

The Two Promises



I **vow** to develop **UNDERSTANDING**
in order to peacefully coexist with
the Living Community of Earth.

I **vow** to develop **COMPASSION**
in order to support the well-being of
the Living Community of Earth.

Gratitude: A Morning Circle Verse

This morning as we greet the day
We have something we'd like to say
That helps us all to recognize
The things we value in our lives

The sun the moon, the earth the sky
The things that crawl and swim and fly
The plants around us everywhere
The oceans, mountains, and the air

Our families, friends, and folks we've met
And others that we haven't yet
Our ancestors, here no more
All these things we're thankful for

Co-written by the teachers and children of our
2012-2013 programming year



Welcome to the The Learning Village

Community Supported Education at

Sacred Mountain Sanctuary

*Nature! I hold your motherly essence in the being of my will,
And the fiery power of my will temper my spiritual urges,
so that they may give birth to the feeling of myself-
to hold my self within me." Rudolph Steiner*

This handbook is meant to guide and support family participation in The Learning Village as we work together to provide a safe, sacred and inspired learning environment for our children. Each family plays an important part in creating, maintaining and improving our program, land and facilities. TLV is part of an emergent movement called Community Supported Education, or 'CSE'. The CSE model was inspired by Community Supported Agriculture programs, where members pay a fee for services/farm products and also provide support by working at the farm picking, planting, sorting, selling, etc. Working within the CSE operational model, The Learning Village and it's programs provide the structure, teachers, facilities, resources, and the parents and children within the learning community reciprocate by gifting their time, energy and resources to the well-being learning environment. We believe that this deeper engagement inspires and enriches the lives of parents and families through meaningful stewardship of their child's learning journey.

MEMBER RESPONSIBILITIES:

Membership in our CSE requires parental attendance to our family enrichment and orientation day, which is held at the beginning of our programming season each Autumn. Both new and current members **must** attend these workshops. Workshops will outline various operational details of TLV, and offer family enrichment about our educational approach and curriculum, creating an informed membership community. Topics covered will include: Member job descriptions and activity circle sign ups, guidelines of socio-critical/dynamic governance decision making protocols, and the overall operational/financial needs and yearly goals of our CSE, and special pedagogical mini-workshops.

All members are also responsible for participating in our CSE as follows:

- performing one or more service jobs for TLV totaling 3-4 hours each month, depending on enrollment
- attending all parent meetings
- participating in at least two festival and activity circles
- volunteering for maintenance or special projects, and our 2 annual working bees
- punctuality with arrival and pick up
- timely payment of tuition and fees
- adherence to illness policy guidelines

IMPORTANT NUMBERS

TLV Office: 828.665.6966

Nicole Almeida, Board Representative, TLV Council, Program Director: 828.399.9274

Septimbor Lim, Board Representative, TLV Council, Founding Steward: 828.242.3937

Joy Kennedy, Parent Representative/TLV Council: 828.348.8870

Laura Coleman, Faculty Representative, TLV Council: 828.989.9086

NOTES

ENROLLMENT

Enrollment priority is given to siblings of current and alumni TLV families. Further selection of children and families is based on our commitment to balance each class by age, gender and most importantly, to foster a community of families who are enthusiastic about being involved in a CSE learning environment. Our total student population will be limited to 60 students, with a goal of 8-10 full time learners in each of our five learning circles.

Enrollment in our CSE **does not** exempt your family from registering as a homeschool with NC Department of Education. If your child is age 7 or older, please be sure you have done this prior to enrolling in our program. We are committed to providing resources for end-of-grade testing on campus, or off campus, as needed. You may register as a homeschooling family here: <http://www.ncdnpe.org/registration/hhh110b.aspx>

HOURS OF OPERATION and WEEKLY/DAILY RHYTHM

Our grades program operates Monday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. The weekly rhythm for the grades consists of focused, Waldorf inspired academic studies on Monday through Thursday morning, with outdoor, specialty and enrichment classes in the afternoons. Friday is reserved for our Farm and Forest Program, which includes animal care, gardening, horseback riding, and more. Our Starseed Forest Kindergarten program operates Monday through Thursday, 9:00-1:00 (ages 3-4) and 9:00-3:00 (ages 5-6)

Our After Care program is offered for ages 5 and up, 3:00pm-5:00pm. Parents who chose this option must pick up their child on campus at 5pm. Rates are hourly/seasonal- check with director for details.

Punctuality and arrival/pick up/departure:

Our day begins at 9:00 a.m. Parents are required to arrive at 8:50 a.m. when driving their child to campus, or 8:20am at the pick up location if their child is riding in our transport van. This allows the child time to adjust and settle in for circle activities. If, on occasion, you arrive after circle has begun, please wait with your child at the classroom door until the teacher greets and invites your child into circle.

Pick-up or van departure are at 3:00pm, with the van arriving at 3:30pm at the pick up point. Please be punctual, out if respect for our teachers and drivers. If you think you may not arrive on time for pick up or drop off, please plan to drive your own child and text or call our parent co-ordinator or your child's teacher as far in advance as possible.

FEES/VALUE EXCHANGE

A non refundable materials and processing fee of \$200 is due at the time of application/enrollment. This fee will hold your child's place at TLV. The fee will be used to pay administrative staff, purchase teaching materials, high quality natural art materials, classroom furniture, etc. Once submitted, this fee CANNOT be refunded or prorated.

Grades Program

Four Day Enrollment: offered Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Monthly-\$444-\$688 sliding scale, plus 4 hours of service per month
Farm and Forest Friday Program: offered seasonally, 6 week sessions, \$266-\$388 per session

Starseed Forest Kindergarten

Four days per week/half day: Monthly-\$388-\$555 sliding scale, plus 3 hours of service per month
Two days per week/half day: Monthly-\$222-\$424 sliding scale, plus 3 hours of service per month

Rising Starseed/5and up/ 4 full days:

Monthly-\$444-\$688, plus 3 hours of service per month
Farm and Forest Friday Program: offered seasonally, 6 week sessions, \$266-\$388 per session

Payment:

We prefer that families make their payments by check or online. Please make checks payable to The Learning Village. Along with your once yearly materials fee, your monthly membership fee includes most necessary supplies and expenses. However, we may ask for contributions towards field trips, special projects, etc from time to time.

Membership fees are invoiced via email and due on the first of each month, with payments beginning September 1st and ending June 1st.

If fees are not paid by the 5th, a \$5 per day late fee will be assessed. If payment (including late fees) is not made by the last day of the month and arrangements have not been made with the TLV Council, membership may be revoked. If there is a problem with paying on time, please contact the Council treasurer who will do his/her best to accommodate, depending on the circumstances.

SERVICE COMMITMENT

As part of their membership and value exchange, members are asked to offer 3hours (Starseed Forest Kindergarten) or 4 hours(grades) of service work per month. Service will include signing up for specific service jobs, plus participation in our 2 annual 'working bees' and participation in all activity/event planning circles. A detailed schedule of needs, events and parent jobs will be clearly outlined during the membership orientation workshops, held at the beginning of the year, or at individual orientations scheduled when a family enrolls mid-year. It is essential that all parents understand the value of their contribution of time, energy and skills. Please be present for your scheduled service days, and complete the tasks affiliated with your service commitment. **If you are unable to be present for or complete your commitment for any reason, it is your responsibility to source a replacement.** The health of our CSE model depends upon the reliability of our parent members.

Parents with a special skill may be eligible to contribute supplemental/enrichment classes as a part of their service offering (yoga, art/crafting, music, eurythmy, foreign language, classroom assistance for learning differences, and cooking classes are some

Adolescence, ages 14-21

Throughout the glorious turbulence of adolescence, the personality celebrates its independence and seeks to explore the world in a new, more individualized way. Deep within, the essence of the adolescent being is quietly maturing, and eventually, the whole individual will emerge. This essential, unique being is neither a product of inheritance nor environment, but is a manifestation of the soul fully inhabiting the physical realm, and living into its greater belonging and capacity to serve something more than itself.

The work of this magical time is the exploration of passions, interests, curiosities, through the lens of an intellect that is integrating itself with emotional and bodily wisdom learned during the previous years. It is an exciting period during which the young person is naturally drawn towards relational learning with peers and mentors.

In many traditional cultures a being 'comes of age' at the end of this cycle, and around age 21, is ready to embark upon the journey into freedom and self education. This is a process of emergence should be enriched with sacred and ceremonial rights-of-passage and balanced with contemplative time alone and immersion in the natural world~time to reflect on one's experiences, and recognize one's role in our human community. When these processes are honored and held sacred, what emerges is a whole and healthy being, full of vitality, curiosity, confidence and courage, and an abiding connection to humanity and the Earth that tenderly nurtures us.

HOLISTIC, SACRED EDUCATION AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT

Early Childhood, ages 0-7

Infants and young children are intimately connected to their physical surroundings, and absorb the world through their senses, responding actively through imitation. Imitation expresses the young child's identification of self with one's immediate environment, and is an act of the will forces that live within the child. Everything~anger, love, joy, intelligence, stupidity~ speaks to the infant or young child through tone of voice, physical touch, bodily gestures, light, darkness, color harmony and discord. These influences are absorbed by the malleable physical organism of the infant or young child and effect the body for a lifetime.

As parents, caregivers, and guides, we are responsible for creating an environment that is worthy of the child's unquestioning trust and imitation. The environment should offer the child plenty of opportunity for meaningful imitation, free play, and immersion in the natural world. This supports the child to develop their physical being, which is the central focus of these early years. In our early childhood programs, children play at cooking, dress up to become queens, kings, fathers, mothers, animals; they sing, paint, color, and run through forests and fields and gardens. They observe trees, and flowers, and insects, hear stories and birdsongs, touch the earth and the grass, build forts and houses out of play cloths, sticks and branches.

Drawing the child's energies away from these sacredly fundamental tasks to meet premature intellectual demands can compromise the over-all vitality they will need later in life. Full engagement in the 'sacred work and play' of early childhood is the best preparation for life and love of learning.

Middle Childhood, ages 7-14

When children are ready to leave kindergarten and enter first grade, they are eager to explore the whole world of experience for the 'second time'. In early childhood, they identified with it and imitated it; now, at a more conscious level, they are ready to know it again, by means of the imagination~ that extraordinary human ability to 'see' a picture, 'hear' a story, or 'intuit' meaning within an appearance or pattern language. These years are a time for educating the 'feeling intelligence',

During the these years, the educator's task is to transform all that the child needs to know about the world into the language of the imagination, a language that is as accurate and real as intellectual analysis is within the adult. When presenting curriculum, folk tales, legends and mythologies of the past become the educator's inexhaustible treasure house, from which to draw rich imagery and inspiration.

When introduced through the lens of imagination and nature, the world of words, numbers, objects, and the practical work of humanity are deeply nourishing to the soul of the child. The four arithmetical operations can, for instance, be introduced as characters in a drama to be acted out with gusto by first graders. In 5th grade, grammar and the structure of language can be delivered within the living context of a story from an ancient civilization, told with voice and presence by a skilled teacher. During this developmental period, whatever speaks intimately to the child's imagination will stir and activate feelings, and be remembered and learned.

possibilities). These service positions require an interview and application protocol. Additionally, parents who work in the healing or alternative health industry (massage, acupuncture, body-work, etc) may offer their services to our staff and teachers as a part of their service commitment.

Service commitment 'buy out' option:

If the schedule permits, and there are enough working parents to cover all needed tasks, TLV may allow parents with no available time to forgo a portion of their service/work obligation for an additional monetary contribution. In lieu the service hours they will not be contributing each month, those parents will add \$88/month to one child's monthly membership fees. The feasibility of this arrangement will be left to the discretion of the TLV Council.

TLV ACTIVITY CIRCLES and SERVICE JOBS

Members are required to contribute time and skills to a service job/s as well as group tasks or work projects, i.e. fund-raising events and marketing, assisting with administrative or operational tasks, planning festivals or events, cleaning or maintaining our land or facilities, and more. There will be a schedule for service days/tasks circulated at the beginning of each programming year, and all will be asked to sign up for several days/tasks. There will also be at least 2 clean-up and maintenance 'working bees' throughout the year which all members are asked to attend. Below is a brief description of service jobs our members are asked to perform.

Class Parent: *Each Class Parent will work with the Teacher to assist with projects and class events as well as arrange field trips and special visitors. The Class Parent acts as a liaison between the teacher and the rest of the parents in the class. The Class Parent will make all phone calls to arrange field trips, as well as make a sign-up sheet for chaperones, verify seating arrangements of children in vehicles and communicate and facilitate the collection of money for the cost of the trip.*

Handwork Assistant: *will help our handwork instructor prepare materials or assist children as they finish various projects, including knitting, spinning and yarn processing, crocheting & basketry.*

Infrastructure projects assistant: *Basic carpentry skills and familiarity with simple tools required. Also must be comfortable with lifting and working outdoors. Will help with construction of any building or repair projects, mowing, landscaping, etc under the supervision of our land and facilities steward.*

Classroom Cleaner: *will vacuum, clean and disinfect classroom and launder items when necessary.*

Carpool Driver: *will drive TLV students to and/or from TLV from a central location in West Asheville. Must have a valid license and good driving record.*

Carpool Coordinator: *will organize, schedule and manage via email or phone tree, all carpool drivers to insure enough seats are available for those students needing transportation to and from TLV.*

Fundraising Coordinator: Each coordinator will be responsible for researching fundraising opportunities and presenting them to the membership. When fundraising ideas/events are approved the coordinator will create a work circle/service jobs to organize and execute opportunities.

Childcare provider: will be responsible for providing or organizing childcare and activities for our monthly member meetings, festival planning meetings, or other events, as needed.

Festival and Event Coordinator/clean up: will coordinate other parents and assist other staff with the set up, clean up, sourcing of items, and planning of our yearly Autumn and Spring festivals, and other occasional events, as needed

SMS retreat and rental support: will assist our retreat and rentals staff with servicing, cleaning, laundry, or other tasks associated with our retreat and rental program.

GUIDANCE and DISCIPLINE

We intend to create a culture of care at TLV by modeling kindness through appropriate speech and interaction with peers, animals and all life in our learning community. When redirection of actions or behavior is required, positive, conscious language is used, with a clear explanation of appropriate action as well as the potential consequences of inappropriate or unsafe behaviors for the child and their community at TLV. It is important that parents are willing to partner with us to create consistency at home, as we co-create and maintain a healthy, 'classroom culture' for our children. Guidelines will be discussed at the family enrollment workshop and at parent meetings and teacher conferences.

We do not discriminate as we serve children and their families; on the basis of race, religion, cultural heritage, national origin, political belief, sexual orientation, marital status, or disabilities. However, it is beyond the current scope of our program to accommodate children with severe learning disabilities or behavioral issues. All new families are admitted on an 8 week exploratory basis to allow the families and faculty of TLV to evaluate whether our program is an appropriate fit for the learner. At the 8 week mark, a family will gain full membership in our CSE after mutual agreement that TLV is a good fit for the learner and family.

On rare occasions, a behavior issue may arise which must be resolved through collaborative communication between a family, the child, their child's teacher, and in some cases the TLV council. A behavior issue is defined as actions/behaviors which compromise the classroom environment, freedom and safety of other students, or prevent a teacher from delivering curriculum and maintaining an emotionally safe, sacred learning environment, such as:

-ongoing, repeated aggressive behavior
-ongoing, repeated use of disrespectful, violent/threatening, or inappropriate language
-ongoing, repeated inability/refusal to follow directions

A LIVING CURRICULUM THROUGH THE GRADES

Primary Grades 1-3

Pictorial introduction to the alphabet, writing, reading, spelling, poetry, and drama, presented through folk and fairy tales, animal stories, fables. Numbers, basic mathematical processes of addition, subtraction, multiplication, division. Nature stories, house building music, handwriting, nature skills and gardening.

Middle Grades 4-6

Writing, reading, spelling, grammar, poetry and drama, presented through Norse myths, history and stories of ancient civilizations. Review of the four mathematical processes, fractions, percentage, and geometry. Local and world geography, comparative zoology, botany and elementary physics. Music, handwriting, biodynamic gardening and nature skills

Upper Grades 7-8

Creative writing, reading, spelling, grammar, poetry and drama, presented through Medieval history, Renaissance, world exploration, American history and biography. Mathematics, geology, physics, basic chemistry, astronomy and physiology. Music, handwriting, biodynamic gardening and nature skills

High School Grades 9-12

English literature, composition skills, vocabulary and speech, foreign languages, algebra, geometry, trigonometry, calculus, statistics, computer skills, chemistry, biology, physics, world history, US History, economics. Local internships, international exchange, mentoring, music, handwork, biodynamic gardening and nature skills

How do we call forth enthusiasm for learning and work, healthy self-awareness, a respect for fellow human beings and all life, and an abiding reverence for the natural world?

How do we establish within each child his or her own level of excellence in the social, intellectual, kinesthetic and spiritual realms?

How can we help each learner discover, develop and sustain meaning in their lives?

Educators working within this framework are dedicated to cultivating enthusiasm for learning within every child. Subjects are dynamically presented in a vibrant, multi-sensory manner, eliminating the need for competitive testing and behavioralistic rewards to motivate learning. Motivation arises from within the child, awakening their innate capacities for joyful, lifelong learning.

Our curriculum is broad and comprehensive, structured to respond to the three developmental phases of youth: early childhood, middle childhood, and adolescence. We strive to provide holistic support for the child as they navigate these phases, and to bring "age appropriate" content that will nourish their healthy growth ~ head, heart and hands.



THE LEARNING VILLAGE

Education as a Sacred Encounter

The Learning Village is a place where education is participation in the living community of Earth, and the learning journey is about relationships~ with one's self, others and the natural world. Our learning environment invites every child to experience an abiding sense of wonder that will permeate everyday life.

Vision:

To create a sacred space in which we support learners of all ages and abilities to:

~cultivate a love for learning~

~collaborate with others~

~connect with his/her own inner guidance~

~commune with the natural world~

Mission:

Illumination and refinement of each individual's unique purpose through ensouled learning with heart, head and hands

When entering our campus or classrooms, visitors might notice the care given to create sacred spaces for learning. Our indoor learning environments are attuned, beautiful and harmonious, adorned with student artwork, and meaningful artifacts of learning~ from uniquely created main lesson books, to handicrafts or beautiful treasures gathered from the natural world. This is the landscape of learning at TLV. Our unique program combines a Waldorf-inspired curriculum with nature-centered learning, in a pristine environment of fields, farm and forest. This is Sacred Education~ a context in which learning is participation in the living community of Earth.

Developed by Rudolf Steiner in 1919, Waldorf Education is defined by a reverence for the intellectual, emotional, spiritual and physiological needs of the growing child. Waldorf-trained teachers view a child's learning as a sacred process, and strive to educate the whole child~head, heart, and hands~ with reverence and respect. Our teachers hold an enduring commitment to the sacred work of education, and continually contemplate these questions:

-ongoing, repeated disruptive behavior pattern that does not seem to improve over time with the help of TLV staff, parents and other children.

Any of the above circumstances will result in the following protocol/
actions:

1) After the first incident, a report will be generated and shared, and a phone or in-person conference scheduled with the teacher, parent and child if appropriate. Clear expectations for improvement and remediation protocol will be discussed and agreed upon.

2) If a second incident occurs, a report will be created and a conference scheduled with parents, teacher and a third party-either program director or other faculty member. Clear parameters for improvement and remediation will be agreed upon, with consequences clearly outlined. Consequences may include temporary suspension, a requirement for outside support or therapy, or other requirements that meet the circumstances.

3) If, after two incidents and consultation with the teachers, family and TLV Council, we are unable to establish a protocol that results in noticeable improvement within a reasonable timeframe, it may be necessary to guide the family to another program that can better meet the needs of their child.

As difficult as it may be for TLV to request a family leave the TLV, it is our responsibility to initiate a change that can insure the freedom, safety and learning of other students, and support future learning, safety and happiness for the child.

HEALTH and WELL-BEING

TLV supports the decision of each family regarding childhood immunizations.

Illness Policy:

TLV's goal is to decrease the amount of illness spread from one child to others, and to help minimize the disruption it creates. We ask parents to bear in mind that one child's illness can affect the group as a whole.

If a child has had a **fever or diarrhea, or has been vomiting**, he/she should *not attend school* until 24 hours after symptoms have subsided.

If a child is **tired, lethargic, or unusually irritable**, he/she should remain at home.

If a child has **heavy nasal discharge or is coughing**, he/she should remain at home. Frequent nose-wiping makes the entire group more susceptible to the transmission of germs; it is also time consuming and disruptive. Coughing is an easy way for germs to spread.

If parents do not feel that their child's condition is contagious, or that his/her behavior is affected by the condition, they must take the child to a physician or care provider and obtain a **written note** stating that the child is not contagious. Likewise, working parents should stay home (and arrange for a substitute) if it is their workday and they:

- have had a fever within the past 24 hours
- have vomited or had diarrhea within the past 24 hours
- are feeling ill and may be unable to perform work duties
- have a contagious condition
- have a rash or other significant symptom

Parents should report any attendance changes to the Teacher, by phone, as soon as possible. If a child becomes clearly ill during the day, the Teacher will notify the parent to pick up the child.

Emergency preparedness:

All TIV instructors have either CPR training, Wilderness first responder training, or both.

First Aid: A first-aid kit, including homeopathic and herbal remedies, is available in the main facilities cabin/classroom. Working parents should familiarize themselves with the contents.

Weather-ready attire:

Please dress your child appropriately and safely for indoor and outdoor activities. Remember, we have an absolutely beautiful campus brimming with opportunities for outdoor learning. It is our goal to spend as much time as is practical exploring, absorbing, and examining all that mother nature has to offer! Coats, hats, gloves/ mittens, boots or water shoes may be necessary depending upon weather conditions. Layers are good on those unpredictable spring or autumn days. If you would like your child to wear sunscreen/mosquito repellent while outdoors, please apply it before sending him/her to school, or teach him/her how to apply it. Our staff does not distribute sunscreen/mosquito repellent or any type of medication, without a written agreement to do so.

MEDIA, TV, COMPUTERS

The Learning Village is dedicated to nurturing each child's imaginative capacities, independent thinking and communion with self, others, and the natural world. We make every effort to foster each learner's healthy emotional development and relationship with their learning environment. These efforts can be undermined by encounters with media that separate them from authentic, embodied experience and instead promote a distorted, developmentally inappropriate, or consumer-driven view of the world. Children learn the appropriate use of electronic media as a resource and tool



We always try to allow the children to remain playing, even as we help bring them toward appropriate behavior. This is much more helpful than reasoning with them or warning about punishment. Often, 'misbehaving' children are looking for a way to join others in play and we can help facilitate this by gently entering the world of play. For instance, if there's a wildly behaving 'bear' knocking down others' play things or roaring at them, we might find a 'hunter' or 'berry-picker' among the other children to find some food for the bear. Or perhaps a 'builder' can be found to make a perfect cozy den for the bear. In this way, children gradually learn to find creative and peaceful solutions. Sometimes it's necessary to get children to stop certain harmful behaviors. We strive to tell children an action they may do instead of talking about what they cannot. (e.g. "Use walking feet inside;" Rather than "Do not run inside.") Or if necessary we say, "stop," (less abstract than, "no," for young children) and then offer the appropriate behavior. If children become very upset, we offer them a physical outlet to meet their need for release and refocusing. (And to help us get the veggies chopped, the bread kneaded, etc.) We keep our own voices gentle and creatively encourage deep breathing. We may see it would be helpful to offer some space or a refocusing little walk to bring them back to peace.

- * Gloves/mittens (wool suggested)
- * Scarf/balaclava
- * Woolies/long underwear
- * Snow pants/snow boots
- * Winter coat

Nutrition

Please provide nutritious food for your children. Starseed is an active program and our growing children will need ample healthy food to sustain them through the day. Let meals include: protein, vegetables, fruits, healthy carbohydrates, etc.

Be sure we have an accurate list of food allergies

Breakfast (at home)

- Be sure your child gets breakfast before coming to school!
- Please include protein (i.e. nuts, seeds, yogurt, milk, kefir, meat, eggs, soy, quinoa, sprouted bread, smoothie with protein powder, etc) at breakfast.
- Avoid candy, soda, foods with refined sugars, and processed foods.

Starseed Snack

- Each day, we will share a warm snack together that has been prepared in the classroom. - We ask each child to bring in a vegetable (carrot, sweet potato, celery, broccoli, etc.) to share on Thursdays

Lunch (from home)

- Strive for healthy items (including protein, fruit, vegetables, and healthy carbohydrates) and avoid processed foods.
- Use as little packaging as possible. Reusable lunch boxes and containers are suggested (especially ones that are easy for children to open on their own.)
- Please refrain from sending sugary items and sweets.
- Consider packing the night before to allow for pleasant and peaceful mornings

Discipline

Understanding that all children are different, we strive to understand the nature of each individual child. The daily rhythm of the classroom helps children know, out of habit, what is expected of them. Additionally, we teachers strive to speak to children, and one another kindly and to treat all with respect. This modeling has proven the most fruitful way of building good habits. The collective habit-life of the class is remarkably helpful in guiding the children toward kind and mannerly behavior.

When children are having challenges participating in our classroom community, teachers first simply increase proximity to the child(ren) involved. The classroom is very consciously held as the children's sacred space; teachers talk very little during free play (and not at all about adult topics). Adults keep busy at work (crafting, cleaning, cooking, etc.), but move thoughtfully and peacefully as possible, attuned at all times to the children, moving around the room as needed. Often simply having an adult nearby can remind little ones to act rightly. By focusing much energy and attention on the children and moving close before conflicts escalate, we're able to prevent difficulties from arising.

when it is introduced after the child has developed a rich experiential foundation. Our curriculum is presented through stories, mythologies, and direct human-to-human communication and communion, and is meant to live, integrate and rest within the learner's imagination throughout the programming week. It is our preference that the stories and experiences of our day remain prominent within the child as they are present through the programming week. Please make an effort to limit or eliminate media exposure, as best you can within your family culture. If you would like to read more about the effects of media on children and young adults, please inquire with your child's teacher for resources, or visit our website, under the 'resources' tab.

BIRTHDAYS and HOLIDAYS

Holidays:

TLV generally follows the Buncombe County Schools calendar for breaks and holidays. Members will receive a calendar that is specific to TLV at the beginning of each programming year. We also plan to host several festivals and holiday celebrations or ceremonies throughout the year, particularly- Michaelmas festival in Autumn, a Solstice Spiral and winter festival on or near Winter Solstice, a May Day festival with maypole, and summer solstice & closing ceremony.

Birthdays:

Each child will have the opportunity to experience a joyful and reverent celebration of his/her birthday. This involves the parent, teacher and students, and will include a sharing activity that celebrates each year of the child's life- with stories, photos, a candle and a healthy treat provided by parents. Activities will differ dependent on the child's age, and learning circle teacher. Please schedule a time for this celebration with your child's teacher at least one week prior.

INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICY

In the event of inclement weather, TLV will follow Franklin Charter School closures. If Franklin is closed, or has a delay, TLV is closed or delayed. Occasionally, the unique weather patterns of our mountain home will call for a TLV closure when Franklin is in session. In these instances, we will ask teachers to contact parents via text/phone, and an email will be sent to the entire parent body.

MATERNITY/PATERNITY LEAVE

An 8 week leave from service is granted to parents for their service requirement following the birth or adoption of a child. During this time, your child may continue to attend school; and you are encouraged to attend membership meetings. At the end of 8 weeks, the parent will be responsible for fulfilling their service commitments.

COMMUNICATION

Communication is critical to the smooth operation of our CSE. To be effective, our system has been kept simple and requires the full participation of all members. There are two main channels of communication:

Email:This is communication central. Please check your email daily. Here you will find all notices concerning meetings, work commitments, special events, parties, special work circles, and other important news.

Text Messaging: Messaging is used for emergency, critical, or last-minute information. All members will receive a tree at the beginning of the year and will receive updates when necessary.

Communication during programming hours

If there is a reason to communicate with your child's teacher during the programming day, please call **828.665.6966** and speak with someone in the office to deliver the information. In the (rare) event that there is no one available, you may message your child's teacher directly. However, we ask our faculty to refrain from phone use during the programming session, and the response may be delayed.

30-DAY NOTICE

Thirty days notice is requested, in writing, if a family decides to leave The Learning Village. This notice allows time to arrange for another family to fill the slot of the vacating family. Departing families are required to pay a full month's membership fee even if they plan to leave TLV mid-month.

MEETINGS

All parents are required to attend all parent membership meetings. In the event of illness or other emergencies, if at all possible, we ask that the other parent attend. During warmer months, meetings are held at TLV, during winter, we may opt to meet in town. It is the responsibility of the members (see childcare coordinator) to arrange for childcare during the meeting. Generally, meetings last 1-2 hours.

TLV monthly membership meetings may include:

- Parent education and enrichment activities
- Discussion of program enrichment changes
- Discussion of financial/operational health of TLV
- Discussion of themes and curriculum
- Governance Council elections (as needed)
- Service/job designations (as needed)
- Plans for special events/field trips/festivals

Meeting notices and agenda will be emailed several days prior to the meeting date. These meetings include reports from the teachers, board and parent representatives, and allow for open discussion and voting on issues affecting The Learning Village. Minutes of the meeting will be compiled by the TLV Council and shared via email within two weeks of the meeting.

Weekly Rhythm

Children come to know the weekly schedule by the snacks they make. Instead of Thursday, we have Soup Day! Children are invited to help prepare these snacks during free time. We find that knowing what special things are coming each day, helps the children feel confident in their work and play.

Here's our weekly snack rhythm:

- Monday- Oatmeal and dried fruit
- Tuesday- Bread and nut butter
- Wednesday- rice and carrots
- Thursday- Bean and veggie soup

Clothing

We weather the weather whatever the weather, whether we like it or not! Please dress your child for school in comfortable clothing that is functional for play indoors and out, in all kinds of weather. We provide full-body waterproof rain suits for all Starseeds, so be sure to dress your child in appropriate under-layers for the outside temperature. **All clothing should be labeled with your last name or with your child's symbol** During all seasons your child will need the following items
* Inside shoes - We wear these inside each day and a pair will be needed to stay in our classroom on the shoe shelf.
* Outdoor shoes/boots (depending on the season) – We need sturdy shoes for playing, running, stomping, climbing, etc. (Platform shoes, heels, flip-flops, slip-on/mules/backless shoes, and jellies are not suitable.) Waterproof rain boots need to be worn or sent on rainy days.
* A seasonally appropriate spare change of clothing; each item must be labeled with your child's name or symbol, all inside a ziplock bag which is also labeled with your child's name or symbol.
Wet or dirty clothes need to be taken home at the end of each day. Please replace anything brought home on the next school day.
2 pair of socks
2 pair of underwear
pants
shirt

* Sunscreen or bug repellent - If you would like your child to wear sunscreen or bug repellent, please apply it before sending your child to school that day.
* Layers - for outside play, We go outside in all weather! Please dress accordingly (footwear included) to allow for safe and enjoyable outdoor play. Woolies or breathable long underwear is recommended from October-March.
Fall/Spring:
* Sun hat/baseball cap
* Long sleeve shirt
* Light jacket
Winter:
* Hat (wool suggested)

- Work in conjunction with other faculty to further define, develop and articulate an appropriate curriculum and goals for each age group/learning circle, (including students with learning differences) and work towards designing a 'living curriculum template' from which we will structure our future years of programming. This work would be ongoing.
- Host occasional, 2 hour parent education events (2-4 per year) to create opportunities for more in-depth discussion, participation and presentation of how our program supports holistic child development. This will include the creation of a craft, lesson or activity that is a representative 'snapshot' of their child's normal daily activities at the Learning Village.

STARSEED FOREST KINDERGARTEN: Special Considerations

"Rhythm replaces strength"

– Rudolf Steiner, founder of Waldorf Education

Children live in a very rhythmic world – sleeping/waking, eating/digesting, breathing in/breathing out, activity/rest. We get "Spring Fever" after the snow has melted when things are budding. After digging in the garden, we love running through the sprinkler during the "dog days" of Summer. When Autumn comes, we enjoy the crisp cool morning air and spend time harvesting. In Winter, we have fun getting bundled up and playing in the snow and then coming into a cozy warm place. At Starseed, rhythm is the foundation of our activity – daily, weekly, and seasonally.

Daily Rhythm

Our schedule is designed to promote a rhythmic unfolding of each day. We alternate between active "out-breath" activities (free play, group movement & song in circle, etc.) and more focused or quiet "in-breath" activities (tidy up time, mannerly meal, story time and rest time). Our goal is to make the classroom rhythm as smooth and steady as possible, allowing the children freedom to be fully present and engaged in their work and play. As children grow to know and trust in the daily rhythm, they live more deeply into each activity and more comfortably move through the day. To aid with the movement between activities, all transitions are graced with simple, but beautiful songs.



CONCERNS

Members are encouraged to approach their child's teacher, TLV parent representative, or program director with any concerns regarding their own or their child's experience at TLV. Concerns around your child's experience in the classroom setting should first be brought to the attention of the lead teacher. If resolution isn't satisfactory, a meeting will be scheduled with the council chair and teacher during which problem solving and further resolution will be discussed. Concerns about TLV operations, protocols or policies should first be brought to the TLV parent representative, who will share them with the TLV Council. If the concern or issue is not resolved, the parent may schedule a time to meet with Council representatives to discuss resolution.

MEMBERSHIP/TEACHER EVALUATIONS

Membership Evaluation:

The TLV council is responsible for evaluating new enrollment/membership applications with teachers to determine if our program is able to meet the needs of the family. The TLV Council has the responsibility to approve or deny new membership based on the information provided in the application, including, but not limited to, the family's ability to commit to membership requirements and/or financial contribution, and the needs of the child as outlined by the parents. The TLV Council is also responsible for addressing any ongoing issues regarding inappropriate conduct of parent-members. If, after discussion with the individual or family, issues remain unresolved and inappropriate conduct continues, the council is authorized to ask the individual/family to forfeit TLV membership.

Although rare, membership at TLV may be revoked for *ongoing, repeated* non-compliance to membership requirements, such as:

- dropping off and picking up their child on time (or failing to notify the school when there is a problem)
- respecting our illness policy
- attending required monthly meetings
- paying fees in a timely manner without notification
- fulfilling responsibilities as working parent
- participation in TLV activities, festivals or events

Teacher evaluations:

Teacher conduct and performance will be evaluated at the end of every programming year through questionnaires, which will include input from parents, children and council members. If there is concern in our parent body, or among the TLV council that a teacher isn't upholding the standards or vision of TLV, an evaluation circle, including the teacher, will be formed, and the teacher will be given an opportunity to improve performance via mutually agreed upon action steps/benchmarks, within a specific timeframe. If the TLV council determines that these benchmarks aren't met within the timeframe, the teacher may be released from his/her position.

TLV GOVERNANCE COUNCIL

The council consists of a three-fold representation from the faculty, parent body and SMS non-profit board of directors. The Council hires new teachers, reviews and SMS parent memberships and teacher performance, and serves the health and wellbeing of the organization. The Council resides in deep service to TLV, and strives to guide the organization through reverent observation, deep listening, phenomenological research, seeking mentorship, and other contemplative practices. Council positions are elected by the faculty, board and parent members to serve a one-year term beginning in March after elections are held at the February membership meeting. Individuals must have at least one year of membership, in good standing, with our co-op in order to serve on the TLV Council. Board and faculty representatives must have two years of service with TLV.

TLV Council positions are defined as follows:

- **Board Representatives**
 - represent, recommend, and revise policies, procedures that reflect values, vision and mission of our organization, meet legal compliance, and support it's fiduciary health
 - advocate for current and ongoing resource needs
 - attend all Council meetings
 - participate in hiring circle and teacher or member evaluations
 - participate in new member orientation meeting
 - oversee board member elections and recommendations for new members
 - attend all parent meetings

Parent Representatives

- provide program information & reflect on their experience with new/interested families
- offer Council openings to members with approval of the Council
- occasionally participate in new member orientation meetings
- mentor members with parent service commitments, source parent participants in festival committees, work days
- assist teachers with field trips and carpool arrangements
- represent and receive input from the parent body and communicate to the Council for consideration
- participate in hiring circle and teacher or member evaluations
- attend all parent meetings
- attend all TLV Council meetings

Faculty Representatives

- represent the faculty's perspectives on curriculum and classroom considerations
- insure that our vision and mission are reflected in the daily life and culture of the classroom and curriculum
- participate in hiring circle and teacher or member evaluations
- attend all parent meetings
- attend all TLV Council meetings
- participate in festival planning with other faculty
- mentor and guide faculty, hold them accountable in the above areas

OUR TEACHERS

Responsibilities:

- Develop daily, weekly and seasonal rhythms for the class, including time for seasons, cultural studies (math, language arts, history, natural sciences, ceremonial activities), free movement/creative play, wildcrafting, handwork, sacred/ceremonial activities, and outdoor activities that integrate academic studies with head, heart, hands, and spirit.
- Coordinate academics and classroom activities with relevant farm operations and SMS retreat events. Interface directly with farm and retreat staff members to create inclusive, developmentally appropriate, seasonally thematic activities for learners.
- Set up and maintain a clean, uncluttered, orderly 'sacred learning space' that is properly equipped, using natural and organic materials as much as possible, as per the needs of each class.
- Create materials lists and communicate classroom needs to administrator in a timely manner.
- Purchase and source materials from time to time, when needed, with reimbursement.
- Attend faculty meetings once per week, membership meetings once per month, and other planning/enrichment meetings as required
- Attend occasional enrollment events and facilitate visitation days for prospective families
- Interface directly with parents regarding their children's progress and participation via written reports for each family that include academic, social, emotional, spiritual assessment of the child, including gentle suggestions for the family around how they may collaboratively support their child's growth at The Learning Village within the family environment.
- Plan the class calendar and timeline in conjunction with TLV council
- Assist in creating community awareness of our co-operative through event planning and publication of information.
- Actively pursue training and learning opportunities in Waldorf education, outdoor education, mentoring education, new learning/education and internal/spiritual/self cultivation.
- Assist administrator in providing parent education within the co-op through the gathering and distribution of articles and written information on the various aspects of our educational values, including topics such as the importance of movement, creative play, nature immersion, project based learning, rites of passage, Waldorf education, mentoring, multiple intelligences, child-led study, multi-sensory education, sacred education, limitations on media/TV/computer time, the importance of nutrition, and more.