



*Language Enrichment  
Arts Program*®



# PARENT HANDBOOK

## *2023-2024*

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## Purpose of Handbook

This handbook has been written to provide you with guidance regarding the policies and procedures of the LEAP School. Please do not hesitate to request clarification on any item that you do not understand. The policies and procedures outlined in this Handbook are subject to change at any time, at the sole discretion of the LEAP School.

### I. INTRODUCTION



#### A. SCHOOL HISTORY

LEAP was founded by Robin Shapiro in July of 1985. Robin was born and raised in Cleveland, Ohio. She attended the University of Vermont and graduated in 1981, with concentrated studies in Early Childhood, Child Development, Psychology and the Fine Arts. She trained in a variety of educational programs, designing arts related and language-based curriculum for youngsters. Ms. Shapiro moved to Boston and attended Lesley College Graduate School in the fall of 1981. She received her Master's in Expressive Arts Therapies in May of 1983. After working in a range of human services programs and gaining administrative and supervisory experience, the LEAP concept was conceived. Robin's goal was to provide a rich experience in learning and fun for children, families and teachers. LEAP is designed as a model Early Childhood Program offering supportive services and education to parents, teachers and children.

In December 2022, The LEAP Schools were acquired by Busy Bees and their US division, Bright Path Early Learning Centers. The LEAP School name will continue, and most importantly our best practices will be combined with the best practices of Busy Bees/Bright Path over time.

#### B. LEAP CONCEPT

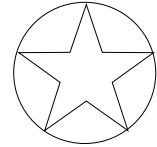
LEAP is a holistic Language Enrichment Arts Program for toddler, preschool and children. The program addresses social, emotional, and developmental needs of children. The curriculum offers youngsters a wide range of learning and play experiences, both structured and unstructured. The LEAP staff strikes a balance between teacher directed activities and child directed experiences. The program includes the following: visual arts, movement and musical arts, dramatic play, puppetry, storytelling, science, math, literacy, readiness skills, self-directed play, cooperative games, and many outside specialists (See the Curriculum Guide for more details). These experiences are designed to provide language enrichment, conceptual learning, and, most of all, to promote positive self-esteem. LEAP's supportive and nurturing environment inspires and empowers children to learn, grow and create through self-expression.

LEAP's family centered philosophy enables parents to actively participate in the planning and implementation of the program. By encouraging family involvement, providing consistency, and emphasizing open communication, relationships within the LEAP community are strengthened. Through weekly communication notes, home visits, and conferences, parents and teachers build strong and caring relationships that ensure the child's care is consistent.

## II. LEAP STAFF

### A. OVERVIEW

The LEAP team is made up of very special and dedicated teachers. The entire team in the interview process when selecting a new member of the team. The LEAP administration is dedicated to ongoing training and supervision of its team members. The Administrative design may vary program to program to meet the individual needs of each school.



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### B. THE LEAP ADMINISTRATIVE AND TEACHING TEAM

The LEAP Schools are licensed by the Department of Early Education and Care (EEC) located in Lawrence, MA. Their phone number is 978-609-0309.

**Co-Executive Directors – *Tricia Wilson and Vicki Roux.*** The Co-Executive Directors oversee operations of all of the LEAP Schools.

*The Executive Directors:*

- consult with BrightPath Kids executives as needed
- supervise the Program Directors at each LEAP School
- assist in the process of supporting and helping families of children with special needs
- are available to any LEAP family if they have questions, concerns, or feedback

**Program Director** --The Program Director oversees the day-to-day functioning of each LEAP School.

*The Program Director:*

- supervises the Curriculum Director and LEAP teachers
- provides opportunities for ongoing open communication between the school and families
- promotes ongoing communication and problem solving amongst the LEAP teaching team
- is available to assist families with questions and concerns
- welcomes feedback from LEAP families at any time

**Administrative Support** --The Administrative Support assists the Program Director in all aspects of the program.

*The Administrative Support:*

- coordinates the ordering of office supplies, paper goods and food
- manages LEAP's custodian
- provides a safety checklist logbook for all teachers to review daily

**Curriculum Director** --The curriculum director in each school supervises his/her staff on curriculum and environmental issues. She/he takes over the Program Director's responsibilities when the Program Director is out sick or on vacation.

*The Curriculum Director:*

- manages the yearly educational supply budget for that school
- monitors the individual and group needs of each classroom
- assists teachers in setting up classrooms with appropriate equipment and toys
- coordinates In-Service Training workshops with the Program Director
- oversees purchases with donation and fundraiser

**Afternoon Arts Coordinator** --The Afternoon Arts Coordinator oversees the day-to-day functioning of the Afternoon Arts Program.

*The Afternoon Arts Coordinator:*

- plans and coordinates all afternoon arts curriculum with the other afternoon teacher(s)
- supervises the afternoon teachers
- coordinates staffing patterns for the afternoon transition times
- communicates important information to morning teachers by maintaining a daily log notebook in the afternoon

**Lead Morning Teacher** -- Lead Teachers are the main provider of nurturing, high quality early childhood education for each group of children at the LEAP Schools.

*Lead Morning Teachers:*

- design and implement daily, weekly, monthly, and yearly curriculum plans and submit to the Curriculum Director
- provide ongoing communication for families through weekly communication emails, communication boards, and parent/teacher conferences
- communicate important information pertaining to their group of children and families to others on the LEAP teaching and administrative team
- Assist with support and coverage of the Afternoon Program

**Lead Afternoon Teacher** --Lead Afternoon Teachers assist the Lead Morning Teachers and teach the Afternoon Arts groupings.

*Lead Afternoon Teachers:*

- design and implement daily, weekly, monthly, and yearly curriculum plans and submit to the Curriculum Director
- provide ongoing communication for families through weekly communication emails, communication boards, and parent/teacher conferences
- communicate important information pertaining to their group of children and families to others on the LEAP teaching and administrative team
- substitute teach for Morning Teachers when they are out sick, on vacation or on a break
- provide assistance to assigned morning groups throughout the day

**Teacher** -- Teachers provide support and care in our classrooms. They respond directly to the needs of the children in their care and assist the lead teacher.

*Teacher:*

- provide assistance to morning and afternoon groups
- develop relationships with all children involved and contribute to their growth
- substitute for lead teachers as needed

**Director of Admissions & Human Resources -- Terri Connelly**

**Director of Admissions & Administration – Jaclyn Olson**

The Admissions office can be found at the Lexington LEAP School at 210 Marrett Rd. in Lexington, MA. 781-861-1026.

*The Director of Admissions & Human Resources and Director of Admissions & Administration:*

- manage the LEAP main office and answers phones
- maintain the LEAP waiting list
- work together with the Executive and Program Directors in the enrollment process
- oversee all billing functions and processes
- maintain children's charts
- oversee interviewing and hiring process

### C. STAFF QUALIFICATIONS

All LEAP staff are Department of Early Education and Care teacher qualified. Many LEAP teachers possess a Masters or Bachelors degree in a related field and certification in Early Childhood Education. Teachers further their current level of education through ongoing LEAP supervision and training, in-service seminars, and by pursuing outside classes, workshops and/or conferences. Each year, LEAP provides training for teachers in First Aid and CPR for children and adults.

The LEAP staff is selected carefully. Qualified applicants visit LEAP for a full morning while school is in operation. Applicants meet all LEAP staff and run an arts related group under the supervision of a LEAP teacher. The LEAP team selects prospective LEAP teachers. The LEAP team seeks teachers that possess strong communication skills to participate in LEAP's team teaching system. New teachers typically train in a support teacher capacity first. This enables new teachers to learn about the LEAP philosophy by observing other seasoned teachers. Through role modeling, substitute teaching and ongoing supervision, support teachers gain training to enter into the position of a LEAP Lead Teacher. The time frame for support teachers to train is individualized according to their readiness to take on the responsibilities of a Lead Teacher, and availability of those positions in the LEAP Schools.

### D. ONGOING SUPERVISION AND TRAINING

Each teacher is a member of a supervisory team which includes: the school's Program Director, Administrative Support, and Curriculum Director. Teachers meet weekly to discuss issues in the classroom, curriculum needs, supply needs, etc. A bi-weekly staff meeting is designed to keep the lines of communication open and clear as well as to assist anyone in need of support. Regular In-Service workshops incorporate outside consultants and ongoing education of new methods and procedures in the field. Throughout the year, LEAP sends its staff members to conferences, workshops, and observations of other programs to further growth. LEAP supports teachers to develop and grow professionally to keep alive the excitement about learning for themselves and the children they teach. LEAP conducts bi-yearly teacher reviews for each staff member. The purpose of the reviews is to assist teachers in setting professional goals and objectives. This process enables teachers to make choices or changes towards positive professional and personal growth.

### E. CLASSROOM OBSERVATIONS

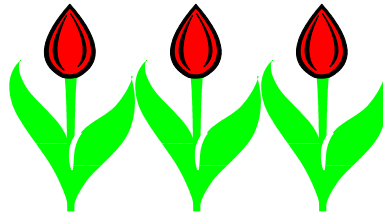
As part of our commitment to individualizing our curriculum and teaching strategies, as well as to provide on-going support and training to our staff, we utilize on-going classroom observations to guide instruction. On a regular basis, and as needed, professionals with expertise in child development conduct observations in our classrooms and give feedback to the teachers. Many of these professionals are members of our LEAP team and we will also utilize outside specialists such as Speech and Language experts, Occupational Therapists, Child Psychologists, or Early Intervention specialists. These resources are invaluable as we all strive to be active learners of our craft. Additionally, as a model early childhood program we also seek to enrich the training of teachers who are new to the field and welcome student-teachers to observe in our classrooms to deepen their knowledge of best practices.

## F. TEAM TEACHING

All of the LEAP Staff participates in a Team-Teaching system. This means the teachers have knowledge of all of the youngsters and families in the program. Each child has a lead morning teacher for the year. This primary teacher and the program director are present at the parent/teacher conference. The lead teacher maintains ongoing communication with the parents. If your child stays past 1:00, he/she will also have an afternoon lead teacher. Many wonderful relationships develop in the Team-Teaching approach. If your child's primary teacher is absent or on vacation, another teacher will easily be able to fill in without disruption to the classroom.

## G. CHILDCARE OUTSIDE OF LEAP

LEAP teachers are not permitted to contract for, agree or otherwise arrange with LEAP parents or guardians to transport, care for and/or otherwise assume responsibility for their children at a time not explicitly covered by the Registration Contract, unless both the teacher and parent or guardian have obtained advance permission from LEAP and further have signed a "Notice of Intent to Contract For Outside Activity" Form. Please see your Program Director for a form.





### **III. COMMUNICATION**

#### **A. OVERVIEW**

Consistent and effective communication is at the core of the LEAP concept. The following are examples of some of the structures that exist to facilitate and encourage communication between parents and teachers, teachers and youngsters, parents and other parents, and teachers and teachers.

#### **B. COMMUNICATION WEEKLY E-MAIL NOTES/KAYMBU**

Weekly parent communication e-mail notes are sent to parents from their child's classroom teacher. These notes are sent through a communication tool we use at LEAP called Kaymbu. Each teacher uses an iPad to capture moments of your child in the classroom and has the ability to send pictures and video to parents via e-mail through Kaymbu. Along with Kaymbu, teachers are able to send home notes and/or correspondence through e-mail. Each faculty member has an e-mail address at LEAP. Any parent unable to receive e-mail will be given a written note. Notes to parents are written and sent home each week and are designed to be an ongoing link between the parents and teacher. Once a month you will also receive an individual note that is specifically about your child's development. Information in the notes includes relevant school information, a log of daily activities and plans, and insights into the children's development. Parents are encouraged to communicate back through e-mail or notes.

#### **C. CONFERENCES**

The LEAP staff prides itself on being available to support and assist parents with ongoing communication. The LEAP staff schedules conferences at the parents' request during which the Program Director and child's Lead Teacher will meet with parents to discuss their child's development at LEAP. We encourage two conferences each year. The LEAP staff may request a conference to ask questions or if parents or teachers are anticipating a change at school or in the home. Parents are encouraged to give constructive feedback. Conferences will be offered either in person or by Zoom at the discretion of the director.

#### **D. OPEN DOOR POLICY**

Another way to facilitate communication between parents and the LEAP staff is for parents to become involved with the program. Parents are always welcome to visit and participate in the daily activities. It is suggested that parents schedule these events with their child's classroom teacher.

#### **E. NEWSLETTERS**

The Program Director issues a newsletter to inform parents of updates, calendar events, new ideas, etc. It contains references for parent education, articles, news from the classrooms and many other fun and informative items!

## F. PROGRAM EVALUATIONS

The LEAP staff encourages all parents to provide feedback on the program. This helps us to strengthen our services and better meet your needs. Please use the program evaluation forms, conferences, and other casual conversations to let us know how we are doing. Parent feedback is very important to the LEAP staff. Thank you for taking the time to share your perceptions, feelings, and suggestions!

## G. PROGRESS NOTES

In the Fall and Spring of each year, each teacher writes a "progress note" for each child in his/her classroom. These overviews cover a range of developmental areas for each age group including social development, physical development, skill development, and creative and expressive arts. The purpose of the progress notes is two-fold. First, the reports help teachers to look more closely at each child's growth and development on an individual basis and enable the teachers to clearly set goals and objectives for each child. Secondly, they give parents a nice overview of their child's development throughout the year. Many parents find it helpful to schedule a conference with their child's teacher shortly after the overviews are sent home to discuss the development of their child and set goals for him/her for the upcoming months at school.

## H. "My Cubby"

When you log onto our website, [www.leapschool.com](http://www.leapschool.com), you will want to click on "My Cubby" which will bring you into the LEAP parent portal of our site. This site includes up-to-date information such as school closings, events, due date reminders, etc. LEAP reference materials that will always be available and current, are the Parent Handbook, Curriculum Guide, Calendars, Newsletters, important policies, Orientation Schedules, etc. One important feature is School Forms Online which is a link to access our online forms that will need to be filled out during the year. To access both "My Cubby" and School Forms Online, you will need a Username and Password. An e-mail is sent to parents to create an account.

## I. Emergency Broadcast System

In the case of a school emergency, LEAP School uses software called SchoolMessenger to notify parents. This broadcast will call your home and cell phone numbers. It has the option to send a text to your cell phone and email both email addresses that we have listed at LEAP which we will use on an as needed basis. **This system will be used for any and ALL unexpected emergency circumstances, including snow days and early school closings.** (Parents can still refer to the public school websites or local television stations for School Closing information. If the public school is closed for snow, LEAP will be also.) We will attempt to ensure you get these messages, based upon prevailing conditions and access at that time.

<b>IV. SCHOOL CALENDAR</b> <b>DAILY SCHEDULES</b> <b>SPECIAL EVENTS</b>
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#### A. SUMMER SESSION

The Summer Session is typically a six-week session, which begins in early July and runs through the middle of August. Please see the Curriculum Guide for more detailed information concerning the Summer program.

#### B. FALL/SPRING SESSION

The Fall/Spring Session runs from late August to June. A calendar for each summer session and school year is published at the beginning of each session. The calendar contains dates for all school closings throughout the year and also contains the dates and times of special events happening throughout the year. *All dates are subject to change based on circumstances at the time.* Some of the Special Events typically offered during the Fall/Spring session at LEAP are as follows:

- Curriculum Night (September/October) - *for Parents only*
- Community Service Project such as a Food Drive
- Classroom Parties or other Special Events
- Winter Concert
- Afternoon Arts Show
- May Show (May)
- Graduation (June)

#### C. SCHOOL CLOSINGS

- Last week of August/Beginning of September - Home Visit/Orientation/Teacher Work Days
- Labor Day
- Indigenous People's Day
- Day after Indigenous People's Day- Teacher Training Day
- November Progress Note Day *see calendar for details*
- Thanksgiving Day and the day after (AM Dismissal on Wed. before Thanksgiving)
- Winter Break at the end of December
- Martin Luther King Jr. Day
- Day after Martin Luther King Jr. Day- Teacher Training Day
- February Vacation Week (the week of President's Day)
- March Progress Note Day *see calendar for details*
- April Vacation Week (the week of Patriot's Day)
- Memorial Day
- Juneteenth
- Teacher Work Days at the end of June
- Week between Fall/Spring and Summer sessions
- Week break between Summer and Fall/Spring sessions

Tuition rates reflect the above holiday/vacation/work/training days schedule. Full tuition is due for weeks in which these days occur. Substitution in schedules cannot be made. We have scheduled most teachers' vacations to coincide with school closings to provide more consistency in the classroom.



#### D. SNOW DAY POLICY

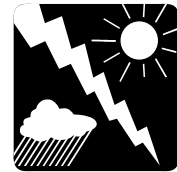
LEAP typically follows the Lexington, Bedford and Sudbury Public School snow day schedule. *When the Lexington Public Schools close due to weather conditions, the Upper and Lower Lexington LEAP Schools will be closed. When the Sudbury Public Schools close due to weather conditions, the Sudbury LEAP School will be closed. When the Bedford Public Schools close due to weather conditions, the Bedford LEAP School will be closed.* Parents can refer to the public-school websites or local television stations for School Closing information, however, LEAP will use SchoolMessenger to inform you of a closing as well. Safety for the children, families, and staff is our primary concern.

***When the Lexington, Bedford or Sudbury Public Schools delay the opening of school for one or two hours, LEAP reserves the right to delay the opening of the school for one or two hours as well. This ensures teachers will be at the school when you arrive in the morning. If we do not have adequate staffing at each school at the time of opening, we may ask parents to wait at school with your child until we do have adequate staffing to provide a safe school experience.***

LEAP holds the right to determine a school closing or delay.

#### E. SEVERE WEATHER CONDITIONS

In the event of severe weather conditions, catastrophic building emergency, or Act of G-d, the LEAP School will open and remain open as long as safety permits. The closing of the school is at the sole discretion of the Director on-site or the Executive Director. Full tuition is due for weeks in which these conditions occur. In the event that the parent/guardian cannot be reached, we will refer to the emergency authorization pick up list.



#### F. DAILY SCHEDULE

The daily schedule is designed to promote a balance between teacher directed activities and child-directed experiences, and a typical day offers children a combination of individual and group choices. Information about the daily schedule for each group can be found in the Curriculum Guide.

#### G. EMERGENCY CONTINGENCY PLAN

In the event of an unavoidable circumstance that requires us to close our doors, every effort will be made to contact parents to come and get their child. Such circumstances may include: fire, natural disaster, loss of heat, loss of power, or loss of water. Any decision to evacuate or “shelter in place” will be made by the Program Director in consultation with the Executive Director and/or local Police or Fire Departments. If we are required to evacuate immediately in Lexington, we will bring the children to the Clarke Middle School, 17 Stedman Road, Lexington. In Sudbury, it would be the white house located on the LEAP campus. If required to leave the school campus, the children would be temporarily moved to 136 Dakin Road until we could safely evacuate the children to the Haynes School (169 Haynes Road) with assistance from the police and/or fire department. In Bedford, it would be 426 Davis Road. If any of these facilities are not an option for any reason, children will be brought to the closest safe shelter. Parents will be notified where to find their child through email, phone alerts, or whatever methods the circumstances allow. In addition to the Emergency Contingency Plan, each school has a preparedness plan in the event of a disaster. This plan includes contact information for families, specific medical information for students, a plan for ensuring that all children are accounted for, first aid kits, and an emergency radio and cell phone.

LEAP has in place the following contingency plans for emergency situations. This plan includes specific procedures for evacuation, sheltering-in-place, lock-down, and missing child response. Teachers are aware of the all page code for use in an emergency -- something to say on the intercom say that will not scare the children, but will alert teachers to prepare to respond to the emergency. Each month we have regular evacuation drills to practice getting children ready to go quickly. If we need to leave the property, we will walk to our designated safe

area or utilize Emergency Responder transport. Any evacuation off the LEAP property will occur in consultation with Emergency responders.

*In case of fire:* In the event of a fire requiring evacuation, children will be brought to locations listed above. Parents would be notified from these locations to come and get their child(ren).

*In case of Natural Disaster:* If a building was declared unsafe due to severe weather condition (hurricane, tornado, etc.) we would evacuate to locations listed above. Parents would be notified from these locations to come and get their child(ren) as soon as possible.

*In case of Loss of Power:* During daylight hours we would be able to continue to run our program. We are not dependent upon electricity to provide meals as children bring their lunch from home. Our alarm system has an integrated battery back-up and we have a cell phone to use for calls. Depending on the time of year (after daylight saving's time), we would notify parents of a 3:30 closing time, to ensure all children would be picked up before the building would be in darkness. In case of emergency, the Lexington cell phone number is 617-610-2256. The Sudbury cell phone number is 978-430-0970. The Bedford cell phone number is 781-439-1883.

*In case of Loss of Heat:* In the event that the heating system cannot be repaired in a reasonable amount of time, we would contact parents, and ask that they pick up children as soon as possible. How long the heat has been off and the temperature in the building at that time will determine what constitutes a reasonable amount of time. Children will wear any extra clothes or outdoor clothing as deemed necessary due to the existing temperature at that particular point in time.

*In case of Loss of Water:* Any available bottled water will be used to provide water for drinking and hand washing in the event of a water shut-off. Children could use potty chairs for toileting and teachers would use a solution of bleach and water to sanitize the potties. Contents of potties would be disposed of into toilets. Toilets would be flushed when water service is restored. If water service were to be interrupted for an extended period, we would notify parents to pick up children as soon as possible.

*Thunder & Lightning:* All teachers and children should go indoors at the first sound of thunder or sighting of lightning. Teachers and children cannot return outdoors until 30 minutes *after* the last boom of thunder or lightning is seen.

*Other safety issues:* If the Emergency Broadcast System or local authorities advise evacuation or quarantine due to any local or national security concerns, LEAP staff would follow directions given by these authorities. Possibilities might include evacuation to our regular site, or to an alternate location dictated by authorities, or staying in at the LEAP School site for a period of time extending beyond normal hours of operation. LEAP has prepared mobile and stationary emergency supplies for these contingencies. These supplies include water, food, first aid, children's activity supplies, cell phones, radios, flashlights, and contact/emergency information for each child at the facility. In the event that we are unable to contact families by phone with evacuation information, staff will post signs on all doors indicating the evacuation location at which parents may pick up their children.

\* \*In situations involving loss of heat or water, a *reasonable* amount of time would be determined by the director in charge, based upon the existing conditions at that particular time.

Below are the phone numbers that can be reached in case of an emergency:

LEAP Upper - Lexington	Phone:	781-862-4539
	Cell Phone:	617-610-2256
	Fax:	781-674-0098

LEAP Lower - Lexington	Phone:	781-862-4568
	Fax:	781-862-7902

LEAP Sudbury	Phone: 978-440-7668 Cell Phone: 978-430-0970 Fax: 978-440-7665
LEAP Bedford	Phone: 781-275-2010 Cell Phone: 781-439-1883 Fax: 781-275-7950
Admissions & Billing (All LEAP Schools)	Phone: 781-861-1026 ext. 0 Fax: 781-860-9525 Email: admissions@leapschool.com
Executive Directors	
Tricia Wilson	Phone: 978-440-7668 Email: twilson@leapschool.com
Vicki Roux	Phone: 781-862-4539 Email: vroux@leapschool.com

## H. TRANSPORTATION PLAN

The LEAP School coordinates the transportation of children through the following plans:

Parents provide their own transportation to and from school and are responsible for escorting their child safely to the check-in area.

In the event of an emergency evacuation, the children will walk to our emergency shelter under close supervision.

If a child requires emergency medical care, an ambulance will be called.

## I. PARKING AT LEAP

Due to limitations of space, we rely upon consistent support from our families to maintain a safe and efficient parking system. Our expectations of our parents, and their designated pick-up people, are as follows:

- Drive slowly and be vigilantly aware of pedestrians. Parents are also responsible for holding their child's hand in the parking lot.
- Adhere to the site-specific designated parking areas only. "Creative parking" leads to dangerous blind spots. Do not park on Marrett Road in Lexington, or Concord Road in Bedford.
- Be prepared to wait a moment or two for a space to open during peak times. Your patience makes for a safer and more positive atmosphere for all.
- Respect the directions of any parking monitors. Their instructions are mandatory.
- Unattended cars must be turned off and not have any children of any age inside. Our staff cannot watch infants/toddlers left in cars; however, the director can make arrangements if it is difficult to bring a young child into the building.
- During peak traffic times (8:15-9:15am and 12:30-1:15pm), parents must vacate their space within 5-10 minutes. If you need longer to make your transition, please arrange an alternate time frame with the director.
- Teachers will regularly be preparing children for pickup, including gathering their belongings, in order to make pickup time more fluid and lessen parking lot congestion.

Consistent disregard of our parking policies will result in additional fees and consequences.

## J. HOLIDAY VIEWS

The LEAP philosophy welcomes the celebration of all ethnic holidays. We do not discriminate on the basis of religion or race. Our hope is to instill within each child the acceptance of diversity and the notion that everyone is special. Families may choose to give gifts to their child's teacher or to the school at holiday times. *Gift giving is optional.* If you would like to make a donation to the school, please ask your Program Director. She may have a list of "Wish List" items that are needed by the school.

## K. BIRTHDAYS

Birthdays for children and staff are a special occasion at LEAP. Your teacher will be happy to coordinate a celebration with you around your child's special day. Some examples of these celebrations include inviting family members to join the class for story time, having the class prepare a special souvenir for the birthday child, or inviting the birthday child to share their favorite activity with the class. We ask that parents do not provide treats for these celebrations, as we will be creating a fun experience that does not depend on a treat to be special.

LEAP has a birthday book program. Details will be provided the month before your child's birthday. You may donate a favorite book or choose something from our wish list if you choose to participate. This is a nice way to experience the joy of giving with all of the children. *Gift giving is optional.*

## L. PHOTO DAY

LEAP provides one *optional* Photo Day during the Fall/Spring session, usually held in the spring. Group and individual photos of enrolled children are different packaged options. The photographer will take outdoor photos, weather

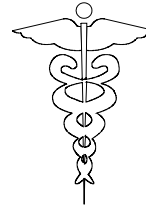


This day is choices in permitting.

## M. PICTURES & VIDEO

Parents and educators are welcome to take pictures and video of children during classroom events such as parties and shows. However, LEAP prohibits the posting of such photos and/or videos in any public domain, without express written permission.

**V. HEALTH CARE AND ILLNESS POLICY**



**A. IMMUNIZATIONS**

The Massachusetts Department of Public Health has established guidelines regarding immunizations for children. These are designed to protect the health of all young children. The Department of Early Education and Care requires that all children enrolled at LEAP have the following immunizations and that this information, completed by your child's physician, be on file at LEAP prior to your child's first day at LEAP. ***If we do not have this information, or if the immunizations are not up to date, your child will not be able to attend LEAP until we have received it.*** If you have religious or medical objections to having your child immunized, you must present a signed statement to that effect prior to your child's first day at LEAP. In such cases, a signed statement from the doctor (for a medical reason) or the parent (for a religious reason) must be presented with the medical forms or your child shall not be admitted to school. The ***minimum*** immunization requirements for preschool age children are as follows:

***These immunizations are required by the state and the Department of Early Education and Care in order for your child to attend LEAP***

By two years:	4 doses of DTP	By kindergarten:	5 doses of DTP
	3 doses of Polio		4 doses of Polio
	2+ doses of Hib		4 doses of Hib
	1 dose of MMR		2 dose of MMR
	Annual <b>Lead Screen</b> (between 9-12 mos/again at 2 & 3 yrs)		Annual Lead Screen
	3 doses of Hepatitis B		
	1 dose of Varicella or a reliable history of chicken pox (must be physician-certified)		

*\* Per the Massachusetts Department of Public Health: If there is an outbreak of a disease designated by DPH for mandatory reporting, susceptible students who are in close contact with the disease who are not appropriately immunized or are without laboratory evidence of immunity or a reliable history of immunity, shall be excluded from school for whatever period of time the DPH specifies. In the case of chicken pox, the exclusion period is from the 10th through the 21st days after last exposure. There is no refund of tuition for this exclusion.*

For your information, we have included information on required immunizations for young children. This information is taken from guidelines published by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health.

**RECOMMENDED IMMUNIZATION SCHEDULE**

	Birth	1-2mo	2 mos	4 mos	6 mos	12-15mo	15-18mo	4-6 yrs	11-12 yr
HepB	1st	2nd			3rd				3 doses
DTaP/DTP			1st	2nd	3rd		4th	5th	Td booster
Polio			1st	2nd			3rd	4th	
Hib			1st	2nd	3rd	4th			
MMR						1st		2nd	2nd
Varicella						1 dose			1 dose

There is an alternative immunization schedule for children who began the immunization sequence at an older age. Please ask your doctor for specific information if your child began the immunizations at a later date.

The LEAP staff makes every effort to keep parents informed of important medical information. If you would like further information concerning immunizations, please contact your doctor, or speak to the Director of Admissions or your Program Director.



## B. UPDATING YEARLY PHYSICALS

The Department of Early Education and Care (EEC) state agency requires all children to have an annual physical exam and a record of all immunizations on file for children to attend school. ***If we do not have up-to-date medical information for your child, he/she will not be permitted to attend The LEAP School.*** Parents have within 30 days of their previous annual physical date to turn in a copy of a current physical form. A child cannot attend LEAP School after 30 days has passed.

After your child's physical, please send the Admissions office his/her form that was given at the appointment. It must be signed by the doctor and have a recorded exam date included. A helpful rule of thumb is to make extra copies of the original form, as most doctors' offices will charge you a fee if they need to print you an extra copy themselves. You can fax it to the main Admissions office at 781-860-9525 (always call to confirm the fax has made it) or you can mail it directly to the Admissions office at 210 Marrett Rd. Lexington, MA. 02421.

## C. BASIC ILLNESS

The LEAP staff understands that runny noses, mild coughs, etc., are all a part of childhood and winter. Our Health Care Policy follows guidelines mandated by the Department of Early Education and Care and is designed to protect the health of the children enrolled at LEAP. Specific additional illness policies may be instituted during a particular outbreak of disease or pandemic. Additionally, please be aware of these expectations:

You must keep your child home if s/he exhibits one or more of the following:

- suspicion of a contagious disease (conjunctivitis, chicken pox, lice, etc.)
- illness that interferes with normal activities

If your child is taking antibiotics, s/he should remain at home for 24 hours after starting antibiotics. This helps to ensure that your child will be able to participate in activities at school and also helps to prevent further infection.

Based upon recommendations from the National Pediculosis Association, we have adopted the "No Nits" standard. Therefore, any child or adult found to have nits, eggs, or lice in their hair will be excluded from school for a minimum of 24 hours for proper treatment. Prior to being allowed to reenter the school, an examination by a LEAP staff member must find no evidence of nits, eggs or lice. If any of these are found, the child will be sent home with the parent. Daily inspections will continue until 10 consecutive days of nit-free results are achieved. For privacy reasons, we will not release the names of the children or adults who have contracted lice during an outbreak. We appreciate your cooperation and patience with these standards.

While bed bug infestations are very rare in school settings, we have adopted the following policy to guide our response if we discover a bed bug in our building, or if a family reports having bed bugs at home. Bed bugs do not live on humans but it is possible for them to "hitchhike" to school on a student's belongings. Any items thought to be harboring bed bugs will be inspected and either removed or heated in the dryer to kill the bugs. Items that come to school from a home that is infested will be stored in a sealed plastic container while at school. Parents will be notified about our process and may be asked to follow-up with strategies at home. Student attendance will be dependent on family cooperation with the LEAP School recommendations.

The LEAP staff will send children home if they are feeling ill and cannot participate in the daily activities. It is sometimes difficult to determine whether or not a child is ill. LEAP teachers will assess the situation and use their best judgment in determining if the child is well enough to attend school. LEAP teachers will always err on the conservative side to protect the health of your child and of the other children in the group. If your child becomes ill while at school, we will contact you immediately. If we are unable to contact either parent, we will call one of the emergency contacts listed in the child's emergency forms. The child will rest away from other children, under the supervision of a teacher, until the parent or emergency backup person can take the child home.

## D. CONTAGIOUS ILLNESS

Children with a contagious illness are not allowed in the school until they have seen a doctor and are given a clean bill of health. Parents must notify the director AS SOON AS POSSIBLE so she can post a sign alerting other

parents and staff. The ill child can return to LEAP when he/she has fully recovered and is free of symptoms for at least 24 hours. In some cases, you may be required to have a note from your doctor stating it is safe for your child to come back to school. Information regarding contagious illnesses will be posted in the school.

## E. EPIDEMIC ILLNESS

If an epidemic illness has been brought into the school and is spreading out of control, LEAP will be forced to close its doors to air out the school. This is regulated by the Board of Health. Prevention is the best cure.

We require that parents keep us informed about any communicable illness their child may have. In the event of illness believed to be part of an outbreak or disease cluster, the LEAP School will consult with the local Board of Health to receive further instructions. We furthermore reserve the right to close our program in the event of an epidemic or pandemic health crisis. Such a decision would be made in consultation with the local and state agencies responding to the emergency and would consider maintaining the necessary child/staff ratios in effect.

## F. ILLNESSES AND OTHER ABSENCES

Because of staff scheduling requirements, credit or refunds are not given for illness or other unplanned absences. This policy includes any closings to due epidemic illness or a pandemic.

## G. ALLERGIES

Each classroom has posted a list of children who have allergies. We rely on parent communication to keep these lists accurate. The LEAP School prohibits peanut or nut products in the classrooms. Your child may be in a LEAP classroom where children have particular food allergies. Please be aware of this as you send in lunch items. As always, we desire to work closely with parents to respond to their child's needs in the safest and most consistent way possible. If your child has been prescribed an EpiPen, we require that parents provide two for us to keep at school, as well as complete an Individual Health Care Plan with your pediatrician.

Prior to the beginning of each session, we will assess the severity of allergies in each school. We will then determine if the allergies warrant a need to make special classroom or all school accommodations for those allergies. We will take into consideration the needs of all children when determining appropriate food choices. Several weeks before the start of each session, parents will be notified of details regarding any changes to our current allergy policy. LEAP reserves the right to alter or change this policy at any time.

## H. MEDICINE

The LEAP staff can administer prescription and non-prescription medication with written approval of a pediatrician and parent. Medicine should be given directly to the LEAP staff by parents, not placed in the child's cubby or lunch box. *All medication must be in their original containers and have the child's name affixed.* No medication should be mixed in a child's bottle or into other food, unless specified by the physician as the proper form of administration. In that case, the medication must be mixed at LEAP. The school is not responsible for replacement of spilled medication or for those left beyond the expiration date. Unused medication will be returned to the parent and any missed doses will be recorded with the reason as to why.

An "Authorization for Medication" form must be completed for **any** medication to be given. This form, available in the office, must be filled out completely and given to your child's teacher along with the medication as needed. LEAP teachers are not allowed to administer the first dose of any new medication. For a chronic illness or condition, annual consent forms signed by a physician will be permitted. Parent signatures on these forms are required to be updated weekly for non-prescription medicine. Verbal permission from the parent will still be required before the medication is given unless there is an emergency. A separate form needs to be completed for each medication. The LEAP School or its staff cannot be held responsible for failure to accurately provide requested medication, nor for adverse reactions that are caused by the administration of such medication. All educators administering medication shall wash their hands before and after handling any and all medications.

*The Department of Early Education and Care requires that we have a doctor's signature before the staff can administer any medication (prescription or non-prescription) to your child. (For non-prescription medication the doctor must sign the authorization form. A prescription label can serve as a doctor's permission.)*

## I. SUNSCREEN, INSECT REPELLENT

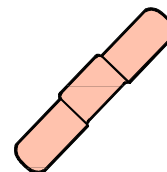
Included in your child's back to school forms are release forms for applying sunscreen, and insect repellent to your child as needed. If you wish us to protect your child with sunscreen or insect repellent, the Department of Early Education and Care requires that you must specify the brand of sunscreen and insect repellent which we may use for your child, and that the proper forms must be signed and in your child's chart. *We cannot apply sunscreen or insect repellent to your child if the forms are not signed and in your child's chart.* Parents must specify the brand of sunscreen and insect repellent that we may use for their child. Parents are responsible for providing sunscreen and insect repellent for their child, and for indicating on the release form exactly where they want it applied. (Ex. exposed areas, arms, legs, face, etc.) Please label all bottles with your child's name and give them to your child's teacher when you bring him/her to school.



## J. EMERGENCY AND INJURY PROCEDURES

LEAP teachers are trained yearly in First Aid and CPR. In the case of a medical emergency, or if a child is injured or becomes seriously ill while at school, the following procedure will be observed:

- The teacher will assess the situation and begin any first aid or CPR treatment or intervention. If the teacher or director determines an ambulance is needed, one will be called immediately.
- The parents will be immediately contacted. If we are unable to contact a parent, a designated back up person listed on the child's emergency forms will be contacted. The parents (and emergency contact if this person will be taking care of the child) will be notified as to the nature of the emergency and what action is recommended or is being taken by LEAP. If we cannot reach a parent, or the designated backup person, we will call an ambulance and your child's physician.
- If a child is transported by ambulance to the hospital, a LEAP staff member will accompany the child and remain with your child until you arrive. A LEAP staff member will take the child's chart and emergency medical information to the hospital to provide as much information to the doctor as possible. This will allow the doctors to begin treatment and admit a child immediately. Parents will be expected to assume responsibility for any resultant expenses.
- The teacher who assisted will complete an Injury Report Form. The form will be signed by that teacher and given to the parent to sign. Copies of this form will be given to the parent and placed in the child's records at school.



## K. AIDS GUIDELINES AND POLICY

The following guidelines have been developed from recommendations of the Massachusetts Department of Public Health including the Governor's Task Force on AIDS, the Massachusetts Department of Education, the Massachusetts Board of Education, and the American Academy of Pediatrics for implementation in Early Childhood group/school settings.

1. Infants, toddlers, and preschoolers with HIV infection/AIDS should be admitted to early childhood settings if their health, neurological development, and behavior are appropriate. HIV-infected children should be evaluated for attendance at an early childhood setting on a case-by-case basis by the child's parents and the child's physician.

2. As with the enrollment of any child, regardless of HIV status, the parent or guardian and the early childhood program director (or, where there is no director, the primary caregiver) will discuss the appropriateness of the child for the setting. With consent of the parent or guardian, the physician will provide information regarding the child's HIV status.

3. No child should attend an early childhood setting in the event of:

- a) Weeping or bloody skin or mouth sores that cannot be successfully covered or controlled with medications;
- b) Biting of an unusual frequency or severity that would be accompanied by actual transfer of blood from the biter, as might happen from a child with chronically bloody gums or mouth;
- c) Bloody diarrhea
- d) If the child exhibits inappropriate behavior which increases the likelihood of transmission (i.e. biting, or frequent incontinence)

These restrictions would hold for any child in an early childhood setting, regardless of his/her HIV status.

4. Continued attendance of an HIV-infected child in an early childhood setting should consider the child's social, psychological, and developmental status; current health status, including degree of immune function and stamina; and the ability of the early childhood caregiver to provide appropriate care. The physician, parent/guardian, a School appointed physician, the School Director and Executive Director, and early childhood caregiver will provide ongoing monitoring of the HIV-infected child, including decisions about the child's daily attendance. In each case, risks and benefits to both the infected child and others in the setting should be weighed.

5. Medical records of all children are considered confidential information. With parental consent, records containing HIV status may be shared by the above mentioned only with persons who have an absolute need to know in order to protect the child against other infections. This information does not require release of a child's HIV antibody status, unless parental consent is given. Such persons should be identified by the above group and notified by the head of school in a manner to best preserve patient confidentiality. The number of personnel notified should be kept at the minimum necessary to assure proper care of the student and to detect situations where the potential for transmission might increase or where the safety and health of the infected person might be at risk. Notifying parents of other children about the presence of a known or suspected HIV infected child is unnecessary and prohibited.

6. Many individuals with HIV infection are immunodeficient and therefore at increased risk of severe complications from certain communicable infections, e.g. chicken pox. The individual's personal physician should be notified of any such outbreak in order to assess the risk to the student of continued school attendance.

7. Infected students should be excluded from regulations requiring live virus vaccines

8. Universal infection control procedures should be practiced in all early childhood settings.

9. Siblings of children with HIV infection or children of parents with HIV infection should likewise be permitted to attend school.

10. Teachers and other employees known to be infected with HIV will not be restricted from work on this basis, nor will they be restricted from using telephones, office equipment, eating facilities and water fountains.

11. Mandatory screening as a condition for school entry is not warranted based on available data.

12. Individual cases should be reviewed periodically by the Executive Director, a physician appointed by the School, the student's personal physician and the student's parents. This pertains both to students attending school and to those who have been excluded and, because of change in their condition, might be permitted to return. The frequency of such review should be determined on an individual basis.

13. These general policies should apply to staff and other employees as well as to students.

14. The executive director of the School will keep the LEAP community informed of policy changes.

There is no basis for concluding at the present time that schools should exclude or dismiss students or employees simply because they are infected with the AIDS virus. Schools accommodating such persons should make their policy known to the community. However, conscientious weighing of the benefits and risks in particular circumstances may warrant exclusion or dismissal of students or employees because of the known factors surrounding AIDS and the seriousness of the problem.

#### L. POLICY ON CHILD ABUSE

Child abuse legally refers to any incident where an individual engages in conduct that is potentially harmful to the physical, sexual or psychological well-being of a child under the age of 18. There are four kinds of abuse: 1) physical abuse (not accidental injury), 2) physical neglect (failure on the part of a care taker to meet a child's basic physical needs), 3) sexual abuse (sexual involvement between a child and an individual who has greater knowledge, power and resources), and 4) psychological abuse (extreme and/or repetitive conduct which is frightening or intimidating). LEAP School shall at all times seek to protect children from abuse and neglect while in LEAP School's care and custody.

If any member of the LEAP Staff suspects, or has reason to believe, that any student is suffering, or has suffered, child abuse, he/she must report such suspected abuse to the appropriate LEAP director immediately. That director will notify the Executive Director who shall immediately report the abuse to the Department of Children and Families ("DCF") pursuant to M.G.L. ch. 199, Section 51A.

In the event the alleged child abuse occurred while the child was in the care of LEAP School or during a LEAP School program or activity, the Executive Director shall notify the Department of Early Education and Care immediately after filing the Section 51A report with DCF, or after learning such a report has been filed. The Executive Director shall also seek to insure that an allegedly abusive staff member does not work directly with children at LEAP School until the DCF investigation is completed, and for such further time as the Department of Early Education and Care requires.

LEAP School will cooperate fully in all DCF or Department of Early Education and Care investigations of abuse and neglect, whether or not such abuse is alleged to have taken place while the child was in the care of the LEAP School or during a LEAP School program or activity.



#### M. CALLING IN AND ATTENDANCE

It is essential that the LEAP staff is aware of children missing school either due to illness or vacation. Please call LEAP in the morning to inform staff if your child will be late or absent from school. The staff then can relay this information to other staff and youngsters. This provides an element of safety in knowing where all of the children are at all times. The numbers to call are listed below:

**Lexington Lower School: (781) 862-4568**  
**Lexington Upper School: (781) 862-4539**  
**Bedford School: (781) 275-2010**  
**Sudbury School: (978) 440-7668**

#### N. FIRE DRILLS

Located in the main office and all classrooms at each school are evacuation procedures for the classrooms in the event of a fire or other emergency. In order to safety for all children in the event of an emergency, the EEC requires that schools fire drills on a monthly basis. LEAP teachers will spend time talking about fire and preparing the children for what will happen during the fire drill.



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## VI. FOOD



Every child attending LEAP should bring a **snack** and a **lunch** and from home with a beverage. If your child stays past 1:00, please pack a second snack as well. The LEAP staff suggests getting children involved in packing their food, asking them what they would like and not like to eat. Sometimes if the preparation is minimal, the children can help pack their food items. Children can also discuss their food likes and dislikes when out food shopping with their parents or when parents are writing the shopping list. ***LEAP is unable to heat or refrigerate children's lunches at school. Please keep this in mind when preparing your child's lunch.*** The LEAP School does not allow peanut or nut products in the classrooms. The LEAP Staff is available to discuss your child's eating habits at school with you.

### *Hints:*

- The most appetizing lunches seem to be the ones that are not too plentiful and overwhelming.
- Re-usable cold-packs help "refrigerate" the lunch box and are particularly helpful during the warmer months.
- Try to avoid too many sweets and junk foods, especially when children are not eating their main course.
- A variety of foods tend to lead to better eating.
- For most children, a child-size sandwich or other "main course", drink, and fruit are sufficient and healthy.

### **Sandwiches**

chicken	tuna salad	cream cheese and jelly	hummus with pita bread
English muffins	turkey	chicken salad	cold hamburgers
roast beef	bologna	egg salad	cheese
bagels	ham	meat loaf	jelly

### **Fruits**

apples	grapefruit	raisins/craisins	grapes cut lengthwise	kiwi
pears	plums	fruit salad	oranges	strawberries
peaches	tangerines	blueberries	melon	bananas

### **Vegetables (plain or with dip)**

cucumber slices	carrots	peas	vegetable salad
cherry/grape tomatoes	broccoli	radishes	green beans
green peppers	corn	celery with cream cheese	zucchini/yellow squash slices

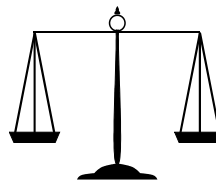
### **Drinks**

apple juice	apricot juice	cranberry juice	grapefruit juice
cider	grape juice	pineapple juice	orange juice
milk	water	lemonade	drinkable yogurt

### **Other Popular Items**

muffins	dry cereals	rice cakes	chicken nuggets
graham crackers	coleslaw	crackers and cheese	spaghetti/pasta
pasta salad	potato salad	mac and cheese	cold pizza
hard-boiled eggs	applesauce	puddings	waffles / pancakes
soups	canned fruit	sushi	leftover casseroles
yogurt	chicken legs	cottage cheese	string cheese

## VII. CHILD GUIDANCE



LEAP teachers approach child guidance at school as a positive process of building a conscience in a child. The goals of child guidance are to help a child gain a sense of internal self-control and maintain and promote positive self-esteem. We help children gain these problem-solving skills when we give children tools to solve problems by themselves as they arise.

There are many reasons why children may struggle at school. When a child is struggling the teacher will assess the situation to attempt to determine why the child is struggling. Part of LEAP's philosophy is to "look behind the behavior" and view the "ABC's" of discipline (Antecedent, Behavior, and Consequence). The teacher's role is to be in charge and help each child control his/her behavior. LEAP views child guidance as an ongoing process and an essential part of a child's growth in learning and dealing with the world.

### ANTECEDENTS:

LEAP teachers look at antecedents to the behavior when assessing each child and situation because there are many reasons a child may choose to test a limit or struggle with a teacher or child. The reason the behavior is taking place may not be immediately obvious. Some of the antecedents' teachers will look for are as follows:

- **Expectations, limits, and rules that are clear and appropriate**  
Teachers at LEAP spend a lot of time within their classroom helping children to understand the rules, making sure schedules and activities are predictable, and reminding children of group expectations. Teachers set the stage by discussing expectations with the children so that things are clear, and children can choose to behave within the given boundaries. Clear limits give children the sense of comfort and control they need in order to be able to behave appropriately; teachers set limits to keep children safe.
- **Room environment**  
Children tend to respond positively if their environment is attractive, has clear choices and contains developmentally appropriate materials. If the room is uninviting--not stimulating or challenging enough, or there is much disorganization, children tend to engage in more negative behavior and require the teacher to do more limit setting than necessary. LEAP teachers continually evaluate their classrooms to ensure that the environment is inviting and appropriate for the children in their groups.
- **Other issues**  
Children may struggle because they are working through an internal or subconscious issue. Each child reacts in his/her own way, perhaps acting angry, sad, aggressive, aloof, needy, exceedingly silly or active. Therefore, we may say to a struggling preschooler "I wonder if something is bothering you?" The child may respond with an outpouring of feeling--perhaps the child is thinking about something exciting (a trip, party, or visitor) or is anxious (thinking about a room/teacher change, an argument with another child, a sick parent). The child, especially a younger one, however, may not be able to tell you what is on his/her mind; it may require input from the parents to learn if anything is different or has changed at home.

### BEHAVIOR:

Even when children do not seem to be concerned or excited about events at home or school, the expectations are clear, and environment is appropriate, problems can arise. Children may argue over toys or ideas, they may react aggressively towards others, or choose not to follow classroom rules. When observing the children who are having a hard time, LEAP teachers consider the antecedent -- was there provocation or was the behavior out of context?

#### CONSEQUENCES:

LEAP believes that it is important to engage the child or children in a discussion about what occurred -- the behavior or situation -- in order to help the children behave more appropriately in the future. LEAP teachers may use a variety of strategies to help older toddlers and preschoolers obtain a sense of internal control and engage the children in the problem solving process whenever appropriate.

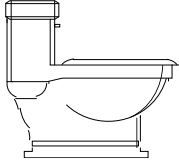
When struggles persist, LEAP teachers will share the information with parents, supervisors, and other staff in order to gain other opinions and strategies. A parent conference may be necessary in order to help parents and teachers work together and decide what is the best way to be helpful to the child, both at school and home. If the behavior cannot be understood and helped by the staff and parents, LEAP may, with the permission of the parents, bring in outside consultants for suggestions, advice, and evaluations.

Child guidance is a process whereby children grow and learn how to behave appropriately. It should not be punitive or harmful or looked at in terms of "punishment" for "being bad". It is important to remember that it is the behavior that is inappropriate, not the child who is "bad". LEAP views child guidance as an ongoing process and part of a child's growth in learning and dealing with the world. The purpose of child guidance is to ensure a safe and consistent setting in which children may grow as individuals while learning to become members of a community. Rules and behavioral limits exist to promote development and are not a means of punishment. When establishing and implementing rules for behavior, the staff will always consider individual needs as well as developmental norms and expectations. Where appropriate and feasible, children shall participate in the establishment of such rules. Punishments may not be used under any circumstance. The following are explicitly prohibited:

- Corporal punishment.
- Humiliation or verbal abuse.
- Denial of food as punishment.
- Punishment for soiling, wetting, or not using the toilet.



## VIII. DIAPERING AND TOILETING PROCEDURES

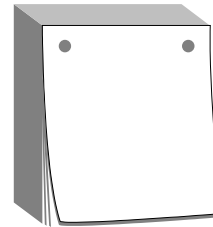


Toilet training is not a requirement for enrollment. For children in diapers, parents should provide disposable diapers, and diaper wipes. When your child shows the physical and emotional readiness to begin toilet training, the LEAP staff will work with you to assist you and your child in this process. For all children, please be sure to always have an extra set of clothing available in your child's cubby. More information regarding the Diapering and Toileting Procedures at LEAP is posted in the main office and in the bathrooms of each school and is available to parents at their request.

## IX. SCHEDULING

### A. SCHEDULE OPTIONS

See current scheduling information in the Admissions Office.



### B. EXTENDED DAY AT LEAP

Any extended days must be registered for in advance as part of the child's ongoing schedule. We will always accommodate children on an *emergency* basis.

### C. LATE PICK-UPS / ALTERNATE PICK-UPS

If a parent anticipates being late to pick up a child, please call the school in advance of the pickup time to let us know. The staff can then notify the child. We will reduce your late fee to show our appreciation for your call. For late pick up fees, please see billing section.

If someone other than a parent/guardian will be picking up your child, **you must provide written permission to the teacher or director.**

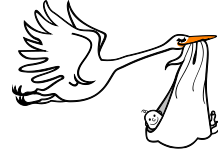
When filling out the yearly Back-to-School forms, we ask parents to give the LEAP School permission to accept electronic signatures in an email format. This authorization allows us to accept an email (from your email address) as permission to dismiss your child to another adult.

## X. REGISTRATION AND ENROLLMENT

### A. WAITING LIST

Interested families will be placed on a waiting list. The date of the "Open House" will be the child's assignment on the waiting list. The families on the general waiting list will have the opportunity to register after In-House registration on a space available basis. Children are offered openings on a first come first serve basis. Parents may call the main office to find out more information regarding the waiting list.

*It is the responsibility of Parents to put new siblings on the waitlist.*



### B. IN-HOUSE REGISTRATION

In-House families will be guaranteed a space in the program if they register during designated enrollment periods, but not guaranteed a specific scheduling preference. Some scheduling options are more popular than others. If there is a conflict between the number of available spaces for a particular schedule and children registered for that schedule, we will then proceed to a lottery system. Preference for schedules will be given to children that have siblings enrolled on the same schedule in other classrooms. The Admissions office will work hard to meet the needs of the families enrolled in the program.

- 1) The In-House Registration process for In-House families and their siblings is typically held in November each year.
- 2) Currently enrolled toddlers are given priority for schedules at the three-year-old level. In-House siblings entering at the three-year-old level are guaranteed a space, however, if a particular schedule is already full, they will be offered the remaining scheduling options.
- 3) The returning Summer Session families will have an opportunity to register for Summer and available Fall/Spring spaces after In-House and Sibling Registration. Summer families are guaranteed a summer space. If a Fall/Spring space is available, Summer families will be given priority over the main waitlist.
- 4) Families currently enrolled in a LEAP location and siblings of those families, will be given registration priority at that location. In-House families choosing to switch LEAP locations will be offered remaining scheduling options, after currently enrolled In-House families submit their contracts.

### C. REGISTRATION CONTRACTS

Every parent or guardian signs a registration contract when enrolling at the LEAP School. The contract clearly outlines starting and ending dates, which can be subject to change. Parents or guardians are responsible for the entire tuition during the course of the contract. If, for any reason, the child is withdrawn from LEAP, the parent(s) or guardian(s) remain responsible for tuition for the remainder of the contract. If, during the course of the school year the parent(s) or guardian(s) wish to change their child's schedule, the admissions team will attempt to accommodate the request if possible. The directors will not over enroll a group to meet such scheduling requests and cannot guarantee such requests will be accommodated. Parent(s) or guardian(s) should consider their scheduling needs and the commitment to the program seriously before registering. Parent(s) or guardian(s) will also choose their desired billing plan on the contract. (See: Tuition and Billing)

## D. APPLICATION TO INDEPENDENT SCHOOL POLICY

Each year some of the families enrolled in the LEAP School will choose to submit applications to independent schools. Your Program Director will be glad to be a supportive resource through this process. She is available to meet with you to discuss insights into the area schools, offer suggestions on the application process and provide letters of reference.

If a parent is registering at the LEAP School and also applying for independent school admissions the following procedures are to be followed:

- 1) Notify LEAP on the In-House Registration Contract as to the school or schools in which the family is applying
- 2) Complete LEAP Independent School Form and submit to the LEAP Admissions Office **during In-House Registration**
- 3) Notify LEAP no later than March 13<sup>th</sup> as to whether the child will be attending LEAP or the independent school.

**Please note: “Independent School” is defined as a school that offers elementary grades in addition to preschool programming. This extension is only to be used for families remaining at that independent school throughout their grade school years. (*Montessori Schools are not included in the Independent School Definition*). If a parent is applying to an independent school and registering for a space at LEAP, they need to fill out the LEAP Independent School Form and return to the Admissions Office during In-House Registration, early November. LEAP holds the right to deny the Independent School Form should the form not list Independent Schools. Independent Schools notify parents of acceptance on March 10<sup>th</sup> each year. Parents that have filled out the Independent School form have until March 13<sup>th</sup> to notify the Admissions Office of their intention to continue at LEAP or attend the independent school. This extension does not apply to parents applying to another preschool program or an integrated preschool.**

If these procedures are followed, LEAP will release the family from the LEAP School contract for the Fall/Spring session and offer the child’s space to another family on the waiting list. The Fall/Spring Registration Fee is non-refundable, but the initial \$400 deposit will be refunded thirty days after the child’s last day at LEAP. **If however, the family does not notify the LEAP School of their intention to attend an independent school, all fees will be retained and the family will be obligated for the full tuition for the registered period.**

## E. REGISTRATION FROM THE WAITING LIST

Once In-House, Alumni and Sibling Registration is completed, the waiting list applicants will be offered openings. If a parent or guardian is offered an opening, he/she will typically have a week to make a decision and return the Registration Contract and appropriate fees to secure the opening(s). Parent(s) or guardian(s) that are unable to commit within the time period may return to the waiting list and call back if they are interested at a later date. Registration is handled the same for each applicant.

The Process begins after In-House registration and is completed in the Spring. The Admissions office will update the waiting list prior to registration, to maintain its accuracy. The schedule for the enrollment will be sent to families on the general waiting list in November prior to the commencement of the enrollment period. This will provide those families with more information on the timing of the enrollment process. The LEAP School does not discriminate based upon age, sex, race, religion or creed, cultural heritage, national origin, political beliefs, marital status, handicap, disability, and or sexual orientation. Children do not need to be toilet trained to attend LEAP.

## F. TERMINATION POLICY

LEAP reserves the right to terminate a child from the program as it deems, in its sole discretion that such termination is in the best interest of the child or LEAP. Reasons for termination include, but are not necessarily limited to the following:

1. Lack of payment (Parents having delinquent payments will be offered a payment plan. If a parent cannot adhere to the payment plan, the child/family will be asked to leave the program.)
2. Inappropriate placement for the child. If a child has a special need that cannot be met with reasonable accommodations to the program, the following procedures will be followed:
  - a) notification of concerns to parents (conference)
  - b) a referral and written reasons for the referral will be made and documentation will be given to parents
  - c) possible evaluations will be recommended
  - d) determination of placement with outside specialists and family
  - e) assist parents with services
3. Inappropriate placement for the family (If the school cannot meet a parent's request after reasonable accommodations, an alternative program referral will be offered.)
4. Physical or emotional problems that require constant one on one attention.
5. Severe behavioral problems, which cannot be controlled with reasonable accommodations and may endanger the child or other children.
6. Physical or emotional impairment which the school cannot reasonably accommodate.
7. Failure to provide health forms and other paperwork required for enrollment.
8. Failure to cooperate with the school's policies.
9. Parent's disrespectful behavior towards other parents, children, teachers or any LEAP staff member.
10. Discriminatory, humiliating, intimidating or harassing behavior of any kind, which contributes to the creation of a hostile environment.

The policies in this handbook have been written to support both the regulations of the Department of Early Education and Care and the philosophy and mission of LEAP. Parents failing to follow these policies and guidelines will be contacted by their Program Director, to review the policy and create a plan for compliance. Failure to adhere to such a plan may result in termination from our program. Parents are still required to pay the full tuition for the entire contracted session regardless of termination.

In the event of withdrawal, absence or dismissal of a child for any reason, the parent(s) or guardian(s) of that child will be obligated to pay the entire tuition for the period in which they were enrolled, and that no portion of such tuition, deposits, or fees will be refunded or waived.

When a child is terminated from the school, initiated by the school or the parents, the LEAP staff will prepare the child for termination from the school in a manner that is consistent with the child's ability to understand. The LEAP School will readily offer referrals for alternate programs or services.

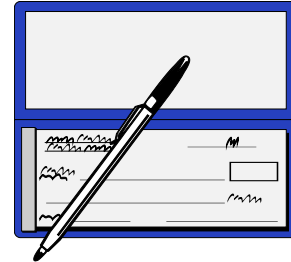
## G. CLASS TRANSITIONS (*Transition Policy*)

If a child leaves LEAP before the end of the session, educators will offer the child a clear plan to help him/her say goodbye. Whenever groups of children are preparing to transition to a new classroom or program, the educator will collaborate and share information between each classroom or program, with parental permission; and assist the child with the transition in a manner consistent with the child's ability to understand. If LEAP chooses to suspend or terminate a child's enrollment for any reason, we will provide written documentation to the parents of the specific reasons for the proposed suspension or termination of enrollment, and the circumstances under which the child may return, if any.

**XI. BILLING**

**A. PAYMENT OPTIONS**

When completing the Registration Contract parent(s) or guardian(s) choose a tuition payment plan. Parent(s) or guardian(s) pay on a monthly cycle. The LEAP School has a program called Tuition which allows for your LEAP tuition payment to be safely and securely directly from the checking or savings account of your choice. All families enroll in this program. A \$25.00 convenience fee will be charged if paying by check.



tuition Express, debited must tuition

**B. PAYMENT DATES/BILLING/LATE FEES**

Your child's monthly tuition is determined by his/her individual schedule and is recorded in the registration contract. If you should need additional hours for your child at LEAP, please check with your Program Director for availability. All tuition is prepaid in order to maintain operating costs. The Summer Program typically runs for 6 weeks in July and August; the Fall/Spring session typically runs for 46 weeks from September through June.

- ***There is no tuition credit given for illness, emergency closings, holiday closings, snow day closings, teacher training days, or vacations parents choose to take.***
- If a family is terminated from the LEAP School by the Executive Director the parents remain responsible for the full term tuition payments.

**The monthly tuition bill**

Will consist of 10 monthly payments. All monthly tuition will be debited from your account on the 15<sup>th</sup> of the prior month. (i.e.—December tuition is debited on November 15<sup>th</sup>). **Any payments received after the twentieth will be subject to a \$25.00 per month late fee unless prior arrangements have been made.** (If you will be unable to make payment by the fifteenth of a certain month, please call the Lexington office at 781-861-1026, to make alternative arrangements.)

If a child who is not currently scheduled for extra time adds to their schedule as approved by the Program Director, extra time will be charged as follows:

Afternoon Arts:	1:00pm-3:30pm
Afternoon Group:	1:00pm-4:30pm
Extra Hour	3:30pm-4:30pm

All debited accounts resulting in insufficient funds will be charged a fee to cover LEAP bank fees. After a second occurrence, money orders may be deemed necessary at the sole discretion of LEAP.

**C. LATE PICKUP TIMES AND FEES:**

If a parent anticipates being late to pick up a child, please call the school to let us know. The staff can then notify the child.

The pick-up times are as follows: *(pick-up times are subject to change)*

	<b>AM</b>	<b>3/4</b>	<b>4:30</b>	
<b>Toddler 2</b>	12:30	3:00	4:30	
<b>3-year-old Lower Preschool</b>	12:45	3:15	4:30	
<b>4-year-old Upper Preschool</b>	1:00	3:30	4:30	
<b>Transitional Kindergarten</b>	1:00	3:30	4:30	

When your child is picked-up late, the guardian picking up and the teacher will sign an attendance form acknowledging the date and time of pick-up and the form will be submitted to the main administration office, and your account will be charged a late fee. \*Please note: For those families enrolled in Tuition Express, your monthly deduction will have an additional charge that month. **The late fee schedule is as follows:**

**Monthly Debit Schedule**

<u>Month</u>	<u>Direct Debit Date</u>
July	June 15 <sup>th</sup>
August	July 14 <sup>th</sup>
September	August 15 <sup>th</sup>
October	September 15 <sup>th</sup>
November	October 13 <sup>th</sup>
December	November 15 <sup>th</sup>
January	December 15 <sup>th</sup>
February	January 15 <sup>th</sup>
March	February 15 <sup>th</sup>
April	March 15 <sup>th</sup>
May	April 15 <sup>th</sup>
June	May 15 <sup>th</sup>



**D. SCHEDULE CHANGES**

A request for a schedule change is based on availability. If families would like to add on to their child’s schedule and the schedule is available, the LEAP School will send a schedule change form to add to the current schedule. The billing for the new schedule will take place when the new schedule begins. If a family requests to decrease their child’s schedule, a schedule change form will be sent to confirm the new schedule. The billing for the new schedule will be updated within the next billing cycle.

**E. AND SIBLING & MILITARY DISCOUNT**

The LEAP School also offers a 10% discount on the lesser of tuitions for families with more than one child in the program. This discount is applicable to families who attend for both the Summer and Fall/Spring sessions or for the Fall/Spring Session.

The LEAP School also offers a 25% military discount. If you have more than one child in the program, the military discount will apply over the sibling discount.

## F. ORIGINAL DEPOSIT:

The balance of the original \$400 deposit, that is paid when each child enters LEAP, will be refunded within thirty days after the last day of the session (of your child's last year at LEAP). If that child has a sibling that will be continuing at LEAP in the following session, his/her deposit will be credited to your family account, and applied towards the sibling's tuition. If you choose to withdraw, the initial deposit is *NON- REFUNDABLE*. **By registering for an opening, you are obligated for the tuition during the entire registered period of time, regardless of withdrawal for any reason.**

## XII. PARENT SERVICES

*The LEAP Schools are licensed by the Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care (EEC) Our direct licensor can be reached at 978-609-0309; 360 Merrimack Street, Building 9, Third Floor, Lawrence MA 01843. Parents may contact EEC for information regarding the program's regulatory compliance history.*

### A. NEW FAMILIES

Traditionally the LEAP team likes to welcome our new and returning families to their new groups with an informal gathering before the session begins. More specific information will be coming from your child's teacher before the session begins. We hope you will join us as we all get to know each other!

### B. PARENT INVOLVEMENT

While the LEAP School does not have requirements for parent participation in school events, we greatly appreciate any contributions parents choose to make. This participation could also include contributing to the class curriculum by sharing a story or a hobby. Some parents may have talents or expertise they would like to share with the teaching staff or other families. In years past, some of our most successful parent-run activities have included: organizing a parent workshop or coffee hour, contributing expertise to staff development, and helping out with school functions like class parties. If you are interested in becoming more involved in the LEAP Parent Connection, please see your Program Director.

*LEAP does not use its parent or teacher body to solicit for any reason.*

### C. PARENT RESOURCE LIBRARY

Each LEAP School houses a resource library for parents and teachers. Parents may borrow books for one week by signing out the material with the Program Director. Articles do not leave LEAP, but we would be happy to copy them for you. In order to keep materials from getting lost or misplaced, we ask that all borrowers abide by the above guidelines.

### D. EDUCATIONAL SEMINARS

Educational Seminars are presented occasionally during the year to enrich parents and teachers in child development topics. The educational seminars are presentations given by consultants (sometimes parents in the LEAP community) who are experts on a particular topic. Open discussions follow presentations. Past topics have included: "Public and Independent Schools," "What happens after LEAP?", "Discipline with Respect," etc. Seminars will be scheduled within the Fall/Spring session. Dates & details will be emailed to parents during the year.

## E. OUTSIDE SPECIALISTS FOR SPECIAL NEEDS YOUNGSTERS

The LEAP School consults with a team of special educators to support children with special needs. All LEAP children are respected for their individual personalities and learning differences. If a child exhibits a special need, the LEAP team will work with the child's parents, and perhaps an outside specialist, to determine needs and perhaps services. Reasonable accommodations will be made for all children. This can be a difficult time for families. Please know that LEAP will be supportive and caring to all those involved. Please see the section on screening and referrals for further information concerning the process that we use for assisting children with special needs.

## F. SCREENING AND REFERRAL PROCESS

### **SPECIAL NEEDS IDENTIFICATION PROCESS AND PROCEDURES:**

The LEAP School is designed as a model early childhood program for toddler, preschool and kindergarten youngsters. The LEAP faculty is pleased to make reasonable accommodations for all children. If the LEAP Staff questions the development of a particular child, the following procedures will follow:

- 1) Review the child's chart thoroughly
- 2) Bring the observations to the attention of the Director and Parent
- 3) Document observations
- 4) Communicate information to the parents and get more feedback on their observations
- 5) Make appropriate referrals (see referral process)
- 6) Determination as to what, if any, reasonable modifications will be introduced into the classroom

### **REFERRAL PROCESS:**

The LEAP School is dedicated to Early Intervention. The program works with both public and private therapists to support children, parents and teachers. The LEAP School will support a family through the evaluation/screening process as needed. If a "special need" is suspected, then the designated consultants will be notified. If an Individual Educational Plan, "IEP", is adopted and put into place, the program will support the process. All consultants, therapists and evaluators will interface with the LEAP teaching team to mainstream children when possible. When it is determined by the LEAP team that the child's needs will be best served in a different placement, or the school cannot accommodate the child at LEAP with reasonable modifications, the parents will be notified, and the child will be referred to the Special Service Team (see list below). The LEAP team will do whatever is possible to assist the family in this process.

Our parent handbook outlines our philosophy of supporting parents through their child's years at LEAP. Following is a list of professionals and agencies to which we refer families when questions or needs arise with regard to health, child development, counseling, etc.

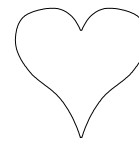
### **REFERRAL LIST:**

- School District Special Needs Liaison  
Lexington, Heejean Parry-Cruwys, 781-860-5823  
Bedford, Tanya Kalantari, 781-275-1700 x3248  
Sudbury, Stephanie Juriansz, Early Childhood Education Administrator, 978-639-3204
- Speech and Language Therapists:  
Randi Loeb, 781-862-8085
- Occupational Therapists:  
-Amanda Marek, Groton, MA 978-448-4001  
-Sarah Ryan, Watertown, MA 617-923-4410
- Health Care Consultant, Dr. Victoria Arthur – Lexington Pediatrics. 781-862-4110
- Minuteman Early Intervention Program, 978-369-3524
- Concord Hillside Medical Ass. (including referrals for vision/hearing tests), 978-371-1300
- Lexington Eye Associates--Vision tests/services, 781-862-1620
- Pediatric Psychologist, Dr. Rachel Kramer, 978-369-9463
- Department of Children & Families (DCF), 800-792-5200 (*Child Abuse & Neglect, State Agency*)



## G. SUPPORT AND UNDERSTANDING

LEAP is a family centered program. We recognize that children's experiences at school are not isolated or separate from their experiences at home. The teachers are always willing to discuss any topics that parents have on their minds. Sometimes discussions occur through email, conferences, or phone calls.



### **PARENTAL RIGHTS**

Chapter 28A, Section 10 of the General Laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts mandates to the Department of Early Education and Care the legal responsibility of promulgating rules and regulations governing the operation of day care centers (including nursery schools).

In accordance with this law, the Department of Early Education and Care published the requirements now in effect on March 31, 1977. These regulations must be complied with by the licensee in order to ensure a **minimum** level of care for the children serviced by the day care center and/or nursery school.

The licensee (day care center owner) is required to inform all parents of “the rights of parents” as stated in the regulations at the time of admission of their child to the center. These rights are as follows:

### **PARENT INVOLVEMENT**

7.05(13) **Parent Input**. The licensee shall have a procedure for allowing parental input in the development of center policy and programs. The licensee shall provide an explanation to the parent(s) when a parent makes suggestions as to the program or policy of a center and the suggestions are not adopted by the licensee. If the parent requests a written response, the licensee shall respond in writing to the parent.

7.05(14) **Reports to Parents**. The licensee shall, periodically but at least every six (6) months, prepare a written progress report of the participation of each child in the center’s records. The licensee shall provide a copy of each report to the parent(s) or meet with them at least every six (6) months to discuss their child’s activities and participation in the center. In addition:

- a) for infants and children with disabilities, the licensee shall complete a written progress report of the child’s development every three (3) months, and provide it to the parent(s);
- b) the licensee shall bring special problems or significant developments particularly as the regard infants, to the parent’s attention as soon as they arise.

7.05(15) **Parent Conferences**. The licensee shall make the staff available for individual conferences with parents at parental request.

7.05(19) **Confidentiality and Distribution of Records**. Information contained in a child’s record shall be privileged and confidential. The licensee shall not distribute or release information in a child’s record to anyone not directly related to implementing the program plan for the child without written consent of the child’s parent(s). The licensee shall notify the parent(s) if a child’s record is subpoenaed.

The child’s parent(s) shall, upon request, have access to his child’s record at reasonable times. In no event shall such access be delayed more than two (2) business days after the initial request without the consent of the child’s parent(s). Upon such request for access the child’s entire record regardless of the physical location of its parts, shall be made available. The licensee shall establish procedures governing access to, duplication of, and dissemination of such information; and shall maintain a permanent, written log in each child’s record indicating any persons to whom information contained in a child’s record has been released. Each person disseminating or releasing information contained in a child’s record, in whole or in part, shall upon each instance of dissemination or release enter into the log the following: his name, signature, position, the date, the portions of the record which were disseminated or released, the purpose of the record which were disseminated or released, the purpose of such

dissemination or release, and the signature of the person to whom the information is disseminated or released. Such log shall be available only to the child's parent(s) and center personnel responsible for record maintenance.

## **PARENTAL RIGHTS**

7.05(12) Parent Visits. The licensee shall permit unannounced visits by the parents to the center while their child is present.

7.05(20) Charge for Copies. The licensee shall not charge an unreasonable fee for copies of any information contained in the child's record.

7.05(21) Amending the Child's Record.

(a) A child's parent(s) shall have the right to add information, comments data or any other relevant materials to the child's record;

(b) A child's parent(s) shall have the right to request deletion or amendment of any information contained in the child's record. Such request shall be made in accordance with the procedures described below:

1. If such parent(s) is of the opinion that adding information is not sufficient to explain, clarify or correct objectionable material in the child's record, he shall have the right to have a conference with the licensee to make his objections known;

2. the licensee shall, within one (1) week after the conference, render to such parent(s) a decision in writing stating the reason or reasons for the decision. If the decision is in favor of the parent(s), he shall immediately take steps as may be necessary to put the decision into effect.

7.05(22) Transfer of Records. Upon written request of the parent(s) the licensee shall transfer the child's record to the parent(s), or any other person the parent(s) identifies, when the child is no longer in care.

7.05(23) Notification to Parents. The licensee shall notify the parent(s) in writing of the provisions of 7.05(19) through 7.05(22) and 7.05(24) at the time of the child's admission to the center and thereafter, in writing, at least once a year.

## **INFORMATION REQUIRED BY THE OFFICE**

7.05(24) Availability of Information to the Office. Notwithstanding 102 CMR 7.05(19), upon request of an employee, authorized by the Director and involved in the regulatory process, the licensee shall make available to the Office any information required to be kept and maintained under these regulations and any other information reasonable related to the requirements of these regulations. Authorized employees of the Office shall not remove identifying case material from the center's premises and shall maintain the confidentiality of individual records.

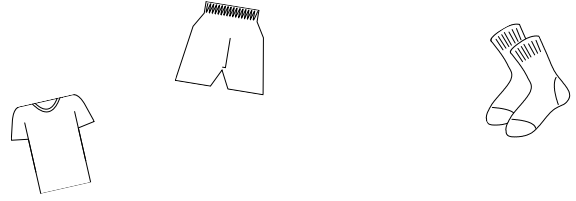
7.07(6) Meeting with Parents. The licensee shall assure that the administrator or his designee shall meet with the parent(s) prior to admitting a child to the center.

a) At the meeting, the licensee shall provide to the parent(s) the center's written statements of purpose, services, procedures for parent conferences, visits and input to center policy; procedures relating to children's records; and procedures for providing emergency health care.

b) The licensee shall provide the opportunity for the parent(s) to visit the center's classrooms at the time of the meeting or prior to the enrollment of the child.

In addition, Section 7.03(23) requires all licensees to have a copy of the regulations on the premises of the center and the regulations shall be made available to any person upon request.

### **XIII. CHILDREN'S BELONGINGS**



#### **A. EXTRA CLOTHES**

Every child should have at least one set of extra clothes to be left at LEAP. Please send children to school in casual, comfortable clothes. There will be many messy projects and much fun during each day, so please leave special clothes at home. Please also send sneakers or other rubber-soled, closed toe shoes for your child to wear outside. It can sometimes be difficult for children to participate in active games when wearing "party" shoes or sandals. Please check your child's cubby and replenish with any extra clothes that may be used. During a health crisis, masks may be required to be worn by children over 2 as well.

#### **B. CUBBIES**

Every child that attends LEAP will have a cubby with his/her name on it. Children may keep all items brought from home in their cubbies. Notices for parents will be sent home with children in their backpack.

#### **C. CHILDREN'S TOYS AND NAP ITEMS:**

Aside from comfort toys we ask that you leave your child's toys at home or in your car. Guns, war toys, and other toys of destruction may not be brought to school. A soft toy, sheet and blanket should accompany children during naptime for comfort. Please also provide a pillowcase to store your child's nap items in. These items can be taken home daily or left in the child's cubby. *All nap items should be brought home and laundered at the end of each week.* LEAP will make every effort to safeguard personal belongings brought by the child but cannot be responsible for lost or broken items.

#### **D. LABEL, LABEL, LABEL!!!!!!!**

It is difficult to keep track of every child's article of clothing, special toys, etc. All items should be labeled with a child or family name. Please remember to label extra clothes, coats, shoes, mittens, gloves, boots, hats, etc. The LEAP staff greatly appreciates labeling!!!

### **XIV. PREPARING FOR LEAP**

#### **A. PREPARING YOUR CHILD**

As with most changes, joining a school can be difficult as well as exciting. Youngsters may express a range of emotions regarding new situations. The LEAP staff tries very hard to make the transitions as smooth and supportive as possible. Do not be disturbed if your child begins acting differently during the transition phase. Every child responds uniquely. Prepare your child in advance by talking regularly about the program. Actively listen to your child and encourage expression of feelings. Reassure your child that the LEAP staff will take good care of him/her while at school. Try to be consistent with limits as children look for boundaries and safety during

transition periods. The LEAP staff is available to discuss separation issues and assist you and your child during the transition phase.

## B. SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR INFANTS AND YOUNG TODDLERS

### **Things to bring:**

All items should be labeled and seasonally appropriate. All children must wear comfortable play clothes. Keep in mind that many of our activities are messy!

- Large Box of Diapers
- Diapering Wipes
- 1-2 sleep sacks until age 1 yr., blankets for age 1 yr+ (no pillows)
- 2 sheets (porta-crib or pack 'n' play size)
- 10 bibs
- Prepared bottles of formula or breast milk (breast milk bottles must include the date on which the milk was expressed)
  - Lunch and snacks for children who are eating solid foods.
- Diaper cream, if needed (signed authorization required)
- 3 complete changes of clothes
- Pacifier (if used) - must have no attachments
- In the spring and summer months, please provide a sunhat and sunscreen
- In the fall and winter months, please provide a warm hat and a coat or sweatshirt

### **Parent Communication:**

In addition to many of the Parent Communication tools we offer all our families, parents of infants and young toddlers will receive a daily report of sleeping, eating, diapering status and a written developmental progress report every 3 months. Any significant developmental changes or concerns will be brought to your attention as soon as they are observed.

### **Cleanliness:**

We have a shoeless policy in the infant and young toddler rooms. Children in these age groups spend most of their time on the floor, therefore we ask that all children and parents take their shoes off when entering these rooms. Indoor slippers that can be left at school are a great option for walkers.

Families provide their child with 2 sets of bedding. These are sent home to be laundered on a weekly basis and whenever soiled. We sanitize cots/cribs weekly and children use the same assigned cot/crib each day.

All infant/toddler toys that have been in a child's mouth are removed from play immediately and disinfected before they are put back on the shelf for all to use. Toys are sanitized with bleach solution daily. All surfaces that come in contact with bodily fluids are disinfected immediately. All surfaces that are touched frequently... door jams, tabletops, doorknobs...are sanitized daily.

### **Safe Sleep:**

To ensure the safest sleeping environment for children under 12 months enrolled in our program, LEAP has adopted the following policy regarding infant sleep practices.

- All infants will nap in an individual crib meeting federal safety standards related to mattress firmness and slat distance.
- Cribs of children under 12 months of age will not contain any soft items.
- Educators will ensure that all children twelve months of age or younger are placed on their backs for sleeping, unless the child's health care professional orders otherwise in writing.
- If the child is able to roll on their own, the caregiver does not need to reposition the baby to its back if they have rolled to a different position.
- No soft objects or loose bedding are allowed in the cribs. Blankets, comforters, pillows, stuffed animals, wedges, positioners, bumper pads or other soft padded materials or toys are not allowed to be placed in the crib with the baby. Sleepers and sleep sacks that leave the infant's arms free to move are good alternatives to blankets.

- Swaddling is prohibited for any child who can roll over, unless there is a written order issued by the child's health care provider and must allow the infant's arms to move freely.
- Bottles are never propped, and babies cannot be given a bottle to use while sleeping. Propping the bottle increases the risk of choking and of ear infections. Falling asleep with milk pooled in the mouth leads to serious dental caries in developing teeth.

### **Biting:**

LEAP recognizes that biting is a developmentally appropriate behavior for children in the infant through toddler classrooms. However, even if parents accept that a biting incident involving your child is likely to occur at some point, we understand that parents are concerned and can be upset when it happens. We ask that you remember this is a developmentally appropriate behavior which many children experiment with at some point, and that teachers are working to identify situations which provoke or elicit this behavior so it can be prevented in the future. The staff will not punish or harshly discipline children for biting behavior; they will simply redirect the children to different activities in separate areas of the classroom. Parents will work with staff to identify methods and strategies to curb this behavior. Parents will be notified by incident/accident report that a biting incident occurred during the day. The staff may not discuss with either parent the identity or medical history of the other child involved in the incident. This information is confidential and cannot be disclosed.

### **Feeding:**

- Bottles of breast milk or formula must be prepared at home in plastic bottles and be labeled with the child's first and last name and the date on which they were prepared. Be sure to prepare one more bottle than you think your child will consume in a day to assure that your child won't run out.
- Prepared bottles must be stored in the designated refrigerator and will be warmed in a water bath prior to feeding. No bottles will be microwaved.
- All bottles must be taken home (used or unused) by the child's family each night to be washed.
- Extra formula (which does not require refrigeration) can be provided for use during emergencies. Formula must be provided in its original packaging.
- All containers of food must be clearly labeled with the child's first and last name. All unused food will go home at the end of each day.
- Children will not be fed directly from baby food jars, nor will the staff use previously opened baby food.
- Staff will mix baby cereal just prior to feedings. All unused food remaining after a feeding will be discarded.
- Parents are asked to complete a feeding schedule which indicates use of either breast milk or formula and will update this schedule as their child's feeding requirements change.
- Staff will complete a daily chart for each child detailing what the child ate, when, and how much. Infants and Young Toddlers will be fed in accordance to their feeding schedule or needs.
- Breastfeeding mothers are welcome to come to the school during the day to feed their child at their convenience.
- We follow the USDA Choking Hazard Guidelines for children who are eating solid foods and a copy will be provided for you.  
[https://wicworks.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/media/document/English\\_ReducingRiskofChokinginYoungChildren.pdf](https://wicworks.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/media/document/English_ReducingRiskofChokinginYoungChildren.pdf)

## **C. SUGGESTIONS TO PARENTS**

- An orientation visit will be set up for you and your child prior to the first day of each session. The visit will enable your child to meet his/her teacher and see the classroom space and learn the new drop-off routine.
- Begin talking to your child prior to the orientation and then afterwards about going to school. Explore your child's feelings, fears, and anticipations. Give him/her ways of self-expression both verbally and non-verbally (e.g., drawing, dramatic play, etc.). If your child is in a different school, family daycare, or baby-

sitting situation, take some pictures of his/her special people to bring to LEAP. The staff can then talk to your child about their previous situation. This usually helps to comfort the child.

- Parents should decide what, if any, transition schedule would be helpful for their child. Some parents choose to shorten the child's school day during the first week. Please see the Program Director for specific recommendations.

#### D. WHAT TO BRING TO LEAP

- All *Back to School forms* should be completed and submitted to LEAP by the due date provided. This is done electronically through the [www.leapschool.com](http://www.leapschool.com), "My Cubby".
- Extra set of clothing. This should include two pairs of underwear, socks, sweater, shirt, pants, and sneakers. PLEASE LABEL EVERYTHING.
- Snack & Lunch
- Labelled water bottle.
- Photographs of family and friends to be left at LEAP. Sometimes seeing photographs eases the transition.
- All children who stay beyond 1:00 must bring a blanket in a labeled pillowcase or bag. In addition, those children may also bring a special comfort toy and sheet that will be kept with their napping items.

#### XV. SUMMARY

*Once again, welcome to the LEAP community! The staff is available as educators and friends. We hope your family enjoys the school. We invite parents to bring concerns, comments, and constructive feedback to the program.*

