



# Unity School

Family Handbook



# UNITY SCHOOL MISSION STATEMENT

It is our dream that the children who pass through Unity School will, through play and discovery, be encouraged to live a healthful life, always opt for a peaceful way to solve their problems, and weave who they are and what they have learned here into positive solutions for our community and our planet.

## ***WELCOME***

Dear Parents,

Welcome to Unity School. We are happy to be able to serve you and your children. We want to make Unity School an extension of your family, and to care for your child with patience and warmth, while providing a rich environment for learning and play.

Our objective is to help each child to set his or her feet firmly on the path of becoming a loving, self-reliant, competent adult. We want each child to experience respect and caring for themselves, others, and the world around them.

To achieve such a high quality program, Unity School has chosen to meet quality standards that are substantially higher than the minimum Oregon certification standards. Unity School has no religious affiliation, and is incorporated as a private, nonprofit, tax-exempt school.

This handbook includes policies and program information you will need as we share the coming months and years together. They enable us to provide our quality, professional program, and reflect governing/licensing agency requirements.

We hope you will read the handbook carefully. If you have questions, please talk with one of our administrative staff.

Thank you for choosing Unity School. We're glad to have you in the Unity School family!

*Warmly,*  
*Executive Director*  
*Program Directors*

*Carol Barton*  
*Susanne Hodson & Jessica Graham*

*September 2015*

# GETTING STARTED

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## ***What you need to know before your child's first day:***

Hours of operation: 7:00 am to 6:00 pm Monday through Friday

### ***Tour***

Before your child's first day, you will have a tour of the center, meet with your child's peers and teachers, and communicate any anticipated concerns. At this time please share the best communication methods that the teacher or administrators may use to reach you.

### ***Paperwork and fees***

All enrollment forms and the registration fee must be turned in before your child's first day of care. We'll schedule a short time for you to meet with the Program Director to review the Family Handbook and answer any questions you may have. (Please see p 23: Enrollment forms, p 25 & 26 for Tuition and Fees Policies and the Fee Schedule for current rates is p 27)

### ***What to bring***

Unity provides all meals, snacks and learning supplies for the children. (See p 8 Meals)

Your child needs to keep a complete change of clothes in their cubby in their classroom. Be sure to write your child's name in each piece of clothing. They will need a small blanket and pillow and a cuddly toy (if desired) to help your child feel comfortable at rest time.

### ***What to wear***

Your child should dress for an active day. We suggest comfortable, washable play clothes. We are outside every day so layers and sneakers with socks are a great choice. (See p 15 Clothing)

### ***Arrival and departure***

Always bring your child to his/her teacher inside the school building (or the play yard) and make sure to check in with a teacher when picking up your child. You can park in the front circle drive for just a few minutes, or in the parking lot if you will be a little longer. Sign your child in at the front desk when you arrive, and the time out with your signature when you pick up.

For the safety of everyone, do not leave children alone in your parked car, or leave your car idling in the parking lot.

### ***Release of Children***

No child will be released to persons not authorized by a parent or guardian. (See page 13)

# ABOUT OUR PROGRAM

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In a rambling farm house on nearly an acre of land, with a yard full of large trees, handmade wooden play structures, rabbits, guinea pigs, gardens, brick walkways and a grape arbor, Unity School offers a homelike facility in a beautiful setting.

The playground has ropes, swings, slides, climbers, and space to run, promoting the child's mastery of large motor skills and facilitating wonderful imaginative play and an experience of nature. Our wonderful old barn offers a great place to play, even when it rains. This is the setting for the life and learning that takes place here every day for children and families.

## ***Our Philosophy***

We believe:

- Children learn by using their senses and by moving.
- Children learn and develop at his/her own pace.
- Children need hands-on experiences with a wide variety of materials.
- Children need regular, hands-on experiences with and in nature for healthy physical, social and emotional development.
- Families and program staff are partners in supporting the child's development and learning.

This is the basis for our program.

## ***Curriculum***

We have chosen the HighScope curriculum to support our philosophy of learning — the focus is "active participatory learning" to support each individual child to develop into a competent, caring adult. The HighScope curriculum is implemented in every Unity School classroom. The daily routine includes 'planning circles', large group circles and small group activities, outdoor time and child-directed learning center times. We provide the children with a wide variety of materials (books, toys, art supplies, equipment, games and household objects) and plan experiences that build on their interests and expand their learning.

Planning for the class is based on a brainstorming process involving teachers and children in creating a 'web' of ideas. From that, the teacher brings materials and activities into the classroom that will challenge and support learning. HighScope Key Developmental Indicators define learning goals for each child. Teachers keep these in mind as they set up the learning environment, support children in their play, encourage healthy interactions, and plan learning experiences.

Watch the bulletin board in your child's classroom for the current 'Web' and Daily Activity Plan.



## ***Program Assessment and Quality Improvement***

To help us maintain the highest quality in our program, the Unity School Board of Directors carries out a program assessment each year. We use the PQA (Preschool Program Quality Assessment), which looks at our implementation of the HighScope educational curriculum.

Unity School is also engaged in improvement through the Oregon Quality Rating Improvement Scale. The QRIS is a mechanism to assess, improve, and identify the level of quality of programs for young children in Oregon. Programs can achieve 3, 4 or 5 stars upon completion of the assessment. We are very proud that we have achieved a designation of **4 stars** with the goal of eventually achieving the 5 star rating. If you'd like to see our beautiful portfolio that helped us achieve our stars, ask Susanne, Jessica or Virginia.

## ***Celebrations***

Our holiday policy encourages an enhanced understanding of and respect for different cultures and beliefs of children, families, staff and community. Family events are scheduled throughout the year to celebrate the seasons and our Unity community. If you have special celebrations you would like to share with your child's class, please talk with your child's teacher.

## ***Our Staff***

The Unity School staff is made up of women and men with education and experience in Early Childhood Education. Our teachers have an Associates Degree in Early Childhood Education or an equivalent in education and experience. All staff members are required to participate in ongoing training in child development and early childhood education as well as HighScope curriculum, ethics, professional responsibility and confidentiality. We require a minimum of 20 clock hours of continuing education annually for all classroom staff.

Every employee maintains good status in the Oregon Central Background Registry, as required by Oregon licensing statutes. In addition, references from previous employers and educational transcripts are required. All classroom employees keep current Food Handlers and First Aid certification.

## ***CLASSES AND PROGRAMS*** (see current Fee Schedule for schedules and tuition)

HOURS: 7:00 am - 6:00 pm

Monday thru Friday, year round (closures are for holidays, training days and inclement weather)

### **Preschool — full and part day for ages 2 -5**

<b>Class</b>	<b>Age group</b>	<b>Class size</b>	<b>Adult/child ratio</b>
Pandas	Two year olds	10 children	2/10
Caterpillars	Three year olds	17 children	3/17
Lady Bugs	Three and four years	15 children	3/15
Butterflies	PreK fours	14 children	2/14

**The daily schedule** (this schedule will be adapted to the needs of each class - see the schedule posted in your child's classroom)

7:00 School opens  
Free choice activities

8:00 Breakfast

8:30 Outside time

9:00 Planning circle

9:15 Learning center choices

10:15 Cleanup

10:30 Snack / recall

10:45 Circle time

11:00 Small group activities

11:20 Free choices / or outside activities

12:00 Cleanup and outside  
Lunch served for two's class

12:15 Lunch for threes/fours classes, followed by nap

12:30 Lunch for fours & Kinders / tooth brushing

1:00 Rest time with stories and back rubs

2:00 Outside time

2:45 Nappers awake

3:00 Circle and PM learning centers

3:30 Snack  
Inside and outside activities

6:00 School is closed for the day

## **School Age Program**

- Otters (age 5 thru 11)
- Class size: up to 24 children
- Adult/child ratio 2/24
- Before and after-school program for children kindergarten through 5th grade
- Our before- and after-school program is open starting at 7AM and 2:30 - 6:00 daily, earlier on early release days, and all day during school holidays and summer vacation. Transportation is available by Unity bus to and from several nearby schools. Currently we transport to and from Gilham, Buena Vista, Centennial, Guy Lee & Bertha Holt.

The program has a recreational focus based on the HighScope curriculum - a child-centered program for the development of cognitive, social and physical skills through a hands-on approach. There are lots of opportunities for group and individual activities, games, snack and age appropriate responsibilities for garden and animal care. Field trips are frequent, especially on non-school days, with visits to museums, parks, and hiking heading the list of popular trips.

Please see the posted schedule in the Otter room for the daily schedule.

### ***Field Trips***

Field trips to parks, museums, the library, and other local sites are planned regularly for each class. These are usually announced in the newsletter at the beginning of the month, and always on fliers posted on the front bulletin boards. We ask for parent volunteers to make sure we have extra adults when needed. Some of our trips are made using a Head Start bus and driver. Both the Head Start bus and Unity bus are equipped with safety seats, and these are always fastened to ensure safety before we leave the school.

### ***Outdoor Play***

Unity School has the wonderful heritage of the farm that was built on this site in 1928. Our outside space expresses this well — with huge old cedars and other trees, lilac bushes, the original barn, and lots of space to run and play. We know that being outside and being involved with nature is essential for healthy physical and mental development for children, so being outside is an important feature of every day at Unity. With lots of climbers, slides, swings, and loose parts to move around and create with — there is always a lot to challenge creativity and learning. When the weather turns wet, we rely on our wonderful barn to allow us to get outside and MOVE.



### **Please keep in mind:**

- If children are healthy enough to be at the center, they are healthy enough to go outdoors.
- Please dress your child for the weather, especially cool mornings in fall and spring.
- Sneakers with socks or other closed-toe shoes are best for running, climbing, and enjoying the outdoors.
- At enrollment, parents sign a consent form for sunscreen to be used as needed.

### ***Garden***

Our organic garden is on the site of the garden on the original farm. Our garden teacher works with the staff of every classroom to get children into the garden — planting, weeding, caring for the herbs and flowers, and of course harvesting. Everyone loves to enjoy organic produce from our garden incorporated into our meals. With raised beds and cloches, and the solarium off of the Caterpillar room, children are able to be involved with gardening all year long.

### ***Unity Pets***

We believe that caring for and interacting with pets is an important developmental experience for all of our children. Our school pets include bunnies and a cat. The bunnies and cat are housed outside. Hermit crabs live in an aquarium in the Butterfly room, and we have fish in the Panda room. From time to time we add other animals to our Unity community. When this happens we'll let you know through our school newsletter and notices on our bulletin board.

Visits by other non-Unity pets will be announced in advance by notice in the classroom and parent bulletin board in the lobby.

Unity families can help us take care of our pets by signing up for weekend pet care. See the display on the parent bulletin board.

## MEALS

Unity serves breakfast, two snacks and lunch daily. Weekly menus are posted on the bulletin board by the front office. Please check the daily schedule posted in your child's classroom for mealtimes. Our food program is provided at no additional charge to parents. We provide high quality meals using beans, cheese, eggs and nuts as protein sources. We serve low-sugar, homemade snacks, whole grain breads, and fresh vegetables and fruits as often as possible. As part of our health curriculum, each class learns about healthy foods, and this is reinforced daily during meal times.

We receive funds from the U.S. Department of Agriculture to assist with the costs of our meal program. This is the same program that supports the meal programs in public schools. Our meals must meet USDA standards for types and quantities of foods included.

We expect all children to participate in our meal program. We request that you not send a box lunch, snacks or other foods with your child.

We eat family style meals, with children helping themselves from serving bowls. The staff eats with the children, modeling positive eating habits by eating all the healthy food served, and encouraging children to do the same. Seconds are available. The children bus their own dishes to the bus tubs, scraping any leftovers for the compost, and putting any paper products in the waste basket.

*In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA.*

*Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g. Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.), should contact the Agency (State or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English. To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, (AD-3027) found online at: [http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint\\_filing\\_cust.html](http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html), and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:*

*(1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights  
1400 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;  
(2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or  
(3) email: program.intake@usda.gov*

*This institution is an equal opportunity provider.*

## **GUIDANCE POLICY**

At Unity School, we guide children through positive means to enhance their self-concept, self-control and sense of cooperation. Problems are handled through redirection, encouraging problem-solving discussions by the children, modeling appropriate behaviors, and when needed, time away from the situation to calm down. Negative forms of punishment such as spanking or withholding of food will not be used, and punishment will not be used in relation to toileting issues. Physical restraint is not used or permitted for discipline. There are rare instances when we need to ensure a child's safety or that of others and we may restrain a child by gently holding her or him only for as long as is necessary for control of the situation.

We will not allow the children to hurt each other physically or emotionally, and will encourage children to speak up for themselves in a problem situation, as well as treating others with kindness and respect. Children will be reminded of rules and appropriate behaviors often - they are still learning – and encouraged to grow daily as a member of the Unity community.

At Unity School, we encourage play that is creative, peaceful, happy, and solves problems cooperatively. War toys, super hero toys and weapon games are not allowed, either in store-bought or pretend form. We discourage children from using pretend weapons and/or play fighting as a means of expressing their competitiveness. All forms of violent and aggressive behavior toward others is discouraged; we encourage working together. Your support for this policy will help us provide a positive learning environment for all the children.

### ***Screen Time***

We at Unity School understand that TV and other electronic media can get in the way of exploring, playing and interacting with others, which encourages learning and healthy physical and social development. There are no computers in our classrooms and we use videos or DVDs only rarely as a special event. When there is a special video for an event (for instance, a nature video on Earth Day) it is not the only choice of activity available to children. We will notify families of any upcoming events including use of media, and it will always be in keeping with the philosophy of Unity School and the developmental needs of the children involved.

## *HEALTH*

### *We are an Eco-Healthy School*

Unity School participates in the Eco-Healthy Child Care project. We use nontoxic or least-toxic cleaning and sanitizing products. We recycle everything we can, and try to purchase thoughtfully to reduce material in landfills. We do not use manufactured air fresheners or fragrance products in the school, and avoid aerosol spray products.

We have removed all asbestos from our building, and have removed or abated all areas of lead paint. We keep mats at every entry to reduce contaminants coming into the building.

Our parking lot is a no-idling zone to help keep our air quality high. Idling engines produce more pollution than when driving — including particulates, carbon monoxide and other harmful compounds that contribute to health problems like asthma, heart disease, chronic bronchitis and cancer. Help us keep the children healthy by turning off your engine.

### *Illness*

Please call us when your child is ill, so we will know they will be gone.

Do not bring your child to school when s/he has a fever of 100° or higher, vomiting, diarrhea, sore throat, a bad cold (especially non-clear nasal discharge), or is very irritable. If your child is not up to participating in normal activities, including outside time, he/she will do better at home. Children have a very difficult time handling a group situation when they do not feel well.

It is mandated by law that the children who contract the following diseases must have a written statement from a physician stating that the child is fit to return to school and has progressed beyond the contagious stage: This includes: Chicken Pox, Hepatitis, Measles, Mumps, and Rubella. It is recommended that parents request the statement from their doctor at the time of diagnosis, as the contagious stage of most diseases is very predictable, and the physician will be able to specify a safe date to return to school at that time.

It is also mandated that children suffering from Impetigo (staph disease) must have certification from a doctor that the child is being treated (prescription antibiotics are essential for treatment) and is fit to return to school. It is also mandated that if a child has pediculosis (head Lice), a written statement must be provided from the parent or guardian that treatment has been initiated. When children develop symptoms of illness while at school, staff will contact you so you can take your child home. We will call and ask you to pick up your child if they have

a fever of 101° (100° under the arm), or a fever of 100° (99° under the arm) along with other symptoms such as sneezing, coughing or difficulty breathing.

**Children who have been ill may return when:**

- They are free of fever, vomiting and diarrhea for 24 hours.
- They have been treated with an antibiotic for 24 hours.
- They are able to participate comfortably in all usual activities.

Thanks for your cooperation in meeting these requirements, and in helping us in our efforts to keep all the children and staff healthy.

***Medications***

We cannot give any medication except at the direction of a doctor (This includes cough syrup, Tylenol, vitamins and other over-the-counter medications). All prescription medication must be in the **original prescription container**. Please complete the medication form on the meds closet door near the staff room, including the name of the medication, amount to be given, and any further instructions. Sign your name. The staff person administering the medication will sign the form to verify that it has been given. This form must be completed each day the child needs medication. Medication should be left in and picked up from the locked compartment in the meds closet each day. Some medications, such as an Epipen (for allergies) may be stored in the medicine cabinet to be used as needed.

***Immunizations***

State law requires all children to be fully immunized who are attending child care centers and private and public schools, unless a medical exemption has been signed by a physician, or their parent has completed the state required procedure and signed a non-medical exemption.

For information on how to obtain a non-medical exemption visit:

[http://bit.ly/vaccine\\_and\\_imms](http://bit.ly/vaccine_and_imms) .

Upon enrollment, each parent must complete and sign a form giving dates of immunizations. If additional immunizations are needed, they must be completed within 30 days of your child's starting school. Please be sure to notify the front desk when your child has new immunizations to keep the record up-to-date. Children who are not immunized because of medical or non-medical reasons will be excluded from coming to school if any communicable disease (e.g. measles, whooping cough, etc.) has been detected in the center and will be excluded until the last case has concluded.

## ***Biting***

Biting is a normal stage of development that is common among toddlers — and sometimes even among preschoolers. It is something that most young children will try at least once.

When biting happens, our response will be to care for and help the child who was bitten and to help the biter learn a more appropriate behavior. Our focus will not be on punishment for biting, but on effective strategies that address the specific reason for biting.

Notes will be written to the family of the child who was bitten and the biter's family. We will work together with the families of each to keep them informed and to develop strategies for change.

## ***Diapering/Toileting***

Be sure you bring extra clothes and any other needed supplies. Unity supplies disposable diapers.

We will work with you and your child on toileting when your child is ready. Signals of readiness include appropriate vocabulary, dressing skills, and advance awareness of body functions. Talk to your child's teacher for more information and resources.

## ***Rest Time***

At Unity, all children take a break after lunch. We feel this is important for busy children who work so hard at playing all day, and a rest time is required for all children by state licensing standards. Children are not required to sleep and may be offered a choice of quiet activities. We encourage you to send a small blanket and pillow and a cuddly toy if desired to help your child feel comfortable at rest time. Children read quietly while everyone settles in, then it's quiet time while a teacher reads for a few minutes, and it's time for back rubs. Children who are not asleep after 20 to 45 minutes (depending on the class) can get up and have some quiet play inside, or outside play if the weather allows. Sleeping children are awakened between 2:30 and 2:45 so they can slowly rejoin the flow of the afternoon.

Please remember to take home your child's blanket weekly for washing.



# ***SAFETY AND EMERGENCIES***

## ***Health and Hygiene***

Good practices for toileting, hand washing and tooth brushing are established with circle time practice, storybooks and songs early each school year and periodically as reminders.

- Children and staff all wash hands before and after meals, after toileting, and wiping a nose. Teachers supervise and model to encourage good washing.
- Children in all classrooms brush teeth after morning snack or lunch.
- Rest mats are disinfected before they are put away each day.

## ***Injuries***

**Minor injuries** will be treated with appropriate first aid and you will be informed about them on an accident report. Accident reports are placed in parent mailboxes for parents to pick up. Please sign and return for your child's file. We will copy the report for you at your request.

All regularly scheduled Unity staff is required to have current First Aid and CPR certification. In the event of a more **serious injury**, staff will contact 911 for ambulance service and you will be called to the center immediately. Please make sure we have current information on your child's doctor and how you can be reached during the day.

Unity School carries **accident insurance**, which covers all costs for treatment of injuries occurring at school, which are not covered by your own medical insurance.

## ***Transportation***

If your child is less than eight years old or is less than 4' 9" tall, a child passenger safety seat will be provided when he/she is transported by the center. If your child meets both these requirements, he/she must be restrained by a safety belt.

## ***Release of Children***

Children will be released only to a custodial parent or guardian or to persons authorized by a parent or guardian on the pickup list on the enrollment form. **If we have any doubt that the person picking up your child has the authority to do so, we will not release the child until we contact you.** Anyone picking up a child should be prepared to show picture ID if they are unknown to the staff member at the front desk.

### ***Right to Refuse Child Release***

We may refuse to release children if we have reasonable cause to suspect that any person picking up a child is under the influence of drugs or alcohol, or is physically or emotionally impaired in any way that may endanger the child. To protect your child, we may request that another adult listed as an Emergency and Release Contact pick up the child or we may call the police to prevent potential harm to your child. Reoccurring situations may result in the dismissal of your child from the program.

### ***Weather Related Closings***

In the winter, occasional closures occur due to the weather. If this happens, the information will be available on the school answering machine by 6:30 AM. If in doubt about the weather, please call. If it becomes necessary to close in the middle of the day, staff will notify parents by phone. Please pick up your child immediately.

### ***Emergencies***

Emergency evacuation procedures are posted in every classroom. Fire and earthquake safety issues are discussed with the children and are practiced one or more times each month. Other emergency procedures are practiced periodically including: lock-downs, medical emergencies and evacuation. Emergency stores are kept on hand to provide for children and staff in weather or other emergency. These will include basic foods, water and blankets. The Unity cell phone is available for communication in the event of an emergency (#541 520-2577).

### ***Evacuation***

In the event that Unity School must be evacuated, children and staff will be relocated to:

- Bertha Holt Elementary School
- Head Start Brattain Office, 425 10<sup>th</sup> St. in Springfield

If possible, we will leave a message on the Unity phone regarding the evacuation. You may call the Unity cell (541 520-2577) for more information.

### ***Dangerous Weapons***

A dangerous weapon is a gun, knife, razor, or any other object, which by the manner it is used or intended to be used is capable of inflicting bodily harm. Families, children, staff or guests (other than law enforcement officers) possessing a dangerous weapon will not be permitted onto the premises.

In cases that clearly involve a gun, or any other weapon on our premises, the police will be called and the individual(s) involved will be immediately removed from the premises. This policy applies to visible or concealed weapons.

### ***Abuse Reporting***

Our teachers are required by state law to report suspected child abuse/maltreatment. This includes non-accidental injuries, such as welts, bruises, cuts, burns, scratches, and broken bones. Suspected sexual abuse, emotional abuse, and neglect are also reported. Child neglect is defined as abandonment, lack of food, utilities, shelter, or lack of supervision.

Teachers are trained to recognize indicators of possible abuse. Reports are confidential and are considered allegations until an investigation is completed. The phone number for the Child Abuse Hotline is posted on the parent bulletin board near the sign-in sheet.

### ***Prohibited Substances***

The use of alcohol, illegal drugs or marijuana or other intoxicants are prohibited on the centers premises. Possession of these substances or unauthorized potentially toxic substances is prohibited.

Any adult, who appears to be inebriated, intoxicated, or otherwise under the influence of mind-altering substances is required to leave the premises immediately.

Smoking (including e-cigarettes) is prohibited on Unity School property by Oregon Statute.

## ***CHILDREN'S NEEDS***

### ***Clothing***

Children at Unity School are active and creative. So that your child can fully participate in all the activities, please follow these guidelines when dressing your child for school:

- Children can easily manage clothing for toileting: fasten and unfasten buttons, zippers, snaps, and buckles.
- Clothing is washable and durable enough to permit vigorous play.
- Any artwork or logos are appropriate for the childcare environment.
- Clothing is inexpensive so that soiling, damage, or loss will not cause great concern.
- Shoes are sturdy and protect the child's feet. Sneakers (with socks) are the best choice. Flip-flops, sandals, and open toed shoes can be hazardous.
- Clothing is appropriate to the weather conditions. Children will spend time outdoors every day. Be sure to send jackets, sweaters, coats, gloves, and hats as needed.

ALL clothing should be labeled with the child's name. Unity School is not responsible for lost clothing items.

### **Change of clothes at school.**

Every child must have a complete change of clothes at school (socks, underwear, shirt, shorts/pants/skirt). Please check periodically to see if your child's change of clothes needs replacing. If a change of clothing becomes necessary during the day, the soiled clothing will be placed in a bag with your child's name on it.

### ***Cubbies***

Children are provided with cubbies as a means of keeping their belongings together. Please check your child's cubby and art file each day for notes, art projects, and other items that need to go home.

### ***Sharing Day***

Do not bring toys from home except on an announced sharing day. Some classes will have a sharing day weekly or less often. Please check with your child's teacher for the schedule. On those days, children may bring a toy to school to share with the other children in play during the day. Please do not send toys that are fragile and will easily break, or that are important or valuable to you. In keeping with our nonviolent play policy; please do not send guns (or anything that resembles a weapon or war toy) or super-hero figures for sharing. For reasons of safety, no latex balloons are allowed in the center.

## ***Birthdays***

At Unity we celebrate our birthdays together at AM or PM snack on the third Wednesday of each month. This treat is always a healthy and delicious goodie made by our cook. We ask that you not bring in treats on your child's birthday. We'll make sure every child is recognized at our monthly party.

## ***Screening and Assessment***

To guide our work with each child, we include a parent questionnaire screening at enrollment. In addition, teachers do an assessment of each child twice each year using the TS Gold assessment tool. The screening and assessment give the teachers information to help them individualize their work with each child. If concerns are identified, teachers will talk with parents about seeking additional assessment. An assessment report is included in the information shared with families at Parent-Teacher conferences.

## ***Children with Special Needs***

We serve children with special health or developmental needs as long as we can meet their needs. We will determine this with the family and other professionals working with the child. We will access resources to assist the child, their family and our staff including referrals for medical, developmental or behavioral assessment. Decisions about placement for a child will be based on our ability to meet the child's needs with the resources available and will be made in conjunction with the family and any other professionals working with the child to ensure ongoing support for the family.

## ***Moving to a new class***

Children move to the next classroom usually at the beginning of the fall program. Any exception would be based on age, developmental readiness, state licensing requirements, and space availability. During the transition, teachers will talk with you to develop a plan to introduce your child into the new classroom.

As space is available, children may move from the toddler group (Pandas) to the Preschool class (Caterpillars) when they are:

- Over 36 months old.
- Showing a pattern of dryness.
- Regularly initiating trips to the bathroom.
- Showing readiness in other areas such as circle time participation, self care, social interactions, etc.

This decision to change groups will be made together by parents, program director and teachers.

### ***Pattern of Inappropriate Behavior***

When a pattern of inappropriate behavior emerges, staff will collaborate to develop strategies to respond. If the problems continue, parents will be asked to meet with our staff. The goal will be to work together to find a solution to the problem behavior and resolve the difficulty. If appropriate, additional resources may be called upon including referrals for medical, developmental or behavioral assessment.

Some behaviors pose a significant threat to the child or others, and therefore the child must be excluded from the program if the behavior cannot be extinguished quickly. Situations requiring exclusion include:

- A child appears to be a danger to others.
- Continued care could be harmful to or not in the best interest of the child as determined by a medical, psychological, or social service personnel.
- Provision of adequate levels of service makes an undue burden on our resources and finances.

Decisions about changes in placement for a child will be based on the ability to safely meet the child's needs with the resources available. Decisions will be made in conjunction with the family and any other professionals working with the child to ensure ongoing support for the family.

### ***Admission policy***

It is the policy of Unity School to provide equal opportunity for families and children to participate in the school's programs without regard to race, creed, color, religion, national origin, gender, age, ethnicity, religion, disability, or parent/provider political beliefs, marital status, sexual orientation or special needs, or any other consideration made unlawful by federal, state or local laws. Educational programs are designed to meet the varying needs of all students.

We believe that children of all ability levels are entitled to the same opportunities for participation, acceptance and belonging in childcare. We will make every reasonable accommodation to encourage full and active participation of all children in our program based on his/her individual capabilities and needs. In instances where we cannot adequately meet the child's needs, we will refer the family to other resources to assist them in obtaining a suitable placement.



# FAMILY-STAFF PARTNERSHIP

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## ***Confidentiality***

All information about children and families is considered confidential. Staff members and volunteers will maintain the confidentiality of each family and of each child's educational records. Unless we receive your written consent, information regarding your child will not be released with the exception of that required by our regulatory and partnering agencies.

## ***Enrollment Forms***

You are asked for information in the enrollment packet that helps us get to know your child and your family. This includes where we can reach you (home and work numbers and cell phone), your work schedule, names and contact information for family members and others who will be bringing or picking up your child from school and those who should be called in an emergency. We also ask who is in your child's family constellation, and any health issues that we should be aware of. Please be sure to let us know about any information that will help the teachers make your child comfortable and help them succeed at Unity School. Be sure to keep us updated on any changes in any of this information. We do ask for updated forms at the beginning of each school year in September.

## ***Communication Systems***

We use a number of methods to communicate between center and family:

- Talk to your child's teacher at drop-off and pickup time.
- Read posted weekly lesson plans and daily schedules
- Read special event notices posted near the sign-in sheet
- Read the center newsletter. We can e-mail it to you, or you can pick up a copy at the front desk.
- Enjoy the photos, children's work and other documentation of children's activities posted in your child's room and around the center.
- Check your family mailbox (wooden mail slots) in the lobby (your name is over your mailbox). Monthly invoices, newsletters, and all special communications are placed here. We encourage parents to check their mailbox daily.

In addition, there are bulletin boards in the entry area to inform you of current happenings.

You can communicate with us:

- A message sheet is available next to the sign-in sheet to leave special information for the day, i.e. pickup time, someone new picking the child up, etc.
- Payments, messages, changes in information from the enrollment packet, and suggestions for improvement can be left in the 'mailbox' at the office desk. There will generally be someone in the office between 7:30 and 5:30 daily if you need assistance. If there is no one at the desk, please check with a Program Director or Teacher-in-charge for assistance.
- Come to your parent-teacher conference
- Share information at center-wide parent meetings
- Messages may also be faxed to us at 541 484-6944.
- VISIT THE CENTER! You are welcome to drop by anytime.

General information about the school and upcoming events is on our web site at [unityschooleugene.org](http://unityschooleugene.org).

### ***Daily Arrivals and Departures***

A parent or authorized adult must accompany children into and out of the center at all times, and must sign children in and out. Arrival and departure times are very busy; for safety, please hold your child's hand in the parking lot. (Please do not leave your car running in the parking lot. Idling cars create lots of exhaust, creating a health hazard for everyone.)

Drop-off and pickup times are opportunities to exchange information with our staff. As staff members are greeting children, parents often have lots of information to give us. Please help us do a good job — if it's important for us to know, write it down and hand it to a staff member.

### ***Parent-Teacher Conferences***

Teachers hold individual conferences with parents to talk about their child each spring and fall. We look forward to these special opportunities to talk about your child's progress. The conference will include a report of the most recent TS Gold assessment and we'll want your input about your child's needs. If you have questions or suggestions, please feel free to talk to the teachers or Program Director as you come and go each day, or don't hesitate to ask one of us to call you, or schedule an extra conference. We want to be sure both you and your child are comfortable and happy at Unity School.

### ***Procedure for Complaints***

If you have concerns, please bring them to one of the Unity Program Directors. We will make every effort to find the best solution.

### ***Meetings and Special Events***

Parent nights are held several times each year as a forum for parents and staff to get to know each other and share ideas. Sometimes this will be a potluck party for the whole family, and sometimes there will be a topic, with perhaps a guest speaker. If you have a suggestion for a parent night topic let us know.

### ***Photographs and Video***

Teachers use digital cameras and, occasionally, digital video to record children's activities. Documentation of children's activities is used for families to see what their children are doing in the center, and also for children to recall what they have been doing. You will see photographs throughout the center. Video may be used occasionally during meetings or special events.

Photographs may also be posted on our web site to inform the community about our program. Our staff may also share photographs with other teachers in professional meetings, classes, and workshops.

During the enrollment process, parents will sign a release for their children to be included in photographs and video.

Please remember you cannot post photos of Unity children (other than your own child) on Facebook or other social media. Please respect the privacy of other Unity families.

### **Parent participation**

The Unity School program is a reflection of the people involved in it, and we want you to be involved.

#### **Open Doors:**

We are delighted to have family members participate in our program. Parents/Guardians are welcome to visit the program any time during regular program hours, but please remember that rest time is from 1:00 to 2:00 PM — It is not a great time to share in your child's activities. (Free access for parents of enrolled children is required by Oregon licensing standards).

#### **Orientation:**

As your child begins at Unity, we'll schedule a short time for you to meet with the Program Director to review the Family Handbook and answer any questions you may have. This will help you and your child become comfortable and familiar with the school.

**Board of Directors:**

Some parents are on the Board of Directors, elected at our annual corporation meeting in January. Other participation opportunities include: Board committees, fund raising and other volunteer activities through the Friends of Unity, special work day activities, and volunteering for regular small tasks to help the teachers.

**Volunteer opportunities:**

We often post volunteer opportunities on the parent bulletin board near the front office. Some parents have offered to repair books or puppets, help with small repairs, or sew special additions for the classrooms. They have organized fundraisers or special activities like the Harvest Carnival. Please watch the bulletin board and the newsletter for opportunities, and talk with the Director when you have a great idea or some extra time. Always feel free to bring garden veggies, offer your farm for a field trip, or come in to talk with the children about what you do!

**Spread the word!**

Parent referrals are our best source of new families, so please tell your friends, neighbors, and coworkers about Unity.

# LICENSING AND LEGAL STATUS

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Unity School is a federal and state tax-exempt, nonprofit corporation. We are licensed by the Office of Child Care as a childcare center, and by the state Board of Education as a private school. If you have concerns regarding compliance with licensing requirements, complaints should be filed with:

Office of Child Care Eugene 310  
2510 Oakmont Way  
Eugene, OR 97401  
Ph. (541) 349-4102  
Fax (541) 683-2986

Unity School is governed by a Board of Directors. The Board is elected each year by the parents and staff of the school, and is made up of current and past parents of the school and professionals from the community.

## **Administrative Staff**

Executive Director	Carol Barton
Office Manager	Virginia Dare
Program Director	Susanne Hodson
Program Director	Jessica Graham
Head Start Child Care Specialist	Sierra Demo

# ENROLLMENT AND ATTENDANCE

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## ***Records***

We must receive all enrollment forms on or before the first day your child attends Unity School. Please be sure to complete and sign all forms. These include:

- Enrollment Form (4 pages) \*
- Fees and Payment Policy \*
- Emergency Medical Treatment Authorization \*
- CACFP Child Enrollment Form\*
- Confidential Income Statement\*
- Contact Information Sheet\*
- Certificate of Immunization Status\*\*
- Ages and Stages Questionnaire\*

\*updates are required annually (September 1)

\*\*updates are required as new immunizations are completed

Be sure you give us a contact person that we can call to pick up your child in an emergency if we cannot reach you. Include this person on the "pick up" list on the enrollment form. Please be sure you tell your emergency contact you have given us their name. If your address, phone number, doctor, or any other information on your application form changes please notify us immediately.

## ***Bringing your child to school***

Always bring your child to his/her teacher inside the school building and make sure to check in with a teacher when picking up your child. We ask that you do not drop off your child at Unity between 12:00 and 2:00. We also strongly encourage pickups by 1:00 or after 2:00, as children often have a tough time when they transition during this period of day. These steps will help us make lunch and rest time peaceful for all the children. We understand that scheduling conflicts may come up unexpectedly. If that happens, please give us a call and we will work with you to reach the best solution.

## ***Attendance***

Sign your child in and out each day. It is an important record of who is here. This is required by law and is also used in billing and reports for the government. We also use the attendance sheet as a reference during fire drills and other emergencies to account for children at school.



The attendance sheet is located below the clock by the office. Write in the times you drop off and pick up your child and sign your name so we know whom your child left with.

Please be sure you call to let us know when your child is home due to illness or for other reasons.

### ***Picking up your children***

Please arrive to pick up your child at the agreed upon time. The office should be notified of any schedule changes in writing. We schedule staff based on children's scheduled attendance.

If your child stays all day, be sure to come before 6:00 pm, as our center is then closed and staff are off work and need to leave the school. If you leave with your child after 6:00, we charge \$5 plus \$1.00 per minute late fee based on when you leave the building with your child. Repeated occurrences will result in an increased charge (SEE FEE POLICY FOR DETAILS)

If a child has not been picked up by 6:00 PM and we have not heard from you, attempts will be made to contact you and the contacts listed as Emergency and Release Contacts. Provisions will be made for someone to stay with your child as long as possible, but if after 30 minutes we have not been able to reach you or a person listed as an Emergency and Release Contact, we will call the local child protective services agency.

### ***Days closed***

Our official holidays are New Year's Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving and the day after, and two days at Christmas. We also close two days just before Labor Day for staff training. The school is open all year, and the above days are our only planned days off. From time to time, with lots of advance notice, we may close for an extra day or so for training, workdays, repairs, etc. In the winter, occasional closure occurs due to weather. If the school is closed due to bad weather, the information will be available on the school answering machine by 6:30 AM. If in doubt about the weather, please call.

\* Please note: Tuition is charged equally across twelve months. Holiday or weather closings will not change your tuition.

# TUITION AND FEES

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Tuition is paid in advance and pays for program, meals, and most field trips. The tuition rate is based on an average of 21 days per month, year-round. You must contract in advance for the category you wish to use. Your contracted tuition is due unless a change is made within the limits outlined in the next section. (PLEASE SEE TUITION INSERT FOR CURRENT TUITION AND FEES)

## ***Change in tuition or withdrawal from school***

Schedule changes must be turned in to the office by the 25th of the month to change your tuition for the following month. The same deadline applies if you are withdrawing your child from Unity; notification is required by the 25th to exempt you from the coming month's tuition. No adjustments or refunds are made for unused hours without this prior notice. (This includes illness, holidays and weather closings.)

## ***Registration fee***

An annual registration fee of \$70.00 is charged for each child. This amount will be included in your September bill or, if you enroll after September, will be added to your first bill upon enrollment.

## ***Due date and late fee***

Tuition must be paid in advance, due by the 5th of each month. (If you have unusual circumstances you can arrange for an alternate payment date. Arrangements must be made with the office in advance of the due date.) Due dates for all charges are printed on your bill and posted in the lobby. A late fee of \$5.00 will be charged for each school day the payment is late, and care will not be provided if payment is not received by the 15th. Fees are assessed as long as your account has an unpaid balance. Accounts more than 30 days overdue are charged interest at the rate of 10% per year and are assigned to a collection agency when 60 days have elapsed since the due date. A fee of \$25 will be charged for each returned check.

## ***Overuse of hours***

Overuse hours (exceeding the limit of your tuition category) are charged at the hourly rate for up to 10 hours per month. Use of 11 or more hours over your category will result in a shift up to the next category and a charge for the difference between rates. Overuse of hours in two consecutive months will result in billing for the higher tuition category in the third month. Overuse charges are billed the first week of the following month and payment is due a week later. The school's late fee policy (see above) will be applied to unpaid charges.

## ***Underuse of Hours***

No refunds are made for sick days or other unused hours.

Hours may be made up within the same month if space is available. Arrange makeup hours through the front desk. Unused hours may not be made up beyond the end of the month.

### ***School Hours and Pickup***

Our business hours are 7:00 am - 6:00 pm. If you arrive after 6:00 pm we charge a late pickup fee of \$5.00 plus \$1/ minute (based on the time you leave the school with your child), billed to your account. The fee increases to \$5 plus \$3/minute for repeat incidents. In the event of any true emergency please notify us immediately and make arrangements for your child. Thank you for your cooperation.

### ***Holding a Space***

If your child is gone for the summer, a fee equal to one-month tuition for the desired fall schedule will hold your space. The fee is due by June 15, is nonrefundable and does not apply to tuition.

### ***Other absences/schedule changes***

If your child is gone for vacation during the school year, or on a reduced schedule, tuition equivalent to a quarter time schedule must be paid to hold the space. For a mini-schedule, usual tuition must be paid each month the child is absent to hold the space. Due dates are the same as regular tuition.

# UNITY SCHOOL 2016-2017 TUITION AND POLICIES

Rates & Policies effective **September 1, 2016**

Tuition is due the 1<sup>st</sup> of the month and late after the 5<sup>th</sup>.

## Preschool

Full time	(136-210 hrs)	\$966
3/4	(93-135 hrs)	\$851
1/2	(53-92 hrs)	\$688
AM half time	(53-92 hrs)	\$662
Half day preschool (4 days)		\$470
3-5 year olds	(5 days)	\$590
1/4	(25-52 hrs)	\$530
Mini-schedule 3-6 hrs. /wk. \$10.33/hr.		

\* Preschool not toilet trained: add 7 %

Pandas	Full time	(136-210 hrs)	\$1113	Panda rates includes diapers
	3/4	(93-135 hrs)	\$971	
	1/2	(53-92 hrs)	\$788	
	1/4	(25-52 hrs)	\$599	
Mini-schedule 3-6 hrs. /wk. \$13.02/hr.				

## School Age Care (Kindergarten through 5<sup>th</sup> grade):

School age care up to 50 hr./mo.-	\$431
School age care up to 80 hr./mo. -	\$462
Mini-schedule 3-6-hrs/wk. \$9.18/hr. or \$32.00 /3.5 hr. days	
No School Day:	\$64

## Summer Rates for School-agers available on weekly or monthly basis

2016 Weekly		Monthly:			\$60/Day
FT \$230	1/2 \$164	FT \$865	3/4 \$ 761	1/2 \$615	
2017 Weekly:		Monthly:			\$64/Day
FT \$241	1/2 \$172	FT \$908	3/4 \$800	1/2 \$647	

Transportation: included in monthly and daily tuition for Schoolagers:  
for hourly rates \$5.00/trip up to \$50/mo.

Program fee: \$75 /yr./child

Credit/Debit card fee: \$10 /use

Late payment fee: \$5 /day, dropped after 15th 10% /mo.

Return check fee: \$25

Late pick-up: \$5 plus \$1 per minute (\$3/minute for repeat incidents)

VISA/MASTERCARD accepted (payments due 1st day of month)

All tuition adjustments arranged by 25th of previous month.

No credits for sick days. No multi-child discount.

# Unity School Calendar

## 2016

January 1	Closed for New Years Day
May 30	Closed for Memorial Day
July 4	Closed for Independence Day
September 1 & 2	Closed: Staff Training
September 5	Closed for Labor Day
November 24 & 25	Closed for Thanksgiving
December 23 & 26	Closed for Christmas

## 2017

January 2	Closed for New Years Day
May 29	Closed for Memorial Day
July 4	Closed for Independence Day
Aug. 31 & Sept. 1	Closed: Staff Training
September 4	Closed for Labor Day
November 23 & 24	Closed for Thanksgiving
December 25 & 26	Closed for Christmas

Check out our web site at  
[www.unityschooleugene.org](http://www.unityschooleugene.org)