

parent handbook

for the School-Age Program
2017-2018



est. **1979**



Our Vision:

The Child Educational Center is a caring educational community where:

- we value children, and help them to thrive and reach their full potential as individuals and as contributing members of society;
- through participation, the members of our community enrich themselves and the community as a whole;
- we commit to sharing our ideals in early care and education throughout the world through outreach.

Our Mission:

To support the development of happy, caring and productive human beings, to ensure high-quality programs, and to contribute to a high quality of life for children at the CEC and beyond.

Our Values:

- * **Integrity:** To maintain integrity of the individual and the institution
- * **Innovation:** To achieve innovation in our programs
- * **Diversity:** To embrace diversity of people and ideas
- * **Excellence:** To demonstrate excellence in our care and programs
- * **Openness:** To be open about ourselves and our processes
- * **Nurturing:** To nurture our children, families and staff
- * **Service:** To provide service to the broader community
- * **Respect:** To have respect for all

What makes the CEC so special?

We preserve the experience of childhood

We honor the experience of childhood, recognizing that children need time to be children, in order to progress and grow into healthy adults.

We are a caring, educational community

We operate as a community—of children, families, staff, trustees and friends—working together to create a joyful and loving experience for children.

We establish quality in service

We provide the highest quality care possible.

We meet children's needs

We recognize the unique spirit of each child, including children with special needs, and nurture their particular talents.

We meet families' needs

We make every effort to respond to the individual needs of families, especially during times of particular challenge or hardship.

We provide a quality work environment

We treat our staff with respect and offer pay and benefits that are at the higher level for this profession.

We serve as a model program and training site

We offer guidance as a teacher-training site, as instructors and mentors, and as a leader in developmentally based early childhood education and the practices of the Outdoor Classroom.

Dear Parent,

Please accept our warmest welcome to the Child Educational Center (CEC). We thank you for joining us and look forward to getting to know you as members of the CEC community. We hope you and your family have a rewarding experience with us.

In the pages of this handbook, you will learn about the most important features of the CEC. We ask that you read it carefully and completely. You will find additional information on our website, www.ceconline.org.

In joining the CEC, you become part of a community of staff, parents, children, and extended family and friends, working together to provide an innovative and loving educational environment. The CEC arose from a vision of how to provide the highest quality early care and education services. Then as now, our overarching goal is to fulfill the promise of childhood.

We pledge to support the children in our care, helping them to fully realize the promise that resides in each of them. Our aim is to work together to discover each child's unique spirit and to respond to him or her in a way that best aids their efforts toward development and growth. We find meeting those objectives enormously gratifying.

As you join with us in this profound process of care and education of your child, we encourage you to consider us your partner. Feel free to come to us with any questions or concerns. We greatly look forward to sharing this journey together. Once again, welcome to the CEC!

Sincerely,



Elyssa Nelson
Executive Director



Lisa Cain-Chang
Program Director

Table of contents

The CEC philosophy.....	8
Preserving the experience of childhood	
A child’s need for love	
Child development theory	
The importance of psychological health	
The role of play in education	
Emergent curriculum: learning how to learn	
Spontaneous and planned curriculum	
Learning outside: the Outdoor Classroom	
Learning to value diversity	
Providing positive guidance and approach to discipline	
The power of people in early education.....	14
Teacher qualifications	
Ratios of teachers to children	
Our quality standards	
Origins and foundation of the CEC.....	16
Our commitment to Caltech/JPL and the community	
Professional partnerships with academic institutions	
Volunteers	
The Outdoor Classroom Project	
Our School-Age Program.....	18
Program goals	
Clubs	
Homework support	
Community outreach and volunteering	
The “Zone”	
Conflict resolution	
Holiday program	
Summer programs	
Parent involvement	
Transportation	

Admissions and enrollment information	22
Admissions policy	
Enrolling a child with special needs	
Application process	
Change of schedule	
Withdrawal from the program	
Tuition information.....	24
Schedule options and tuition	
How does CEC tuition compare to other programs?	
Additional details regarding tuition	
Tuition assistance	
Additional fees	27
Enrollment fee	
Health and safety fee	
Late fees	
Holiday and in-service fees	
Operational information	29
School-Age Program sites	
Hours of operation	
Holiday closures	
Additional school closures	
Loading and parking	
Signing in and out	
After school pick-up	
CEC teachers your child in or out	
Signing in and out	
Reporting absences	
Late pick-up	
Extra hours	
Visiting	
Birthdays	
Toys from home	
Communicating with families	
Celebrating our community	
Parent services	

Health and nutrition	34
When your child should stay home	
Administering medicine	
Head lice	
Nourishing young minds and bodies	
Snacks	
Lunches	
No peanuts or peanut butter	
Emergency and disaster preparedness	
Individual illness and emergencies	
Financial status.....	37
Fundraising keeps standards high	
Annual fund	
Wine Tasting Benefit and Auction	
Amazon Affiliates	
United Way	
Governance and leadership	39
Program leadership	40
Contact information.....	41

The CEC philosophy

Below you will find a brief description of the philosophy underlying our approach to the care and education of children. The rich and comprehensive nature of this research-based philosophy provides a solid foundation for our curriculum and teaching practices. Supplementary details on many of these topics are available separately.

Preserving the experience of childhood

Childhood is a precious time of discovery, development and growth. Children today face increasing pressures to grow up too fast, depriving them of fundamental early childhood experiences that help them to become successful adults. The CEC is committed to preserving the experience of childhood. In the safe harbor of our indoor and outdoor spaces, children are free to laugh, climb, run, talk, dig, explore and interact. Through extended and complex play, they come to acquire knowledge and form their own unique identity, and to understand life and their place in it.

Our program is founded on the philosophy that a child's social, emotional, cognitive and physical growth develops from a positive sense of self. We treat children with love and respect, and encourage them to grow, create, and learn at their own unique pace.

The program's atmosphere is relaxed and child-centered. Teachers plan curricula and routines based on the children's interests and abilities and give them the support they need to feel comfortable testing and refining new skills.

A Child's Need for Love

At the heart of the CEC philosophy is the understanding that a child needs love in order to thrive. This is as true in a child care program as it is in the family setting. The CEC is a partner in the family's child rearing responsibilities. For us, loving care includes:

- accepting children as they are
- supporting children through nurturing physical contact and positive verbal communication
- helping children to become self-sufficient and responsible
- encouraging children to identify feelings and needs, and learn to communicate them
- providing non-judgmental feedback
- maintaining a secure environment through clear, consistent limits of behavior
- modeling loving values and behavior

Child development theory

The theory underlying our philosophy is based on several influential child development theorists. The basic concepts include:

- children need first-hand experiences and information in order to develop knowledge
- children pass through sequential stages of development
- growth may be uneven – quick in some areas, slow in others
- areas of growth are related and interactive, making it essential to understand how each area affects the other

Jean Piaget, a Swiss developmental psychologist, established the foundation for basic theory on children's **cognitive development**. He believed that children learn through interaction with the environment, constructing their own knowledge by experimenting and confirming ideas about the world around them. He stressed the importance of play and promoted open-ended activities that require children to think. Children develop cognitive skills in stages, mastering one stage before moving on to another, he believed. According to this theory, observation is essential in order to understand children and recognize where they stand developmentally.

Another psychologist, Erik Erikson, devised a theory about stages of **emotional development**, both for children and adults. He identified eight basic psycho-social stages of development. The first four are:

1. Basic trust vs. mistrust (0 – 18 mos.)
2. Autonomy vs. shame and doubt (18 -36 mos.)
3. Initiative vs. guilt (3 – 5 years)
4. Industry vs. inferiority (5 – 12 yrs.)

Like Piaget, Erikson emphasized the importance of stages. He said it was essential to complete each level of personality development before moving on to the next level. Also, he stressed the importance of understanding how each stage related to later stages.

In addition to Piaget and Erikson, our philosophy draws on a number of other developmental theorists and educators including Lev Vygotsky, who examined the impact of social environment on learning, and Howard Gardner who developed the concept of multiple intelligences. Additional articles on these and other relevant theorists are available separately.

The Importance of Psychological Health

Many child care programs focus on academic activities while neglecting healthy emotional development. We believe that a psychologically healthy and resilient child is a child ready to learn. Nurturing positive self-esteem is the first step. Through the

theories of traditional and emerging psychology, we provide children with the strongest possible foundation for life success.

The Role of Play in Education

Numerous child development researchers hold that play is one of the primary channels through which young children develop and learn about the world. Through play, children learn how things work and how they can interact with them. Play allows children to explore ideas, practice new skills, solve problems, interact with others, learn to communicate, work with emotions, explore ideas, and develop creativity.

A common misconception is that play has less value than work or teacher-directed academic learning. But it is through play that children construct and test ideas, and refine critical-thinking skills. In the early childhood years, an excessive focus on tests, workbooks and other achievement-oriented activities may reduce play's productive results. It can also undermine the foundation necessary for later academic achievement.

A primary goal of our program is to encourage constructive play by engaging children in their activities. Teachers facilitate constructive play by offering activities appropriate for a child's developmental level, and keep them engaged by asking questions that stimulate thinking and encourage exploration. CEC teachers have a thorough understanding of the relationship between play and learning.

Emergent Curriculum: Learning How to Learn

Play is central to our method of curriculum development – an approach known as emergent curriculum. This term was first coined by educator Elizabeth Jones at Pacific Oaks College in 1970. Since then the approach has been explored in detail in numerous books and publications.

Emergent curriculum recognizes that the potential for curriculum is infinite. Everything holds a basis for knowledge, from the physical environment, to the interests of the children and teachers, and also to their values. Curriculum is not something to be "covered", but rather something to be explored.

A key component of emergent curriculum is teacher observation. Children's play reflects their interests and curiosities. When teachers observe how children play and pay attention to their interactions, it becomes possible to plan activities and experiences that have meaning for them. In turn, children become more fully engaged with what they are doing. In effect, children learn how to learn.

Teachers plan curriculum utilizing their professional knowledge and experience, child development norms, and the interests and abilities they observe in the children. Curriculum emerges from both predictable and unexpected events occurring in the group, neighborhood, community and natural world. When teachers and children are unencumbered by prescribed lesson plans and rigid schedules, they become free to take advantage of the wealth of learning opportunities inherent in daily life.

Teachers encourage children to deeply explore experiences that interest them. Oftentimes, subjects learned at school serve as a jumping-off point for School-Age Program activities that cement and deepen that knowledge. For instance, one year several kindergarten students excitedly described their school's butterfly project and how they were learning firsthand about how a caterpillar transforms itself into a pupa and then on to a butterfly. Inspired by the children's enthusiasm, teachers organized related activities including watercolor paintings of butterflies, bug hunting around the yard and research into the types and qualities of butterflies.

This approach contrasts with pre-designed curricula in which adults decide what's important and impose that activity on children, often in a way that limits its broader meaning. With emergent curriculum, the driving force for learning is the natural curiosity and enthusiasm that emerges from the children themselves.

Spontaneous and Planned Curriculum

While spontaneity figures highly in the development of curriculum, planning is also required. Teachers become skilled at quick decision-making, incorporating what they observe into short- and long-term planning. As they develop curriculum, they are also addressing awareness and learning in six key areas:

1. **physical**, including gross and fine motor skills
2. **social**, including awareness, respect, the ability to share and cooperate
3. **cognitive**, including comprehension, problem solving, intuition, and skill acquisition
4. **emotional**, including identifying feelings and developing self-esteem
5. **communication**, both verbal and nonverbal
6. **the spirit** of each child, which transcends the emotional experience and pertains to wonder, awe, inspiration, and joy

Learning Outside: the Outdoor Classroom

An essential part of our program is the integration of outdoor play. The CEC is a pioneer in the practice and promotion of the Outdoor Classroom, an approach to learning in which teachers support and encourage outdoor play in order to enhance children's development. Indoor and outdoor activities are integrated, with each group comprising an indoor and outdoor play area, and children moving freely between the two. This indoor-outdoor flow provides an exceptional learning and growing environment that also adapts well to each child's unique learning style.

Playing outside helps to overcome a range of obstacles facing today's children, which includes a diminished focus on physical activity and the natural world. Outdoor play also supports cognitive growth by allowing children greater freedom of physical movement, a critical component for stimulating brain development.

During outdoor play, each child can pursue activities suited to his or her unique approach to learning. Children are extremely good at creating learning experiences for themselves. Playing outside becomes an even more effective vehicle for learning when teachers support it by responding to questions, providing materials and information, and offering encouragement and guidance.

Learning to Value Diversity

We believe that an optimal learning environment is one that values differences in people individually and culturally, and that provides curriculum in a non-sexist, non-racist, and non-stereotyping way. We maintain a steadfast commitment to reflecting diversity in our curriculum materials, activities and actions, an approach known in early education practice as *anti-biased* curriculum.

We also strive to create a diverse community in our program. We welcome children of non-traditional families, such as children of same sex partners and children with grandparents as teachers. We also welcome children with special needs. It is our view that a diverse community provides a rich and rewarding experience for our children, families and staff.

Providing Positive Guidance and Approach to Discipline

The well-being and successful development of children depends on guidance for behavior that is clear, consistent, appropriate, and above all, positive. Our goals for positive guidance are the same that apply to successful social relationships--not to hurt oneself or others, and to respect the physical environment.

Our goal is to provide children with clear, consistent, and appropriate limits for behavior that help to boost their abilities to problem solve constructively. When a discipline problem arises, we involve children in the process of determining what has happened and coming up with a solution. In this way they begin to internalize limits, learning the skills they need to discipline themselves.

We use the following three criteria when establishing limits with children:

1. Take care of oneself
2. Take care of others
3. Respect the physical environment

Children find these three predictable guidelines very empowering, allowing them to participate in the development of individual and group rules, as well as increasing their ability to monitor personal behavior. We support the child in developing awareness in these three areas, as well as establishing effective "inner discipline" or self-control.

As a rule, teachers do not step in at the first sign of conflict. Teachers wait to see if children can solve problems themselves. If a teacher decides to intervene, the first course of action is positive redirection: A child may need to be made aware of their behavior and appropriate alternatives. The second step would be involving children in "win-win" problem solving: How can we all have our needs met in this situation? In most cases, these two actions are sufficient to diffuse a situation.

If these efforts are insufficient, a teacher may suggest that a child take a break from a certain activity. A teacher might ask, "How long do you think you need before you can rejoin your friends?" Whenever possible, we try to engage the child in a dialogue about what is happening. The CEC does not use time-outs.

Another action a teacher might take is removing a privilege, whenever possible a natural consequence that makes sense to the child. For example, if a child gets frustrated playing foosball and slams the paddle into a friend's stomach, a natural consequence would be losing the privilege of playing foosball for the rest of the afternoon. The consequence is tangible, concrete and in the moment.

In the event that a situation arises that is beyond the capacity of the staff to properly address, parents will be asked to pick up their child as soon as possible. It is our hope that parents will help their child to reflect on the actions that necessitate their pick-up and help their child understand appropriate and safe behavior.

In addition, if the CEC staff identify, through the course of observation and discussion with parents, that a child's particular behavioral issues are beyond the capacity of the program to serve them, we reserve the right to terminate child care services at any time.

We are happy to discuss our philosophy of developing internal discipline with you.

At no time will a child be struck, roughly handled, verbally abused, or demeaned as a disciplinary measure.

The Power of People in Early Education

Teacher Qualifications

One of the most significant factors in the development and well-being of school aged children is access to responsive, loving adults. CEC staff members are experienced and caring educators who have solid knowledge in child development theory and practice. The CEC meets the teaching qualification standards of the National Association of the Education of Young Children and exceeds the requirements of our licensing agency, the Department of Social Services, Community Care Licensing Division.

The majority of teachers, and all program directors, has a BA or MA degree in child development or a related field, or are working towards it. A typical teaching team is made up of lead teachers, associate and assistant teachers. In addition, each site has Site Director, who is extremely experienced in the field of education and provides leadership to interpret program philosophy and practices, to communicate with program directors and work with families and school personnel.

Not only does our staff have academic knowledge, they also hold institutional knowledge. The average tenure of our teachers is six years, with almost a quarter of them working with us for ten years or more. Our directors have even stronger staying power, with tenure ranging from 10 – 31 years. This long tenure reflects their dedication to their leadership role, and greatly enhances the program's success.

An essential factor contributing to staff quality and teacher retention is our use of a team approach. Teaching teams function much like a family, with different members playing different roles yet all roles being an essential part of the whole. While lead teachers and master lead teachers provide a leadership role in decision-making, we welcome and expect the observations and ideas of all teachers.

Once a week, each teaching team meets to share information and plan curriculum. Site Directors communicate daily with program directors to plan, coordinate and evaluate program activities.

Ratios of Teachers to Children

The number of teachers to children is another essential factor in delivering quality care to children. Having more teachers provides better supervision and individualized care and also a greater variety of personality types. A strong connection to at least one adult is one of the best guarantees of a child's happiness in the program. While the state requirement for a school age program is 1:14, the CEC exceeds state requirements with a ratio of 1:10.

Our Quality Standards

The CEC maintains quality standards that greatly exceed the minimum State regulatory mandates required for child care centers. Our quality standards come from a variety of sources including child development theories and practice, programs such as Resources for Infant Educators (RIE), the Program for Infant/Toddler Care (PITC) and the CEC's

own Outdoor Classroom Project. Since 1989, the CEC has also been accredited by the National Academy of Early Childhood Programs.

Accreditation means that the CEC is in voluntary compliance with the Academy's list of criteria for high quality early childhood programs. These criteria include sufficient numbers of adults with training in childhood development, age-appropriate activities and expectations, ongoing child assessments, regular staff communication, communication with parents, and other elements the Academy deems essential in order to deliver quality care. The Academy is sponsored by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) the nation's largest organization of early childhood professionals.

Origins and Foundation of the CEC

In 1979 the Director of the Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL) and JPL's Advisory Council of Women and Caltech established the CEC to provide child care to JPL and Caltech employees, as well as to the local community.

A start-up loan from Caltech of \$31,000 allowed the CEC to first open its doors to 50 children, working with a staff of 15 and an annual operating budget of \$250,000. Today, the CEC serves more than 700 children, with a staff of 130 and an annual budget of \$6 million. Then as now, the goal has been to create a loving and unique environment for the care and education of young children.

Our Commitment to Caltech/JPL and the Community

Caltech and JPL were instrumental in creating the CEC and continue to provide us with operating support. Our initial promise to these institutions was to provide quality service to children and their families, and to remain largely self-sufficient. To that end, we continue to expand our programs and services to meet increasing demand, and search for creative ways to finance our work.

The CEC maintains a service commitment to the La Canada Unified School District (LCUSD), The Westridge School and the St. Bede school through our School-Age Program. These schools have a reputation for excellence, and the CEC's programs contribute to this tradition.

Professional Partnerships with Academic Institutions

The CEC maintains an ongoing relationship with several early childhood education programs at nearby colleges and universities. Child development students can fulfill their practical requirement by volunteering at the CEC. This relationship is mutually beneficial. Students put the theories they've learned to use in our unique atmosphere. We keep up with current child development studies while fostering relationships with potential teachers.

Volunteers

The CEC also works with younger student volunteers. Each year, a small group of older elementary, middle and high school students participate in a CEC volunteer training program. Volunteers are assigned to work with an age group. Volunteers do not fulfill CEC staff ratios, but rather augment established ratios. All practicum students and volunteers are under our teachers' supervision at all times.

The Outdoor Classroom Project

Outdoor play is an exceptional vehicle for learning, and it counters the growing epidemic of childhood obesity, diabetes and other health concerns. Building on many years of experience with the outdoor classroom approach, the CEC launched the Outdoor Classroom Project in 2003 to increase the quantity, quality, and benefits of the outdoor experience in early care and education programs.

Through yearly conferences and consulting services, the CEC shares its knowledge about outdoor learning with early childhood educators. An initial one-million dollar, five-year grant from California's First 5 LA organization helped the project reach more than 3,000 child care educators in more than 600 child care centers serving children aged 0 to 5 in Los Angeles County.

In 2009, that model was adapted for Santa Barbara County, through a two-year 700,000 project paid for by the Orfalea Family Foundation. The project is improving outdoor play for children aged 0 to 5 by educating early care and education professionals on the value of the outdoor environment, and by helping to cultivate outdoor play experiences at area child care centers. The project is also boosting public awareness about the importance of outdoor play and building alliances with related initiatives.

Through the Outdoor Classroom Demonstration Site Network, the CEC provides leadership in cultivating and sustaining long-term change in the early childhood profession, and lends its expertise to other centers state-wide. It also encourages child care professionals to visit the CEC as a model for the outdoor classroom. Promoting the CEC as a leader in outdoor learning increases its name recognition and strengthens its standing with parents, staff and potential donors.

Our School-Age Program

The School-Age Program's before-and after-school care offers an exciting array of creative and stimulating play-based activities for children aged five to twelve. It helps children to develop in the areas of cognitive, social, emotional and physical growth, while creating opportunities to learn cooperation, conflict resolution and build relationships. Children play outdoors, interact with friends, explore creative arts, practice reading and storytelling, play games, work puzzles and engage in science experiments. In many ways, our program strives to recreate the feeling of neighborhood many parents may remember from their own childhood.

Children generally need to relax after their busy day at school, and the CEC emphasizes spending time outdoors and playing. Our program is a place for children to have fun in an open and relaxed setting. We provide a safe physical environment, while encouraging children to explore and take risks, and learn to play within boundaries that are respectful to themselves, to others and to the environment.

While outdoor play is crucial, we also provide the time and resources for children to complete homework assignments. At the start of the year, we help parents to create a homework agreement with their children, specifying what parents want them to accomplish. We then do our best to support each child in fulfilling this agreement.

Program Goals

While the overarching philosophy of the CEC's School-Age Program is consistent with our infant, toddler and preschool program, a significant difference exists. Once a child enters elementary school, the primary focus becomes the school day. The School-Age Program becomes a partner, supporting children and their families to make the most of the school experience.

As a partner, the School-Age Program builds on knowledge learned at school, including in areas of art, music, science, language and communication, reading, writing, math and physical development. It also offers support in areas that may be overlooked in the busy pace of the school day, in particular social and emotional development. Through dramatic play and guided learning, a child can build skills in conflict resolution, gain confidence in forming friendships and acquire a strengthened sense of personal and social responsibility.

In particular, children learn to:

- strengthen social skills that help foster friendships
- successfully sustain play with peers

- explore the activities available to them and integrate their own ideas and interests into activities
- be self-starting in their play, self-selecting activities and interactions with other children and adults
- grow in their ability to problem solve and use positive/effective conflict resolution skills
- communicate individual needs so teachers may provide assistance
- make teachers aware of any matters of concern regarding their school day
- demonstrate ability to transition from their school day into the more relaxed atmosphere of after school care

Clubs

Clubs provide an opportunity for children to participate in a teacher-directed small group activity. A different club meets each afternoon. Some examples include cooking, science, sports, sculpture, watercolors, sewing, fort building, paper mache, and games from around the world. Participation is optional and open to all ages. Clubs allow teachers to share their special talents and interests with children. Children take a role in determining club activities that are of interest to them. Additionally, older children have opportunities to provide leadership for the club activities of younger children.

Homework Support

We support families who choose to have their child do their homework while in our program. At the beginning of the year, we distribute a homework agreement to all families. This agreement, which is between the family and the child, sets out what the child is expected to do while at the CEC. We do our best to implement that agreement.

Each day, about an hour is set aside to work on school assignments. (Children are also welcome to work on assignments at any time.) Depending on the age of the child, they may need more or less time. Teachers help to facilitate a quiet atmosphere, provide materials and suggestions, and to answer questions. If you feel your child would benefit from one-on-one tutoring, we can help provide referrals. A tutor is also welcome to work with your child while at the CEC.

We purposefully schedule homework time later in the day when children have had a chance to reconnect with friends, have a snack, and burn off steam playing outside. While we recognize that some children may miss homework

time if they get picked up early, our aim is to maximize outdoor play during daylight hours. We recognize that children's healthy growth and development rely on plenty of fresh air and physical activity. There is a great deal of research available reviewing homework policies in a variety of settings, as well as the need for exercise, time for play. We are dedicated to finding a healthy balance of addressing homework needs and supporting all other areas of children's development.

If you find homework is creating undue stress on your family, or if you are unhappy with the type or amount of homework assigned, we encourage you to review your school's homework guidelines, meet with your child's elementary school teacher, talk to the lead teachers or site director, and contact the CEC program directors. We are happy to talk with you about your child's individual needs and work together with you to help implement a personalized strategy that supports your child. If you have any questions about the CEC's homework policy, please contact a program or site director.

Community Outreach and Volunteering

An important aspect of the School-Age program involves community outreach. Each year, the program identifies a main volunteer project, for instance, making friends at a senior center or participating in a beautification project. All children have the opportunity to participate in these activities; however, the older children can also play a special role as a mentor of younger children. Since 2008, the older children volunteer every Friday to spend time at the CEC's Infant, Toddler and Preschool program. Additionally, teachers assist children to develop long term projects to benefit their community, such as a gardening and beautification, participating in fund-raising projects or involvement in community events. Past volunteer projects have included cooking meals for ill or injured children staying at Ronald McDonald House, and sewing baby blankets for children in area hospitals.

The "Zone"

Children entering grades 4 through 6 are welcome to participate in regular activities of the "Zone," a program geared to the interests and advanced abilities of this age group. The Zone is an opportunity for kids to connect with their peers, learn responsibility through volunteer and mentoring programs (see above), and enjoy social outlets like sports and an annual pizza party.

Holiday Program

On most school closure days, the CEC offers a separate full-day holiday program. We recognize that these are vacation days and our goal is create a fun, relaxing break away from the regular school-day schedule. Past events have included visiting the Rose Bowl floats, a puppet making workshop and performance, ice skating, cooking and science programs and story tellers.

Teachers in your regular program will send out notices in advance regarding holiday care, including a list of activities. For further information see the section on Holiday and In-service Care.

Summer Exploration Camps

The CEC's Summer Program series offers a range of stimulating activities for children entering first through seventh grade:

Summer Exploration Camp includes themed weeks, where children explore their interests and expand their knowledge through specialized field trips and hands-on activities. Past themed programs have included Stars and Space, Culinary Adventures, Music and Movement and Dinosaur Academy. Details on themes, locations, and hours are available at ceconline.org.

The CEC also partners with Descanso Gardens to offer multiple weeks of nature camp and with Altadena Stables to provide a horse camp experience.

We also offer summer before-and after-school care for children enrolled in the La Canada School District Summer School and after-summer school programming for children enrolled in the Pasadena Educational Foundation.

Parent Involvement

Parents have the opportunity to participate in room activities and fundraising events which support the CEC. Individual sites may also hold social events such as annual family and art festivals, potlucks, pizza nights, bagel mornings and more. Parents are also invited to attend the annual Benefit & Auction held at Caltech, as well as the Celebration of Community and State of the Organization held at our Oak Grove location.

Transportation

We provide transportation from several area schools to our Oak Grove and Caltech sites. Transportation is based on expressed parent interest, the feasibility of designing van routes, as well as limiting children's van rides to under 45 minutes. Though we ask parents to identify any transportation needs on our application form, we may not be able to accommodate all requests. We follow all state laws pertaining to age/weight requirements for car/booster seat use.

Admissions and enrollment information

Admissions Policy

Enrollment is open to children in transitional kindergarten and kindergarten through 6th grade, without discrimination in regard to sex, race, color, national and ethnic origin, disability, or creed.

Enrolling a Child with Special Needs

The CEC enrolls children with a range of developmental delays, disabilities, and medical conditions. We consider each child individually and offer enrollment when we are confident we can meet the child's needs. Factors we consider include suitability with our program philosophy, group size, teacher-child ratio, staff expertise, appropriateness of our curricular approach, and the number of other children with special needs within the group.

The CEC works closely with a number of Regional Centers that facilitate services for children with special needs, a service offered under the auspices of the State Department of Social Services. Local Centers are familiar with the CEC and can advise families on whether our program is aligned with the developmental needs of their child. The CEC also maintains strong ties with the Special Education departments of local school districts.

Some children with special needs require therapeutic companions for one-on-one support. While the CEC cannot provide these companions, our directors and many of our teachers have extensive experience collaborating with parents and professionally trained companions to support social and behavioral goals. We value participating as a member of the parent-companion team.

At a family's request, our staff can provide input for their child's 504 plan (referring to section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act) and/or their Individualized Education Program (IEP). If you would like more information on our Program's inclusion of children with special needs, please contact the Program Director.

Application Process

Families interested in enrolling their child at the CEC should do the following:

- Visit the CEC website, read the Parent Handbook, and any attached materials thoroughly and carefully. Please call us with any questions.
- Submit the completed application. Enrollment forms will also be completed at the time of registration.
- If interested, make an appointment to meet with a director and visit the program with your child.

- Families must reapply annually for the following year. Typically, an email message is sent out to currently enrolled families in early spring, who receive priority enrollment if their application is received by the stated deadline (which is normally a month from the date of the email).
-
- New families can apply for enrollment anytime throughout the year; mid-month start dates can be accommodated as space permits.

Change of Schedule

Schedule change requests are processed through our office, not through our website, registration portal or at school sites. Schedule changes will generally go into effect the first applicable day of the following week. Billing will be prorated for the week the schedule change takes effect.

After October 1, a \$10.00 fee will be assessed for each schedule change.

Schedule changes are considered as enrollment capacity permits. If your desired schedule is not currently available, we will notify you when it is. All schedule changes and corresponding tuition adjustments submitted by the 15th of each month will be reflected on the next month's tuition bill.

Withdrawal from the Program

It is important for your child to be given the opportunity to say good-bye and have a closure when he or she leaves the program. Please let your child and staff know in advance of your child's last day so that the transition can be a positive experience for your child, his or her friends, and teachers. **To qualify for a tuition refund, at least two weeks' advance notice of withdrawal must be given in writing via email to our office and not at school sites.**

Tuition information

On these next five pages, you will find the following information:

- Schedule options and tuition rates
- Additional details regarding tuition
- Tuition assistance
- Enrollment fee
- Health and Safety Fee
- Holiday and in-service care
- Temporary Withdrawals

2017-2018 SCHOOL-AGE PROGRAM TUITION RATES

PARADISE CANYON, LA CAÑADA, AND PALM CREST ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS					
	Daily	4 Days	3 Days	2 Days	1 Day
For PM Kindergartners (8:00 – 11:30 am)	\$573	\$458	\$380	\$253	\$127
For AM Kindergartners (11:35 am – 3:05 pm)	\$573	\$458	\$380	\$253	\$127
After-school hours (2:50 – 6:00 pm)	\$501	\$401	\$331	\$220	\$110
Extended (7:00 – 8:00 am)	\$176	\$141	\$116	\$79	\$40
Extended for Late Birds (8:10 – 9:10 am)	\$176	\$141	\$116	\$79	\$40
Extended for Early Birds (1:50 – 2:50 pm)	\$176	\$141	\$116	\$79	\$40
OAK GROVE AND CALTECH SITES					
Schedule D (11:30 am - 6:00 pm)	with	Schedule F (1:45 pm - 6:00 pm)		with	
transp.		transp.			
D1 (daily)	\$974	F1 (daily)	\$654	\$886	
\$1,205		F2 (4 days)	\$524	\$711	
D2 (4 days)	\$780	F3 (3 days)	\$393	\$533	
D3 (3 days)	\$584	F4 (2 days)	\$261	\$354	
D4 (2 days)	\$388				
	\$968				
	\$723				
	\$481				

How Does CEC Tuition Compare to Other Programs?

Tuition costs for child care vary widely. While CEC rates fall at the upper level of average costs for private childcare in this area, our Program provides extremely good value. Research shows the single most significant factor in the development and well-being of children is access to responsive and skilled adults. Some schools boast of new buildings and shiny new equipment. While environment is important, physical structures and elements cannot take the place of a nurturing, knowledgeable adult. People's time, however, is expensive. The CEC spends more than 60% of its total budget on salaries to pay well-qualified teaching staff.

When you see lower priced child care programs, ask yourself why. Often, low prices point to poor teacher-child ratios or the use of untrained or low-paid staff. By contrast, our teacher-child ratios exceed state requirements and our well-trained teachers are paid a competitive rate. Paying teachers well is one of the most effective ways of avoiding excessive turnover, a common problem among child care programs, and one that is extremely disruptive to children. As a nonprofit organization, we are committed to providing the highest quality programs at the most affordable price. This is an ongoing goal of our Board of Trustees. For more information on how we allocate your tuition dollars, please see the information on CEC revenue and expenses in our annual report and in related materials on our website.

Additional Details Regarding Tuition

- Tuition is charged for all week days each month whether or not your child in attendance. It may be helpful to think of tuition as you might rent on an apartment. It holds a place for your child in the center. Just as a landlord is unable to fill your apartment while you go on vacation, we are unable to enroll your child's space for a brief vacation period or school field trip while our operating expenses remain constant.
- Exchanging or "banking" unused hours/days cannot be accommodated due to the complexities of ratios and staffing.
- Tuition adjustments for schedule changes will be reflected on the next monthly bill.
- Payments can be made in a variety of ways: cash, check (payable to the CEC and **only** mailed or brought to the Oak Grove office at 140 Foothill Blvd, La Canada, 91011), or by eCheck and credit/debit cards through our website payment portal.
- For credit and debit card payments, a 2.5% processing fee is added.
- An automatic payment option is available through the Caltech Credit Union.
- Tuition is due by the first of each month. A late fee of \$30 is assessed if tuition is not received within ten days of the first of the month.
- Balances not paid off within 40 days of the initial charge may result in termination of your child's enrollment.

- Late pick-up fees are charged to the following month's bill.
- We charge a \$25 processing fee for returned checks.
- Tuition rates increase at the beginning of each program year to cover operational expenses. These rates are determined each year by the Board of Trustees, as part of the budget process.

Tuition Assistance

The CEC maintains a tuition assistance program to help families unable to afford the full amount of tuition. Each year, about 20 families receive assistance covering from 10% to 90% of tuition costs, based on need and available funds. Funding comes from United Way donors who designate the CEC to receive their gift, from CEC fundraising efforts, and from the CEC's budget. We are seeking ways to develop our tuition assistance program further in order to help more low- and middle-income families. Additional information, including the application, can be found on the CEC website. JPL and Caltech employees can seek tuition assistance through their institution's Child Care Assistance Program.

Additional Fees

Enrollment Fee

An annual, non-refundable enrollment fee of \$100 is added to your first billing statement to cover administrative costs.

Health and Safety Fee

A yearly health and safety fee (\$10.00 for LCUSD sites and \$35.00 for Caltech and Oak Grove sites) is charged at the time of enrollment and added to your first billing statement. The fee pays for the cost of supplemental accident insurance and earthquake preparedness and other health-related expenses. Accident insurance covers all children attending the CEC and acts as secondary coverage to a family's existing insurance for injuries that may occur while your child is in our care. For instance, it may reimburse out-of-pocket expenses such as seeing an out-of-network specialist. For additional information or to submit a claim, contact the CEC's Director of Administration. A deductible of \$100 applies.

Late Fees

The CEC reserves the right to impose a late fee on those who arrive for pick up after 6:00 pm. The fee is \$15 for each 1 to 15 minute period after 6:00 pm. Fees for late pick-up are billed on the following month's tuition statement. Repeated lateness may jeopardize your child's enrollment.

Holiday and In-Service Care Fees

At many of our sites, the CEC offers a separate program for care during most school closure days, with care available typically from 7:00 am to 6:00 pm.

Families interested in taking advantage of this additional care need to reserve care in advance because space can be limited. You can either sign up on site or by contacting the office. Families pay an hourly rate of \$8.00 per hour for each hour their child is in our care beyond their regular schedule, with a cap of \$60.00 per day. Although we currently do not bill in advance of these days, a non-refundable cancellation fee will be charged if you signed up for the day, but your child does not attend. If utilizing in-service care only, a non-refundable enrollment fee of \$25 and the health and safety fee (amount depends upon the site) is added to your first billing statement.

For example:

- If your child usually attends 11:30 - 6:00 pm, Monday through Friday, you are entitled to use 6.5 hours on a full-care day at no extra charge.
- If your child usually attends 1:50 - 6:00 pm, Tuesday/Thursday, you are entitled to 4 hours on a full-care day that falls on a Tuesday and/or a Thursday

at no extra charge. Care needed on other days would be charged the \$8.00 per hour rate, with a cap of \$60.00.

Please note: We cannot accommodate trading days or using accumulated hours for full-care days. Families are billed after the full-care day has occurred to insure accuracy of attendance and billing; however, a cancellation fee will be applied to your statement if your child does not attend on the day you reserved..

In addition, there are a number of early release days at many of the area schools. If your child normally attends on the day of the early dismissal, we will be expecting them at the earlier time. If your child does not normally attend and you need care on the early dismissal day, it may be available, but is entirely based on available space. Billing for additional time on early release days will be at \$8.00 an hour.

Temporary Withdrawals

Some families request a temporary withdrawal during certain times of year. We would be happy to consider this if a) the child will be withdrawn for one month or more, and b) no waitlist exists at your child's site. Temporary withdrawals cannot be accommodated if there is waitlist as the next family is eagerly awaiting the vacancy.

Operational information

School-Age Program Sites

The School-Age Program currently functions at seven sites:

1. Oak Grove site (Whale room) near JPL, La Cañada
2. Caltech site (Owl room), Pasadena
3. La Cañada Elementary, La Cañada
4. Paradise Canyon Elementary, La Cañada
5. Palm Crest Elementary, La Cañada
6. Westridge School, Pasadena
7. St. Bede School, La Cañada

Hours of Operation

The CEC main office is open 6:45 am to 6:00 pm, Monday through Friday. The Oak Grove and Caltech sites are open from 11:30 am to 6:00 pm (and 7:00 am to 6:00 pm on full-care dates.) The La Cañada District Elementary Schools are open 7:00 am to 6:00 pm.

Holiday Closures

The Oak Grove and Caltech sites are typically closed on holidays observed by JPL and Caltech. The La Canada elementary school sites close on holidays observed by the La Canada school district, but remain open for full-care on most in-service days, conference days, and winter and spring recesses.

Additional School Closures

In addition to holiday closures, the School-Age Program closes for two days before the start of the school year to prepare for the new program year, and for one or two days in early June to prepare for Summer Exploration Camps. Additionally, the program closes for one day during the year for professional development. Exact dates for closures can be found on the CEC's website.

Loading and Parking

Each site maintains a separate plan for loading and parking. Please check with staff at each site.

Signing-in and Signing-out Is the Parent's Responsibility

Signing your child in and out each day is a state-licensing requirement. Parents must escort their child to the CEC classrooms and pick them up there each day. When you pick up your child, you must personally sign them out. This also gives the staff an opportunity to share information about your child's day, build a relationship with you regarding your child's development, and ensure your child's safe departure from the program.

Please note: If you would like to give this responsibility to another adult, you must notify the program in writing. We will not release your child to someone we do not know without prior notification and a photo ID.

Signing In/Out Exceptions

There are certain instances in which School-Age Program staff can sign your child in or out:

1. During peak traffic times at La Cañada Elementary School sites: If you so choose, you may transfer the responsibility of signing in your child to a CEC teacher during the peak morning hours of 7:45 to 8:15 am and 8:45 am to 9:15 am, and the peak afternoon hours of 2:50 to 3:15 pm. To do so, you must submit a letter of authorization, which is signed and dated by you, authorizing CEC personnel to sign your child out on your behalf. The letter is placed in your child's file and must be renewed each year.
2. When care is transferred from School-Age Program staff to teachers (before-school care) or from teachers to School-Age Program staff (after-school care).
3. When children are brought to the Oak Grove or Caltech sites by the school bus or CEC van.

Late Pick Up

We appreciate your help in picking up your child before the school closes at 6:00 pm. When a parent is late, one or more teachers in addition to the program director must remain with the child. If you are going to be late, please contact the site directly or if your child is at our Oak Grove site, call our administrative office, (818) 354-3418 or (818) 354-3419 if after 6:00 pm.

Reporting Absences

Your child's safety is our highest priority. For this reason, it is vital that you call the Site Director or Lead Teacher if your child will be absent. If you are unable to reach someone or leave a voicemail at the site, please call the CEC main office at (818) 354-3418.

Sometimes a child is able to attend during the school's normal hours, but is unable to attend the School-Age Program. Please notify us in all instances when we should not expect to receive your child at the normally scheduled time, such as your child leaving school early, going to a friend's house, or participating in an extra-curricular activity. We also talk to children on an ongoing basis about the importance of coming directly to the CEC after leaving their classroom.

Reporting absences is especially important if your child rides the van from school to the Oak Grove or Caltech sites. Van drivers are not permitted to leave a school until all children are accounted for or until they receive authorization from the School-Age Program Director. Please notify us by 10:00 am if your child will not be riding the van.

Extra Hours

If your child is enrolled on a part-time schedule, you may request extra hours (at \$8.00 per) on an occasional basis, subject to availability. To do this, please contact the Site Director. You are responsible for noting these hours on the extra-hours' sheet next to the sign-in sheet. Failure to do so may result in this privilege being retracted. Fees for extra hours are billed on the following month's tuition statement if they are entered before the 15th of the month. Please note that extra hours used more than on an occasional basis may require a schedule change.

Visiting

The program encourages parents to visit during the day as this makes children feel very special and facilitates communication between the program and home. Parents are also invited to join scheduled field trips and other outside activities. Parents are free to come and go from the program at their own discretion.

Parents who are visiting the La Cañada Elementary School sites will need to check in through the elementary school office before entering the campus, as this is school policy.

Birthdays

We recognize and celebrate birthdays in a variety of ways. Please talk to your child's Site Director or call the CEC office for more information.

Toys from Home

Children are welcome to bring comfort items to the program. Kindergartners especially often need these items, especially at the beginning of the year. Please be sure to write your child's name in them.

The CEC requests, however, that children leave electronic toys and cell phones at home. We feel these objects emphasize solitary play, preventing children from fully developing skills in the areas of social/emotional development, peer relations, cognitive and critical thinking, and fine/gross motor skills. If your child brings electronic games or

cell phones to the program, we will ask them to leave these objects in their cubbies or the teacher cabinet until they go home.

Likewise, the CEC asks parents' help in ensuring children do not bring violent-themed toys to the program. We encourage children to explore power in a variety of areas, including dramatic play, art, writing and literature, and rough and tumble play.

The CEC works to create an environment that encourages social problem solving and peace building. We help children understand why physical force and weapons are not an appropriate answer to problem solving. We promote the concept of social conflict resolution and encourage children to participate in the process. When conflicts arise, we ask the children involved to identify the problem, communicate through discussion, brainstorm to find out the facts, and negotiate a resolution.

Please feel free to talk with your child's Site Director, Lead Teacher, or a School-Age Program Director if you have further questions about the toys your child may bring or our methods for effective and peaceful problem solving.

Communicating with Families

Open communication is the foundation of a harmonious child care community. Please communicate your needs and concerns as they arise. You can speak to your child's teachers, Site Director or any of the directors listed on the contact page of this handbook. They are responsible for the operation of the program and have the training and experience to answer your questions, discuss your child's development, and work with you to resolve any problems you encounter.

Communication with staff takes place spontaneously during drop-offs and pick-ups or during phone conversations and parent conferences. A newsletter describing both specific site activities and CEC-wide initiatives is emailed monthly, with a current calendar available on our website. You will find information specific to your child's room at your child's site.

If you have a specific concern, it is often best to schedule a conference with your Site Director. You may request a Program Director to be present or request a conference alone with a Program Director. We are here to meet your needs. Please don't hesitate to make use of our services.

Celebrating Our Community

A broad circle of people including children, parents, grandparents, relatives, and friends create the special community that is the CEC. Each year, we hold a series of events to celebrate the spirit of community. These are opportunities to meet other like-minded people, to share ideas, and to have fun. We invite you to participate in as many of them as possible.

Parent Services

A number of services are available to help parents make the transition to the CEC and to provide guidance in child rearing issues:

- Referrals to pediatricians, family therapists and special needs counselors
- Lending library of books and articles
- Individual parent meetings
- The Parent Resources section of our website

If there is something else we can help you with, please let us know.

Health and Nutrition

When your child should stay home

By State of California mandate, we must exclude any child from the program who displays symptoms of illness. Symptoms that are cause for exclusion include fever, vomiting, diarrhea, contagious rashes and ill or unusual behavior. We ask parents to exercise good judgment in keeping children at home when they are ill, and to seek medical attention as appropriate. Children may return to the program once they have been symptom free without the aid of medication for at least 24 hours and exhibit the strength and well-being to thrive in a group environment. For more information, please refer to the CEC's Guidelines for Exclusion and Return of Sick Children, which is provided with enrollment materials and is also available on our website.

Administering Medicine

We prefer that parents administer medication to their children. However, if a child's medication schedule requires medicine to be administered while at the CEC, we will do so following specific guidelines: Parents must complete a Medications Consent Form. Prescriptions must be in their original packaging, and labeled with your child's name, age and dosing instructions. Over-the-counter medications can be given according to the dose, schedule and instructions on the package. Otherwise, we need a doctor's note with dosing instructions. Please note that medications are kept in a locked box in the room, and may not be placed in cubbies or lunch boxes.

Under certain conditions, we can accommodate children with anaphylaxis (severe, potentially life threatening allergies), asthma (chronic lung disease that impairs breathing), seizure disorders (febrile seizures), and sleep/breathing disorders (sleep apnea). Community Care Licensing requires an "Incidental Medical Service (IMS)" plan to be agreed upon and completed by parent, physician, and the appropriate Program Director. Please contact a Program Director for additional information and to request an IMS plan.

The Center reserves the right to decline or terminate enrollment of a child with any of the above conditions if we believe the condition/treatment needs are beyond the scope of our staff's training or ability to perform in the context of a group setting. In addition, enrollment may be suspended or terminated if communication with the parent does not support full understanding of treatment needs, or if parents fail to provide medication/supplies, instructions, and any required documentation.

For forms relating to the administration of medication, including inhalers, please consult our website.

Head lice

The CEC maintains a nit-free policy to avoid potential spread of head lice. If a child is found to have head lice, we will ask that a parent pick up the child immediately. Upon return, we check children to make sure they are free of lice and nits. The CEC has a

number of resources available to help with parents' concerns regarding head lice. Please make sure to notify us if your child has contracted head lice.

Nourishing Young Minds and Bodies

A healthy diet supports optimal mental, emotional, and physical functioning. Nourishing foods include whole grains, fresh vegetables, fresh fruits, and proteins. We encourage parents to prepare healthy meals containing as little sugar, additives, caffeine or excessive salt as possible. Guidelines for food safety and preparation are provided with enrollment materials.

Snacks

Each site posts a weekly snack menu. Examples of typical snack menu items include: fresh fruits and vegetables, whole grain and low fat breads and crackers, yogurt, pasta, eggs, cheeses, etc. Teachers exercise great creativity to prepare and present these foods in ways that are both attractive and inviting. Children often help teachers prepare snacks. Snack is served midmorning (for programs operating in the morning) and mid-afternoon.

Lunches

The choices that you and your child(ren) make regarding lunch time food may be based on a combination of what you feel is healthy and what your child will eat. While in our care, your child always has the opportunity to choose leftover lunch foods from their container to snack on, in addition to the daily snacks we serve. **Please do not send gum, candy or sodas.** If you are in need of suggestions for your child's lunch, please see a teacher.

Please note: For kindergartners utilizing the La Canada Unified school cafeterias, our teachers are available to assist children in making choices of lunch foods. If your child has food restrictions, please inform the site director.

No Peanuts or Peanut Butter

In order to try to protect the needs of children with a life-threatening allergy to peanuts, the CEC prohibits the presence of peanuts and peanut butter at the Oak Grove site. The CEC does not knowingly purchase or serve any food or snacks with peanuts or peanut butter at this location. (Regretfully, due to the prevalence of peanut oil in pre-package foods, we cannot absolutely guarantee a completely peanut-free environment.) We request the cooperation of all parents in following this policy. Specifically, we ask that parents not send peanuts or peanut butter in their child's breakfast or lunch. Sunflower butter is an acceptable alternative.

Please notify a director if your child has any food allergy, including an allergy to peanuts.

Emergency and Disaster Preparedness

The CEC is well prepared for emergencies. Staff members receive extensive instruction

on what to do in various emergency situations. Fire and earthquake response drills are conducted on a regular basis to test and refine emergency procedures.

During monthly fire drills, staff members and children evacuate to predetermined areas when the fire drill bell sounds. After each drill, we review its success and consider any procedures needing improvement.

We also have extensive emergency plans in case of moderate and major earthquakes. We conduct "duck and cover" drills monthly. Directors circulate through the yards and rooms, alerting staff. We use the expression "Rabbits in the hole," when we want children to duck and cover indoors or outdoors. We say "Rabbits all together" when we want the children together in the center of the yard or the room. Once children come together, staff members wait for instruction to evacuate by designated routes to the baseball field behind the CEC. Each staff member is assigned to a response team with specific duties. Each group has its own supply of food, water and activities.

Periodically, we conduct extended earthquake drills during which children spend most of the morning playing on the baseball field adjacent to the CEC yards. In addition to drills, we have tested our procedures during real earthquakes. We have been pleased with the comprehensiveness of our plans and continue to review and update them as necessary. The CEC also takes steps to assure safety in the indoor spaces, such as anchoring heavy objects like refrigerators and fans.

In the event of a moderate to large earthquake, we delay the acceptance of children for at least one hour. During this time, directors gather information and assess when or if to receive children. If deemed necessary, directors may elect to close the program for the remainder of the day, or longer should the facility sustain damage. If you are en route to the CEC or still at home when an earthquake occurs, please keep this in mind. If an earthquake occurs during program hours, we encourage parents who can get to the CEC to do so as quickly as possible to pick up their child. Staff members will stay with children as long as necessary, but will be eager to look after their own families and homes. The CEC encourages parents to maintain their own supplies of clothing, food and water in case of emergency. The CEC has established relationships with the high school adjacent to us, and benefits from community disaster response resources converging there. This includes the Red Cross, as well as the fire and police departments.

Individual Illness and Emergencies

Directors, lead teachers, and other interested staff members are trained in CPR and first aid and are required to keep their certification current. When a child falls ill or is injured, parents are notified as soon as it possible to do so. In the event of severe illness or injury, the CEC will first contact emergency services, then contact a parent. In addition, the Oak Grove site maintains an AED (automated electronic defibrillator) that can be used on an adult or child in the event of a cardiac emergency.

Financial Status

The CEC is a private, nonprofit educational organization operating under 501(c)3 tax-exempt status. We receive some support from Caltech and JPL (for the early care and preschool programs only) but are separate from them and legally responsible for our own financial obligations. More than 90% of our revenue comes from tuition, with the remaining 10 percent coming from consulting services, fundraising and other income. Each year the Board of Trustees determines the budget. The Executive Director can provide you with a breakdown of the CEC's anticipated income and expenses for the current fiscal year. This information is also discussed each year at the State of the Organization meeting.

Fundraising Keeps Standards High

The CEC cannot sustain its high quality of care through tuition alone. A strong fundraising program ensures that teacher salaries are maintained at competitive wages and professional development opportunities are offered to retain our high-quality staff. Additionally, the gifts to the CEC provide materials and equipment to offer a rich and varied landscape for children's indoor and outdoor experience.

The Child Educational Center is a 501(c)3 organization. Gifts are deductible to the full extent provided by IRS guidelines. Our tax ID number is 95-3403258. We depend on the generosity of families, alumni, and friends to make tax-deductible, charitable contributions that allow us to fund this exceptional level of care.

HERE ARE SOME WAYS YOU CAN HELP:

Annual Fund

All year

The Annual Fund is our most significant fundraising initiative of the year. A well-supported Annual Fund fuels every aspect of CEC operations to provide the highest quality education for your child. Last year, parents, grandparents, alumni families, staff and board members contributed from \$5 to \$5,000. Our goal is 100% family and staff participation. We appreciate gifts of all sizes. Families who donate \$500 or more are recognized on engraved bricks at the main entrance. Families who donate \$1,000 or more earn an inscription on the Donor Wall located in the breezeway adjacent to the main office at the Oak Grove site and are invited to the Leading Hands Donor Dinner in the fall.

Annual Online Auction and Benefit Party

Each year, the CEC raises funds and brings our community together with a unique and extensive online auction (cecbenefit.org) that culminates in an evening 'parent party' under the stars. Enjoy live jazz, wonderful food, a memorable selection of wine and beer, and socializing with CEC staff and supporters. Donate a product or service to the auction, or bid on one of the many offerings, many of them one-of-a-kind items especially for CEC families! In 2014, more than 225 people attended and sponsored the

event, bring in more than \$60,000. Supporting our Auction and Benefit is a fun way to give back to the CEC.

United Way

If you participate in your employer's United Way campaign, you can choose to designate the CEC for your contribution by writing Child Educational Center on your donation form. United Way donations contribute to the CEC's Tuition Assistance program, which enables low-income families to attend the CEC. When Caltech employees donate through the United Way, Caltech generously matches the contribution.

Governance and Leadership

The CEC is a nonprofit organization governed by its members. Legal membership in the organization is automatically conferred to all CEC staff and parents as well as to the members of the Board of Trustees.

The Board of Trustees is comprised of approximately 20 members, representing a broad community of directors, teachers, parents, and other individuals sharing the philosophy and goals of the CEC. The Board is legally responsible for the governance of the organization and helps to carry out the organization's vision and mission. Members are unpaid, and serve a three-year term. (Board members who are CEC parents fulfill all parent participation requirements through their service.) Each year, a nominations committee interviews candidates to fill any vacant seats and then makes their recommendations to the Board of Trustees.

An Annual Meeting takes place each summer, during which CEC members vote to confirm new board members and to approve any amendments to the organization's bylaws. As members of the organization, parents have a role of oversight, to ensure that the Board of Trustees upholds the vision, mission, and values of the CEC. Indeed, the decisions at the Annual Meeting are only legally binding if a minimum quorum of 20% of overall membership is represented. For this reason, families are requested to either attend the meeting or send in their votes by proxy. (You will receive a letter outlining this responsibility.)

Parents are encouraged to consider board service or to serve on one of its committees. Over the years, the CEC has benefited greatly from the knowledge and experience of its board. Board members have included professionals in the areas of human resources, law, fundraising, nonprofits, communications and financial planning. Their dedication has greatly enhanced operations of the CEC, for instance by helping to streamline its payroll process, strengthen its strategic planning and advise on administrative structures that represent nonprofit best practices. Board members work closely with CEC directors to build, refine and strengthen the organization.

CEC Leadership

Elyssa Nelson is the Executive Director and co-founder of the CEC. Elyssa provides organizational leadership and strategic planning.

Eric Nelson is Director of the CEC's Consulting and Educational Services and co-founder of the CEC. Eric delivers teacher training on the principles and practices of our Outdoor Classroom approach. He also provides professional consulting services to employers, municipalities and child care centers wishing to establish, maintain or improve child care services.

Lisa Cain-Chang is Senior Program Director. Lisa provides leadership in program philosophy and makes decisions about program practices and curriculum.

Our program directors supervise the teaching staff and provide leadership in the ongoing design, expansion, and implementation of program philosophy.

- **Erinn Levin** is the Director of the Infant/Toddler Program.
- **Ellen Veselack** is Director of the Preschool Program.
- **Allegra Inganni** is Director of the School-Age Programs.
- **Talar Tchoboian** is Assistant Director of the School-Age Program

Helen Ruppel is Director of Administration. Helen guides the administrative program functions of the CEC, supervises office staff, and provides support to parents, staff and the Board of Trustees.

Sheryl MacPhee is Director of Development & Communications. She directs the CEC's advancement, fundraising, and communication efforts.

The Child Educational Center is a private, nonprofit 501(c)3 organization, guided and governed by a Board of Trustees.

Contact Information

Our administrative offices and our Infant-Toddler and Preschool Program are located at the Oak Grove site, 140 Foothill Blvd, La Cañada 91011

YOU CAN REACH US:

by phone (818) 354-3418

by FAX (818) 393-4243

by e-mail at cec@ceconline.org

Or by email:

Elyssa Nelson, Executive Director (ernelson@caltech.edu)

Lisa Cain-Chang, Program Director (lisacain@caltech.edu)

Allegra Inganni, School-Age Program Director (allegra@caltech.edu)

Talar Tchoboian, Assistant School-Age Program Director (nellie@caltech.edu)

Helen Ruppel, Director of Administration (hruppel@caltech.edu)

Sheryl MacPhee, Director of Development & Communications (smacphee@caltech.edu)

SCHOOL-AGE PROGRAM SITES:

Oak Grove site (near JPL): 140 Foothill Boulevard, La Cañada (818) 354-3418

Caltech site: 250 & 256 Michigan Avenue, Pasadena (626) 795-0369

Westridge School: 324 Madeline Dr., Pasadena (626) 485-0193

St. Bede School: 4525 Crown Ave., La Cañada (818) 949-4378

La Cañada Elementary Schools:

Paradise Canyon: 471 Knight Way (818) 952-3751

La Cañada: 4540 Encinas Drive (818) 790-5473

Palm Crest: 5025 Palm Drive (818) 790-2347

A separate handbook detailing the Infant-Toddler & Preschool Program is available upon request or can be found online at ceconline.org

More information about the Child Educational Center can be found on our website at ceconline.org

Notice of Nondiscriminatory Policy

The CEC admits families of any race, color, national or ethnic origin to its program. It grants the same rights and privileges to all children and families at the CEC, and makes its programs and activities available to all. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin, age, sex, or disability, in the administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and loan programs, or other CEC programs.

The CEC thanks Diana W. Thompson for writing.