith report are immune from civil and criminal liability. Additionally, laws provide for the protection of the identity of the reporting agency.

A childcare worker who fails to report suspected child abuse or neglect commits a class three misdemeanor and will be punished as provided in section 18-1-106, C.R.S. The staff person could also be liable for damages "proximately caused thereby."

### Snow/School Closing/Inclement Weather

When Denver Public Schools are closed due to inclement weather, DCP will also be closed. The parent body will be notified via local TV, local News websites, an all school email, and Facebook posts. Since the families and staff of DCP live in many different zip codes throughout metropolitan Denver, the Executive Director may close the school due to dangerous driving conditions during inclement weather, even if Denver Public Schools does not. The Executive Director will use the same communication methods as stated above in this situation to notify the DCP community. In the event DCP closes for other reasons, these same forms of communication will be used.

## Excessively Hot or Cold Weather

Children will be given the opportunity to be outside whenever possible. If the outdoor temperature is excessively hot or cold, children will remain indoors. Sun in Colorado is intense at all temperatures. Please apply sunscreen to your child prior to coming to school. Should you plan to have sunscreen applied by a staff member, a permission form will need to be completed indicating whether you want the school sunscreen applied (Rocky Mountain Sunscreen) or your own labeled with the child's name.

At all times common sense will be used when determining if it is appropriate for children to play outside. On days when the wind chill is too low, the children will participate in active learning indoors.

## Food Allergy Protocols at School

At DCP we do everything we can to ensure a safe and healthy environment for all children in our program. In consideration of both life-threatening allergies and food sensitivities that may affect any of our students, DCP has developed the following allergy policies and procedures;

### **If a Child Has a Life-Threatening Allergy**

The parent(s), along with the child's health care provider will need to fill out the appropriate health care plan for your child's allergy. These forms are available through the Executive Director at [mary@dcpplay.org](mailto:mary@dcpplay.org).

The parent(s) will need to provide the medications necessary for DCP to keep on site. Please refer to the guidelines in the "*Medication Storage and Administration*" section of this handbook for further information regarding medications that are to be kept on site for allergies.

The Parent(s) will need to provide a recent photo of their child to accompany their care plan paperwork.

Parent(s) of the child with the allergy or an appointed guardian will be required to check the monthly snack calendar and to also visually check the snack brought in each day that the child is in class to approve of the ingredients.

Optional –The parent(s) along with the child's medical care provider may provide a letter with additional information regarding the nature and any additional details of the allergy that they would like DCP to be aware of. In the case of more severe allergies, it can be helpful for the Executive Director and the classroom teachers to have a list of symptoms that signify an allergic reaction, the child's behaviors surrounding an allergic reaction, and specific, prohibited food ingredients/allergens, including any alternative terminology that may be used to describe the allergen on food packaging. This will be included in the child's file and will be shared with all appropriate DCP staff members so that they may be fully aware of the nature and scope of the child's food allergy/sensitivity.

Distributing a list of suggested pre-packaged foods to parents in the child's class is NOT allowed, as the manufacturing process and ingredients can frequently change.

Please be aware, there are certain times during the year where families are allowed to bring in homemade treats. It is up to you if you would like to share approved recipes for certain homemade items with other parents in your class. You may also provide an alternate snack for your child on these days, if you would prefer. Parents are asked to notify staff members before bringing homemade treats to the class so that accommodations may be made for children with allergies.

Before school begins, our school nurse reviews and authorizes all allergy and school health care plans for our

students based on the information provided.

**\*\*No child will be allowed to attend school until the office has received and reviewed the child's completed allergy care plan along with all required medications.**

### **Allergies and Classroom Materials**

DCP classrooms use homemade play dough that does typically contain white flour. If your child has a gluten sensitivity that will also prevent them from being able to play with our usual homemade play dough, please let us know so that we can make the proper arrangements.

### **If a Child Has a Minor Allergy/Food Sensitivity/Personal Dietary Preference - But Does Not Require Medication**

In the case of minor allergies, food sensitivities or personal dietary preferences, the enrollment forms must accurately reflect the nature of the child's sensitivity/allergy/preference.

Because life threatening allergies need to remain a top priority for the health and safety of our students, we cannot guarantee accommodations for minor allergies, food sensitivities or personal dietary preferences unless they are accompanied by care plans and/or medication orders that have been filled out and signed by a healthcare provider.

In some cases, we may require a *Medication Opt Out* form from the family stating that the child's allergy is non-life threatening as well as the family's choice to "opt-out" of keeping any medications on site. This is especially important in cases where the family's choice not to keep medications at school is contraindicated by your child's health care provider. Alternatively, a signed letter from the family stating the above is also satisfactory.

DCP has a *Medication Opt-Out* form that can be provided for this purpose. Please see the Executive Director if you would like a copy at [mary@dcpplay.org](mailto:mary@dcpplay.org).

No additional paperwork will be necessary other than making sure that the enrollment forms accurately reflect the nature of the child's sensitivity.

The optional step above, in reference to life threatening allergies, also applies to minor food allergies, food sensitivities and personal dietary preferences.

### **Allergies and Snacks at School**

Due to the nature of how snack is provided at our school, we cannot *guarantee* that DCP is a "nut-free" school, but we do strongly discourage any nuts or nut products from entering the school.

In all cases where a child has a minor allergy, food sensitivity, or personal dietary restrictions and medications are NOT required to be on site, reasonable efforts will be made by the Executive Director to accommodate these needs on the monthly DCP Snack Calendar.

At times, it happens that certain foods are medically necessary for some students. In these cases, those foods will be made available on the monthly DCP Snack Calendar with the exception of those foods that could potentially cause any severe allergic reactions.

In the case of a food allergy, food sensitivity, or voluntary dietary restrictions, parents are *strongly* encouraged to provide a small Tupperware container of a few acceptable snacks labeled with your child's name and class in the event that the snack provided by the parent helper is deemed inappropriate or if the ingredients cannot be verified.

Please provide this container to the Executive Director upon the start of school.

In classrooms where there are several life threatening and major allergies, the classroom teachers may elect to set up snack with the assistance of the helping parent. Classroom teachers will be in charge of preparing snack for any children who are specifically providing their own snack due to allergies and/or medical conditions.

**Celebrations, Food Sharing, and Allergies**

Please be aware, there are certain times during the year where families are allowed to bring in homemade treats. It is up to you if you would like to share approved recipes for certain homemade items with other parents in your class. You may also provide an alternate snack for your child on these days if you would prefer. Parents are asked to notify staff members before bringing homemade treats to the class so that accommodations may be made for children with allergies.

The DCP staff will discourage children from sharing food as an additional safety measure while in our care and we will always encourage awareness and acceptance of inclusive practices for the different needs of children.

The health and well-being of our students is a top priority at our preschool. The above list of procedures will help us work together to maintain this priority. Please do not hesitate to contact our Executive Director at **mary@dcpplay.org** should you have any questions regarding allergies and how they are handled at DCP.

**Illness**

Young children frequently become mildly ill. Infants, toddlers and preschoolers can experience an average of six respiratory infections (colds) and can expect one or two gastrointestinal infections (vomiting and/or diarrhea) annually. Deciding whether or not to keep your child at home when they are not feeling well can be difficult. Clearly there are instances when it is necessary for a child to remain at home. Four reasons to keep sick children at home:

1. The child does not feel well enough to participate comfortably in usual activities (such as; extreme signs of tiredness, unexplained irritability or persistent crying).
2. The child is unable to manage symptoms independently (i.e. an excessively runny nose, an uncontrollable cough).
3. The child requires more care than program staff is able to provide, without affecting the health and safety of the other children.
4. The illness is on the list of symptoms or illness for which exclusion is recommended.

Illness	Is Exclusion Necessary?
Diarrhea – frequent, loose or watery stools as compared to child’s normal pattern; not caused by diet or medication	Yes – If a child looks are acts ill; if a child has diarrhea with fever and behavioral change; if a child has diarrhea with vomiting
Fever – With behavioral changes or illness	Yes – until 24 hours after there is no longer a fever without the use of fever-reducing medicine*
Coughing – severe, uncontrolled coughing or wheezing, rapid or difficulty breathing	Yes - note: children with asthma may be cared for in school with a written health care plan and authorization for medical treatment

Mild respiratory or cold symptoms – stuffy nose with clear drainage, sneezing, mild cough	No – may attend if able to comfortably participate in school activities
Vomiting – two or more episodes of vomiting in the past 24 hours*	Yes – until vomiting resolves or a healthcare provider decides it is not contagious
Rash without a fever	No – body rash without fever or behavior changes usually does not require exclusion from school
Rash with a fever	Yes – any rash that spreads quickly, has open, weeping wounds and/or is not healing
Strep Throat	Yes – until 24 hours after treatment, has been fever free for 24 hours, and the child is able to participate in usual activities
Conjunctivitis “Pink Eye” – pink color of the eye <i>and</i> thick yellow/green discharge	Yes – until 24 hours after treatment. If your health provider decides not to treat your child, a note is required
Fifth’s Disease	No – child is no longer contagious once symptomatic rash appears
Hand Foot and Mouth Disease (Coxsackie Virus)	No – may attend if able to comfortably participate in school activities, unless the child has mouth sores and is drooling

*\*Please note, during times of increased illness, DCP may increase our exclusion period from 24 to 48 hours at the advice of our school nurse, and/or the Colorado Department of Health and Human Services*

Please contact DCP when your child is ill and describe the illness. If a specific diagnosis is made, e.g., strep throat, conjunctivitis, Flu, etc., let the school know so that other families may be notified (without giving the name of the child). The Executive Director and Assistant Director with the assistance of our school nurse will report any of the reportable communicable diseases to the State Department of Public Health and Environment.

Please help us provide a healthy environment and be respectful of children who come to school healthy by keeping your child at home when necessary. If your child sounds or appears “sick” but has seen a doctor and that doctor has evaluated the child as non-contagious and able to go to school, please let the classroom teacher know.

Remember, being exhausted makes a child more susceptible to germs and may even be a sign of impending illness. Also, a child is most contagious right before and 24 hours after the onset of symptoms.

We love to have each child in class with us and healthy children are usually happy ones.

### Immunization Notification

In accordance with childcare licensing, DCP tracks and reports our immunization rates annually. Immunization rates are available in the office. Parents of children who are exempt from immunizations for either personal or medical reasons will be asked to complete the appropriate paperwork.

## Safety and Health

Child safety at DCP is of utmost importance. All classrooms are continually monitored visually for identification of children. At the beginning of class, each child is signed in by the adult that brings that child to school. This adult should designate on the sign-in sheet the person who is authorized to pick up that child on that day. The classroom teacher will take attendance and note the number of children present on that day. The children are counted before going outside to play and they are counted again when they return to the classroom. Children are also counted during each transition time within a class schedule. At the end of class, classroom teachers will check the sign-in/out sheet to make sure each child is accounted for. DCP will not release any child to an unauthorized person. (See Arrival and Departure Policy). The adult who picks up the child should also remember to sign the child out on the attendance roster at the end of class.

At the close of each school day, the Executive Director or her/his assigned substitute, will review the attendance sheets, walk through the school and confirm with each lead teacher that each child has been picked up by a parent, legal guardian, or other authorized adult.

If a child becomes lost at DCP, each classroom will be immediately alerted, and staff members will spread through the school and areas surrounding the school to locate the child. If the child is not found immediately, then 911 will be called as well as the child's parent/guardian. If the child's parent/guardian cannot be reached, then the child's emergency contact will be called. DCP exercises a strict child supervision protocol to prevent such an incident.

Should the tornado sirens sound, the children will be removed from the upstairs classrooms and taken into the basement rooms of the church. Children will also be gathered in the hallway near the basement bathrooms. Staff members will accompany children at all times and will keep the sign-in/out sheets with them. The children will be counted, and any missing children will be located. Any necessary emergency medications and supplies will be available.

If there is a fire, the building will be immediately evacuated according to the emergency exit map. Staff members will accompany children at all times and will keep the sign-in/out sheets with them.

Should the staff be directed by authorities to relocate the children from the school because of an emergency, we will walk to the nearest safe location, as outlined by our emergency plan. In such an event, ALL staff and volunteers, the attendance sheets, appropriate supplies and emergency contacts will be with the children. Parents and caregivers will be notified as soon as it is safe to do so, and pickup will follow the reunification procedure as outlined by our emergency plan.

Per childcare licensing, staff members regularly practice safety drills including fire, tornado, lockdown, shelter in place, and active shooter. Licensing requires that fire drills are practiced with students to familiarize them with the process and our emergency routes. Lock down, shelter in place, and active shooter drills are not required to be practiced with children present, and we do not do so at DCP. This is a sensitive topic for many families and could present a frightening experience for young children. Staff are trained on and aware of all emergency protocol, and practice quarterly. Should licensing regulations change to require that lock down, shelter in place, and active shooter drills be practiced with children, parents and caregivers would be notified prior to this occurring in the classrooms.

When a child becomes ill at school, DCP will contact the parents or legal guardian first, and then (if the parent or legal guardian cannot be reached) the emergency contact. The ill child will be isolated from the rest of the class until the child is picked up. When a child is hurt or injured at school, DCP will administer first aid to the child and fill out an accident report.

Depending on the severity of injury, the child will either be returned to the class or the parent or legal guardian will be called to pick up the child. If a staff member feels that calling 911 is necessary, then an emergency call will be placed to 911 and then the parent or legal guardian will be called. If the parent or legal guardian cannot be reached, the emergency contact will then be called. Parents and legal guardians are asked to specify a preferred hospital choice on their emergency form. However, please note that in the event of an emergency, the first responders and emergency personnel will make the ultimate determination of where to transport the child.

**There is a no-smoking policy in and around the school building.**

### Firearms

DCP is a gun free zone unless it is required for a parent's profession that they carry a firearm. If this is the case, they are asked to notify the office. Individuals with a concealed carry permit are to be aware that, as a private school, guns are not allowed on the premises.

### Insurance

DCP carries insurance protecting the property of the preschool and the children against negligence. It is assumed that all parents carry medical insurance to cover accidents that happen during school hours.

### Recruitment

Denver Cooperative Preschool aims to recruit and retain highly qualified educators, administrative staff, and directors who are passionate about early childhood and committed to our mission and vision.

Our employee recruitment and selection policies outline our process for attracting and selecting job candidates. We are committed to an equal opportunity policy at every stage of the hiring process, and hiring teams aim for a well-planned and discrimination-free hiring process.

Hiring teams are typically comprised of the Executive Director and Assistant Director, and may also include the Board President, Board President-Elect, current educators, and/or members of the administrative staff, as determined by the Executive Director.

The recruitment and selection process typically follows the steps below:

1. Identify need for an opening.
2. Determine whether to hire internally, externally, or both.
3. Review the job description and compose a job ad when appropriate.
4. Select appropriate sources (external or internal) for posting the opening.
5. Decide on the selection stages and possible timeframe.
6. Review submitted resumes as well as those kept on file.
7. Shortlist applications/resumes.
8. Proceed through selection stages. Typical selection stages include:
  - a. Resume screening
  - b. Phone Screening
  - c. In-person interview
  - d. Background check
  - e. Working interview
9. Select the most suitable candidate
10. Make an official offer

11. Inform all candidates who interviewed and were not chosen that they were not selected for the position.

Steps in the hiring process may overlap, and directors may add or remove steps as appropriate.

### Retention

DCP believes strongly that are staff are our greatest resource and works diligently to retain those employed by the school. The following include elements of our retention strategy:

- Competitive compensation, paid in salary (9 or 12-month payment option available)
- Full benefits package offered to employees, including:
  - Paid holidays
  - Paid time off (sick, vacation, personal)
  - Health, Dental, and Vision Insurance
  - Life Insurance
  - Disability Insurance
  - Retirement plan with employer match
  - Employee Child Discount
- Ongoing staff-wide professional development
- Individual professional development budget for all employees, renewed annually
- Holiday bonuses
- Performance-based end-of-year bonus
- Staff representation on the Board of Directors

### Staff Gifts

We have a tradition at DCP of collecting gifts for our staff to show appreciation for all that they do for our children and our community throughout the year. The primary goal is to convey gratitude in ways that are individually meaningful for each family. DCP is an all-inclusive school that prides itself on appreciating the diversity of its school community. Anything from a handmade card, homemade or store-bought item, or gift certificates from a single family to a group collaboration is greatly appreciated.

In advance of the winter break and end of school year your Class Liaison will share a staff wish-list to give families staff preferences and a starting point for gift-giving. As a community we are very intentional about creating an environment centered on celebrating young children and families. We ask that gifts also embrace this philosophy and kindly request that families refrain from gifts of alcohol, marijuana or other items in conflict with this cultivated environment.

### Use of DCP Classroom Teachers or DCP Staff as Babysitters, Caregivers or Advisors

Should parents, family members or friends of DCP students (the “Requesting Party”) request that a DCP classroom teacher or DCP staff member provide any sort of care, supervision, guidance or activity for a child or children outside of the DCP standard classroom hours established for that child or children, and that DCP classroom teacher or staff member agrees to the request, such an arrangement (the “Arrangement”) will be an independent contractor relationship between the classroom teacher or staff member and the Requesting Party. During any Arrangement between the Requesting Party and a DCP classroom teacher or staff member, that classroom teacher or staff member is acting as an independent contractor and not as an employee, agent or representative of DCP. Any manner, method, and means used by the classroom teacher or staff member to perform babysitting, supervision or other guidance or activity during the Arrangement shall be under the classroom teacher or staff member’s sole discretion and control, and in the capacity as an independent contractor. DCP is not responsible for the classroom teacher or

staff member's conduct during any such Arrangement and the Requesting Party assumes all risk associated with the Arrangement, including, but not limited to, property damage, and physical or mental injury to any person or animal. DCP does not necessarily condone or recommend staff members as babysitters.