

Tara Redwood School

Parent Handbook



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Welcome to Tara Redwood School.....

Thank you for selecting Tara Redwood School. We understand that you are placing your trust in us and you can be assured that your child will be educated in a safe, loving, and supportive environment. Please take sufficient time to review this handbook thoroughly as it provides detailed information about our programs, policies, and procedures. If you have any questions or concerns after reviewing it please feel free to discuss them with us.

Mission Statement

Tara Redwood School is empowering children to make a positive difference in the world. We are the first model school for the unique Creating Compassionate Cultures (CCC) pedagogy. This approach to education has developed since the founding of the school in 1988. Tara Redwood School's methodology is constructivist and contemplative, based on ancient principles, modern science, and latest research. We nurture the child's evolving sense of self through our contemplative methodology and practical application in developing positive interpersonal skills, self-awareness and the ability to think critically, constructively and altruistically for the greater good in order to provide a foundation for our children to live a happy, successful and meaningful life. We offer a program that offers education to develop knowledge (wisdom), strength (confidence), and compassion (loving kindness).

Values

Tara Redwood School bases its curriculum on the following values:

Insight

- Develop a deeper understanding of our unlimited potential
- Develop awareness of the effects of our actions on oneself, others and the environment
- Understanding our emotions in order to exercise the freedom to make skillful, compassionate and helpful choices

Kind Speech

- Speaking words that are helpful, kind, encouraging and complimentary
- Refraining from speaking words with ill intent i.e., divisive speech, lying, gossip, harsh speech, name-calling, belittling, and exclusion.

Kindheartedness

- Showing respect and compassion for all living beings (creatures great and small)
- Taking responsibility for helping others whenever possible
- Being mindful to not harm others

Generosity

- Practicing generosity and sharing with our material belongings, our knowledge, our time and resources
- Not taking that which has not been offered or does not belong to you.

Courage

- Developing the courage and perseverance to practice patience, respect, acceptance and forgiveness of differences
- Not responding with anger, jealousy, pride or resentment.

Philosophy

Our children are the leaders of tomorrow and they will be faced with many new challenges and opportunities as they move into the future. As parents and educators we have a responsibility to offer the best possible foundation for our children to live a happy, successful and meaningful life.

We combine educational approaches and methodologies that focus on understanding the interconnectedness between self, others, and the environment in which we live. Through this deeper understanding of our inner world of thoughts and feelings in connection with the world around us, we are better suited to help create a harmonious community. Our students develop a strong awareness and appreciation of the cultural and religious diversity in the world and an acceptance of the similarities and differences therein. They do this, in part, by developing their knowledge of their place in the world.

It is our intent that our students develop empathy and compassion, knowledge and confidence, as capable beings able to make a positive difference in the world.

Creative indoor and outdoor exploration and hands-on activities nurture the joy for learning and increase intra/inter personal, physical and academic skills. Our program strives to create the most experiential learning opportunities and hands-on learning. We believe that a combination of free creative playtime and collaborative games foster positive connections of working together rather than competitive games that can create stress and pressure to be better than others.

The children explore their inner world and the world around them through multiple disciplines such as sciences, creative arts, math, language and play while utilizing reflection, critical thinking, collaboration, communication and creativity. Through inner exploration students connect with their deep wishes of what is most important to them, which connect them to their local and global communities through universal values.

Tara Redwood School is committed to being a green school. All life is dependent upon the environment for survival and our actions.

Creating Compassionate Cultures



CCC permeates the classrooms with daily rituals, classroom design and curricular content. We study thematically and follow an explicit framework of the Seven Steps to knowledge, strength and compassion. This process helps children develop compassion through understanding their own mind, emotions, and their interconnected relationships with others and their environment. Resolution strategies, teacher development and practice, as well as other structural support systems such as our Peace Corner and gardens, also support the holistic and pervasive approach to Creating Compassionate Cultures.

The Seven Steps to Knowledge, Strength and Compassion are the philosophical threads that are woven throughout the curriculum and inform everything we do. These principles are universal and scientific, all subjects can be studied following this structure. They are briefly summarized as:

1. *Mindful Intention: What do I really want?* Through reflection and discussion children connect with their deepest wishes, which reveal universal values, such as kindness, and we discover the innate driving force behind all we do.
2. *Interconnection:* Everything is connected. All things are produced in dependence upon causes and all actions have an effect. All things are interconnected and nothing exists independently of everything else.
3. *Change:* Everything changes. Everything is in a constant process of transition.
4. *Perception:* Our mind creates our reality. Our ever-changing mind shapes our experience of reality. If the quality of our mind is improved, it will automatically improve the quality of our life.
5. *Transformation:* Emotions can be transformed. Emotions are also transitory, which enables us to transform them and improve our own experience and that of others.
6. *Empathy:* Extend your understanding to others. Understanding our own experiences and the universality of the wish for happiness, we can cultivate greater empathy for others.

Taking Action in the world informed by the Arts and Sciences
Enriching their lives and others through the arts as both performers and audience
Understanding the arts and sciences across history and cultures
Continuing their experience with the contemplative practices and the neuroscience which supports it
Drawing on Arts and Sciences to take action to advocate and contribute to make improvements locally, regionally, and globally

Our Program



The Tara Redwood School curriculum is a global curriculum. We learn about our place on the planet, but in the context of being part of the world system, sharing this planet with all life. The world we live in is a mosaic of cultures and customs, so to learn more about the reality of life today, we need to follow those designs and explore our multicultural heritages as global citizens.

Over 200 languages are spoken and read in California with more than 100 indigenous languages, making California one of the most linguistically diverse areas in the world. Living in a very rich multicultural state and country offers us great wealth of cultural resources. If we look at our 'home' from that perspective, our 'home' represents a global community. If we follow the threads of ethnicities and explore our rich and diverse population, it will take us around the world. In fact, we all trace our ancestries to other countries and continents. Even the indigenous races at some time migrated to this continent.

Our program is designed around 2 to 3 year cycles for each classroom group of combined ages. All the curriculum studies are thematic, multi-disciplinary and integrated with as many subject areas as possible. We incorporate Montessori methodology as well as other inquiry-based approaches. We strive to make our studies as rich and experiential as possible and incorporate all domains of learning while exceeding national standards. We have a strong focus on developing global competencies for the 21st Century: critical thinking, communication, collaboration, creativity, plus our special fifth C of Compassion. These skills equip youth to excel in the rapidly changing world that is constantly unfolding and evolving.

Morning Work Period

We begin each day with Centering, Reflection and setting the Daily Intention. The classes begin each day with a circle where each child will have a turn to be the person to set the Intention for the classroom. Then each child independently states or writes about the significance of the intention for themselves, the classroom and the world. The intention setting may be stimulated by a story and discussion. This work is integrated in many ways: literacy, self-expression, communication, collaboration, creativity, critical thinking.

Teachers help regulate the energy and classroom behavior with the use of the 'Mindfulness Gong'. We use a gong to sound the beginning of mindfulness practice, or to regulate the energy throughout the day. When the gong is rung, the children stop what they are doing and 'center' on their breath for a short interval. The teacher may use the gong to center and then make announcements or signal a transition. It offers a wonderful tool for children to stop when it is rung, take a moment and remember their morning intention. In this way the practice of remembering and being mindful helps children to self-regulate and train our mind for developing helpful habits that result in happier, more positive outcomes.

Throughout the day children work independently, in small groups and also as a whole group. In the mornings children work within their own learning plan directed by the child's interest and teacher's guidance. They often work together on projects, reports, or topics of mutual interest. This social interaction and collective study is encouraged as students work together as co-constructors of knowledge.

Academic emphasis in the morning is on mathematics and language, although all subjects are explored during this time. Children work in all the subject areas, creating a stimulating learning environment where children inspire one another, respect differences and tend to have minimal competition. They will often revisit work and activities, practicing and eventually mastering a particular subject or topic.

Afternoon Enrichment

The afternoons are reserved for group presentations, activities and units centered on the Seven Steps and thematic webs. These curricular webs also extend into the morning work period within the selected theme continent and Steps. These universal threads can be found in all cultures through which we can explore philosophical beliefs and ideas, art, language, ritual, music, mathematics, dance, holidays, and celebrations. The universality of the human anatomy, physiology, needs, potential and emotions is an integral part of our on-going studies. Science is also integrated into regional ecology, geology and landforms.

Initially, each step is introduced explicitly in the beginning of the week on a day specifically designated for CCC for the entire group. These introductions to each new step may occur during the morning circle in a brief presentation or discussion and/or more elaborately in the afternoon work period for CCC. Throughout the week when other subject matter is explored the step is revisited both explicitly and implicitly.

The Seven Steps are integrated into the whole class curriculum. This allows students to explore the principles from many perspectives in a variety of activities while engaging different intelligences. This means that the kinds of lessons under each subject are specifically chosen and explored through activities that will provide the children an opportunity to discover the specific CCC Step embedded in it and then demonstrate their understanding and relevance in "real life."

By focusing on a particular theme and continent, then integrating curriculum around it, the children weave together an understanding of humanity's incredible diversity and common interests. Children then have the opportunity to connect, identify with, and be inspired by people, animals and cultures of the world. An integrated curriculum helps children construct webs of understanding that link ideas and remain meaningful to them.

The creative arts are easily integrated into the Steps and thematic webs through cultural art, dance, architecture, literature, music, philosophy, textiles, written language and more. Specific artists are emphasized and explored in order to delve deeper into the cultural study and artistic style of the culture being studied. Basic art theory such as line, shape, color, form, and texture is also presented.

Children will also practice yoga and occasionally Qi Gong for some weeks in connection with their cultural studies.

Performing arts include music, movement and drama. All these are then incorporated into a performance at the end of the year. The plays are based on the cultural theme being studied at the time and they all depict and highlight the qualities and values that the children study and practice throughout the year.

There is a strong focus on Compassion in Action and all the thematic studies culminate with at least one compassion project. Throughout the year there are also several Social Service projects that the children engage in such as: Compassion Cards of the children's art and wisdom, a Hot Lunch Program to raise funds for service, Thanksgiving baking for the Homeless Shelters, and Gifts of Love for the holidays to name a few. Some of the organizations the children have voted to fund are:

<i>Jane Goodall Institute</i>	<i>Pregnant Mare Rescue</i>
<i>Friends of the Rainforest</i>	<i>Save Our Shores</i>
<i>The SPCA</i>	<i>Elephant Sanctuary</i>
<i>Barrier Reef Preservation</i>	<i>Wombat Protection Reserve</i>
<i>Worm Rescue</i>	<i>Penguin Protection</i>
<i>Polar Bears</i>	<i>Fish release</i>
<i>Loma Prieta Fire Relief</i>	<i>Standing Rock</i>

All the classes study Spanish at Tara Redwood School. California is in close proximity to our Hispanic neighbors of Mexico, Central America, and South America. Hispanic-Latino cultures make up 38.8% of the Californian population so it is logical it would be our second language.

Tara Redwood School values experiential learning and there are many enriching opportunities for hands-on learning on field trips around the county and beyond. Our field trips are all planned throughout the year to enrich our learning experience of our thematic studies.

CCC Curriculum Focus for All The classes:

Rainbow: Young Children’s Community 24mths – 3 years

Rainbow activities recognize that children learn by doing. Classroom materials are always accessible, attractive, safe, and geared for a child’s success. Activities are changed regularly in response to children’s need for variety and challenge as they grow and learn. The safe, loving, gentle atmosphere puts children and parents at ease and makes for a trusting, spontaneous transition to school. The schedule for a full-day class is relaxed — there is the luxury of more time for work, outdoor exploration, food preparation, art activities, and an early afternoon nap. Arrival and pick-up routines are well planned to ease the transition for children and parents.

Our Teachers give toddlers responsive, individualized attention to help them build their skills in these five important areas:

- Sensory and Perception
- Independence
- Language
- Physical and Motor Skills
- Social and Emotional Growth

We are committed to providing our children with engaging, meaningful activities which:

Provide experiences that stimulate the senses

Enrich the child’s vocabulary and understanding of language

Provide time for the child to repeat and master activities as long as it is productive

Teach our children how to use tools in the specific environment such as eating utensils, brooms, sponges, etc.

Give children the opportunity to gain a sense of self-esteem, self-worth, and self-confidence

With this age group, communication and collaboration with parents is essential. We work in partnership and provide support to make the toddler and younger years productive and happy for the entire family.

Mandala: Preschool for 3–4 year olds

Looking Inside, Looking Outside

The purpose of the curriculum is to help young children become aware of and understand how to be a "good friend".

The children come to appreciate how we humans are all basically the same in terms of senses, feelings and

physicality, yet differ because of environmental and cultural influences. Through this two-year curriculum, children come to understand and respect differences, and to see the potential for thinking of all beings everywhere as "good friends!"

Year One: Investigating ourselves: senses/feelings/bodies/interconnection of body/mind complex/respecting differences, celebrating similarities.

Year Two: Exploring the Planet: continents and how geography/weather/flora/ fauna/ influence our lives.

Element Explorers: TK/K for 4.5-6 year olds

The Precious Elements curriculum is designed around the theme of the Four Elements, and each theme follows the framework of the Seven Steps. Children explore the universality of the precious elements by focusing on a different continent for each Element study. We learn about our own home, county, state and country in relation to the other continents of our global community. Children explore both their inner and outer environment and understand how their inner world of thoughts and feelings are interconnected with the outer world and vice versa. The study is also grounded in the seasons and we look at how all life depends on the preservation of these precious elements. The Precious Elements Full Circle Curriculum is a two-year program. Children journey around the world, through the seasons, following the Seven Steps. Here is a brief map of the two-year thematic focus.

Year One

- FIRE - Summer/Sun/where we live/reptiles/Our shining qualities/Our energy
- EARTH - Fall/Planet Earth/North America/Past and Present/Native Americans/ mammals of North America/Our skeletons
- WATER - Winter/Antarctica/Arctic/Polar animals/Ocean travel/ocean life/migration/Our fluids
- AIR - Spring/Asia/wind/plants/insects/birds/amphibians/Our respiratory system
- FIRE - Summer/Middle East /deserts/ desert animals/ empathy/compassion in action

Year Two

- FIRE - Summer/Solar System/reptiles/outer energy and inner energy
- EARTH - Fall/South America/Rainforests/trees/leaves/medicinal plants/mammals of South America
- WATER - Winter/Islands/ Australia/water forms/clouds/rain/tropical fish/ocean mammals
- AIR - Spring/Europe/Inventions/Flight/birds/flowers/bees/bugs/butterflies
- FIRE - Summer/Africa/African animals/ empathy/Compassion in action

Global Citizens: 1st & 2nd Grade for 6-8 year olds

The Global Citizen curriculum explores the natural and cultural richness of our world through a year-long 'trek' visiting each continent through the lens of each of the Seven Steps. We connect with the ancestral threads that are part of our classroom and local culture and see ourselves as inextricably interconnected with our world community. Annual celebrations and festivals that have adapted to our country's culture have now become traditions that are celebrated in our daily lives. We learn about the deeper significance of those traditions and identify the common threads of kindness that are taught and celebrated.

As we travel around the globe we focus on each continent, one Step at a time. An example of this at the beginning of the year, we begin with exploring what kind of classroom we really want to come to each day. We explore Step One in more depth and focus on that inquiry for one month. Then we move to the next discussion of production and interconnection, where does that classroom come from? What kind of actions create what we really want? This is a perfect segue into exploration of cause and effect as we explore where this planet we call 'home' came from. This naturally shifts our focus to Step Two, Interconnection as we delve into the Big Bang Theory and the birth of the universe.

As the children learn from the perspective of interconnection and integration, they naturally see themselves as part of something much greater than the neighborhood and town they live in, they see themselves as Global Citizens.

Year One and Year Two: 7 Continents

The countries the children study and learn about in the continents will differ each year:

- Our Classroom
- Solar System
- North America
- Africa
- Europe
- Asia
- South America
- Antarctica and Arctic

Earth Stewards: 3rd, 4th, 5th & 6th Grade for 8-11 year olds

The Earth Stewards travel around the continents and pause to study the continents and countries in greater detail and depth that they have already been introduced to in previous years. Students write reports on the various cultures they are studying and there is an emphasis on stewardship, care of the environment and all life that it supports.

Each thematic continent study lasts for approximately 14 weeks so they rotate around the seven continents and delve into space within a two – three year cycle.

One year the studies will move through the Northern Hemisphere and next year they will cycle around the Southern Hemisphere and the third year they focus on the study of the Poles, the Oceans and Space.

The Earth Stewards are the gardeners for the Growing Goodness garden Project. They work on the farm at least once a week and as often as is needed through the spring. The project continues through the summer and into the fall for harvest.

Our new Growing Goodness Garden Project is in development. The Earth Stewards grow their organic veggies, herbs and flowers at a local farm cultivated by Tara community farmers from Old House Farm. Children learn what it takes to plant, nurture and harvest their produce. They raise funds from their sales and prepare food, oils and herbal remedies.

The class goes on a camping trip together at the beginning or the end of the year. Each student participates as a team member to help plan, organize and take responsibility for this wonderful team building adventure in nature.

Year One: Northern Hemisphere:

- North America and Central America: USA, Canada, Mexico,
- Asia
- Europe
- Year Two: Southern Hemisphere:
- Australia
- South America
- Africa
- Year Three:
- Arctic and Antarctic
- Ocean and Space

If it is cold or wet, outside playtime may be shortened or eliminated. Inside play would then be extended and other special activities would be organized, such as dance, music, games, etc. We do try to take as many hikes as possible even if we have a lot of wet weather, so please bring rain –coats and boots for your child. If you forget we do have

some spares. When the weather is hot, outside play is often extended (including time later in the day) to enjoy the outside.

Before/After-School Program

Village Campus commences at 8:30am and Redwood Campus commences at 7:30am. Village and Redwood Campus aftercare commences at 3:15pm and ends at 5:00pm. We are required to supervise your child at all times while she or he is on campus. If your child is not picked up by the 15 minutes after dismissal, your child will be automatically be signed into After School Care by the ASC staff. You must sign your child out of ASC every day that she or he needs to be signed in. All charges for the Before and After Care Program will appear on your TADS billing account. You will be billed at the beginning of every month for your days. Aftercare School Care and Summer Program close promptly at 5:00 pm. To motivate parents to be sure to pick up on time, we charge a \$12 Fee for every fifteen minutes after closing time that your child is left in our care.

School Hours:	
Rainbow	8:30am – 2:30pm
Mandala	8:45am - 2:45pm
Element Explorers TK/K	9:00am - 2:45pm
Global Villagers Elementary	8:30am - 3:00pm
Earth Stewards Elementary	8:30am - 3:00pm

School Bus Service



Families are encouraged to use the bus service we provide or carpool to limit traffic congestion. Before and after school bus service is currently available Monday, Wednesday and Friday to families at an additional cost. *Advance notification must be received in writing by the office in order to use the bus.*

Pick up and drop off location: Congregational Church of Soquel

	Pick-Up Time	Drop-Off Time	Fee Per Ride	Yearly Pass
Earth Stewards	8:15am	3:15pm	\$5	\$450
Element Explorers	8:45 am	3:15pm	\$5	\$450

The school bus is contingent on a minimum number of students using the service. Tara Redwood School reserves the right to change or cancel routes at any time.

Field Trips

Trips are taken throughout the year, to nearby places. Field trip fees may be requested. Students are well prepared for trips through relevant classroom activities and conversations. Parents must sign permission slips for each trip. This form includes the child’s name, date and destination of the trip, as well as parent signature and date signed. A lack of adequate staff and chaperones to meet the stated ration will cause a trip to be postponed. Private

automobiles will be used. Parents and teachers will be asked to drive and all drivers will need to show proof of insurance. Seat belts will be required for all children, and child safety seats will be required for each child that is under 8 years of age.

Summer Programs



During the summer months, Tara offers two fantastic summer programs for children 2-5 years and 6-10 years of age. Children can explore, play, have adventures and discover something new every day on 108 acres of creeks, woods and meadows.

Health and Safety

Dressing for the Day

Your child will be actively playing, learning and experimenting. Our environments will expose your children to dirt, sand, water, glue, play dough, tempera paint and more! Please send your child in comfortable play clothes that you do not mind them getting dirty.

Meals and Nutrition

Children will bring their lunch and beverages from home. A lunch box may be used, and your child's name should be on it. We emphasize whole grains and organic whenever possible. We ask that candy and gum is not included in lunches. There is a microwave in the core room, but we ask that parents please put a note in the lunch box to let the teacher know that there is a warm up needed. We also encourage green containers for your child's lunch, reusable plastic or glass storage in place of plastic bags, cloth napkins for your child's lunch space. In the case you forgot to bring your child's lunch box, the school provides lunch for the child for \$5 as an emergency solution.

We celebrate birthdays, and parents are encouraged to discuss with their child a snack he or she might like to share with the other children on the special occasion. We encourage healthy treats for birthday celebrations.

What to Provide from Home (No Toys Please):

- Extra sets of clothes labeled with your child's name.
- Waterproof Jacket and boots for cold or rainy days
- Lunch & beverages for entire day, prepared at home and labeled with your child's name
- Indoor & outdoor shoes (please take home once a week to wash)
- Personal drinking cup/glass to keep at school

Illness

If your child is ill, do not bring him or her to school. This is in your child's best interest and also protects classmates, teachers, and adults from unnecessary exposure to illness. We know that it causes families a great deal of stress when they miss class or work due to their child's illness. Nevertheless, it is important to anticipate that children may experience more illness during their first year in group care. We encourage you to arrange a back-up caretaker or to network with other families in preparation for emergency situations. If your child becomes ill while at school, all efforts will be made to contact you so that you can make arrangements to pick up your child. If you cannot be reached, your child will be kept away from the other children, and made as comfortable as possible.

Please follow our Covid protocol updates on the website: www.tararedwoodschool.org

A CHILD IS CONSIDERED ILL WHEN HE OR SHE IS DISPLAYING AT LEAST ONE OF THE FOLLOWING SYMPTOMS:

Fever - has had a temperature of over 100.4 degrees or above within the past 24 hours

Vomiting - is vomiting; has been experiencing prolonged periods of diarrhea

Skin - unexplained rash accompanied by a fever. Lice - intense scratching of scalp. Mites or nits in hair, Scabies- raised red spots or lines on skin caused by a microscopic mite

Cold - has runny nose (clear, white, yellow, or green discharge). Show other signs of oncoming cold -glassy or watering eyes, listlessness and generally not feeling well.

Eyes - discharge (green or white) from the eyes usually accompanied by redness and itching (possible "Pink Eye", conjunctivitis) will not be admitted with discharge Even if taking medicine.

Cough - Has WET wheezy cough, or dry cough, which through the mucus could spread viral or bacterial infection. Must keep your child home until symptom free.

Covid Test - If your child has had any of the these symptoms, please keep them home and get a covid test.

If your child or family member has been in contact with someone known to have covid, please keep them home, get a test 5 days after known contact and then observe for any symptoms for at least 10 days. Your child may return after 7-10 days.

Medications

If medication is to be given during school hours, written permission, including directions, must be provided by an authorized adult and given only to a teacher or the Director. Do not leave medicine in your child's lunch box for your child to take himself.

Injury

If a child receives a superficial injury, a staff member will wash the injured area with soap and water; apply a bandage or ice- and give comfort. Teachers are trained in safety, pediatric first aid and CPR. An Accident Report is filled out for all injuries occurring at the program. You will receive a copy of your child's accident report. A copy will be added to your child's file. In the event of a more serious accident, we will contact you at once and call 911. In the event a child needs to go to Dominican Hospital, that child will be transported by ambulance and accompanied by a staff person, unless we are able to contact you and you wish to provide transportation.

Parking Lot Safety

We ask that parents closely supervise their children in the parking lot and elsewhere on the premises. It is recommended that as children exit from cars, they be offered a hand to hold.

Emergency Procedure

In case of an emergency we will notify parents via our all school alert system, Swift K12, with a report and the procedure necessary to safely reunite you with your children. Our staff will remain with your children until that time.

Communication

In addition to daily exchanges with classroom staff during drop-off and pick-up, meetings can be arranged for more extensive or private conversations outside of the classroom. The teachers, the Administration Director or the Education Director can make an appointment to meet at a suitable time. Feel free to call or email at any time.

We will do our best to keep you informed about your child's day at school, our curriculum, and our observations of your child's growth and development. Please let us know if unusual circumstances are occurring at home or elsewhere in your family or child's life. We can better assist your child during the day when we know how the evening and the morning went at home, or how vacation was. Difficulty sleeping, changes in eating habits and other normal events have an impact on your child's day in the program. Some aspects of family life, such as illness or separations, can be hard for children to understand or cope with and are therefore very important for the teaching staff to know about. When we are informed, we are prepared to help your child think and talk about what is happening. All sensitive family matters are treated confidentially and discussions regarding such information are limited to the regular teaching staff.

Teachers and administration will communicate with regular updates to families. Administration will send a monthly Newsletter and teachers will send a weekly update to families in their class.

Parent/Teacher Conferences are scheduled twice a year in fall and spring.

Discipline and Positive Guidance Philosophy

Teachers have an enormous responsibility. They are the protectors of the human mind. By nurturing and developing the minds of their students they are actually affecting the way the world is. – *Lama Thubten Yeshe*

Research shows us that the stories we tell ourselves and the view we hold of ourselves actually changes our brain to fit that narrative. In the same way research shows that the view we hold of others influences the way they see

themselves. Just as we need to respect and have compassion for ourselves as life-long learners with limitless potential to learn and grow we need to remember that potential in others and especially the children we are guiding. Sometimes our harmful emotions can hijack our ability to make helpful choices. Especially as a guide for the children, we need to be a role model for them on how to maintain balance. However, sometimes a challenging situation could arise with the children and it is important to be able to recognize when irritation, impatience and other harmful emotions are building and before they take over, take a stand and take space. Even if only for a moment it helps to breathe and cool down.

When we feel calm and settled we can return while remembering that underneath that manifestation of emotion the child has a pristine, kind and loving quality. Focus on that positive aspect of the child. It is like a meditation. This is a wonderful practice for the teacher/student connection. It has proven to be extremely powerful. Children are very sensitive and they feel it immediately. They feel loved and respected, and they will respond to this love and respect by showing greater trust. We call this the 'Namaste Attitude'. Addressing the inner person while holding the child and each other to their most helpful behavior. Following are some helpful guidelines and reminders for teachers and parents.

Guidelines for Teachers and Parents

- Practice mindfulness, presence, and the Namaste Attitude
- Regard yourself as a guide to help children make a positive difference in the world
- Keep boundaries clear with firm but loving guidance
- Cultivate curiosity: question your own assumptions and always ask more questions
- See problems as learning opportunities
- Practice hearing the child's point of view
- Find value in the child's input and ideas
- Give children the opportunity to discover answers and solutions for themselves
- Use natural and logical consequences when appropriate
- Guide children to practice according to the Golden Rule
- Enjoy life as it comes: be serious about humor and plan for spontaneity
- Support fellow teachers
- Enjoy being a life-long learner

Children and staff practice using mistakes as opportunities for change and practice transforming mistakes into rich learning experiences. We follow the guidance of the 5Rs to help us. These are practiced explicitly and also used throughout the day whenever needed, either with others or for your own practice.

The 5Rs

1. *Remember - that acting in a harmful way while under the control of destructive emotions does not bring happiness to oneself or others.*
2. *Regret - we can do something about actions we are sorry for having done. In contrast to shame and guilt, regret is healthy and empowering.*
3. *Remedy - a sincere apology is the most commonly applied remedy.*
4. *Resolution - a commitment to ourselves to not repeat that harmful action but learn how to avoid such actions in the future.*
5. *Rejoice - a positive reinforcement that celebrates our courage, ability and willingness to learn important life lessons.*

CCC Conflict Resolution

If a conflict arises that requires a more in-depth meeting between two or more people, then a time can be arranged to meet. Although the conflict resolution process is often facilitated by a teacher, when the children become more familiar and adept with this process, they also practice without a facilitator.

We use a shell and crystal to help remind us how to listen and speak to each other. The person who requested the meeting will be the first speaker. The speaker holds the crystal heart to remind him to speak kindly while remembering the other person has their own perception of what happened and our assumptions may not be the same as the other person's intentions. The listener holds the shell to remind him to listen deeply, just like we need to listen quietly and focused to hear the sound of the ocean deep within a shell. They hand the shell and crystal back and forth to each other as they share the roles of listener and speaker.

Stop - Do not try to resolve a conflict in an emotionally charged climate.
 Breathing Space (*R1 - Remember*)
 Take space and breathe.

Return - When the energy has calmed down and you feel ready to maintain distance from the 'problem' approach those involved and arrange a time to meet for dialogue. (*R2 - Regret*)

Shell Listening - The listener listens with respectful silence. (*R3 - Remedy*)

Repeat - What you heard. The listener repeats the story and the feelings the speaker has expressed. (*R3 - Remedy*)

On Agreement Switch - The speaker acknowledges that the listener has understood them, and they switch roles. (*R3 - Remedy*)

Problem Solve - Once each person's story has been heard, focus on problem solving. Asking "So, how do we move forward?" encourages a problem-solving approach. The aim is for each person to acknowledge the role they have played in the conflict - and to apologize. (*R3 - Remedy*)

Resolution - Ask: What will you do differently next time? (*R4 - Resolution*)

Forgiveness - Be sensitive - this may be difficult. Forgiveness needs to come from the heart: it can't be forced. (*R4 Resolution*)

Rejoice - This is an important step in providing positive reinforcement. When an agreement has been reached go through to make sure all 5Rs have been covered. (*R5 - Rejoicing*)

Enrollment

Admission Policies



We accept all children from ages 24 months to 12 years of age (on a first-come –first- serve basis and do not discriminate because of race, color, religion, gender or physical ability). Our program is not designed to serve the needs of the severely disadvantaged child with special needs; however, we will make reasonable accommodations in an effort to meet everyone's needs.

Child Readiness Assessment

During the course of signing up and registering the teacher or director will want to spend some time with you and your child. Admission decisions are based on what is best for the child and family. Can this program provide what this child needs to develop to her/his fullest potential. Interviews, visits to the School and observations are helpful in assessing the child's readiness. The final decision is a cooperative effort between the professional staff and the family.

Required Enrollment Forms

All forms listed in TADS must be completed before enrollment is finalized. These forms are: Notification of Parents' Rights, Personal Rights, Identification and Emergency Information, Consent for Emergency Information, Child's Preadmission Health History-Parents Report, Physician's Report-Child Care Centers, and Immunization Forms, Field Trip Agreement, Permission to Use Child's Photo

New Student Registration Includes:

[Creating Compassionate Cultures](#) (CCC): A six to eight week parent education course. This series introduces parents to the philosophical foundation and practical application for the curriculum taught in CCC schools. Workshops focus on how the CCC program and methodology can be integrated at home to enhance happy, compassionate family cultures. It is designed for families to learn more about the Tara Redwood School Philosophy that underlies all we do and offers tools you can implement at home.

Annual Materials Fee Includes:

- Two annual Auction Tickets
- Individual classroom supplies
- Field Trips/ and Docents
- Yearbook

Drop Off/Pick/Up Policy

When dropping off your child at school, please make sure one of the teachers is aware of your child’s arrival. Also, state regulations require that your preschool child be signed in and out each time he or she is dropped off and picked up. A form is located in each classroom for this purpose.

We appreciate your cooperation in dropping your child off and picking them up on time. If you are running late, please contact us and your child will be signed into after-care.

Your child will only be released to you or to those people you have designated. If for some reason it is necessary for someone else, not listed in our files, to pick up your child, you must contact the school administrator personally to make arrangements. We must have written consent to release a child. This is essential for the protection of your child.

Absences

Please notify your teacher and the office via email as early as possible if your child is going to be absent for the day. No tuition credit is given for daily absence.

Vacation & Illness Policy

We do not give tuition refunds or credit for individual days your child is absent.

Tuition

Tuition is based on a full year's school budget, a ten-month schedule and the number of spaces available for student enrollment. Consideration has already been given to holidays, vacations, and illness. Therefore, tuition is not reduced by holidays or limited absences. All Tuition and Fees will be billed to the Students TADS account. When Parents enroll in TADS, they select the methods that they will use for paying all Tuition Fees and all other charges that are billed to the Students billing account. The TADS payment options are checks, or automatic debit withdrawal.

Payment Plans

Parents must indicate on their Tuition Agreement their agreement to pay Tuition and any required Fees according to the terms described therein. Tuition and Fees are considered to be late if not received by the due date listed in this Financial Agreement, and are subject to late or Follow-Up fees. There is a \$50 re-contracting fee in the event that Tuition Payment Plans or otherwise alter the terms of the Student’s Enrollment Contract once a signed Contract has been accepted by the School.

The Annual Tuition Payment Plan: Pay the full year’s Tuition by July 15th, through the Students TADS billing account entitles Parents to a discount of:

- 2.5% of Student’s enrollment is completed by 5:00 pm on March 31st.

The Semi-Annual Tuition Payment Plan: Pay the full year’s Tuition in two (2) equal installments through the Students TADS billing account by July 15th, and January 1st, respectively entitles Parents to a discount of:

- 1.25% if Student’s enrollment is completed by 5:00 pm on March 31st

Enrollment is considered to be completed when all required documents are correctly executed and are received, along with the Registration Fee, by Tara Redwood School office or through TADS.

Tara Redwood School offers a 10% discount on tuition for the youngest student (s).

Cancellation of Enrollment by the Parents

It is agreed that enrollment, as specified in this Enrollment Contract, may be canceled by the Parents without penalty (except for the forfeiture of the non-refundable Registration Fee) if the cancellation is received by the School's office in writing before July 1st. However, the enrollment fee is non-refundable.

60 Day Withdraw Notice

This Enrollment Contract covers the entire school year. There is no discount, refund, or other allowance for absence, dismissal, or withdrawal except as provided below. In the event of withdrawal subsequent to the first day of school, the school requires 60 days written notice. If written notice is given less than 60 days prior to the date of withdrawal, the school requires that tuition be paid for 60 days from the receipt of notification, i.e. withdrawal reported on January 1st that student is withdrawing February 29th, there will be no additional charge. If reported on February 28th that student is withdrawing on February 29th, then an additional 60 days of tuition will be due. Registration Fees are non-refundable.

Consequences of Non-Payment

Tara Redwood School reserves the right to refuse a child's admission to the School until all bills from all the School's programs and activities are paid in full and up to the date. Children will not be able to attend school if your account is in arrears more than 90 days. The School reserves the right to send the Student's account to Collections if the accounts continue to be delinquent. The School reserves the right to apply Late Fees to the Student's account.

Questions or Discrepancies

If you have a question about any charge that appears on your bill, please email bookkeeping@tararedwoodschool.org and call TADS immediately so that they can research your question and resolve the issue promptly.

Financial Aid

Returning Preschool students must submit a completed financial aid application through TADS by March 15th. You will be asked for a number of financial documents and the online form will take approximately 45 minutes to complete. Only a completed application can be processed. Submitting an incomplete application will cause delays and can affect your final award. Financial aid is first come, first served. Applications submitted after the deadline will be considered if there is any aid remaining.

The Finance Committee will review the report from TADS for all completed applications submitted by March 15th. Financial aid will be disbursed for all eligible students and notifications will be sent via a TADS email by April 15th. Families can accept their aid award by signing their financial agreement in TADS by April 20th. Financial aid recipients must keep their tuition accounts in good standing.

Tuition Insurance Refund Plan Provided by Hanover Insurance Group

The Tuition Refund Plan is important to you and to Tara Redwood School. Tara Redwood School requires full payment for all fees for the year in which you are attending. These fees are due and payable in order for your child (ren) to remain in the school. The overhead expenses of the school do not diminish if a student departs during the course of the year. Deductions or remission of tuition cost will not be allowed by the school for absence, dismissal, or withdrawal for disciplinary, academic, or personal reasons. Your financial obligation to the school is for the full annual tuition as stated in the School's enrollment contract. We are pleased to extend a Tuition Refund Plan to you in order to protect your yearly financial obligation. The fee is 2.5% of the annual tuition. This program insures fees – (prepaid and due) in the event of separation according to the terms of the policy.

Participation is mandatory and due in full at the beginning of the year.

Fundraising

'Why is Fundraising for Tara Redwood School important? We pay tuition...'

Tara Redwood School is a Non-Profit School. Tuition is offered at approximately 85-90% of what it actually costs to run the school and educate our students. The tuition is established at this rate in order to make a Tara education financially possible for a greater number of families. It is imperative that each family helps to make up that gap in costs through participating in school fundraising drives held each year. We offer multiple fundraising drives that are fun and engaging to participate in and we expect 100% participation in one or more of these endeavors in order to keep our tuition reasonable and our school operations and offerings possible.

Our Annual Auction, Annual Giving Program and Hike 4 Peace are some of the fundraisers we do to help make up the 10-15% gap to balance our operating budget. By participating in these events you are contributing to the true cost of the school with tax-deductible contributions. We receive support from a network of Alumni Families, friends and grandparents that value the school, as well as ask our current parents, guardians, employees and students to contribute to the fundraising efforts.

Parent Participation

Enrollment at Tara Redwood requires that each family agree to actively participate in the community by performing a family job working the minimum of 30 hours per school year. In the event that your family is not able to fulfill the parent participation requirement, paying a fee of \$50 per hour can compensate for hours not volunteered. Doing your family job consistently and proficiently is essential to the running of the school, as parents are key components to many parts of our program.

Parent Participation Opportunities:

Annual Auction (October – March)

Auction Chair

Responsible for leading/ overseeing and managing the auction committee and making sure the planning of the event is on track and each piece/detail is being followed through on. This person is responsible for the end result.

Classroom Rep

An essential function for the fundraising efforts of Tara Redwood School, each classroom provides an auction representative who is responsible for keeping the classroom informed about the auction, working with classroom teachers, coordinating classroom projects, descriptions and donations. Helping to facilitate a smooth auction experience for everyone.

Campus Rep

Similar to classroom job, but instead represents campus, makes sure signage is up at campus, oversees campus wide projects that relate to the auction. Collaborates with Auction team, and has specific Auction task as well.

Compassion Cards (October – November)

Classroom Coordinator

Coordinate Compassion Card orders by displaying class artwork, collecting orders, and passing off artwork to another parent to scan.

Campus Coordinator

Scans cards for all classes on campus, and communicates with card printer to organize campus order.

Gifts of Love (December)

Coordinator

Organizes gifts for family in need during holiday season, by distributing their wishes through class, compiling gifts, and helps deliver to drop off location.

Campus Winter Concert (December)

Coordinator

Help setup and cleanup for school performance and snack potluck.

Campus Sound Engineer

Help put together sound system for performances, set up microphones, monitor sound during performance for whole campus.

Campus Musical Accompaniment

Play music with classes during performances, coordinate with teachers of classes to get music and practice together beforehand, for whole campus.

Yearbook (January – June)

Head Designer

A project for someone who likes creativity and graphic design, is organized and willing to make our yearbook a work of art. Work with classroom parent helpers to make one yearbook for the whole school.

Coordinators

Works with Head Designer to create yearbook by collecting and taking photos, and working with teachers to capture interesting quotes and art, and arranges into online layout.

Special Person Tea – (February)

Campus Event Lead

Planning, prep, and set-up/clean-up for annual tea party with students’ special people (grandparents, aunts, adult friend, etc.).

Spring Picnic (March)

Spring Picnic Coordinator

Organize and put on school gathering at Wilder Ranch, help with treasure or scavenger hunt. Help setup and cleanup potluck lunch.

Spring Picnic Helper

Help to create and implement a scavenger hunt, prepare the prizes, and put on event. Help coordinate potluck lunch.

Class Plays (April/May)

Carpenter

Build stage for plays (early spring)

Build a stage at Land of Medicine Buddha for the plays that can be disassembled and stored for future use. (Stage size approximately 15’x25’)

Classroom Play Helper

Work with teachers to assist with play needs: costume organization, set design, songs, play practice.

Campus Sound Engineer

Help put together sound system for performances, set up microphones, monitor sound during performance for whole campus.

Campus Musical Accompaniment

Play music with classes during performances, coordinate with teachers of classes to get music and practice together beforehand, for whole campus.

Hike4Peace (April/May)

Event Chair

Responsible for leading/ overseeing and managing the committee and making sure the planning of the event is on track and each piece/detail is being followed through on. This person is responsible for the end result.

Event Promotion Lead

Banners, Radio, Flyers, Posters & Social Media

Fundraising Coordinator

Food Coordinator

Booth Attendants

Welcome to TRS Booth – Information & volunteers to guide tours of Redwood Campus. Booth at Fair – Sell raffle tickets, provide registration information, sign-up for future Village/Redwood Campus tours. Booth for Arts & Crafts.

Parking Attendants

Classroom Assistants (All Year)

Help teachers with making materials or prepping for big projects, likely at your home. More details with teachers.

Classroom Field Trips (All Year)

Coordinator

Helps by researching, planning, and organizing field trips for class, based on teachers' requests and curriculum studies.

Classroom Hot Lunch (All Year)

Coordinator

Coordinate the hot lunch program with LMB

Classroom Rep (All Year)

Interface as an informational resource between board, admin and parents, concerning school programs, services, volunteer requirements, fundraising, issues and events. Attend and participate in various meetings as assigned or request meetings to represent and share information from parents. Respond to inquiries and provide information concerning related activities Maintain various records related to Parent Participation activities.

Campus Shopper (All Year)

Once every other week, shop at Costco, Trader Joes, and New Leaf to get supplies for school.

Event Setup and Clean-up (All Year)

Works with Administration to pick up chairs, and set up tables and chairs, as well as break down and return if necessary. At end of event, helps clean the area.

Fundraising (All Year)

Fundraising Team Lead

Lead and work with fundraising team to organize and put on fundraising projects/events.

Classroom Rep

Working together with other parents on various fundraising projects throughout the year, such as Amazon Smile, online fundraising, Drive for schools, car wash tickets, Read a thon, etc... (Important Fundraising Activities – Annual Auction, annual Toyota Fundraiser & Compassion Cards).

Gardening (All Year)

Gardening Lead

Assess outside needs, organize classroom gardeners to follow through with tasks, planting, watering, weeding, raking, sweeping, and keep an eye on outside cleanliness/maintenance.

Classroom Gardener

The gardeners are responsible for maintaining the outside of classroom/school areas, pulling weeds, raking, and watering.

Laundry (All year)

Coordinator

Collect laundry on Friday, wash at home, and return on Monday.

Maintenance (All Year)

Playground Maintenance Coordinator

Clean up or repair things on the grounds as needed. Sometimes mulch or new sand needs to be spread. It would be helpful if this person could schedule a regular review visit of the playground. Responsible for setting up parent work parties once or twice a year- working with Gardening Lead person.

Outside and Classroom Maintenance Coordinator

As needed, repair small things in the classroom, broken chairs, faucets, doors etc. Make sure outside space is maintained and clean, including leaf blowing/sweeping.

Scholastic Books (All Year)

Classroom Coordinator

Distributes Scholastic book order forms to class, collects orders and payment, makes order, and distributes books when they arrive.

This parent handbook is subject to change in whole or in part at any time. Any changes in above-mentioned policies, or any new policies that are added, will become effective within 30 days. Parents will be notified in advance.

Welcome to Tara Redwood School.

The Tara Team!