

The LOS GATOS-SARATOGA OBSERVATION NURSERY SCHOOL  
OPERATING POLICIES  
Updated August 2016



Los Gatos-Saratoga  
Observation Nursery School



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**The Los Gatos-Saratoga Observation Nursery School**  
OPERATING POLICIES  
Updated July 2015

**I. Registration**

**A.General Information on Applying to LGSONS:**

Information on applying to the school shall be printed in the LGS Recreation brochure, listed on the application form itself, posted at the school house, available on the information line on the school's answering machine and on the school's website.

**B.Amounts**

1. A \$60 non-refundable application fee shall be paid for each child upon submission of the application form each year, including those who enter after school is in progress.
2. The application fee for each additional child from the same family is \$20.

**C.How and When**

1. Anyone interested in applying should submit a separate application for each child by mail to the school's P.O. Box during the school's priority application period for that year, which begins in January.
2. Applications requiring a receipt signature will not be accepted.
3. Applications postmarked after the priority application period will be processed after those submitted prior and on a first come first served basis. They will not be part of the lottery (see 7. below). Application forms post-marked with a date earlier than the priority application period will be processed as if they were turned in during the specified dates.
4. Among the applications postmarked during that year's priority application period, first priority is given to children who are currently enrolled in our regular program (which includes all classes except the Saturday afternoon) who wish to continue for the following year in the regular weekday program. The remaining spots will then be filled with current Saturday afternoon families, then alumni families, then Lakeside School District families, and then families new to the school.
5. Children currently in the weekday 3/4s class have priority over those currently in the 3s for enrollment in the 4/5s the next year.
6. For the older classes, teacher input may be given to the parents and Registration Chair to evaluate developmental readiness and recommend appropriate class placement before parents complete their application forms during the priority registration period. Following those considerations, remaining spots are filled according to status guidelines and lottery.
7. If there are more applications than spots available for each class, a lottery will be held. A wait list will be kept according to lottery number drawn.
8. The number of children, age, developmental level, and gender balance are also considered when building a class.

#### **D.Place**

The Application Form and fee shall be mailed to the Registration Chair. The address for mail-in registration shall be printed on the Registration Form.

#### **E.Late Admissions**

If admitted to the school after April 15, enrollment forms and fees are due within three-weeks of being notified of a class space in order to reserve that position.

#### **F.Alumni Status**

1. Alumni members are those families who have attended the school and completed all the financial obligations and participation requirements.
2. Alumni status extends to parents who attended the school as children.
3. Enrollment in the Saturday afternoon class does give a family Alumni status.
4. Alumni status does not extend to those families who only attended summer school.
5. Alumni families have priority in class registration over families who have never attended the school.

#### **G.Guaranteed Placement**

1. Continuing families in the regular program will be guaranteed a position in the school for the following school year, provided they are in good standing (see section III. A. 7). They are not guaranteed a position in their first choice of class but will be placed in classes based upon space availability, their assigned lottery number and teacher recommendation. The number of children, age, developmental level, and gender balance are all considered when building a class.
2. Continuing families in the Saturday afternoon program will also be guaranteed a position in the Saturday afternoon program for the following school year, provided they are also in good standing.
3. Families currently enrolled in the Saturday afternoon program, who are in good standing, and wish to enroll in the regular program, will be given priority over alumni families and over families who have never attended the school.

#### **H.Wait List**

1. The school will maintain a Wait List for families who wish to enroll in the school or who are waiting for an opening in their first choice class. Drawn lottery number determines place on the wait list. Prioritization for the placement and the creation of the wait list is as follows: current families, followed by current Saturday afternoon families, followed by alumni families, followed by new families who have never attended the school.
2. No intra school transfers are allowed within the regular program after the first circle meeting without a Head Teacher recommendation. Saturday afternoon students, however, are allowed to transfer to the regular weekday program should their name come up on the wait list anytime during the year with the approval of the Head Teacher and the Director. Before approval is given for transfer between classes, established family partnership arrangements must be considered.
3. New families may be added to the school to fill any vacancies, with Head Teacher approval, at any time until February 28. After this date the approval of the Head Teacher and the Director is necessary. Established family partnership arrangements must be considered.

## **II. Tuition**

### **A. Tuition Payments**

1. The upcoming year's Tuition Contract is due on April 15 and must be postmarked on or before that date. Payment of tuition may be made in one single payment or in three equal payments or monthly. Payments are due on the following dates:
  - a. Year in Full Payment Plan: due April 15.
  - b. Tri-annual Payment Plan: First installment due April 15, second installment due October 15 and third installment due January 15. Families electing to be on the tri-annual payment plan must submit post-dated checks for the second and third installments as part of their enrollment paperwork. Checks should be post-dated October 15 and January 15. The post-dated checks will be kept on file and will not be deposited until after the date they have listed has passed.
  - c. Monthly Payment Plan: 3 months due on April 15, then seven monthly payments due on the 15th of each month from July 15 to January 15. Families electing to be on the monthly payment plan must submit post-dated checks as part of their enrollment paperwork. Checks should be post-dated July 15, August 15, September 15, October 15, November 15, December 15, and January 15. The post-dated checks will be kept on file and will not be deposited until after the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month for which they cover.
2. Failure to Pay Tuition
  - a. April payment: Payment and contract must be received or postmarked by April 15. The child will be dropped from the roster if payment and contract are not received by April 15.
  - b. Tri-annual and monthly payments:
    1. If tuition or fees remain unpaid 30 days after the due date and no arrangement has been made with the Treasurer, the child shall be dropped from the school and the family shall be permanently disqualified from attending the school with any child in the future.
3. Returned check policy: There is a \$25 charge for the first returned check. If a check is returned a second time, there is an additional \$35 charge. After return of a second check, cash, a cashier's check, or a money order in person will be required for all further payments during the current school year to the Treasurer.
4. Pro-rated Tuition: Tuition is pro-rated according to when the child starts school.
5. Multiple Enrollments: Parents with more than one child registered in school shall pay full tuition for each child.

### **B. Refund Policy**

Refunds are based on the individual enrollment / withdrawal of each child, if a family has more than one child in the school. If a family withdraws a child, they need to inform their Head Teacher and the Registration Chair.

1. Year in Full Payment Plan. Receive 2/3 tuition plus 50% of first 1/3 tuition if withdraw by July 1st; after July 1st, refunds will be pro-rated according to the tri-annual installment plan (October 15 and January 15). See Below.
2. Tri-annual Payment Plan. 50% of first 1/3 tuition installment if withdraw by July 1st. Withdrawal from the program after October 15 and prior to January 15 will result in loss of the second tuition installment. Dropping after January 15 shall result in no tuition reimbursement.

3. Monthly Payment Plan. 50% of first 3 months tuition if withdraw by July 1st. There is no refund for monthly payment if withdraw after the 15th of any month.
4. A family may change from Tri-annual Payment Plan to Monthly Payment Plan. In order to do so, payments will be determined as follows:
  - a. The number of months from the date of change to January 15 will be calculated.
  - b. The balance of tuition will be divided by the number of months to derive the monthly payment.
  - c. The \$200 fee for the monthly plan will be paid in its entirety with the first monthly payment.
  - d. It is not possible to switch from the Monthly Payment Plan to the Tri-annual Payment Plan; but paying in advance is acceptable.
5. In the case of intra school transfers (see I.H.2), refunds will be based on the number of days a child attends.

### **C. Tuition Assistance**

1. Tuition assistance may be available from the Tuition Assistance Fund.
2. The Tuition Assistance Fund shall be comprised of monies from forfeited registration fees, late fees, returned check fees, and Board-approved donations from other school funds.
3. Tuition assistance is available on a per 1/3rd payment period basis. A family must apply each payment period.
4. No full scholarships will be granted. Each family must pay some portion of its tuition.
5. Application process
  - a. Contact the Treasurer for criteria for tuition assistance and an application form. All requests shall be kept confidential.
  - b. The Treasurer will provide a form to be completed.
  - c. If tuition assistance is granted, a letter signed by the Treasurer shall be sent to the applicant.
  - d. A copy of the letter shall be kept in the Treasurer's file. This letter only contains the applicant's name, child's name, class, payment period, amount of assistance received, amount applicant will pay, and date assistance was granted.

## **III. Enrollment**

### **A. Eligibility**

1. Ages: The child must be two years old and cannot be three by September 1 for eligibility in the 2's class. The child must be three years old and cannot be four by September 1 for eligibility in the 3's. The child must be three years old and cannot be five by September 1 for eligibility in the 3/4s. The child must be four years old by September 1 and cannot turn six before June 1st for eligibility in the 4/5's.
2. Waiver of Age Requirement

- a. A family may petition the Board, by letter, to admit a child whose birthday does not fall within the age requirement guidelines. This petition must accompany the family's application form and be received prior to the end of priority registration.
  - b. The Board, Director and Head Teacher must approve the petition to waive the age requirement.
  - c. If the age waiver is approved, the age requirement shall be waived for subsequent years.
  - d. The Board may approve the admittance of a child whose birthday does not fall within the age requirement guidelines if there is space in the appropriate class and no age appropriate children are on the waiting list.
3. Children attending a 5-day Pre-K or Kindergarten program are not eligible for this program. Children who are home-schooled in a Kindergarten curriculum are not eligible for the weekday program.
  4. It is the school's policy not to allow repeating of a class by a particular child. However, a family may petition the Board to request that a child repeat a class. The petition review and potential exception will be based on teacher recommendation, space availability, and Board approval. The Saturday afternoon class is exempt from this policy as per Section I.G. 2.
  5. Families who wish for their child to attend the program for a fourth year or who have enrolled in both the 3's and the 3/4's class and are requesting enrollment in the 4/5's class must petition the Board. The petition review and potential exception will be based on teacher recommendation, space availability, and Board approval.
  6. A parent must be available to attend one daytime class per week. A full-time grandparent may substitute as the parent observer, with Head Teacher and Director approval. Nannies, other relatives or other care providers are not acceptable as parent observers.
  7. Children enrolled in classes that meet more than 1 day per week are required to attend their class regularly. Failure to do so may be cause for dismissal.
  8. Families who have attended the school before must be in good standing to qualify for admission in subsequent years. Good standing means that the family has completed all of its participation requirements and has met its financial obligations as agreed to in the Participation Contract and the Tuition Contract.
  9. Families who have a place in the regular program (currently enrolled families and those eligible for enrollment in the regular program) who also want a place in the Saturday Afternoon class follow these guidelines:
    - Enrollment in Saturday Afternoon class:
      - a. Priority is first given to families already in the Saturday Afternoon class.
      - b. Then a spot(s) should be given to new families who request only the Saturday Afternoon class.
      - c. Families in the regular program who also want the Saturday Afternoon class would be accepted if there is space and with the approval of the Saturday Afternoon class Head Teacher.



## **B. Health and Safety Requirements**

1. Child
  - a. The child's physician must complete a Health Evaluation Form. This record must indicate the child is healthy enough to attend the program.
  - b. The child must have a negative TB Skin Test or a TB Risk Assessment signed by their physician.
  - c. An Immunization Record must be completed by the child's physician and children must have all age appropriate immunizations. Starting in the 2016-2017 school year, children must be fully immunized according to the ShotsforSchool.org website to be admitted to school, unless the child has a medical exemption.
2. Adult
  - a. The participating adult(s) must have a negative Mantoux TB Skin Test within the past four years.
  - b. An adult with a positive test must have proof of a negative chest x-ray and written clearance from a doctor on file prior to the first day of class. Adults with a positive test must complete a symptom review annually and keep that on file with the school.
  - c. All adults who regularly attend class must be fingerprinted by LiveScan and clear a background check by the Department of Justice.
  - d. Participating adults must submit proof of immunization or immunity for measles, pertussis, and influenza per SB 792.
  - e. Occasional visitors are not required to meet the Health and Safety requirements. If an adult wishes to attend class more than twice a year, that adult must meet the requirements of this section.
3. All forms must be completed and sent to the Forms Chair by April 15th.

## **C. Forms**

A family may not begin the program until all completed forms are reviewed and on file with the Forms Chair.

## **D. Special Needs**

Families who wish to enter children with special needs may be asked to fulfill additional requirements in order to allow for a successful school experience.

## **IV. Leave of Absence**

Types of Leave: If a family must leave the school for an extended vacation, short-term change of residence or family hardship, arrangements may be made with the Head Teacher, Registration Chair and Family Partnership Coordinator for a leave of absence.

1. Request for leave of absence must be made in writing to the Registration Chair and must be approved by the Executive Committee. If granted, the Registration Chair will notify the Head Teacher and Family Partnership Coordinator.
2. The family must furnish the Registration Chair with a current address at all times.
3. The family must pay Registration and Tuition fees if a class position is to be reserved for them.

4. There shall be no day or evening attendance requirements during a leave of absence.
5. The family must meet the maintenance and fundraising requirements.

**A. Medical Leave**

A parent may request a Medical Leave with approval of the Executive Committee and Director. There are no day or evening make-ups required during illness and recovery.

**B. Maternity Leave**

Four consecutive weeks are granted for maternity leave. No day or evening make-ups are required for those four weeks.

**V. School Program**

**A. Day-Time Participation**

1. One parent is required to attend one full daytime class per week.
2. Children enrolled in classes that meet more than 1 day a week are required to attend their class regularly. Failure to do so may be cause for dismissal.
3. Observations: Parents must submit 20 written observations per year per class. Parents enrolled with two children in a class meeting once per week must write 10 observations per child per year.
4. Twins are recognized as two individual enrollments. Parents are required to attend one class per week per child and do 20 observations per child per year. There is an exception for twins enrolled in the 2's classes for 10 observations per child per year as those classes only meet once a week. The following are family requirements: evening meetings attendance (9 meetings per year); one fundraising participation, and one maintenance obligation.
5. No intra school transfers are allowed within the regular program after the first circle meeting without a Head Teacher recommendation. Before approval is given for transfer between classes, established family partnership arrangements must be considered.
6. Cooking: Parents help by planning, providing and assisting the children in the preparation of a snack on a rotating schedule, approximately 3-6 times per year.
7. Absences: Parents absent from a daytime class must do an approved make-up, selected from the prepared make-up list. The make-up shall be due by the end of each trimester.
8. Extended illness: In the event of an extended illness, parents may request the child come with a parent substitute. This must be prearranged with the Head Teacher and Director.
9. Siblings: Siblings less than 6 months old may attend class. Parents who wish to have their child, who is 6 months or older, attend class must talk with the Head Teacher and petition the Executive Committee.
10. Visitors: Visitors of the registered family must make arrangements in advance with the Head Teacher to visit and observe a class.
11. Family Partnerships: Families attending any class that meets more than once per week must participate in family partnerships with one another in conjunction with the plan established by the Family Partnership Coordinator. They must be responsible for either one other (3's class) or two other (3/4s and 4/5s classes)

children on the day that they attend school. Family partnership recommendations will be made by August and finalized at the first circle meeting. Partners are encouraged to meet before school begins to allow the children and parents to get to know each other. This can be very helpful in establishing a successful family partnership. Class size will be considered when establishing family partnerships.

**B. Evening Program**

1. Attendance: A parent must attend 9 evening meetings per year (6 Circle Meetings per year, 1 General Meeting per year and 2 Mini-Course per year).
2. Make-up policy: If an evening meeting is missed an approved make-up must be completed by the end of each trimester.
3. Prearranged absences: Advance make-ups may be done in anticipation of an absence. One parent may attend additional meetings or both parents may attend one meeting for double credit.

**C. Make-Ups**

1. Families that have make-ups to complete shall be given a written notice of such make-ups. Make-ups are due at the end of each trimester. All attendance requirements must be fulfilled by the end of the first trimester in order to continue for the remainder of the year. Make-ups for the last trimester must be completed before the last day of school in order to return the next year or to leave the school in good standing.
2. The Head Teachers shall report to the Director at the end of each trimester any member who has uncompleted make-ups.
3. Failure to meet the make-up deadlines shall result in being dropped from the program. The family shall be notified in writing that they are deemed not in good standing and will not be allowed to enroll any future children in the school.
4. Once declared not in good standing, a family cannot have its eligibility reinstated by fulfilling its requirements at a later time.

**D. School Rules**

1. No smoking on the premises.
2. No animals shall be allowed at school without Head Teacher approval.
3. A child with a fever (100.5 F) or a rash of unknown etiology may not attend school. See the Health Guidelines in the Parent Handbook for specific guidelines.
4. In classes that have lunch together, the children are expected to bring healthy, low sugar foods.
5. Unregistered children may not attend class. If an emergency arises and a sibling does not have childcare, the Head Teacher must give permission for that day's attendance.

**E. Personal Conduct and Social Media Guidelines**

1. Parents are expected to treat all members of the school community with dignity, kindness, and respect, and lead by example with their own speech and behavior at all times.

2. If you choose to participate in social networking, please be respectful in your communications concerning our school. The line between professional and personal relationships is blurred within a social media context. In addition, words travel alone over the network — tone of voice and other live conversational nuances are completely absent from these discussions which can contribute to misunderstandings.
3. Communications should be in good taste and not express ideas and opinions that denigrate others. Remember that our community reflects a diverse set of customs, values and points of view. This includes not only the obvious (no ethnic slurs, personal insults, obscenity, etc.) but also proper consideration of privacy and of topics that may be considered objectionable or inflammatory. If you are about to publish something that makes you even the slightest bit uncomfortable, please take the time to reconsider. What you choose to publish will be available on the internet for a very long time and could potentially harm our school.
4. Members may be disciplined for any conduct and/or speech, in person or online, which the Board reasonably believes will cause actual, material disruption to the lives of members of the community or school activities

## **VI. Maintenance Obligation**

### **A. Annual Maintenance Requirement**

Each family, including those with more than one child in the school, shall be required to participate for 4 hours in the organized workday. Both parents attending the workday for 2 hours may fulfill this commitment.

### **B. Absence**

1. Members must notify the Workday Coordinator at least 7 days prior to their assigned workday, if they cannot attend.
2. Failure to notify the Workday Coordinator of any intended absence before the workday begins will result in a \$15 penalty fee of the declared buyout, in addition to the buyout payment.
3. In cases of unexpected illness, a letter can be written to the Workday Coordinator to request release from the \$15 penalty fee. The Workday Coordinator shall communicate to the Board the waiver request and the decision.

### **C. Buyout**

1. While the school prefers family participation, a family may choose to buyout of their workday obligation for \$250. Buyout arrangements must be made prior to the workday. Payment is directed to the Treasurer. The buyout amount is determined yearly and voted on by Board.
2. Late Fee: A \$50 late fee shall be assessed if arrangements for a buyout are not made within 30 days of the assigned workday.

### **D. Mid Year Obligation**

Families who enroll after the end of the first trimester shall have half the maintenance requirement. Families who withdraw from the program after the year begins shall have the option to participate or buyout to remain in good standing.

E. **Exemptions**  
Voting Board Members are exempt from the maintenance requirement.

F. **Fulfillment**  
All members must attend a workday, pay a buyout fee or have completed a substitute project authorized by the Workday Coordinator by May 1 or they will be permanently disqualified from the school.

## **VII. Fundraising**

### **A. Annual Fundraising Requirement**

Each family is required to participate in annual fundraising.  
Families with more than one child in the school shall have the same participation requirement as families with one child in the school.

### **B. Buyout**

A family may choose to buy out of the fundraising participation for \$450. The buyout payment shall be sent to the Treasurer and is due at least 30 days before the date of the fundraiser. If the buyout payment is made less than 30 days before the date of the fundraiser, the buyout payment shall be \$500. A penalty structure may be imposed if commitment deadlines are not met.

### **C. Mid Year Obligation**

Families who enroll after the end of the first or second trimester must coordinate with the Fundraising Chairs to determine which committee could use additional help or pay the buyout fee. To remain in good standing, a family leaving the school before the first day of the third trimester is obligated to either pay the buyout fee for the current year or fulfill the mandatory requirements for the fundraising event.

### **D. Exemption**

The following persons are exempt from the designated annual mandatory fundraiser:  
Auction Chair (1)

### **E. Fulfillment**

Failure to fulfill the fundraising requirements will result in permanent disqualification from the school.

## **VIII. Board**

### **A. Term**

The school Board serves from May to May.

### **B. Qualifications**

All members in good standing are eligible to serve on the Board. Any member who requests a position on the Board shall be added to the nomination slate.

### **C. Nominations**

A nominating committee shall be formed to solicit members for open Board positions. Advertising for new Board members shall be in the Newsletter, on the Website and through e-mails and Circle meetings.

### **D. Position Term**

No Board member shall occupy the same position for more than two consecutive terms without approval of the Board.

**E. Executive Committee**

The Chair, Treasurer, Information Chair, Registration Chair, Director, and Head Teacher shall comprise the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee creates the budget, rules on petitions and makes other rulings as stated in the By-laws.

**F. Board Notebook**

Each Board member shall be required to keep an up-to-date notebook. It shall include:

- i. The position's duties and responsibilities
- ii. A monthly listing of position's expected activities
- iii. A copy of the current By-laws and Operating Policies
- iv. The handouts relating to being part of the Board.
- v. The duties of Board Representatives.
- vi. The school membership list and calendar.
- vii. An addendum that lists issues and who needs to be notified when they arise.

**G. Reimbursement**

Board members shall submit receipts to the Treasurer for reimbursement. The Board Chair or Director must sign receipts. Any check over \$1200 must have two signatures: the Treasurer and the Director.

**H. Privileges**

1. Voting Board Members receive the following privileges
  - i. Waiver from Maintenance obligation
  - ii. An excused absence from one day or any night class per trimester
  - iii. A letter verifying Board service written by the Director, if requested
2. Non-voting Board Members receive the following privilege
  - i. An excused absence from one day or night class per year
3. Fundraising Committee Members receive the following privilege
  - i. An excused absence from one day or night class per year

**I. Board Representative**

Each class shall have a member who serves on the Board as the class representative. The designated Board Representative shall give a brief Board report to the class members during the circle meeting of that class. The report shall include pertinent information from the Board Meetings and upcoming events. The representative shall convey to the Board any concerns the class or a member may have.

**J. Minutes**

The Secretary shall post a copy of the approved Board Minutes in the Parent's Room at the Schoolhouse and on the school website.

**K. Public Comments**

Any member may attend the Board meetings. Dates are listed on the school calendar. The member should contact the Chair if they wish to be placed on the agenda to address the Board.

## **IX. Staff**

### **A. Head Teachers**

The Head Teachers are hired by Los Gatos-Saratoga Observation Nursery School.

### **B. Assistant Teachers**

The Assistant Teachers are hired by Los Gatos-Saratoga Observation Nursery School.

### **C. Director**

The Director is hired by Los Gatos-Saratoga Observation Nursery School.

### **D. Hiring**

A committee composed of the Board chair, an appointed Board member, a current staff member and the school Director will interview candidates for a staff position. The committee will report their recommendations to the Board prior to the hiring of staff.

## **X. Investment Policy**

### **A. Reserve Account Funds**

These funds are collected from tuition, fund raising or any other source (except for funds specified for the endowment account), which are not immediately needed for school expenses, in excess of the amount equal to six month's average operating expenses.

### **B. Investment of Funds**

1. Funds shall be added on an annual basis at the discretion of the Executive Committee, upon review of the previous year's financial statements.
2. The balance of Reserve Account Funds will be invested as follows:
3. 30% of capital in a S&P 500 Index Fund
4. 30% of capital in a Russell 2000 Fund
5. 20% of capital in an International Equity Fund
6. 20% of capital in a Bond Fund
7. Any reallocation of the above percentages shall require the unanimous consent of the Executive Committee.
8. The Reserve Account funds will reside in a non-profit Vanguard investment account. No paid money manager may be used to manage these funds without unanimous approval of the Board.

### **C. The investment philosophy is described as follows**

"The Reserve Account Funds are to be invested in instruments which are expected to achieve greater returns than money market accounts. The expectation for the capital is that there is no liquidity requirement for 3-5 years, though in the event of an emergency, funds could be withdrawn. This time horizon will allow use of diversified stock funds with intermediate time horizons to decrease the risk of short-term market fluctuations. Index Mutual funds will allow the lowest fees and expenses, and save the school from finding and reviewing performance records of specific fund managers."

### **D. Funds may be removed from the Reserve Account for the following purposes**

1. To purchase a school site.
2. To embark upon a major capital improvement to the school.
3. Inclusion in the annual budget, only to the extent necessary to make up any shortfall of operating revenue.

**E. Removal of funds**

Removal of funds shall require a two-thirds majority vote of the Board. Funds from the Reserve Account should not be used for ongoing operating expenses of the School including:

1. Teacher's salaries
2. School supplies
3. Maintenance of school property
4. General expenses, including rent, insurance, taxes, etc.