

BYLAWS

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**DIETRICH JOHNSON COOPERATIVE NURSERY SCHOOL
BYLAWS**

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Article 1 Name

The name of this school is Dietrich Johnson Cooperative Nursery School, a New Jersey non-profit corporation. The address is 61 Nassau Street, Princeton, New Jersey 08542.

Article 2 Mission Statement

This organization is a nonprofit cooperative nursery school for children in the pre-kindergarten years. For the child, we provide a safe place that allows him/her to be with other children and adults outside his/her own family. This environment gives children a sense of comfort and security, and of independence and adventure, and a chance to learn and to investigate alone, and with schoolmates, guided by teachers. For the parents, we provide a chance to learn from the teacher, including the ways she handles children and the games and projects she offers. Parents also have the opportunity to share mutual concerns with other parents, and to learn about other children – what they are like and what their abilities and developmental patterns are – to gain perspective on where their child fits into the group.

Article 3 Description

The school consists of classes for children ages two and one half through five years old in classes that meet from two to four mornings a week at the Nassau Presbyterian Church, 61 Nassau Street. A lunch and extended day program is available. The school year runs from September until June, with vacations and snow day cancellations following the Princeton Regional School procedures. Classes will make up canceled days according to the following schedule: 2’s will make up all days above 2 days missed, 3’s all above 3 days missed, and 3/4’s, 4’s and 5’s all days above 4 missed.

Article 4 Membership

The membership consists of each parent or guardian of any child enrolled in the nursery school. The requirements for membership in good standing are set forth in Article 5. The membership votes on the proposed budget for the upcoming year, elects the Board of Directors (see Article 7), votes on any changes in the by-laws that would have significant impact on the membership requirements, or on the operation of the school. The proposed budget is subject to change based on actual number of enrolled students.

Article 5 Membership Responsibilities/Co-op Requirements

Fall Parents’ Meeting

At least one parent or guardian from each family must attend the yearly Fall Parent's Meeting. Parents who miss the meeting and fail to contact the Homeroom Coordinator prior to the meeting, will be charged a fine. An updated fee schedule is available in the Parent Handbook.

Clean-up Day

One parent or guardian from each family must participate in one of the two Clean-Up Days held during the year: one in the fall and one in the winter. Parents who miss their assigned Clean Up Day and fail to contact the Homeroom Coordinator prior to that morning, will be charged a fine. Hours spent at a clean-up day do not count toward maintenance hours (see maintenance hours section). An updated fee schedule is available in the Parent Handbook.

Classroom Co-op/Helping Parent Days

Parents are assigned (by the Scheduler) to work or "co-op" in their child's classroom on a rotating basis. The number of days will vary between classes and depend on the number of children enrolled in the class and other factors. The hours for the helping parent are 8:40 a.m.-12:00 p.m. Helping parents are required to bring a healthy snack and drink for the whole class.

If a parent cannot serve as helping parent on a specific day, he or she must either trade with a parent in the class or contact a substitute from the list provided in the handbook. The parent pays the substitute according to the fee schedule listed in the handbook. In case of emergency, parents should call the school or teacher so a last minute substitute can be found.

A parent must serve as a helping parent in the classroom at least once each semester. On other helping parent days, the helper may be a caregiver (provided that the caregiver is physically able, can communicate sufficiently with the teachers, the proper paperwork has been submitted and prior approval is given by the teacher); the teacher reserves the right to determine whether a caregiver is an acceptable substitute for the parent.

Family Activities/Events

One parent or guardian from each family must work at one school activity/event (Pizza Night, Craft Fair, Pancake Breakfast, etc.) Each family will have the opportunity to sign up for their preferred activity/event, but may be switched as needed by the Activities Coordinator to ensure that all activities/events have adequate volunteer coverage. The hours worked on or at this event do not count towards maintenance hours. To fulfill their co-op responsibility, parents are required to work for the entire duration of their assigned event (set-up through clean-up) unless other arrangements are agreed upon in advance with the Event Chairperson.

Maintenance Hours

Each family in the school is required to complete ten (10) maintenance hours regardless of the number of children enrolled in the school. Homeroom parents and the Supplies Coordinator receive a credit of five (5) maintenance hours. Members of the Board of Directors and other Administrative Positions (Secretary, Scheduler, Health Officer, etc.) receive a credit of ten (10) maintenance hours.

Parents should consult with the homeroom parent, homeroom coordinator, activities coordinator, or teacher to determine what tasks are needed to fulfill their maintenance hours. Parent record their own maintenance hours on a chart in each classroom as they are completed. At the end of the year, a fine will be imposed for every hour not completed.

Complete Forms

All nursery school forms, including the enrollment contract, registration packet, teacher evaluations and permission slips, must be completed and returned by the due date. Immunization and emergency Medical Release Forms must be returned prior to the start of school. Children will not be allowed to attend the preschool until these forms are turned in.

Pay Tuition, Fees and Fines.

Tuition is set by the Executive Board each January for the next academic year. Tuition is payable in three installments. Parents are responsible for the timely payment of all tuition and fees. The tuition schedule will be distributed to parents in the registration packet, in the DJCNS Handbook and on the school website. Failure to pay tuition, fees and fines in a timely manner and without contacting the Treasurer to make other arrangements may result in the suspension of a child from attending class and school functions.

Article 6 Consequences of Failing to Meet Parent/Guardian Obligations

Parent participation is critical for effective operation of the school. Parents who do not comply with the membership requirements may be subject to sanction and, in the case of repeated or egregious disregard of their obligations, may be asked to remove their children from the school.

Fines

The Board of Directors is responsible for setting the fines and publishing them in the DJCNS Handbook. Fines will be assessed against parent/guardians who do not fulfill the following obligations: (1) participate in a clean-up day; (2) attend the fall parents' meeting, (3) participate as a helping parent in the classroom, and (4) participate in chosen school event, and (5) complete maintenance hours.

Student Dismissal.

On the advice of the Director and Head Teacher, and the affirmative vote of 2/3rds of the Board of Directors, parents who do not abide by the participation requirements of the school may be asked to withdraw from the membership, and thus remove their children from the school.

Article 7 School Administration

The Nursery School is administered by the Board of Directors with the assistance and cooperation of all parents, as outlined in Parent/Guardian Membership Responsibilities/Co-Op Requirements (see Article 5). The Board of Directors consists of the Director, the Head Teacher, and the following elected members, chosen from the pool of parents in the school: President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, Registrar, Publicity Chairperson, Activities Chairperson, and Fundraising Coordinator. The Lead classroom teachers serve on the Board in an advisory capacity, and thus have a non-voting role.

The other Administrative Roles will consist of the Scheduler, Homeroom Coordinator, Health Officer, Newsletter Coordinator, and Supply Coordinator.

The Board shall hire, on an annual basis, a Director and Head Teacher and any other staff members that it may deem necessary for the proper administration of the School. The responsibilities of the Director and Head Teacher are set forth in Article 9.

When necessary, a small subsection of the Board of Directors will meet separately from the entire Board. This subsection is called the Executive Board. The Executive Board consists of: the Director, Head Teacher, President, Vice-President, Registrar and Treasurer.

The Board of Directors, acting in trust for the total parent body of the Nursery School, will, together with the professional staff, make policy regarding the educational philosophy, administration, membership requirements, fiscal health, and long-term goals of the Nursery School.

Any grievance or concern should be directed to the Head Teacher, Director, President or Vice-President. Homeroom parents can address small issues that affect only their classroom, or pass on larger concerns to the appropriate person.

Article 8 Board of Directors Selection

Standing Board Members will recruit new Board members when necessary, and propose a slate of incoming Board Members chosen from existing Board Members and new parent volunteers. The membership votes to approve the new board in the spring. Each elected member of the Board serves a one-year term. Board members are encouraged to serve a two-year term where possible, to facilitate continuity in the administration of the school. Should a Board Member be unable to complete the year's term of office, a replacement will be appointed by the President.

Article 9 Board of Directors' Duties

Director

- Meet all of the requirements and perform all of the functions set forth for a "Director" in the New Jersey Child Care Licensing statutes and administrative rules and regulations.
- Formulate the overall educational policies of the school with concurrence of the Board of Directors and interpret those policies to the parents. Specifically, to work with the Head Teacher to evaluate and plan the school's curriculum, and to implement special programs (e.g. music and science, field trips, etc).
- Following the recommendation of the Personnel Committee, have the authority to hire and fire staff.
- Have power, along with the Treasurer, to sign checks.
- Act as liaison with Nassau Presbyterian Church for scheduling issues.

Along with the Head Teacher, the Director will

- Give help and advice to the teachers in developing and carrying out the daily routine and programs of the school, holding regular staff meetings for this purpose. Keep them apprised of new developments and courses given in the field of early childhood education.
- Evaluate teachers in the classroom, and meet with the Personnel Committee in the fall and spring to review the teacher evaluation (see article 10).
- Be a liaison between the teachers and the Board of Directors.
- Have the authority to call emergency Board of Directors, Executive Committee, and Parents' Meetings.

Head Teacher

- Arrange specials for the school (Wacky Gym, Tae Kwan Do, Music, Science, etc.).
- Research professional development opportunities (workshops, hours) and arrange for staff to attend.
- Update and maintain teacher records and files.

President

- Preside at and prepare the agenda for all meetings of the Board of Directors, Executive Committee, and at all Parents' Meetings.
- Make appointments to standing Committees as required.
- Have the power to set-up and disband temporary committees, and will be a member ex-officio of all committees.
- Have the authority to call emergency Board of Directors, Executive Committee, and Parents' Meetings.
- In the spring, assist the Treasurer and Director in preparing a tentative budget for the forthcoming year.
- In the spring, appoint a committee to audit the Nursery School books during the summer.

Vice-President

- Chair the Personnel Committee (see article 11) and work closely with the Head Teacher in all matters pertaining to teacher personnel.
- Screen and interview all applicants for teaching or other positions, and present hiring recommendations to the Board of Directors.
- Prepare annual teacher contracts.
- Prepare and distribute teacher evaluation forms to parents, once in the fall/winter and once in the spring, and distribute completed forms to respective teachers; edit/revise forms where necessary.
- Preside in the absence of incapacitation of the President.
- Become President if that office falls vacant.
- Have the authority to call emergency meetings in the absence of incapacitation of the President or Director.
- Be responsible for and oversee the creation preparation and distribution of the contents of the Handbook.

Secretary

- Keep the minutes of all meetings of the membership and of the Board of Directors meetings, email a copy to all Board members and keep a hard copy in a central file. Post a copy on school bulletin board after each meeting. Ensure that the membership is informed of all Board and Parents' Meetings.
- Be responsible for the gathering, copying, and distribution/emailing of required materials for the Fall Parent's Meeting, registration packets, Handbook, Open House, etc.

Treasurer

- Receive and record all tuition, lunch or other payments, fees, fines, and donations.
- Pay all salaries and bills in accordance with the budget. This includes attending to all matters relating to insurance, taxes, social security, and the pension plan.
- In the event that the Treasurer holds more than one position on the Board the vote is reduced to one.

Registrar

- Receive and respond to all inquiries concerning membership.
- Keep accurate and up-to-date records of class enrollment and names on the waiting list.
- Fill vacancies when withdrawals occur.
- Chair the Placement Committee. Plan and prepare, in consultation with the committee, class lists. Distribute updated class lists throughout the year.
- Distribute registration packets and receive all returning forms and distribute them as necessary.
- Oversee tour guides.

Publicity Coordinator

- Be responsible for newspaper articles and other publicity throughout the community, including advance publicity for all events, class vacancies, teacher openings, etc.
- Organize and oversee all Open Houses and Communiversity.
- Maintain copies of all publicity and advertisements.

Activities Coordinator

- Oversee the organization of all-school events, including the Fall Parents' Meeting, Pizza Night, Craft Fair, Pancake Breakfast, Open Houses, Communiversity and Music Morning.

Other Administrative Roles (Non-voting board positions)

The following roles are critical to the smooth running of DJCNS:

Homeroom Coordinator

- With respect to maintenance hours, ensure that parent/guardian responsibilities are fulfilled, and ensure that parents attend at least one clean-up day.
- Record all fines as they are incurred by families and notify the treasurer of the responsible parents.
- Be a liaison between class parents and the Board of Directors.

Scheduler

- Create the Helping Parent schedule, with the help of the returned co-op schedule forms. Distribute the schedule at the Fall Parents Meeting. Compile and distribute the substitute list.
- Update schedule as necessary throughout the school year with any major revisions.
- Post the master schedule on the classroom bulletin boards.

Communications Coordinator

- Create and distribute the school newsletter at least twice a year in the fall and spring.
- Maintain the school's web site.

Health Coordinator

- Collect and file health forms for children and teachers, notifying the teachers of all pertinent information, and ensuring that all children satisfy New Jersey State law regarding inoculations.
- Conduct monthly emergency exit drills, and if necessary review with the teachers the location of emergency exits.
- Immediately advise all parents of any communicable diseases, e.g., chicken pox, strep throat, pink eye, etc.
- Formulate health policies for the school to present to the Board, including the school's health and sickness policy, and public health issues relevant to the school's environment.
- Distribute information to the membership regarding the school's peanut and tree nut-free food policy, and regarding any other issues relevant to the environment of the school.
- At the start of the year, collect health documentation from the teachers, including: (1) a statement of health signed by a doctor, and (2) a (negative) TB skin test (see Article 10).

Supply Coordinator

- Purchase class room and housekeeping supplies as directed by the teachers, and buy permanent equipment with the approval of the Director and the Board of Directors.

Fundraising Coordinator

- Coordinate all fundraising activities.
- Responsible for Picture Day (contacting school photographer, scheduling dates and communicating with parents)

Scholastic Books Coordinator

- Distribute Scholastic Book flyers to parents on a monthly basis
- Place orders and distribute books after orders are shipped

Article 10 Teachers

- If a vacancy in the teaching staff occurs the Personnel Committee, which includes the Director, Head Teacher, President and Vice President will interview all applicants. Teachers will be appointed by the Board of Directors on the recommendation of the Personnel Committee, and following the affirmative vote of the members of the Board of Directors.
- Teachers will be given a yearly contract. Teachers will be reviewed yearly by the Personnel Committee prior to the offer of a renewal contract.
- Teachers shall furnish at the beginning of each year a statement of health signed by a registered physician, and a (negative) TB skin test.

Lead Classroom Teachers/ Co-Teachers

- Along with the Director and Head Teacher, cooperate with the Board of Directors in formulating the overall educational policies of the school.
- Plan and execute the daily program of the school.
- Attend regular staff meetings called and presided over by the Head Teacher.
- Attend all Board meetings, Clean-up Days and the Fall Parents Meeting. Maintain an accurate attendance record for each child.
- Provide a fall progress report in the fall and at least one scheduled in-person conference with each parent in the spring, and be available by appointment to parents for consultation. Be responsible to the parents for the explanation of teaching methods and goals for the school year.
- Attend educational conferences and workshops appropriate to teaching responsibilities.
- Visit each child from their class at their home in the fall (“home visits”).

Assistant Teachers

- Work with the teacher, and assist the helping parent or substitute, with execution of the daily program of the class.
- Attend regular staff meetings and all Parents’ Meetings.
- Assist teacher with parent-teacher conferences and home visits.
- Be available to parents for consultation.

Article 11 Standing Committees

In addition to temporary committees, which may be set up and disbanded at the discretion of the President, the Board will appoint the following standing committees.

Executive Board

- Consists of the Director, Head Teacher, President, Vice-President, Registrar and Treasurer.
- Will meet and act in the event of an emergency requiring action before the meeting of the Board of Directors, or if the membership cannot be called together quickly enough to address the issue at hand.
- Address issues requiring confidentiality, such as personnel issues, and issues referred to it by the Board or a Standing Committee. In the event that a confidential issue involves a member of the Executive Board, the other members can meet without informing that person.

Nominating Committee

- Appointed by the President to be chaired by a current Board of Directors member.
- Presents a slate of officers for election to the Board of Directors (see Article 8). This slate of officers will be presented first to the Board of Directors, followed by a vote by the entire membership.

Personnel Committee

- Chaired by the Vice President, members include the Director, Head Teacher, President, and any other Board members or parents appointed by the President.
- Responsible for publicizing (with the assistance of the Publicity Coordinator) any job openings.
- Screen and interview all applicants for teaching or other positions, and for making hiring recommendations to the

Board of Directors.

- Meet with Budget Committee to determine salary structure for employees.
- Develop guidelines for hiring and for performance and salary review. If personnel problems develop during the school year, the Personnel Committee will consider and implement appropriate action.

Financial Aid Committee

- Chaired by the Director, members include the President, and Treasurer.
- Responsible for reviewing all applications for scholarships and management of all scholarship funds.
- Establish guidelines for recipients.
- Maintain the confidentiality of all applicants, and all recipients of scholarships.

Audit Committee

- The President will appoint a parent or parents to serve as an Audit Committee.
- Reviews the books of the Nursery School and reports to the Board of Directors.

Budget Committee

- Chaired by the Treasurer, members include the Director, Head Teacher, President, and the Vice-President and any other Board Member deemed appropriate by the rest of the Committee.
- Prepares the Budget for the following year for presentation to the Board for its approval or change before presentation to the parents in the spring.

Article 12 Meetings

- Meetings of the Board of Directors will be held once a month during the school year and over the summer as needed.
- Meetings of Standing Committees will be held whenever the Chair, or an appointed member of the Committee, announces a meeting, during the school year and over the summer as needed.
- The Fall Parents' Meeting occurs once in the fall before school begins.
- The Board, or a committee of the Board, may participate in a meeting of the Board or such committee by means of a telephone conference call. The Board may also submit their vote via email in the event that issues need to be decided in between Board meetings.
- Minutes will be kept by a Secretary, or in the case of committees by a designated member, and circulated in draft form prior to the next meeting for approval and will be stored as a hard copy file maintained by the Secretary .

Article 13 Registration

Internal Enrollment will begin in January. During this time, registration is prioritized for currently enrolled students, siblings of current or previously enrolled students, and children of past and present teachers. Full enrollment will consist of no less than 12 students in a class.

Open Enrollment will begin after internal enrollment is completed. Once class lists have been finalized, the Registrar will contact those families whose child has been placed. A non-refundable deposit is required to secure the placement of the child in the school.

DJCNS will continue to fill spaces from the wait list throughout the year if space becomes available.

Placement

- Requests to have a child placed in a specific class should be submitted in writing to the Director.
- Placement decisions will be made after consultation between the Director and teachers involved to consider the issues relevant to the placement request such as age, teacher recommendation, waiting list status, parent preference, etc.

Article 14 Finances

- A non-refundable registration fee consisting of \$50 towards the DJCNS Financial Aid fund and the first tuition

payment will be determined annually by the Board of Directors.

- Tuition payments are due in three installments based on a tuition schedule updated annually. The tuition schedule will be distributed to parents in the registration packet, in the DJCNS Handbook and on the school website.
- Failure to pay tuition, fees and fines in a timely manner and without contacting the Treasurer to make other arrangements may result in the suspension of a child from attending classes and school functions.
- DJCNS is a non-profit organization relying on the collection of tuition for operating expenses. By submitting an Enrollment Agreement a parent is reserving a position for their child in the school. Parents choosing to withdraw their child from DJCNS at any time after signing this agreement must submit their intent in writing to the Director or Registrar and will be obligated to pay the remaining tuition amount owed for the year until the class is fully enrolled.
- In the event of a withdrawal, pro-rated tuition payments will only be refunded if the class is fully enrolled.
- Financial aid collected for a specific tuition year will be held in trust for financial aid applicants. If there are any funds remaining in account at the end of the school term, they will be transferred to the general operating funds.

Article 15 Withdrawals and Fulfilling Classroom and Maintenance Hours

- A parent is responsible for notifying the Director or Registrar in writing of the intention to withdraw a child from the school.
- Parents choosing to withdraw their child from attending DJCNS at any time after signing the enrollment agreement will be obligated to pay the remaining tuition amount owed for the year until the class is fully enrolled.
- Parents are responsible for fulfilling Helping Parent responsibilities for the duration that the child attends school.
- If withdrawal must be immediate, parents are responsible for any Classroom Days that occur within the next two weeks.
- Parents are responsible for completing the pro-rated portion of their Maintenance Hours, as determined by the Homeroom Parent Coordinator.

Article 16 Adoption of By-Laws

- These By-Laws become effective immediately upon approval of a 2/3rds majority of membership present at the Parents' meeting, or if 2/3rds of the membership gives approval through a paper ballot or via email.
- Amendments: These By-Laws may be amended first by approval of 2/3rds of the members of the Board of Directors, and then by approval of a 2/3rds majority of membership present at the Parents' meeting. If 2/3rds of the Board of Directors is not present, then 2/3rds approval through a paper ballot or email is required.
- Minor corrections and additions, not affecting parent's or teachers' responsibilities, may be made in these By-Laws by approval of 2/3rds of the members of the Board of Directors present at the meeting.

Article 17 Policy Against Discrimination

The Nursery School will not discriminate against any individual on the basis of race, color, religion, ethnic or cultural background, or sexual orientation.

Article 18 School Environment

The Nursery School will, as much as possible, encourage and maintain a peanut and tree nut free environment.