

# **GORHAM COOPERATIVE PRESCHOOL, INC. BYLAWS**

**28 Ballpark Rd  
Gorham, ME 04038  
(Updated February 2022)**

## **ARTICLE I Name**

The Gorham Cooperative Preschool (hereinafter referred to as the "Preschool") is located in Gorham, Maine. The Preschool is a cooperative non-profit, non-sectarian, non-discriminatory organization licensed by the state of Maine.

## **ARTICLE II Definition of a Cooperative**

A cooperative preschool is organized and administered by parents who:

- Hire qualified professional teachers who develop, review and adapt the curriculum to meet the needs of the children.
- Assist the teachers in the classroom.
- Operate the Preschool on a non-profit basis keeping costs to a minimum by the parents doing much of the work themselves, raising funds, holding offices, working on committees and maintaining the school and equipment.

The Preschool provides opportunities for the children to:

- Try new activities.
- Develop their independence.
- Acquire pre-academic concepts and skills.
- Make life-long friends and learn the importance of sharing.
- Listen and follow directions.
- Enjoy the learning experience.

The Preschool provides opportunities for the parents to:

- Play an active role in their child's first organized learning experience.
- Enhance parenting and leadership skills.
- Gain a deeper understanding of how children develop.
- Share ideas, interests and resources as well as create family friendships.

## **ARTICLE III**

### **Purpose Philosophy**

The mission of the Preschool is to provide a safe, nurturing, play based program, governed by the parent body and taught by professional early childhood educators with assistance from families. A strong sense of community is created by active family involvement. Each child's unique social, emotional, intellectual and physical growth is supported as they learn to adjust to a structured school environment. Children engage in hands-on developmentally appropriate activities.

## **ARTICLE IV**

### **Membership**

Parents of children enrolled in the cooperative and having submitted their June tuition deposit for the upcoming academic year are eligible Members (hereinafter referred to as "Members").

Membership will be open to all persons according to the provisions set forth in the Bylaws regardless of race, religion, national origin or gender.

Members will:

- A. Elect an Executive Board. Each member is entitled to one vote regardless of the number of children enrolled.
- B. Sign a confidentiality agreement and a Criminal Conviction Disclosure Statement. If a criminal incident has been noted on the disclosure or occurs during the school year, Members are required to report such incident to the Chairperson(s) immediately and complete additional documentation. A Member's right to volunteer in the preschool may be suspended by a vote of the Executive Board.
- C. Participate as a Parent Helper on a rotating daily schedule. Members with more than one child enrolled will be required to participate as a Parent Helper twice as many days as a Member with one child. For specific duties, see Parent Handbook.
- D. Attend every Parent Meeting. The Members are the governing body of our school, therefore attendance is mandatory.
- E. Hold a minimum of one position as either an Executive Board member or a committee member.
- F. Provide transportation to and from school and for field trips as shall be reasonably requested.
- G. Participate in official school fundraisers. Participation requirements will be outlined at the beginning of each school year, voted on by the Executive Board and presented to the Parent Body.
- H. Satisfy all financial responsibilities.
- I. Provide up to date immunization records for each child enrolled in the Preschool. (or a medical exempt form if applicable) Inform teacher(s) of any allergy or infectious disease information.
- J. Conduct themselves in a professional and rational manner at all times while on Preschool property or while attending a Preschool function.

- K. Be familiar with school Bylaws and contents of the Parent Handbook.
- L. Voice any issues or concerns to an Executive Board member.
- M. Read and sign the YIKES emergency procedure forms.
- N. Complete the Child Protective Services Background form, pay the associated fee and volunteer in the classroom only after the background check has been processed and shows no history of abuse.

Membership responsibilities include but are not limited to the aforementioned. Failure to meet the membership requirements as stated above, without approval from the Executive Board, will result in the Member receiving an email from the Secretary as a reminder of membership responsibilities.

Loss of “good standing” will occur upon receipt of a second notification and the Member will be required to meet Executive Board and or Chairperson(s) to discuss membership responsibilities.

Membership may be terminated without a refund of paid tuition due on affirmation of majority.

A majority of Members voting at a Parent Meeting or special meeting provided said Member(s) is informed in writing at least ten (10) days in advance of the meeting in which expulsion is to be considered; and such member shall have an opportunity to be heard in person at such meeting. All tuition due upon termination will remain due and outstanding after termination.

## **ARTICLE V**

### **Parent Meetings**

Parent Meetings shall be held at least twice each calendar year. Dates of the Parent Meetings will be determined by the Executive Board and posted before the beginning of the school year. The incoming Executive Board will determine the number of Parent Meetings each year and may amend the dates of scheduled Parent Meetings in its sole discretion. Special Parent Meetings may be demanded by majority vote of the Executive Board or by written petition of at least 3/10 of Members. In which case, the Chairperson(s) shall call such a meeting to take place within 14 days of such demand.

A simple majority of Members constitutes a quorum. A quorum is the minimum number of persons of any body that is required to be present in order to legally transact business. The Members may repeal a decision by the Executive Board with a 2/3 majority vote of those present at the meeting. There is one vote per enrolled family. A simple majority of the votes cast is sufficient to carry a motion.

An agenda will be distributed via email in advance of each Parent Meeting. Meeting minutes will be shared with the parent body within 7 days via email and a copy of the minutes will be filed at the Preschool.

Parent Meetings provide an opportunity for Members to openly discuss Preschool business. After one unexcused absence, the Member will receive a letter from the Secretary as a reminder of membership responsibilities.

## **ARTICLE VI**

### **Executive Board**

The Executive Board consists of the Lead Teacher, Assistant Teacher (non-voting member), Chairperson(s), Treasurer (non-voting member), a Class Coordinator for each session, Secretary, Maintenance Chair and Fundraising Chair. Treasurer position may be a member or non-member. In the event the Treasurer is a member he/she will have a voting interest as a Parent Body Member not as an Executive Board Member.

Any Member or staff who has a direct or indirect financial interest in decisions being made at an Executive Board or Parent Meeting must disclose this interest. The Executive Board may ask this person(s) to leave the meeting while the Executive Board decides how to proceed. The Executive Board can require this person(s) to leave the meeting during discussion of, and vote on, matters involving the disclosed financial conflict of interest. Members discussing and voting on tuition prices are exempt from this policy.

A simple majority of the voting members of the Executive Board constitutes a quorum. A majority vote is a simple majority of votes cast at a meeting.

Executive Board Meetings are open to all Members of the Preschool, debate of school business between 3 or more Executive Board members should be reserved for planned meetings of the Executive Board. The Executive Board reserves the right to call an executive session to discuss matters of a personal nature.

An agenda will be distributed via email in advance of each Executive Board Meeting. Meeting minutes will be shared with the parent body within 7 days via email and a copy of the minutes will be filed at the preschool.

The Executive Board will:

- A. Consider the work, welfare, current and future issues of the Preschool.
- B. Hold meetings monthly. Changes to or additional Executive Board Meetings may be called at the discretion of the Executive Board.
- C. Be familiar with the Bylaws.
- D. Propose amount of tuition and present for vote at a Parent Meeting annually.
- E. Review Treasurer's financial reports monthly.
- F. Vote on teacher(s) and Treasurer salaries annually.
- G. Keep matters of a personal nature in the strictest of confidence and sign a confidentiality agreement to that effect.
- H. Perform an annual performance review of the teacher(s) and Treasurer.
- I. Review the Preschool Calendar created by the Lead Teacher and the Governing Calendar created by the Chairperson(s) and offer input as needed.
- J. Review and vote on the annual budget for presentation to Members at a Parent Meeting.

- K. Outline a marketing/public relations plan for upcoming registration to the community, collaboratively with the Marketing committee.

Executive Board responsibilities include but are not limited to the aforementioned.

An Executive Board member or committee chairperson may resign at any time by providing notice to the Executive Board. Notice of resignation is effective immediately or at a later time agreed upon by the resigning member and the Executive Board Members.

An elected Executive Board member or committee chairperson may be removed from his/her position by a majority vote of the Executive Board or Membership.

The Executive Board will adhere to the following policies regarding all Gorham Cooperative Preschool financial matters:

- A. Contracts: Any contract entered into on behalf of Gorham Cooperative Preschool must have two (2) signatures by members of the Executive Board. Two (2) signatures are not required if authorization is granted by vote of the Executive Board.
- B. Checks, Drafts, or Orders: All Gorham Cooperative Preschool checks or other forms of payment exceeding \$1,000 must have two (2) signatures. Two (2) signatures are not required if authorization is granted by vote of the Executive Board.
- C. Deposits: All Gorham Cooperative Preschool funds shall be deposited to the credit of the preschool into a bank as designated by the Executive Board.

## **ARTICLE VII**

### **Elections**

The Chairperson(s) will invite and the Secretary will accept all volunteers for a slate of officers. The nominees are presented to Members by the Secretary. In the event that there are no volunteers, the Executive Board has the power to select a slate of officers to be presented to Members. By ballot, a separate vote will be held for each office at a Parent Meeting. It is recommended that the offices of the Executive Board be filled with experienced Members whenever possible. The newly elected Executive Board is required to attend the remaining Executive Board Meetings through the academic year. All duties and responsibilities of the Executive Board will be transferred to the newly elected Executive Board at the end of the academic year.

## **ARTICLE VIII**

### **Duties and Requirements of Executive Board Officers**

#### **Chairperson(s)**

- A. Assumes responsibility on July 1st of the current year.
- B. The term continues through June 31st of the following year.
- C. Preside at Executive Board Meetings and Parent Meetings.
- D. Prepare meeting agendas with input from other board members 7 days prior to Executive Board Meetings and Parent Meetings.
- E. Establish dates for the Governing Calendar prior to the commencement of the academic year. Changes to the Governing Calendar may be made at the discretion of the Executive Board. The Governing Calendar ("Governing Calendar") is a timeline of governing events throughout the academic year, which shall include but not be limited to: Executive Board elections, teachers contract negotiation and annual budget submittal by Treasurer.
- F. Initiate election process.
- G. Appoint Executive Board members and Chairpersons to fill vacancies during the year until a Member vote can be held.
- H. Review annual budget presented by the Treasurer.
- I. Conduct an audit of books submitted by the Treasurer and present findings to the Executive Board.
- J. Create, distribute, receive and review annual program evaluations and present synopsis to Members.
- K. Negotiate teacher(s) and Treasurer contracts and salaries and present to the Executive Board for vote.
- L. Ensure that the school has at least 2 qualified substitutes and prepare a full employment file for all substitutes.
- M. Confirm and review renewal of license by Lead Teacher and ensure Preschool is operating in accordance with Maine Department of Health and Human Services Rules for the Licensing of Nursery Schools.
- N. Assign volunteers to the Standing Committees and brief the volunteers of their duties. Chairperson(s) will oversee all Standing Committees.
- O. Update and distribute a current Preschool contact list to Members.
- P. Confirm Lead Teacher has collected all medical forms (i.e. immunization, medical, allergy) and prepared confidential student files prior to the start of the academic year.
- Q. Keep Members informed of relevant medical information.
- R. Prepare Teacher files for the new academic year.
- S. Administer an annual performance review of teacher(s) and Treasurer with input provided by the members of the Executive Board. Review results with the Executive Board and staff.
- T. Responsible for meeting annually with the Lead Teacher and Secretary to review the Bylaws and Parent Handbook.
- U. Present a written report (in chronological order) to the incoming Chairperson(s). Such report will detail all activities in which Chairperson(s) was involved during the term.

#### **Class Coordinators**

- A. Attend and participate in all meetings of the Executive Board.

- B. Provide a brief report at Parent Meetings.
- C. Preside at Executive Board and Parent Meetings in absence of Chairperson(s).
- D. Serve as a liaison between Members and the Executive Board.
- E. Set up and distribute the Parent Helper Day schedule for the academic year prior to the first day of school.
- F. Set up and initiate class phone tree, email, and or mass text when necessary.
- G. Post sign up sheets on the school bulletin board for special events and parties or use an electronic sign-up that all members can easily access.
- H. Obtain list of eligible emergency substitutes (from currently enrolled Members) for Parent Helpers.
- I. Familiarize new Members, who enroll after the start of the academic year, with the classroom and general procedures. Address any questions pertaining to the Bylaws.
- J. Disseminate pertinent Preschool information, as needed, and aid Lead Teacher when requested in answering questions and providing feedback to prospective families interested in the Preschool.
- K. Present a written report (in chronological order) to the incoming Class Coordinator. Such report will detail all activities in which the Class Coordinator was involved during the term.

### **Secretary**

- A. Keep detailed minutes of business transacted at Parent and Executive Board Meetings and maintain attendance records. A copy of the meeting minutes signed and dated by the Secretary, will be available for review in the Meeting Minutes Notebook in the Preschool and electronically distributed to the membership within 7 days.
- B. Prepare and type all necessary materials and correspondence.
- C. Make updates to the Parent Handbook and Bylaws as requested by Lead Teacher and Chairperson(s).
- D. Oversee the annual election including creating nomination and ballot forms.
- E. Assist Lead Teacher with preschool administrative duties, as requested.
- F. Present a written report (in chronological order) to the incoming Secretary. Such report will detail all activities in which Secretary was involved during the term.

### **Treasurer**

- A. Is a paid member or non-member, with a rate of pay to be determined and voted on annually by the Executive Board.
- B. Coordinates with Chairperson(s) in ensuring separation of duties with regards to financial transactions, in order to prevent fraud.
- C. Responsible for filing Secretary of State Annual Report.
- D. Responsible for the annual review, audit and update of all insurance policies.
- E. Responsible for payroll, including but not limited to setting up new employees, quarterly reporting, annual salary changes and workers' compensation reporting.
- F. Negotiate lease and handle issues.
- G. Attend and participate in all meetings of the Executive Board and submit financial reports at each meeting.

- H. Provide a financial report at Parent Meetings and make available to Members by email and at the school.
- I. Prepare annual budget for review by the Executive Board for the upcoming school year.
- J. Receive and process monthly tuition and miscellaneous monies throughout the year (e.g. registration, fundraisers, donations, reimbursements, etc.).
- K. Catalog donations and issue receipts upon request.
- L. Pay all monthly expenses.
- M. Deposit checks at bank and reconciles account monthly in a timely fashion.
- N. Visit preschool on a weekly basis to pick up mail and other financial correspondence.
- O. Correspond with accountant as needed.
- P. Work with accountant and payroll service to ensure all tax related and new hire forms are completed and filed in a timely manner.
- Q. Submit monthly financial reports to Chairperson(s) for auditing.
- R. Correspond with Members regarding account activity.
- S. Present end-of-year synopsis to the Executive Board and Members.
- T. Have working knowledge of Quickbooks Online.
- U. Present a written report (in chronological order) to the incoming Treasurer. Such report will detail all activities in which Treasurer was involved during the term.

### **Fundraising Chair**

- A. Attend and participate in all meetings of the Executive Board.
- B. Provide a brief report at Parent Meetings.
- C. Develop ideas and recommendations for fundraising events to be presented to the Executive Board for review and approval prior to the commencement of each school year.
- D. Plan and coordinate official fundraising activities and present to the Members.
- E. Outline a marketing/public relations plan for each fundraising event which may include radio, television, newspaper, website advertising, local signage and marketing materials (i.e., tickets, flyers, posters and programs) with the help from the Marketing Committee.
- F. Collaborate with and delegate duties to Members of the Fundraising Committee.
- G. Maintain a list of current, past and possible future sponsors including contact information, monetary donations as well as other donation information.
- H. Complete a written cost/income summary after each fundraiser and present to Executive Board.
- I. Present a written report (in chronological order) to the incoming Fundraising Chair. Such report will detail all activities in which Fundraising Chair was involved during the term.

### **Maintenance Chair**

- A. Attend and participate in all meetings of the Executive Board.
- B. Provide a brief report at Parent Meetings.



- C. Maintain and update the written record of seasonal and on-going maintenance tasks required to keep the Preschool and Preschool grounds safe, clean and orderly.
- D. Working with maintenance committee members create a plan for completing maintenance tasks including lawn/yard maintenance and snow removal.
- E. Coordinate the purchasing of maintenance supplies and the upkeep of maintenance equipment. Consult with executive board members if these costs exceed budgeted amounts.
- F. If desired make recommendations for improvements to the classroom and the grounds.
- G. Present a written report (in chronological order) to the incoming Maintenance Chair. This report will detail all activities in which the Maintenance Chair was involved during the term.

## **ARTICLE IX**

### **Registration and Fees**

Annual student enrollment will commence on the first day in February for the upcoming school year ("Alumni Enrollment Date"). At that time, enrollment is open to current Members, past Members and families on previous years' wait list, applications to be postmarked no earlier than the Alumni Enrollment Date. Annual enrollment for the community at large will start the first day in March ("General Public Enrollment Date").

Applications are obtained from and returned upon completion to the Lead Teacher Upon receipt of the completed application and non refundable registration fee, the application will be dated for further use.

In the spring, if there is not full enrollment, the Lead Teacher and the Executive Board will set an open house date for the community at large. At that time applications will be accepted until all openings are filled.

Openings will be filled in the following manner:

1. Current Members: by postmark date or time of registration online of all current Member applications.
2. Past Members: by postmark date or time of registration online of all past Member applications.
3. Past Waitlist: by postmark date or time of registration online of all waitlist that are eligible for class program.
4. Community at Large: by postmark or time of registration online date of all applications.

In the event that many applications are received on the same date, the order will be determined by the time it was received. It is recommended that all postmarked applications have the post office employee write the time it was dropped off on the envelope. Online applications will automatically be timed upon submission. Online

applications will not be accepted before 8:00 am on the Alumni Enrollment Date or General Public Enrollment Date, whichever date is applicable to the enrolling family.

If a family is registering more than one child (i.e. twins) the first child's registration time will count for both, taking up to two openings in the registration. If necessary, membership can be increased by one by a vote of the Executive Board in order to accommodate twins.

When a class is full, a waitlist will be formed according to the order received by postmark. No special accommodations will be given to prior Members, etc. past the General Public Enrollment Date.

Prior to filling the classes, the Lead Teacher will determine the number of spaces to be left open for children who may need to repeat a year. A decision to repeat a year must occur by March 30th. Should a Member decide after March 30th to repeat a year, the Member will be placed on the waitlist.

Registration and tuition policies include, but are not limited, to the following:

- A. The maximum number of children to attend the 2-day class in any year will be 10. The maximum number of children to attend the 3-day class in any year will be 14. In accordance with the desire of the Members, the Executive Board will strive to maintain low class size. If a situation arises where the Executive Board finds it necessary to increase or decrease this number for a particular year, they may do so by a majority vote of the Executive Board.
- B. Students in the 2-day classes must be three (3) by October 15th of the school year they are entering. Students in the 3-day class must be four (4) by October 15th of the school year they are entering. The teacher(s) must approve any exceptions to the age qualifications listed above after an informal evaluation of the student is conducted. Exceptions to the age qualifications will be considered for students born between October 16th and January 1st. Board approval is required for registering a 3-day student who does not turn four until after January 1st. All students in the preschool must be toilet trained.
- C. The non-refundable registration is subject to change by the Executive Board and voted on by the Members.
- D. For every child who is registered in the Preschool, a deposit of one month's tuition must be paid by June 1st and will be counted as June tuition. Any Member not complying with this deadline risks forfeiting his/her space in the Preschool with no refund of the registration fee and said space will be offered to the next waiting list application.
- E. A new Member entering after the first week of the month will pay a prorated tuition for the month.
- F. Monthly tuition is payable on the first of each month, to be mailed to the school, deposited in the tuition envelope in the classroom, or online.
- G. Monthly tuition not received by the 10th of each month will be assessed a late fee of \$10 or an amount to be determined by the Executive Board.
- H. If tuition is not paid by the 10th of the month, a warning will be given by the Treasurer. If tuition is not paid by the 20th of the month, as a second warning, a written notification will be sent by the Treasurer. Failure to pay tuition within the

30-day delinquency period, without approval of the Executive Board, may be grounds for expulsion.

- I. In extenuating circumstances, families experiencing financial hardship may appeal to the Executive Board for special tuition arrangements. Families must complete a Scholarship Application to apply for special tuition arrangements.
- J. There is a Sibling Discount for Members with multiple children enrolled in the Preschool. The "Sibling Discount" will be a 10% discount on the second child or lesser tuition amount. Members who apply for scholarship assistance are not eligible for the Sibling Discount during their scholarship period.
- K. Any charges incurred by the Preschool due to check(s) being returned "non-payable for insufficient funds" will be paid by the Member.
- L. All accounts should be settled by June 1st of the year enrolled. On June 10th a late fee of \$10 will be assessed.

Members who have not fulfilled their financial commitment by June 1st will not be provided their student's school portfolio until all financial obligations are met. Members who have not fulfilled their financial commitment by June 1st may forfeit their position in the preschool for the following year.

### **Scholarship**

In extenuating circumstances, families experiencing financial hardship may appeal to the Executive Board for special scholarship arrangements. Families must complete a Scholarship Application to apply for special tuition arrangements. Scholarship Applications can be obtained from the Teacher(s). The full June deposit must be paid prior to applying for a scholarship. No scholarship funds are reserved for payment of deposits.

Annual Scholarship Funds shall not exceed THE AMOUNT SET BY THE EXECUTIVE BOARD per school year. Scholarship Funds can be divided between multiple families based on need but the total amount granted in any year will not exceed THE AMOUNT SET BY THE EXECUTIVE BOARD. SCHOLARSHIP FUNDS WILL BE SET PRIOR TO THE END OF THE PRIOR SCHOOL YEAR.

Scholarships are awarded for three (3) month increments and applications are due on the first of the month prior to each period as detailed below:

August 1st FOR VOTE AT AUGUST BOARD MEETING	September, October, November
November 1st FOR VOTE AT NOVEMBER BOARD MEETING	December, January, February
February 1st FOR VOTE AT FEBRUARY BOARD MEETING	March, April, May

### **ARTICLE X**

#### **Leave of Absence**

A. Birth/Adoption: A Member may be excused from participation in the group (parent helper duties) for six weeks after the birth/adoption of their child provided they are a Member in "good standing" and tuition remains current.

In cases of complications, the term may be extended, at the discretion of the Executive Board, provided tuition remains current.

B. Serious Illness: In case of serious illness, the Parent Helper may be excused from participation in the group for two weeks. Extended absence may be approved by the Executive Board.

C. Personal Leave: One week's notice should be provided on a Personal Leave of Absence if possible. The Personal Leave should not exceed three weeks and tuition must remain current. The Member must arrange coverage for her/his own Parent Helper Day, which must be repaid after return.

D. Child Leave: A child who is enrolled in the Preschool but had to take a leave of absence can re-enter as long as tuition remains current.

## **ARTICLE XI Referral Policy**

Should a situation arise where the Preschool is unable to meet the needs of a child, the teacher(s) and Member involved will evaluate and determine whether the Preschool is an appropriate setting for the child. Any unresolved issues or concerns arising from this meeting can be brought before the Executive Board with the knowledge of both the teacher(s) and Member.

In the event that a student or family needs assistance that the Preschool cannot provide, the Executive Board, and teacher(s) will make every possible attempt to make the necessary referrals. The referrals will be within the student's and family's community whenever possible. If appropriate referrals cannot be found within the home community, every attempt will be made to find assistance in surrounding communities. The Preschool reserves the right to refer any party to an appropriate agency outside of the school when the Executive Board, and teacher(s) cannot provide a needed or recommended service.

Should a child be requested to leave the Preschool, tuition will be refunded for the days paid and not attended.

## **ARTICLE XII Withdrawal**

If a Member withdraws from the Preschool voluntarily before the commencement of the school year, the deposit will be refunded if the vacancy is filled before the commencement of the school year.

If a family voluntarily withdraws after the commencement of the school year, the family is responsible for paying their current balance prior to the withdrawal date. Deposits will

not be refunded. In extenuating circumstances, a deposit may be refunded if agreed upon by a majority vote of the Executive Board.

### **ARTICLE XIII**

#### **Procurement of the Teachers and Salary**

The Chairperson(s) will negotiate teacher(s) contracts and salary. A vote of the Executive Board to accept negotiated contracts and salary will be taken. The contract must be signed by the teacher(s) within two weeks of the receipt.

When a vacancy in the position of teacher(s) occurs a Hiring Committee will be formed. The Hiring Committee will consist of any interested Members, at least one Member of the Executive Board. The Hiring Committee will advertise for the position, interview qualified candidates and present a candidate to the Members for a vote. The interview process will consist of no more than 7 members.

In the event a substitute teacher is required, the Executive Board will determine the rate of pay.

The Executive Board may vote to terminate a teacher(s) contract.

### **ARTICLE XIV**

#### **School Hours**

The Preschool will be in session:  
8:30 – 11:00 a.m. Tuesday/Thursday 2-Day Class  
8:30 – 11:30 a.m. Monday/Wednesday/Friday 3-Day Class

The Preschool generally follows the same holiday schedule as the Gorham Public Schools system and are guided by their “no school” announcements.

### **ARTICLE XV**

#### **Snow Policy**

Preschool classes may be canceled due to inclement weather. In such event, the Preschool will follow the closing of the Gorham Public School system. If Gorham Public Schools are closed, the Preschool will be closed. A “one hour delay” of Gorham Public Schools means a “one hour delay” for the Preschool.

A “two hour or more delay” of Gorham Public Schools means the Preschool will be closed. If there is a weather related early release of the Gorham Public Schools the Preschool will also release early after communicating with families. Snow days will not be made up. The final date of school and the date of graduation will not change.

### **ARTICLE XVI**

#### **Food Allergies and Snacks**

Gorham Cooperative Preschool recognizes the potentially serious consequences of allergen exposure to children with allergies. The Preschool does not purport to be, nor can it be deemed to be free of food items and non-food items that may lead to a severe allergic or anaphylactic reaction. The Preschool will make every reasonable effort to reduce the risk to children with severe allergies or anaphylaxis both by banning known allergens and following sound hygiene practices.

If no enrolled students have life-threatening food allergies

- The Preschool will maintain a peanut and tree nut free environment because peanuts and tree nuts are the most common food allergens.
- If food is to be shared, teachers will verify safety by reviewing the pre-packaged ingredient list or the ingredient list for a home-made item.
- If food is to be consumed by only an adult and his/her child/children, teachers will provide a reminder of the allergy policy and trust the adult's verification that the food contains no peanuts or tree nuts.

If one or more enrolled students have life-threatening food allergies

- The Preschool will ban all of the life-threatening allergens from both the Preschool building and the playground. Signs listing banned allergens will be hung.
- Using information provided by the families of students with allergies teachers will update the Annual Allergy Safety Plan and the Annual Snack Protocols found in the Family Handbook.
- All food brought into the Preschool will need to be approved. Approval will require food to be accompanied by an ingredient list for home-made items or left in the original packaging for pre-packaged items.
- Food will require written approval by the family of any student with life-threatening food allergies if that student will be present when the food is consumed. Approval should only be given if the student with the allergy can safely consume the food.
- Teachers will review and approve food items if the student(s) with life-threatening food allergies will not be present when the food is consumed. Teachers will base their approval on an understanding of the current allergies of all enrolled students and a thorough assessment of the ingredients.
- If teachers approve a home-made item handwashing after eating will be enforced because there is less certainty regarding allergens when food isn't pre-packaged.
- If any of the banned allergens are not part of the top eight allergens, teachers will not approve any food item without written approval from the family whose child has the uncommon allergy even if that child won't be present when the food is consumed.
- The only exceptions that won't require approval are water and whole fresh fruits and vegetables. If there is a student with an allergy to specific fruits or vegetables then those fruits and/or vegetables will be banned.
- Adults and children should only drink water when at the Preschool.
- If an enrolled student has a sibling with life-threatening food allergies, the student's family must decide if the Preschool is a safe place for the sibling. The Preschool will not ban allergens based on the allergies of siblings.

Teacher Lunches

During non-school hours teachers will be allowed to consume food that has not been approved and that may contain banned allergens. When eating non-approved food teachers must eat at a table, wash hands after eating and then clean both the sink used for hand washing and the table used for eating. If there are spills or crumbs that land on the floor or chair the teacher will clean the floor and/or chair.

### Classroom Pets and Pet Food

If the classroom has pets that require food that contains life-threatening allergens the families of children with these allergies will be made aware of the procedures used for storing and serving the food. Food will be stored in a lid with a container, kept out of reach of children and only accessed during non-school hours. Teachers will wash hands after serving the food and thoroughly clean up any spills if they occur. Teachers will also wash hands after cleaning out the cage of pets, thoroughly clean up any spills if they occur and place the trash created in the outside dumpster.

### Daily Snacks

- A daily snack is a requirement for Nursery Schools licensed in the state of Maine.
- During snack time students will be offered either a fruit or a vegetable brought to the Preschool by a parent helper or supplied by the Preschool. If there are any students with life-threatening food allergies this fruit or vegetable must be prepared at the Preschool.
- Children will also be offered a dry shelf-stable snack that is purchased by GCP staff or by a board approved volunteer purchaser. Before being served to anyone this snack must be approved by all the families of students who have life-threatening food allergies.
- The primary goal of the Preschool supplied snack is to limit the number of separate food items that require ingredient review and approval.
- The dry snack must meet the needs of all students with life-threatening food allergies. The Preschool will purchase snacks that satisfy the budget restraints of the Preschool and the needs and preferences of most families. If a student or student's family has food restrictions or preferences that make certain foods unacceptable the teachers will avoid serving those foods to that student.
- Families are welcome to store at the Preschool an alternate snack for days when the Preschool dry snack is not acceptable for their child. As with all food this snack will require approval based on the current allergy needs of all enrolled students.

### Food for Celebrations

- The sharing of a small sweet treat will be an option if desired on or near a student's birthday. Prior to being served the sweet treat must receive approval based on the current allergy needs of all students.
- Teachers may choose to celebrate certain holidays with food items provided by the Preschool or provided by donations from families. All food items will require approval based on the current allergy needs of enrolled students. A small sweet treat may be part of the celebration.

### Food for Events and Fundraisers

- The Preschool may not always be able to or willing to ban allergens from events and fundraisers held off-site.

**ARTICLE XVII**  
**Amendments to the Bylaws**

The Bylaws may be amended by a simple majority vote of the Members acting on the recommendation of the Bylaws Committee, the Executive Board or the motion of any Member.

The proposed Bylaw amendment(s) will be published and distributed to Members. The proposed amendment(s) will be read and voted on at a Parent Meeting.

**ARTICLE XVIII**  
**Parliamentary Procedure**

In all matters not covered by its Bylaws, Robert's Rules of Order will govern this Preschool.

**Bylaw Revision February 2022**