

Partners In Learning

Child Development and Family Resource Center



Accredited by
NAEYC'S National Academy of Early Childhood Programs

Staff Handbook



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Mission Statement

Our mission is to model the highest quality learning environment that stimulates families and the community to provide optimal growth and development of children.

Our Goals are:

- W**elcome parent participation in center activities, provide resource and referral services, parent training, and counseling to families with young children enrolled in the Center.

- I**nclude children with diverse backgrounds and special needs in the mainstream of the childcare center and provide high quality resources and learning experiences to children of all levels of development.

- S**upport and encourage staff training and education to enhance quality, and to ensure that the needs of children and families are being met.

- E**stablish and maintain an observation and practical experience laboratory for for students enrolled in area public and private institutions.

Vision

Partners In Learning Child Development and Family Resource Center strives to become a model child development center seeking the highest accreditation level and providing the highest quality, affordable care to families. The Center will encourage community support and will provide training and consultation to child care providers in Rowan County.

This handbook is for employees of Partners In Learning Child Development Center, Incorporated (herein called "the Center") and is intended for information purposes only. Neither these policies, organization practices, nor other communications create an employment contract of term.

All employees of Partners In Learning will have electronic access to the personnel policy manual, and each employee must sign and date a receipt indicating he/she has read and understands the policies contained herein.

Equal Employment Opportunity

Partners In Learning Child Development Center, Incorporated will provide equal employment opportunities to all people without regard to race, color, creed, sex, age, national origin or disability, make reasonable accommodations for the employment and advancement of disabled persons and veterans, and promote the full realization of this policy through positive, continuing implementation.

Partners In Learning Child Development Center, Incorporated is fully committed to assuring equal opportunity and equal consideration to all applicants and employees in personnel matters including recruitment, examination and hiring, training, promotion, salary and other compensation and/or termination. In the implementation of this policy, full consideration will be given to all qualified candidates for all positions to be filled, coupled with special effort to recruit and upgrade members of minority groups and women.

Statement of Non-Discrimination

Partners In Learning Child Development Center, Incorporated shall not discriminate against any of its employees or applicants for employment because of race, religion, sex, age, national origin, or disability that does not impair job performance. This requirement shall apply to, but not be limited to, hiring, promotion, demotion, transfer, recruitment advertising, disciplinary action, lay-off or termination, apprenticeship, and compensation.

Partners In Learning Child Development Center, Incorporated is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA)

Partners In Learning Child Development Center, Incorporated is committed to hiring and retraining employees with disabilities in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). All applicants and employees with disabilities are to be afforded every opportunity granted by this act.

The ADA prohibits discrimination against qualified applicants and employees on the basis of disability. Qualified individuals with disabilities must meet the skill, experience, education and other job-related requirement of the position held or desired and can perform the essential functions of the positions with or without reasonable accommodations.

An individual with a disability is defined as an individual who:

- Has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of his/her major life activities;
- Has a record of such an impairment; or
- Is regarded as having such an impairment.

Employers cannot discriminate against people with disabilities in regard to any employment practices or terms, conditions, and privileges of employment. This covers all aspects of employment, including:

- Application
- Testing
- Hiring
- Assignments
- Evaluation
- Disciplinary Action
- Promotion
- Medical Exams
- Layoff/Recall
- Termination
- Compensation
- Leave
- Training
- Benefits

Employers must make a reasonable accommodation to the known physical or mental limitations of a qualified applicant or employee with a disability unless it can be shown that such accommodations would cause undue hardship on the organization.

Some examples of reasonable accommodations include:

- Renovating existing facilities to make them readily accessible and useable.
- Restructuring of job responsibilities.
- Modifying work schedules.
- Reassignment to a vacant position
- Modifying equipment or devices.
- Adjusting or modifying testing and training materials or policies.

Any questions concerning this policy or its application should be directed to the Director.

Family & Medical Leave Act (FMLA)

Partners In Learning Child Development Center, Incorporated will adhere to the Family & Medical Leave Act (FMLA).

The Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 grants provisions for eligible employees. To qualify for this special leave, an employee must have worked for the organizations for at least one year (12months) and must have worked at least 1,250 hours during the previous 12 months. A physician's certification must be returned within 30 days of the notice to secure FMLA leave. If the request is not made in writing, FMLA leave will be forfeited. Eligible employees are entitled to a total of 12 week of unpaid leave during any 12-month period for one or more of the following:

- Birth of a child.
- Placement of child for adoption or foster care.
- To care for a spouse, child, or parent who has a serious health condition.
- Due to the serious health condition of the employee that prevents him/her from performing his/her job.

Any employee who takes FMLA leave under the law is eligible to return to the same or, an equivalent or comparable position and benefits. The employee is also eligible to continue any health insurance benefits that he/she has been eligible at the same rates. Employees planning to take FMLA leave are recommended to give a 30-day notice, if possible. The organization will determine the rolling period of time by the previous twelve (12) months from the effective date of the leave.

Harassment Policy

It is the policy of Partners In Learning Child Development Center, Incorporated that all employees have the right to work in an environment free from all forms of discrimination and conduct which can be considered harassing, coercive or disruptive including, but not limited to, sexual harassment.

Partners In Learning Child Development Center, Incorporated will not tolerate any form of harassment by or towards employees. Engaging in such behavior is grounds for immediate dismissal.

Harassment is defined as a form of misconduct that undermines the integrity of the employment relationship. It refers to behavior that is not welcome, which is personally offensive, which debilitates morale, and which, therefore, interferes with work effectiveness.

Areas of harassment include, but are not limited to, harassment of racial, ethnic, religious, national origin, disability, citizenship status, age, or sexual nature.

NO employee or volunteer should be subjected to unsolicited or unwelcome sexual overtures or conduct, either verbal or physical. **NO** employee or volunteer is to threaten or insinuate, either explicitly or implicitly, that an employee's refusal to submit to sexual advances will adversely affect his or her employment, evaluation, wages, advancement, assigned duties, or any other aspect of employment or career advancement.

Any employee who feels he/she has been subjected to harassment or has witnessed the harassment of another employee is strongly encouraged to report it to his/her immediate supervisor or the next individual in the chain of command with whom he/she feels comfortable.

Employment Requirements

Age Requirements. Due to North Carolina Child Care Licensing Regulations, all applicants must be at least 18 years of age to be considered eligible for full-time employment. Individuals at least 16 years of age will be considered eligible for some part-time opportunities.

Training/Education Requirements. Formal training in early childhood education or related field is required of the teaching staff.

- The Director should have a degree in early childhood education or child development.
- Likewise, the Program Coordinator should have a degree in early childhood education or child development.
- Lead Teachers should have or be working toward a degree in child development, early childhood education, or a related field.
- Assistant and Flexible Teachers should hold the North Carolina Child Care Credential or its equivalent and be working toward a degree in Early Childhood Development.

Experience Requirements. All individuals considered for employment will have experience working with young children.

- The Director should have at least five (5) years of classroom experience and two years of administrative experience.
- The Program Coordinator should have at least five (5) years of classroom experience.
- The Lead Teachers should have at least Two (2) years of classroom experience.
- Assistant Teachers should have at least one (1) year of classroom experience.

Medical/Health Requirements. All individuals considered for employment must be in good health. All Center employees must have an initial physical examination, including a TB Test.

Criminal Records Check. Within two (2) weeks of employment, all new employees must complete Criminal Record Check information which will be submitted to the Rowan County Sheriff's Department and the North Carolina Division of Child Development.

Employment Procedures

Application Process. All applicants will complete an application for employment and provide the names, addresses and phone numbers of at least three professional references and two personal references. Qualified applicants will be screened through an interview process. If the applicant is to be considered further, the Director will request him/her to spend 2 – 4 hours in the classroom for which he/she is being considered. The Director will observe and evaluate the applicant's interaction with the children as well as his/her interaction with the teaching staff involved. The Director will either interview the applicant a second time during which a job offer may be made or will send the applicant a letter of rejection, thanking them for their interest in the position.

SPECIAL NOTE: Consideration will be given, when applicable to promotion from within for those employees deemed qualified as demonstrated by their performance and training that they are capable of and interested in assuming additional responsibilities.

Orientation. Within the first six (6) weeks of employment, ten (10) hours of orientation is required which includes instruction of Center operations, review of policies and procedures, review of licensing regulations, health and safety procedures for abuse and neglect.

CPR & First Aid Training. Within the first year of employment, each full-time employee must receive CPR and First Aid certification. For continued employment, each full-time employee is expected to renew CPR certification annually and First Aid certification every three (3) years. Some part-time positions will also require CPR and First Aid certification.

In-Service Training. Each employee must complete up to 20 hours or more of in-service training per year. Whenever possible, the Center will provide time off for the training and will pay any fees associated.

Center employees are expected to attend all training sessions they have been registered to attend. If an employee fails to attend, he/she will be responsible for repaying the Center for any fees associated with the training.

If an employee has an emergency that will prevent him/her from attending any such scheduled training, he/she should alert the Director so a replacement may be found to attend and the originally scheduled employee will be exempt from repaying the Center. If however, a replacement cannot be found or is not allowed by the organization offering the training, the employee originally scheduled for the training will be subject to repayment of the fees.

Center employees will be expected to arrive on time for all training sessions and to remain for the full time allotted for the training.

The Center will provide at least five (5) hours of in-house training per year. Attendance by the teaching staff will be required at these sessions.

In addition to the five (5) hours of in-house training provided each year, Partners In Learning will set aside two (2) days as Staff Development Days to be announced by the Director prior to the commencement of each new year. Participation as prescribed by the Director is mandatory.

Employee Categories

Probationary Employees. All full-time and part-time employees will work a probationary period of employment during their first 90 days of employment. However, at the discretion of the Director, this period may be extended up to 30 additional days. At the end of the probationary period, a formal evaluation will be completed before permanent employment will be offered by the Center Director. An employee may be dismissed at any time during the probationary period if it is determined he/she is incapable of performing his/her assigned duties or for any other reason.

Full-Time Employees. Individuals employed to work 35 – 40 hours per week are considered full-time employees and are eligible for benefits as described in this handbook. Eligibility for employee benefits begins the first day following the completion for the probationary period.

Part-Time Employees. Individuals employed to work less than 35 hours per week are considered part-time employees and are not eligible for benefits as described in this handbook.

Policy Revised 7/1/11

Performance Evaluation

The effectiveness for the Center is dependent upon competent staff who fully understands their duties, responsibilities, and performance standards. The performance evaluation system provides each employee with information about his/her performance in terms of his/her job responsibilities as well as guidelines to measure performance, the steps necessary to improve performance and/or prepare him/her for additional responsibilities.

The objectives of the Partners In Learning Child Development Center performance evaluation system are:

1. To assess each individual staff member's performance.
2. To identify training needs or other ways to improve the staff member's performance.
3. To determine the staff member's potential to assume additional responsibilities and future assignments.
4. To determine appropriate and equitable performance-based salary increases.
5. To motivate staff by providing clear expectations, goals, and feedback.
6. To allow the Director to play a key role in developing the staff's abilities.
7. To eliminate arbitrary and overly subjective personnel decisions.
8. To provide accountability to the Partners In Learning Child Development Center, Incorporated of its overall goals for all staff members.

The Partners In Learning Performance Evaluation System consists of five (5) key elements:

I. Job Description.

During the interviewing process each applicant will have access to the job description applicable to the position for which he/she is interviewing. Job descriptions will describe, in general terms, the outcomes expected in each job at the Center.

II. Observation

Periodically throughout the year, supervisors will observe each employee as they work with the children in the classroom or (as in the case of non-teaching staff) their assigned duties. Observation Vignettes will be used for this purpose. The employee will get a copy and a copy will be placed in the employee's file.

III. Planning

The Director will review the weekly plans and classroom records of each teacher periodically. In the case of non-teaching staff, the Director will review work plans and the associated records requirement.

IV. In-Service Training

The Director will review the yearly training records of each employee on a quarterly basis to determine the employee's needs and whether or not he/she is scheduling appropriate training in a timely manner.

V. Overall Performance

The Director will discuss each employee's performance, calling into account the aforementioned items as reference. He/she will be aided in this effort by an evaluation tool that provides a scale for evaluating each of the aforementioned items and provide a score for overall performance.

New Hire, Rehire, and Reinstatement

New Hire. The Director is responsible for having the new employee complete all pre-employment forms, benefit applications, and enrollment forms; The Director is also responsible for providing, on the employee's first day of work, basic information on pay policy, leave policy, benefits, and working hours.

Rehires. Applications received from former employees will be processed using the same procedures and standards that govern all direct applications. The Director will review the former employee's performance records and circumstances surrounding termination of previous employment with the Partners In Learning Child Development Center.

Reinstatement. Employees who are re-employed by the Partners In Learning Child Development Center after termination will lose their original date of hire for all purposes and be assigned a new date corresponding to their first day on the job after re-employment. Benefits will begin in accordance with this new date of employment. This policy shall not apply to layoffs or to an employee who was erroneously terminated for cause and later reinstated.

Personnel Records

A personnel file will be maintained for each employee.

It will contain the employee's application (and if applicable—resume), copies of school transcripts and training certificates, medical information, letters of commendation, a job description, salary information, grievances or disciplinary actions, receipt of policy handbook and updates, etc. All such information will be held in strict confidence and made available to authorized personnel only.

The personnel file will be available to the employee upon request. The file will be reviewed in the presence of the Director or his/her designee.

The employee will be held responsible for notifying the Director of and changes in his/her personal status such as legal name, address, telephone number, or marital status.

An employee may authorize release of any information in his/her personnel file to any person, institution, or agency at any time by sending a written release to the Director. Routine verification of employment does not require written authorization. The Director is responsible for the verification of staff member's employment and the Chair of the Board of Directors is responsible for verification of the Director's employment.

Staff Meetings

In an effort to maintain an informed staff that presents a positive professional image, the Director will preside over monthly staff meetings. Attendance at these meetings is mandatory.

At times during the year, the Director may call special staff meetings to discuss specific issues or for particular training opportunities that cannot be conducted during the regularly scheduled staff meetings. Attendance at these meetings is also mandatory.

Dress Code

It is the aim of Partners In Learning Child Development Center to ensure that staff dress in such a manner that presents a professional and best image of themselves and that reflects well on the Center to the children and families they serve. The staff of the Center is expected, as a matter of routine, to report to work in the appropriate attire of Polo Shirts with a PIL logo and khaki or scrub pants. ***Shirts and pants will be purchased at the expense of the staff member.***

It is expected that the staff members will use good judgment in their standard of personal hygiene and will adopt an appearance that reflects the importance of their profession and their value to the Center.

The following is a partial list of items that are considered ***inappropriate***:

- Soiled, tattered, and/or rumpled clothing.
- Ill fitting or tight clothing.
- High heeled shoes.

SPECIAL NOTE:

Shorts may be worn only if they are walking or bermuda shorts. However, they must reach below the finger tips of the employee when standing straight and arms are extended downward. Pants and Capri's are preferred.

An employee determined by the administration to be inappropriately attired will be required to leave work and requested to alter his/her appearance to a more appropriate manner. Time lost on the job by the employee for this purpose will not be compensated. If an employee refuses to heed the administration's instruction regarding personal appearance, such conduct will result in disciplinary actions up to and including termination.

Policy Revised 3/29/11

Work Schedules

Employees will be assigned a work schedule. However, employees must be available to work based on the needs of the Center. Employees will be notified by the Director if scheduled work hours need to be changed. Individual requests will be considered whenever possible, but the Center needs will ultimately determine staff work schedules.

Time & Attendance

All employees are expected to be on time to work and be consistent in attendance. For the purposes of this handbook, "on time" is defined as being in the assigned classroom or duty station and ready to begin at the time scheduled.

If an employee cannot prevent late arrival or absence, he/she should contact the Director or Assistant Director at least one hour prior to the time he/she is scheduled to arrive.

Multiple and/or consistent occurrences of unexcused tardiness or absenteeism will result in a warning and possible termination of employment.

Employees are not to leave work prior to the end of their scheduled work period without the prior knowledge and consent of the Director.

Time Records

Upon employment, each employee will be given a time clock code. Using this code, employees will be required to “clock in” upon arrival at the Center to begin their scheduled work period. Failure to do so will result in a warning. Continued failure will result in termination of employment.

All hourly employees will be required to “clock out” for lunch breaks and “clock in” upon return.

For more information, on lunch breaks, please see the section entitled “Lunch Breaks”.

Lunch Breaks

Employees working *ten (10) hours per day* are permitted a *20 minute **paid** lunch break*.

Employees working *eight and a half (8.5) hours per day* are permitted a *30 minute **unpaid** lunch break*.

Employees working *nine (9) hours per day* are permitted a *one-hour **unpaid** lunch break*.

Alcohol and Substance Abuse

The Center prohibits the use, manufacture, conveyance, possession or distribution of illicit substances on its premises and maintains a drug-free and smoke-free work environment. Any violation of this policy will subject employees to adverse employment action, up to and including immediate dismissal.

Employees who abuse alcohol and/or other substances, whether legal or illegal, are encouraged to seek treatment voluntarily. In cases not involving sales, transactions or manufacture, decisions regarding disciplinary action will be made by the Director and may depend upon the circumstances surrounding the discovery, whether the employee seeks help voluntarily, and the employee’s work record. Those cases that involve sales, transactions, or manufacture will result in immediate termination of employment.

Partners In Learning reserves the right to test employees for drug or alcohol use. Testing will normally occur under one of the following circumstances:

- When an accident, near-accident, or injury occurs on the job. If an on-the-job injury occurs, a test for alcohol consumption and presence of non-prescribed drugs may be performed. Positive results could result in denial of Workers' Compensation benefits under North Carolina Law.
- Under reports of drug or alcohol use on PIL property.
- When visual observation of an employee suggests that he or she may be unfit for duty.
- Upon Medical information or observation suggesting alcohol or drug abuse.
- Where management has reason to believe that an employee is in possession of or using drugs or alcohol.
- As part of a monitoring or probationary program for employees who have, or may have, violated the Center's drug and alcohol policies.
- Otherwise when and where the Center, in its sole discretion, has cause.

An employee who refuses to consent to a test to detect alcohol or drug use or who alters a test is subject to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

Personal Business on Work Time

While on duty, all employees are expected to maximize the use of their time in pursuit of activities directly related to the Center. Furthermore, the use of Center equipment and supplies for personal business is prohibited.

Employees are asked to take care of personal business at times other than scheduled work periods. The Center does recognize that occasionally situations such as personal phone calls or visitors may arise. However, each employee is responsible for minimizing such occurrences. If such situations are deemed excessive by the Director, the employee will be warned. If there is no improvement, the employee may be subject to termination.

The telephone in the workplace is a business telephone. It must be easily available for business use and must be kept clear in the event of an emergency for communication with parents and Center business. All incoming calls should be answered immediately, identifying the center name and your name. If personal phone calls must be made, employees may make these during their breaks, using the phone provided in the staff break

room. *Under no circumstances should long distance phone calls be billed to the Center.*

If personal phone calls are received while an employee in the classroom, a message will be taken and placed in the employee's box so that the call may be returned when you are not responsible for caring for children. *Only for emergency calls will a message be delivered to the employee and provisions be made for the employee to be relieved in order to take or return the call.*

Personal cellular telephones and pagers **must** be turned off while an employee is working.

Code of Ethical Conduct

All employees of the Partners In Learning Child Development Center will adhere to the Code of Conduct established by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) which is as follows:

Section I: Ethical Responsibilities to Children

Childhood is a unique and valuable stage in the life cycle. Our paramount responsibility is to provide safe, healthy, nurturing, and responsive settings for children. We are committed to supporting children's development by cherishing individual differences, by helping them learn to live and work cooperatively, and by promoting their self-esteem.

Ideals:

- To be familiar with the knowledge base of early childhood education and to keep current through continuing education and in-service training.
- To base program practices upon current knowledge in the field of child development and related disciplines and upon particular knowledge of each child.
- To recognize and respect the uniqueness and the potential of each child.
- To appreciate the special vulnerability of children.
- To create and maintain safe and healthy settings that foster children's social, emotional, intellectual and physical development and that respect their dignity and their contributions.
- To support the right of children with special needs to participate, consistent with their ability, in regular early childhood programs.

Principles:

- Above all, we shall not harm children. We shall not participate in practices that are disrespectful, degrading, dangerous, exploitative, intimidating, psychologically damaging, or physically harmful to children. ***This principle has precedence over all others in this Code.***
- We shall not participate in practices that discriminate against children by denying benefits, giving special advantages, or excluding them from programs or activities on the basis of their race, religion, sex, national origin, or the status, behavior or beliefs of their parents.
- We shall involve all of those with relevant knowledge (including staff and parents) in decisions concerning a child.
- When, after appropriate efforts have been made with a child and the family, the child still does not appear to be benefiting from a program, we shall communicate our concern to the family in a positive way and offer them assistance in finding a more suitable setting.
- We shall be familiar with the symptoms of child abuse and neglect; we shall report the evidence to the appropriate community agency and follow up to ensure that appropriate action has been taken. When possible, parents will be informed that the referral has been made.
- When another person tells us of their suspicion that a child is being abused or neglected but we lack evidence, we shall assist that person in taking appropriate action to protect the child.
- When a child protective agency fails to provide adequate protection for abused or neglected children, we acknowledge a collective ethical responsibility to work toward improvement of these services.
- When we become aware of a practice or situation that endangers the health or safety of children, but has not been previously known to do so, we have an ethical responsibility to inform those who can remedy the situation and who can keep other children from being similarly endangered.

Section II: Ethical Responsibilities to Families

Families are of primary importance in children's development. (The term family may include others, besides parents, who are responsibly involved with the child.) Because the family and the early childhood educator have a common interest in the child's welfare, we acknowledge a primary responsibility to bring about collaboration between the home and school in ways that enhance the child's development.

Ideals:

- To develop relationships of mutual trust with the families we serve.
- To acknowledge and build upon strengths and competencies as we Support families in their task of nurturing children.
- To respect the dignity of each family and its culture, customs, and beliefs.
- To respect families' childrearing values and their right to make decisions for their children.

- To interpret each child's progress to parents within the framework of developmental perspective and to help families understand and appreciate the value of developmentally appropriate early childhood programs.
- To help family members improve their understanding of their children and to enhance their skills as parents.
- To participate in building support networks for families by providing them with opportunities to interact with program staff and families.

Principles:

- We shall not deny family members access to their child's classroom or program setting.
- We shall inform families of program philosophy, policies, and personnel qualifications, and explain why we teach as we do.
- We shall inform families of and, when appropriate, involve them in policy decisions.
- We shall inform families of and, when appropriate, involve them in significant decisions affecting their child.
- We shall inform the family of accidents involving their child, or risks, such as exposures to contagious disease that may result in infection, and of events that might result in psychological damage.
- We shall not permit or participate in research that could in any way hinder the education or development of the children in our programs. Families shall be fully informed of any proposed research projects involving their children and shall have the opportunity to give or withhold consent.
- We shall not engage in or support exploitation of families. We shall not use our relationship with a family for private advantage or personal gain, or enter into relationships with family members that might impair our effectiveness in working with children.
- We shall develop written policies for the protection of confidentiality and shall respect the family's right to privacy, refraining from disclosure of confidential information and intrusion into family life. However, when we are concerned about a child's welfare, it is permissible to reveal confidential information to agencies and individuals who may be able to act in the child's interest.
- In cases where family members are in conflict we shall work openly, sharing our observations of the child, to help all parties involved make informed decisions. We shall refrain from becoming an advocate for one party.
- We shall be familiar with and appropriately use community resources and professional services that support families. After a referral has been made, we shall follow up to ensure that services have been adequately provided.

Section III: Ethical Responsibilities to Colleagues

In a caring cooperative wo4rk place, human dignity is respected, professional satisfaction is promoted, and positive relationships are modeled. Our primary responsibility in the arena is to establish and maintain setting and relationships that support productive work and meet professional needs.

RESPONSIBILITIES TO CO-WORKERS

Ideals:

- To establish and maintain relationships of trust and cooperation with co-workers.
- To share resources and information with co-workers.
- To support co-workers in meeting their professional needs and in their professional development.
- To accord co-workers due recognition of professional achievement.

Principles:

- When we have concern about the professional behavior of a co-worker, we shall first let that person know of our concern and attempt to resolve the matter collegially.
- We shall exercise care in expressing views regarding the personal attributes or professional conduct of co-workers. Statements should be based on first-hand knowledge and relevant to the interests of children and programs.

RESPONSIBILITIES TO EMPLOYERS

Ideals:

- To assist the program in providing the highest quality of service.
- To maintain loyalty to the program and uphold its reputation.

Principles:

- When we do not agree with program policies, we shall first attempt to effect change through constructive action within the organization.
- We shall speak or act on behalf of an organization only when authorized. We shall take care to note when we are speaking for the organization and when we are expressing a personal judgment.

RESPONSIBILITIES TO EMPLOYEES

Ideals:

- To promote policies and working conditions that foster competence, well-being, and self-esteem in staff members.
- To create a climate of trust and candor that will enable staff to speak and act in the best interests of children, families, and the field of early childhood education.
- To strive to secure an adequate livelihood for those who work with or on behalf of young children.

Principles:

- In decisions concerning children and programs, we shall appropriately utilize the training, experience, and expertise of staff members.
- We shall provide staff members with working conditions that permit them to carry out their responsibilities, timely and not-threatening evaluation procedures, written grievance procedures, constructive feedback, and opportunities for continuing professional development and advancement.
- We shall develop and maintain comprehensive written personnel policies that define program standards and, when applicable, that specify the extent to which employees are accountable for their conduct outside the work place. These policies shall be given to new staff members and shall be available for review by all staff members.
- Employees who do not meet program standards shall be informed of areas of concern and, when possible, assisted in improving their performance.
- Employees who are dismissed shall be informed of the reasons for their termination. When a dismissal is for cause, justification must be based on evidence of inadequate or inappropriate behavior that is accurately documented, current, and available for the employee to review.
- In making evaluations and recommendations, judgments shall be based on fact and relevant to the interest of children and programs.
- Hiring and promotion will be based solely on a person's record of accomplishments and ability to carry out the responsibilities of the position.
- In hiring, promotion, and provision of training, we shall not participate in any form of discrimination based on race, religion, sex, national origin, handicap, age, or sexual preference. We shall be familiar with laws and regulations that pertain to employment discrimination.

Section IV: Ethical Responsibilities to Community and Society

Early childhood programs operate within a context of an immediate community made up of families and other institutions concerned with children's welfare. Our responsibilities to the community are to provide programs that meet its needs and to cooperate with agencies and progressions that share responsibility for children. Because the larger society has a measure of responsibility for the welfare and protection of children, and because of our specialized expertise in child development, we acknowledge an obligation to serve as a voice for children everywhere.

Ideals:

- To provide the community with high-quality, culturally sensitive programs and services.
- To promote cooperation among agencies and professionals concerned with the welfare of young children, their families, and their teachers.
- To work, through education, research, and advocacy, toward an environmentally safe world in which all children are adequately fed, sheltered, and nurtured.
- To work, through education, research, and advocacy, toward a society in which all young children have access to quality programs.
- To promote knowledge and understanding of young children and their needs. To work toward greater social acknowledgement of children's rights and greater social acceptance of responsibility for their well-being.
- To support policies and laws that promote the well-being of children and families. To oppose those that impair their well-being. To cooperate with other individuals and groups in these efforts.
- To further the professional development of the field of early childhood education and to strengthen its commitment to realizing its core values as reflected in this Code.

Principles:

- We shall communicate openly and truthfully about the nature and extent of services that we provide.
- We shall not accept or continue to work in positions for which we are personally unsuited or professionally unqualified. We shall not offer services that we do not have the competence, qualifications, or resources to provide.
- We shall be objective and accurate in reporting the knowledge upon which we base our program practices.
- We shall cooperate with other professionals who work with children and their families.
- We shall not hire or recommend for employment any person who is unsuited for a position with respect to competence, qualifications, or character.
- We shall report the unethical or incompetent behavior of a colleague to a supervisor when informal resolution is not effective.
- We shall be familiar with laws and regulations that serve to protect the children in our programs.
- We shall not participate in practices which are in violation of laws and regulations that protect children in our programs.
- When we have evidence that an early childhood program is violating the laws or regulations protecting children, we shall report it to persons responsible for the program. If compliance is not accomplished within a reasonable time, we will report the violation to appropriate authorities who can be expected to remedy the situation.

- When a program violates or requires its employees to violate this Code, it is permissible, after fair assessment of the evidence, to disclose the identity of that program.

Unethical and Improper Practices

The following are examples of job performance violations and misconduct that will require immediate disciplinary action and possible termination of employment.

- Release of confidential information to unauthorized persons.
- Providing information or acting in a way that threatens the safety, health, or well-being of another individual.
- Use of abusive, threatening, or improper language toward others.
- Sexual harassment.
- Failure to perform assigned duties due to lack of effort/commitment
- Failure to report to work without notice.
- Excessive unexcused tardiness.
- Falsifying Center records and/or reports including payroll, personnel and employment records.
- Inability or failure to maintain satisfactory working relationships with co-workers.
- Failure to abide by written policies.
- Insubordination.
- Abuse, misuse, or unauthorized possession of Center property.

This is only a partial list.

The Director retains the right to use his/her discretion in selecting the level of disciplinary action appropriate for the situation.

Custody Issues

Since the families that we serve are sometimes faced with conflicts that lead to custody disputes, employees may be approached by parents or their attorneys to give a statement regarding the care of a child. Under no circumstance should an employee give his/her opinion or make a statement concerning the care of a child to or for the use of anyone other than the parents/guardian of the child, unless he/she is legally required to do so by subpoena. Refer all such inquiries to you Director, as employees are not authorized to speak on behalf of the Center. In addition, the employee could be held personally liable by someone involved in a legal dispute.

Child Abuse Reporting Procedures

North Carolina law **requires** childcare professionals to report suspected cases of child abuse and/or neglect. If a staff member is alerted of the possibility of such a case that meets reporting requirements, it is the legal and moral responsibility of the staff member to inform the Director. The Director will then notify the Protective Services Unit of the Rowan County Department of Social Services who will investigate suspected child abuse or neglect. We are here to serve as an advocate for you and your family and have many community resources for a variety of needs.

A report may be made in person, by telephone, or in writing to the Department of Social Services in your county. The Rowan County address is 1813 East Innes Street, Salisbury, NC 28146. The county phone number for making reports is (704) 216-8499. Reports may also be made to the state Child Protective Services Division by calling 1-800-354-KIDS.

It is your responsibility to notify any persons who are on your child's pick-up list of our policies regarding these issues.

Adopted October 13, 2005

Classroom Supervision Policy

At Partners In Learning the children's welfare and safety needs to be the staff's first consideration. Supervising children in the classroom at all times are very important to the welfare and safety of our children. In order to give the children adequate care, staff should follow these procedures:

- **Never leave children unattended.**
 - **Children should remain in the classroom.**
 - **Children should be counted, using name to face recognition, whenever the children leave the classroom.**
 - **Children are not allowed to leave the classroom without adult supervision.**
 - **If the classroom staff member must leave the classroom, another qualified adult must be left in charge of the classroom.**
 - **All children shall be supervised visually at all times.**
1. Create an environment that has specific learning centers. Make sure this environment is cheerful but not overly stimulating, clean but not overly tidy.
 2. Set your schedule so that children spend most of their time in active learning of their own choosing. Provide opportunities to learn through playing games using building toys, exploring objects from nature, acting out roles, and using art materials.
 3. Without being intrusive, involve yourself actively while children play. Observe their play and extend their play by adding materials and asking questions about it. Be available when needed.
 4. Teach skills and give information individually or in very small groups, through active, playful, and meaningful activities.
 5. Teach children specific skills for getting along with others, solving conflicts, and acting cooperatively.

6. Give children many chances to make decisions, be leaders, make real choices, and be responsible.
7. Tell children often and enthusiastically what they are doing well and how they are competent. Be specific.
8. Teach children correct behavior and give meaningful consequences, if needed, for continued misbehaviors. Avoid using rewards, especially food.
9. Give children many opportunities to interact and to talk to each other in positive ways.
10. Treat all children equitably, but not identically. Recognize and meet individual needs and strengths.
11. Plan, review, and plan again. Prepare your activities and environment thoroughly and carefully in advance. Review what worked and what didn't. Based on your review, plan again.
12. Use new ideas from reading, workshops, and training sessions to make changes in your classroom.
13. Accept responsibility for the quality of your classroom.

Transitions: Structuring Unplanned Time

Transitions are those periods of time when the children are moving from one activity to the next. Because waiting with no directions from the staff member is difficult for young children, transitions can be a problem. Even a few minutes seems like a long time to children. The usual result is that children will wander, run around, or do things they are not supposed to do. Dealing with those behaviors further delays the next activity. Even if you experience no behavior problems, having short, smooth transitions means that more time will be spent in meaningful activities.

- Develop a consistent daily schedule with as few transitions as possible built into it. Plan in advance what each adult will do during transition times.
- Tell the children when a transition is about to occur and explain exactly what they are to do. For example the staff member may say to the children "When you go inside the classroom, hang up your coat, and then sit on the rug for a story."
- Structure staff time and duties so that as children move from one activity to another, something engaging is already happening at the next place.
- Have materials ready for the next activity so the transition will be short.
- Begin the next activity as soon as even one child is ready. (The other children will be attracted by what is going on and will join quickly).
- Keep a list handy of favorite finger plays, short songs, and simple activities to use during transitions. Because the following simple games require no materials, consider using them for transition:(1) Describe what

a child is wearing and have the children guess whom you are describing; (2) Have one child mime an action (i.e. playing the piano, sweeping, making a pizza, etc.) and the other children guess; (3) Name a list of objects and have the children guess what category they belong to (i.e. bracelets, necklaces, and earrings are jewelry). After leading the activity once or twice, give the children opportunities to be the leader.

Transition from Eating

- As children finish eating, have them clear their places and move immediately to the next activity, if possible. Avoid making everyone wait until all of the children are finished eating. If the next activity is not quite ready, let them get paper and some pens to draw, or let them browse through books while waiting on the other children. *The staff member may want to provide a place in the classroom where unfinished pictures can be stored to work on later.
- If more than a few minutes will pass before the next activity begins, provide children with table toys so picking up will not take very long.
- If there is more than one staff member, one should begin the next activity while the other helps the children that are still eating. If appropriate, invite the children to set up the next activity.

Transition to Outdoor Time

- Dismiss children from the previous activity a few at a time. (This can be done by dismissing children by kinds of shoes, colors of shirts, first letters of their names, and so on.) If coats are needed, invite the children to help one another put their coats on, help one another with the coat zipper/button before asking help from an adult.
- If at all possible, avoid lining up. This produces only boredom and tension, which lead to pushing and hitting. Ideally, one staff member will go outside with the first children who are ready. Another staff member can bring out the children who move a little slower.
- If there is only one staff member, involve the children in a song while helping to get them ready. A staff member on her/his own can also take all the children when the children have their coats on. Zipping and helping with mittens and hats can be done outside if weather is not too cold so the children can begin to play as they are ready.

Transition from Outdoors or from Free Choice

- Give a five-minute warning before the children have to finish playing. Use a clock for a visual cue for them to gauge five minutes. Say something like the following: "The long hand is on the five; when it reaches the six, it will be time to stop". Or, use a kitchen timer. Give the warning or have a child give the warning quietly and calmly to each small group of children or individual children as they are playing. Note that this is usually more effective than shouting to the whole group.
- When the five-minute period ends, have a child tell the others that it is time to put equipment away, ring a bell, or turn the lights on and off twice to focus the children's attention. Following these procedures makes the children feel like this transition is an aspect of the daily schedule, not an arbitrary directive from you. This results in less disappointment at having to end play. Also, you maintain your proper authority as the staff member by guiding the children to follow the daily schedule without being overly controlling.

Clean-Up

- Label all shelves for all materials for quick clean-ups that require little adult assistance. To make the work fun, make a game out of clean-up. Singing a song while picking up can also be an effective way to gain cooperation from the children.
- Give generous encouragement to the children who are conscientious about cleaning up "Thank you for working so hard to make our room pleasant for everyone".

Transition from Nap

- Let children get up off their cots or mats when they awaken. Guide them to quiet activities (play dough, puzzles, and so on), while you are getting others up and helping them with shoes.
- Move gradually and quietly from nap time into another activity. It is OK to give a child a hug and talk to them to get them up from nap. Turn on lights, a few at a time, if possible.

Transition to Going Home

- End the day with free choice time or outdoor play and parents pick children up during this time. This makes for a smooth transition and makes chatting with parents a little easier. Encourage children to put

away what they have been using before going home. Enlist parent support in this clean-up effort.

- End the day by saying good bye or giving a hug or a handshake to each child as the child leaves. Encourage children to get their papers and art work to take home.

Playground Supervision

The physical welfare and safety of the children need to be the staff's first consideration. Supervising children on the playground is just as important as supervising children in the classroom. In order to give the children adequate care, staff should follow these procedures:

***Always*: Count children using name to face recognition before going outside and count children using name to face recognition before going into the building.**

1. Do not congregate into groups with other adults. Each staff should sign into a zone upon entrance to the playground. The children and activities in that zone are your responsibility.
2. Stand so that you are in a position to forestall possible accidents. If you are engaged in helping one child, stand so that you can see the group. Do not stand with your back to the group.
3. Staff members should always be near climbing equipment or play items that can prevent supervision of children. Give special care when children use the following and frequently observe children in and/or on these items:
 - The high climbing equipment
 - Play houses
4. When equipment is in use, show the children how to use it properly and safely. Use clear and positive statements: "Walk around the swing", "Walk near the wall", rather than "Don't get in the way".
5. Make sure that each child's clothing is adjusted to the weather. If you have on a coat the children probably need one as well.
6. Children should never be allowed to go into the building alone for any reason.
7. If a child is hurt or injured, notify the other staff members that you must go into the building so that they can watch your group. Take the child to the director or to the person in charge if it is a serious injury. They will make a decision of whether or not to take the child to the hospital. If it is

a minor injury, clean dress the injury and fill out an accident report before returning to the playground. If staff members choose to wait to fill out the report later, the staff member may forget about the incident and fail to notify the child's parent. The parent, if not notified, may think that someone intentionally injured the child (especially if the child has not developed communication skills yet), and could make serious accusations against the staff member. Also, if a staff member waits to fill out the report, the staff member may forget to document an important detail of the incident.

8. Remember that outdoor play is also a learning experience for the child. Interact with the child when he needs help, but act as an observer when he is involved in his own activity.

Attendance & Staff/Child Ratios

Attendance shall be checked in each classroom throughout the day. An attendance check means that the staff member will check the attendance sheet and visually identify each child. Staff/child ratios are posted in each classroom and staff members shall maintain the staff/child ratio for their age group at all times.

- Attendance sheet shall be checked and marked upon the arrival and departure of each child.
- Staff will check attendance by visually identifying the children with the attendance sheet before during and after transition periods such as lunch, naptime and toileting.
- Attendance will be checked before, during and after outside activities. Attendance sheets will accompany staff anytime children go outside the building.
- Attendance will be checked anytime that children leave the classroom and return.
- In the morning and afternoon when groups might be combined, the primary caregiver for the child shall provide to the caregiver of the combined group his/her attendance sheet, which will show which children are joining the group.

The caregiver for the combined group will verify the number and which children are joining the group by using the attendance sheet and visually identify the children.

- Any time a child is moved to another class in order to maintain staff/child ratios, it will be noted by date and name of child on the attendance sheet of the class the child is leaving and the class the child is entering.

- Staff/child ratios and group sizes must be maintained at all times in each classroom. Staff members may never walk out of rooms leaving the children alone or leaving one staff member where two are required.

Policy Adopted 7/1/11

Guideline for Positive Discipline

Partners In Learning Child Development Center is committed to creating a supportive environment where young children can thrive. That commitment and basic respect for children is reflected in or discipline policies and procedures.

Discipline encompasses all the actions taken by teachers to develop self-fulfilling productive, and social acceptable behaviors in children. The following standards have been developed to create a caring environment that teaches children to behave in responsible ways and to feel good about themselves.

- Set realistic expectations for young children's behavior
- Create and environment that enhances the probability that children will behave in appropriate ways
- Focus on positive communication techniques to gain children's cooperation.
- Give children alternatives for turn destructive situations into constructive ones.
- Use natural and logical consequences to motivate and empower children to make responsible decisions about their behavior.
- Teach preschool children to use problem-solving skills and strategies to resolve conflicts.

Employee Discipline

It is the stated mission of Partners In Learning to model the highest quality learning environments to stimulate families and the community to provide optimal growth and development of children. Each employee of Partners In Learning should strive to contribute to the realization of this stated mission as he or she goes about the performance of work tasks.

However, situations arise and human reactions occur that cause employees to lose focus on the Centers worthy goal. When this loss of focus occurs, supervisors of employees must implement a method of corrective counseling so employees can return to the pursuit of the stated mission.

To that end, the following progressive counseling and discipline guidelines is being implemented. The purpose of these guidelines are to encourage and help employees work together harmoniously according to the standards of Partners In Learning Child Development and Family Resource Center.

Behaviors That May Result in Disciplinary Action

Employees are prohibited from engaging in conduct listed below and may receive discipline up to and including dismissal for doing so. This list has been established to serve as examples of behavior that could warrant a range of disciplinary sanctions. Appropriate levels of discipline may be based on the severity of employee behavior. This list is not all inclusive.

- Displaying a disrespectful and/or inappropriate behaviors toward a student, employee or supervisor
- Failure to perform assigned duties due to lack of effort/commitment
- Inability or failure to maintain satisfactory working relationships with co-workers
- Insubordination
- Refusing to do assigned work or failing to carry out the reasonable assignment of a supervisor
- Being inattentive to duty, including sleeping on the job
- Falsifying a time card or other Center records or giving false information to anyone whose duty is to make such record
- Being repeatedly or continuously absent or late, being absent without notice or reason satisfactory to the Center or leaving one's work assignment without appropriate authorization
- Failing to report an On the Job Injury
- Smoking within no-smoking areas
- Conducting oneself in any manner which is offensive, abusive or contrary to common decency or morality; carrying out any form of harassment including sexual harassment
- Action which reflects poorly upon the integrity of the organization
- Violation of the obligation of confidentiality
- Bringing a weapon, firearm or explosive on Partners In Learning property
- Computer abuse, including but not limited to; misuse of computer accounts, unauthorized destruction of files, creating illegal accounts, possession of unauthorized passwords, non-work related utilization of computer software or hardware
- Conviction of a felony
- Leaving a child unsupervised
- Misusing or willfully neglecting Partners In Learning property, funds, materials, equipment or supplies
- Unlawfully distributing, selling, possessing, using or being under the influence of alcohol or drugs when on the job or subject to duty
- Fighting, engaging in horseplay or acting in any manner which endangers the safety of oneself or others. This includes acts of violence as well as threats of violence.

- Interfering in any way with the work of others
- Stealing or possessing without authority any equipment, tools, materials or other property of the Center or attempting to remove them from the premises without approval or permission from the appropriate authority
- Marking or defacing walls, fixtures, equipment, tools, materials or other Center property, or willfully damaging or destroying property in any way
- Malicious gossip and/or the spreading of rumors
- Misrepresentation of physical condition or other important facts in seeking employment
- Failure to obtain and maintain required education standards

An employee arrested for a crime will be suspended without pay until either convicted or found not guilty. If you are found not guilty you may return to work and back pay will be given for the suspended time.

Again, while Partners In Learning will generally take disciplinary action in a progressive manner, it reserves the right, in its sole discretion, to decide whether and what disciplinary action will be taken in any given situation.

Degrees of discipline are generally progressive and are used to ensure that the employee has the opportunity to correct his or her performance. There is no set standard of how many oral warnings must be given prior to a written warning or how many written warnings must precede termination. Factors to be considered are:

- how many different offenses are involved
- the seriousness of the offense
- the time interval and employee response to prior disciplinary action(s)
- previous work history of the employee

Probationary employees are held to the highest standards for behavior and job performance. Progressive discipline is the exception rather than the rule for probationary employees.

The organization will normally adhere to the following progressive disciplinary process:

1. Verbal Caution: An employee will be given a verbal caution when he or she engages in problematic behavior. As the first step in the progressive discipline policy, a verbal caution is meant to alert the employee that a problem may exist or that one has been identified, which must be addressed. Verbal caution will be documented and maintained by your supervisor. A verbal caution remains in effect for three months.

2. Verbal Warning: A verbal warning is more serious than a verbal caution. An employee will be given a verbal warning when a problem is identified that

justifies a verbal warning or the employee engages in unacceptable behavior during the period a verbal caution is in effect. Verbal warnings are documented and placed in the employee's personnel file and will remain in effect for three months.

3. Written Warning: A written warning is more serious than a verbal warning. A written warning will be given when an employee engages in conduct that justifies a written warning or the employee engages in unacceptable behavior during the period that a verbal warning is in effect. Written warnings are maintained in an employee's personnel file and remains in effect for one year.

4. Suspension: A suspension without pay is more serious than a written warning. An employee will be suspended when he or she engages in conduct that justifies a suspension or the employee engages in unacceptable behavior during the period that a written warning is in effect. The purpose of a suspension is to decide whether further disciplinary action is necessary and to give the employee time to think about the seriousness of the offense and to make a commitment toward better behavior and/or job performance. Suspensions may vary in length, according to the severity of the offense or deficiency. Where a suspension has failed to produce the proper results, consideration should be given for a more lengthy suspension or the dismissal of the employee. An employee's suspension will be documented and, regardless of the length of the suspension issued, will remain in effect for one year.

5. Probation: You may be placed on probation in connection with the written warning for a period of time determined by Partners In Learning. Wage increases, bonuses, and vacations will not be given during this period, but all other benefits will continue.

6. Decision Making Leave: Generally following a suspension, an employee will be reprimanded then sent home for the day on decision making leave. This is intended to help the employee decide whether they should continue employment with the organization. If the employee returns, they will be expected to work harder than before to follow the organizations guidelines and continue their employment without interruption. The other option with this leave is the employee may choose to resign because employment with the organization is not a match.

7. Termination: An employee's employment may be terminated after other disciplinary measures have failed or when a first time incident occurs that is extremely serious. An employee may be discharged at any time without regard to any progressive steps if he or she commits an offense for which immediate discharge is specified as a penalty or if, the employee's continued presence would be contrary to the well-being of the organization or its employees.

After the receipt of at least one active disciplinary action for job performance, an employee may be demoted. Disciplinary demotions may be to either:

- a lower classification with or without a loss of pay (the employee's pay must not exceed the maximum rate of the range and must not be reduced below the minimum rate of the range for the position to which s/he is assigned), or
- the same classification with a loss of pay (the employee's pay must not be reduced to less than the minimum rate of the range for the position).

Again, while the organization will generally take disciplinary action in a progressive manner, it reserves the right, in its sole discretion, to decide whether and what disciplinary action will be taken in a given situation.

Grievance Procedures

The employee grievance procedure assures clear communication between employees and the Executive Director and establishes an orderly procedure for hearing and responding fairly to employees' grievances. Should a problem occur in the workplace, the employee has the right to present his/her concerns, free from interference, restraint, coercion, discrimination or reprisal.

If an employee believes he/she has been treated unfairly, he/she should first discuss the matter with the Executive Director. The discussion must occur within 15 days of the action the employee feels was unfair.

If the issue is not settled in the discussion between the employee and the Executive Director, the employee must submit his/her grievance in writing to the Partners In Learning Child Development Center Executive Committee of the Board of Directors within 15 days of the official discussion with the Executive Director. The action of the Executive Committee is final. All Appeals and outcomes of this procedure should be secured in writing, given to each employee involved, and included in the personnel files of all employees involved.

1. The administrative authority may meet with the employee, supervisor and/or other persons to gather relevant facts or may decide the matter solely upon a review of the complaint. The administrative authority shall issue a decision in writing to the complainant within twenty (20) working days of receipt of the appeal. The decision of the executive committee is final.

Secondary or Conflicting Employment

Partners In Learning employees are expected to devote their professional capabilities to their employment within the Center. All secondary employment needs should be discussed with the Director prior to accepting a position with the Center to ensure that the supplemental job responsibilities do not conflict with the proposed position nor interfere with the employee's ability to perform his/her assigned job duties.

Abuses, such as leaving work early, using Center equipment, being sluggish or sleeping on the job due to outside employment, will not be tolerated.

Employment with offices or agencies, including self-employment that presents a conflict of interest with an employee's position with the Center will be grounds for disciplinary action, including termination.

Termination of Employment

A voluntary choice, made by the employee to terminate employment for whatever reason, is termed a resignation. An employee wishing to resign his/her position is expected to give a minimum two-week written notice of such action. The Director is expected to give a minimum 30-day written notice.

Involuntary separation or dismissal results from a decision made by the Director of Partners In Learning. If the Center servers the relationship between itself and an employee, the reason for severance will be documented and communicated to the employee consistent with federal and state employment regulations.

Unless an employee has been dismissed due to an action or inaction covered under the "grounds for immediate dismissal," (see "Employee Discipline") the Director or Center designee should communicate to the employee the reason for his/her dismissal.

Should this notice occur during the mini-review employment period, the employee shall receive a paycheck only for hours worked. If an employee is terminated after the initial review period, he/she will be compensated for the hours worked since the last pay period. Additionally, any *unused vacation time shall be paid to the employee if the employee has worked a minimum of 12 months for the Center.*

In the event of the death of a staff member, the salary, accrued annual leave, and any other benefits to which the employee was entitled, will be

paid to the deceased employee's spouse/partner, or named beneficiary. The Director of Partners In Learning will inform the named beneficiary of all insurance and employee benefits to which the beneficiary is entitled.

Exit Interview

Upon notice of employment termination, the employee will be given the opportunity for an exit interview. The exit interview will be scheduled during the employees notice period with a member of the programs committee or the administration assistant. The employee is encouraged to offer feedback on agency operations, programming and employment practices.

The Administrative Assistant will provide the employee with benefit information, i.e., length of group insurance coverage, payment of accrued vacation time, and options involving retirement contributions.

Wages

Each employee's salary will be set at the time of hiring at the discretion of the Director using the established pay scale. The Partners In Learning Child Development Center Board of Directors will approve the Executive Director's salary.

Employees of Partners In Learning Child Development Center Incorporated are paid twice a month, 24 times annually. Teaching and Non-teaching staff are paid hourly, while Administrative staff are salary.

Partners In Learning Child Development Center operates from 6:30 AM to 6:00 PM, Monday through Friday.

All pay increases/bonuses are subject to the availability of resources. Increases may include cost of living adjustment and/or merit increases. The Executive Director in conjunction with the finance committee, within the budgetary constraints of the agency, will determine the amount of increase.

Payroll Deductions

The following mandatory deductions will be made from every employee's gross wages: Federal income tax, Social Security tax (FICA), State income tax, and Medicare.

Every employee must complete a federal withholding allowance certificate (IRS form W-4) and a state withholding allowance certificate (NC-4) on or

before his or her first day of employment. This form must be completed in accordance with federal regulations. The employee may fill out a new w-4 and NC-4 at anytime when his or her circumstances change. Employees who paid no federal income tax for the preceding year and who expect to pay no income tax for the current year may fill out an Exemption Form Withholding Certificate (IRS Form W-4E). Employees are expected to comply with the instructions on the W-4 and NC-4. Questions regarding the propriety of claimed deductions may be referred to the IRS in certain circumstances.

Other optional deductions include the portion of group health insurance not paid by Partners In Learning (for family members if applicable), which is deducted from each payroll check. Other Voluntary contributions (e.g. payroll deductions, etc.) are also deducted each pay period.

Every employee will receive an annual Wage and Tax Statement (IRS Form W-2) for the preceding year on or before January 31. Any employee who believes that his or her deductions are incorrect for any pay period, or on the W-2, should check with the Director immediately.

Overtime

While overtime is strongly discouraged, there may be times when scheduling requires some employee to work overtime.

It is the responsibility of each employee to alert the Director when he/she is approaching 40 hours worked for the week. The Director will decide whether the employee is needed to work overtime. **Unauthorized overtime will not be paid.**

All full-time staff, other than Administrative Staff will be paid the overtime rate of time and a half for hours worked in excess of 40 hours per week. Likewise, part-time employees will be paid the overtime rate of time and a half for hours worked in excess of 40 hours per week.

The Director and Assistant Director shall receive compensation time when overtime is worked. Compensation time is earned at the rate of 1:1, that is, one hour off for one hour worked.

Worker's Compensation

While the employee is working for the Center, the employee is automatically covered by Worker's Compensation Insurance paid by the organization. This

insurance coverage provides benefits to any employee injured as a result of employment requirements.

Under the rights and benefits established in the provision of the Worker's Compensation Act, ***It is essential that the employee promptly report any injury, no matter how minor it may appear at the time, to the Director*** so the proper forms may be completed.

Unemployment Insurance

Employee Unemployment compensation is paid by the Center. These funds are on deposit with the State of North Carolina and are used for the payment of unemployment benefits if the employee becomes entitled to claim benefits under the law.

In order to be eligible to receive Unemployment Compensation, the employee must be unemployed through no fault of his/her own and be willing and able to work. Certain other conditions have to be met by the employee. Those conditions are explained in a folder published by the Employment Security Commission. The employee may obtain a folder by writing or visiting the local Employment Security Commission office.

Employee Benefits

All full-time employees are generally eligible for the following benefit package.

1. Health Care Insurance Coverage, including Major Medical
**The Center will pay a percentage for Employee coverage only.
For information on coverage for spouse and/or children, see the SPECIAL NOTE at the end of this section.
2. Worker's Compensation Coverage
3. Vacation Leave
4. Holiday Leave
5. Sick Leave
6. Retirement—Available to all eligible full time staff members after one year.
7. Five Year Service - Bonus Day off each year

8. Discounted Childcare - \$15.00 per week, per family – must be payroll deducted.

9. Free Lunch and Breakfast – served family style with the children.

SPECIAL NOTE:

Employees may elect to include their spouse and/or children under this coverage. However, the employee will be responsible for the full monthly premium payment for coverage of his/her spouse and/or children.

Holidays

The following ten (10) days are considered holidays.

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> New Year's Day | <input type="checkbox"/> Thanksgiving Day |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Good Friday | <input type="checkbox"/> Day after Thanksgiving |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Independence Day | <input type="checkbox"/> Christmas Day |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Labor Day | <input type="checkbox"/> Day before or after Christmas |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Memorial Day | <input type="checkbox"/> Floating Day |

Full-time and part-time employees will become eligible to receive holiday pay immediately upon employment.

Part-time employees will receive pay for holidays on a pro-rated basis. For example, an employee that worked 20 hours per week will be paid for four (4) hours for each holiday.

If a regularly scheduled holiday falls on Saturday, it will be observed the preceding Friday. If it falls on Sunday, it will be observed the following Monday. Any holiday that falls during an employee's vacation will be counted as a holiday and not as vacation.

Should it become necessary for an employee to work on a holiday, the employee should be given notice as far in advance as possible. This day can then be taken off at a time agreed upon by both the employee and his/her supervisor. Holiday time is not included in any payment upon employee separation from the Center.

Vacation

Employees who have worked at the Center for one (1) year, but less than two (2) are allowed five (5) days or 40 hours of vacation time. Any employee who has worked for two years or more is eligible for ten (10) days or 80 hours of vacation time. Vacation hours will start accumulating after the first ninety days of work.

Each employee may take vacation leave after a minimum six months of satisfactory employment.

Employees may take their total "available" vacation at any time throughout the year. However, any vacation in excess of 40 hours must be submitted in writing to the Director at least 30 days prior to the date the vacation is scheduled to begin. For all other vacation requests, employees must request approval for vacation time two (2) weeks in advance of the date he/she wishes to begin vacation. Should an employee become ill during vacation time, the remaining leave may, upon written request, be canceled and the employee placed on available sick leave.

An employee's vacation vests when it is accrued and can be carried over to future calendar years if not taken, not to exceed a total of 40 hours. All vacation in excess of 40 hours will revert to sick time. Upon termination, the employee's accrued vacation hours, not to exceed 120 hours, will be added to the final paycheck using employee's then current, straight-time hourly rate conversion.

Sick Leave

Employees are allowed seven (7) sick days per year. Employees are not eligible to take sick leave until they have satisfied their 90 day probationary period. If the employee becomes ill during the 90-day probationary period, he/she will have to take the time off without pay.

Employees should notify the Director as soon as possible when sick leave is needed because of illness. It remains the employee's responsibility to keep the Director informed daily as to his/her condition and when he/she will return to work. If absent for more than three (3) days, an employee will be required to provide documentation of medical problems upon returning to work.

At the end of the year, any unused sick leave will rollover into the next year. Sick leave may accumulate indefinitely, but employees will not be compensated for any unused sick leave upon termination of employment.

Death In The Family

Employees are allowed up to three (3) days leave with pay subject to approval by the Director in the event of a death in their immediate family.

Immediate family is defined as the employee's parents, spouse or partner, siblings, children, grandparents, grandchildren, in-laws, or any relative deemed appropriate by the Director.

Military Leave

Upon request, employees serving in National Guard of Reserve units may take leave, not to exceed what is required by the military branch in any given year, to participate in annual training exercises provided that military orders are submitted when making the request for leave. Military leave shall be granted for up to 120 working hours during the federal fiscal year (October 1 – September 30). Employees required to take military leave will be paid the difference less the military pay for the time they are absent due to this responsibility.

Military leave without pay shall be granted for certain periods of active duty to include attendance at service schools exceeding 120 working hours.

In case of a national emergency that requires the employee's unit to mobilize for active duty, the employee is placed on leave without pay with all rights as employees protected, according to prevailing law. This time off does not result in any loss of sick leave or vacation credit.

Jury Duty

Jury duty notices or a copy thereof, must be submitted to the Director. Employees required to report for jury duty will be paid the difference less the jury duty pay for those daily work schedules or portions thereof from which they are absent due to this requirement.

The employee will be expected to report for work when it does not conflict with court obligations. It is the employee's responsibility to keep his or her supervisor periodically informed about the amount of time required for jury duty or court appearances.

Upon returning to work at the completion of jury duty, employees will be required to submit documentation verifying jury time served.

Time off for court appearance as a party to any civil or criminal litigation shall not be compensated by Partners In Learning, and the employee must arrange for time off without pay or use vacation leave for such appearances.

Leave Of Absence

A leave of absence without pay is a temporary non-pay status and absence from duty by an employee due to personal reasons while guaranteeing the employee's position. A leave of absence **without pay** will be handled on a case-by-case basis and must have the approval of the Director. During this period, the employee may take and accumulated vacation or sick leave not to exceed 12 months. The terms of such a leave of absence will be confirmed in writing to be acknowledged by both the Director and the employee.

Whenever possible, a request for a leave of absence without pay should be submitted, in writing, to the supervisor at least 30 days in advance for the expected leave. In the event of a serious illness, a family member may submit this request for the employee.

The Director should take the following into consideration regarding request for leaves of absence not covered by FMLA:

- The employment needs of the Center
- The employee's length and quality of service
- The extremity of the employee's circumstances
- Other factors which may bear on the request.

All leaves that fall under the Family & Medical Leave Act will be handled as prescribed in the act.

Accidents Or Disaster

Should a safety hazard or dangerous working practice come to the attention of any employee, that employee should either correct the problem himself/herself or inform the Director of the situation. The Director should then act quickly to solve the problem.

In the event of a serious situation, such as a fire or natural disaster, teachers will ensure that all children are safely out of the building and accounted for. The Director is ultimately responsible for ensuring that all employees and children leave the facility in a quick, efficient manner and that all other appropriate actions have been taken.

Evacuation plans will be clearly posted. If time permits, client files should be secured. However, no life should be endangered or sacrificed in this effort.

Inclement Weather Policy

In the event of inclement weather, the Center Director will make a determination to reduce Center hours or close the Center. If the Center opens and operates on reduced hours, the Center Director will set the opening hours and the Zone Schedule will be implemented.

Zone Schedule

Each employee will be assigned to one of three work categories:

Zone 1: Report to Work. Employees are expected to report to work at Center opening time or scheduled work time. Employees reporting to work will not take unreasonable risks with their safety or the safety of others.

Zone 2: Stand by. Employees are expected to be immediately accessible by phone and ready to work their assigned stand-by schedule. And, if called in to work, will not take unreasonable risks with their safety or the safety of others.

Zone 3: Not required to report to Work.

If the Center operates on Reduced Hours the following rules will apply according to the Zone Schedule:

- Only the employees who are required to report to work will be paid for their hours worked.
- Employees not required to report to work will be allowed to use vacation, personal day, floating holiday, take the day off without pay, or make up time.
- If an employee chooses not report to work according to their zone schedule, the employee will **Not** have the option to use vacation, personal day, or floating holiday.

In the event the Center is Closed, an optional teacher workday will be scheduled for those employees scheduled to work on the closed day.

Professional Memberships

Employees are encouraged to participate in and continue to seek opportunities for professional development while employed by Partners In Learning Child Development Center, Incorporated.

The Center will sponsor membership in professional organizations, for the Director and Assistant Director and for the Center. Approval will be at the discretion of the Director or the Board of Directors.

Employee Safety Responsibilities

Each member of the Partners In Learning Child Development Center community has the responsibility to follow safe work practices at all times. This means utilizing safe lifting techniques when lifting children and following all center safety procedures (i.e. safe diaper changing and hygiene practice). If you see a slip, trip, or fall hazard, immediately take corrective action before an accident occurs. Don't hesitate to speak to your supervisor about safety hazards or concerns about your safety or the safety of children.

The Center is also involved in a variety of ongoing internal safety activities in which you will be participating. These include: monthly safety inspections; reporting, documenting, and investigating child or employee accidents. Every employee is responsible for his or her safe behavior in performing daily activities. Willful violations of workplace safety guidelines will result in progressive disciplinary action.

Aquatic Policy

Summer Fun Camp participants will be swimming weekly at Catawba College. For every 25 children participating in aquatic activities, there will be at least one person who has a current life guard training certificate. Certified lifeguards will not be counted in the required staff-child ratio.

Children under the age of three may not participate in aquatic activities unless it is part of their IEP or IFSP.

The following staff-child ratios will be maintained during aquatic activities:

<u>Age of Children</u>	<u>Ratio staff/children</u>
3 to 4 years	1/8
4 to 5 years	1/10
5 years or older	1/13

Regardless of the number of children participating, a minimum of two staff will supervise aquatic activities.

Adequate supervision will be maintained at all times. Half the center staff needed to meet staff-child ratio will be in the water and the other half will be out of the water with children who chose not to swim.

Staff will be positioned in pre-assigned areas that will allow them at all times to hear, see, and respond quickly to children.

Electronic Communication

Partners In Learning Child Development Center's policy provides guidelines for the acceptable use of e-mail, voicemail, Internet, and other electronic communication and system applications.

All aspects of the Center's computer technology and communication systems are the property of Partners In Learning Child Development Center and are provided by the Center for use in the conduct of the Center's business or work-related matters. Personal use of electronic systems is expected to be incidental and kept to a minimum.

The Center reserves the right to periodically review or inspect any employee's e-mail, voicemail, Internet access, or other such electronic communication technology and to disclose the contents thereof. No electronic communication is considered private, except where it may benefit the Center; and employees should not expect that their messages are private. Partners In Learning expressly prohibits the use of electronic communications media to transmit messages or files that contain derogatory, offensive, or harassing content, or content that is sexual explicit or otherwise deemed inappropriate by Partners In Learning. Violations of the electronic communication policy will result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

Updates To The Policy Handbook

In order to meet its need under changing conditions, the Center's Board of Directors may at any time update individual policies. The Director should make appropriate suggestion to the Board regarding changes in employment laws, requirements, etc.

It is the responsibility of all employees to update their copies as revisions are distributed. Further, the Director is responsible for ensuring that each employee of the Center initials having received notice of all such changes. All initialed updates will be kept in the employee's personnel file.