

WILDFLOWERS  
NATURE  
SCHOOL

PARENT HANDBOOK  
Preschool program

**2023-2024**

Location:

10570 Mill Station Road  
Sebastopol, CA 95472

Mailing Address:

P.O. Box 54  
Graton, CA 95444

Owner/Director/Mentor (teacher): Bev Buswell 707-479-1052

Owner/Farmer/Bookkeeper: Mark Buswell 707-481-2710

# **PHILOSOPHY**

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Education has come so far from the original, innate way that humans learned for millennium. Kids learned by discovery, experimentation and very keen awareness. With extended family always around in natural settings, kids used to observe, explore, question, and imitate their mentors in a natural setting. (Which is why we try to call our teachers here “mentors”.) At Wildflowers Nature School, we try to allow the space for that unfolding of inquisitiveness and exploration, for experiencing the wonder and the spirit in special moments in nature. For in those moments, lies the heart of education that will last a lifetime.

## **VISION STATEMENT**

Running with the natural exuberant wonder of a child, we nurture academic inquisitiveness, confidence, imagination, creativity, and a connection to, gratitude for and understanding of the world around them. This will become a solid place within each child that they can continually return to for growth, values, compassion, wisdom and joy in their lives. By fostering a love of nature, these children will naturally develop practices of stewardship, sustainability and respect for the beauty and fragility of the planet.

## **CATERING TO THE INDIVIDUAL**

We have a tremendous respect for the essence of many styles of education, including Waldorf and Montessori and Reggio. Each child is accommodated according to the child’s nature, the parents’ philosophy, and where the child will be going to school when they leave here. Some kids are driven to read at barely 4 without prompting and others are not very interested until age 7. We honor the interests of each child and what is important to each family. By using Maria Montessori’s concept of a “prepared environment”, children can choose work here according to their interests and developmental readiness. With our focus on educating outdoors and responding to nature, academia unfolds rather than is sought after.

## **NATURE AS THE INTEGRATED CONTEXT FOR LEARNING**

Nature is the common thread that ties our program together. We prep their brains for their future interpretation of math and writing symbols by interpreting tracks, symbols that represent a story that unfolded on the land. We present writing opportunities by making signs for the garden or farm stand. We learn science by following wonder and “solving mysteries” when we’re wandering the land. We learn about animals by interpreting the language of the birds. We understand physics by watching how things function in nature. Nature is integral to the human core, especially in early childhood. All their senses are heightened and our job is to help them not lose that.

## **HONORING CHILDHOOD**

We honor childhood, recognizing the need to be outdoors, for imaginary play, and the sense of wonder intrinsic to this age. We practice emergent curriculum (responding to kids’ interests, adjusting plans in the moment) and watch for the sensitive period of readiness children exhibit. We’re totally outdoors except for part of our rainy days (& when we need to use the facilities), just like children were meant to be.

## **BLENDING THE BEST OF MODELS**

Bev has training and experience in Montessori, Waldorf, Emergent Curriculum (Reggio), public school, and of course nature connection styles of education. About 1/3 of our children go on to Waldorf schools (including charter), about 1/3 to regular public schools, and about 1/3 split into private schools & homeschool programs. We find we accommodate all those families well, listening to what parents & kids want from their experience here. The concept of the prepared environment, though coined by Maria Montessori, is key to the simplistic availability of natural objects that brings out creativity in the Waldorf philosophy and key in Reggio to providing opportunities for the kids to follow their interests further. With the exception of some traditional public schools, these philosophies all require careful observation of the child, being ready to feed their thirst for knowledge without busting their beautiful bubble of childhood. In nature connection education, we talk about their “edge”, that magic place where a child is bursting with interest and readiness. We make sure they get opportunities to dance right on that edge without falling over it, enjoying their growth with pride and further interest, then pull back to comfort until we see that twinkle in their eye again. That’s where the excitement of learning is.

# **PROGRAM**

## **CLASS SIZE & RATIO**

We have a maximum of 12 children unless the child is 6 years of age or more and registered in kindergarten or older, and then we may have 14. There are 2 teachers whenever there are more than 6 kids. Occasionally we fill absentee days with siblings or alumni or kids who plan on attending the next year. Children this age are very prone to imitation and most people learn best by relationship. **It is unnatural for a child to be in large group of kids!** From my research, generally a group was 7-14 kids in native cultures. Most learning throughout human history was done by mentoring, with the learner working alongside, watching, copying, & asking questions of the mentor. Most didn’t feel they were being “schooled”, but rather thought they were just following someone who knew cool stuff. Large groups tend to create chaotic moments and bad habits that generate seeking of attention, differentiation and belonging. Instead, we join the child in co-explorations and nurture respect for each other and celebration of who each child is.

## **FOREST DAY**

We’ll do a field trip every Thursday this year. Most of the time, the day will be spent immersed in nature, with plenty of forest to play in. Ragle Park has given us permission to meet there every Thursday that we wish. LandPaths has also expressed a lot of interest in us utilizing their lands. The 1<sup>st</sup> month we’ll spend all of our Thursdays (except the very 1<sup>st</sup> day) at Ragle Park to help the kids get comfy with the expansiveness and to create a rhythm. Then perhaps we’ll do one day a month at a LandPaths site, or maybe we’ll go regularly there for a month to do a stewardship project there with the kids. We hope to visit many other different environments, plus a few non-nature field trips. Pick up and drop off will be at the field trip sites, though carpooling is STRONGLY encouraged.

## ACTIVITIES

Our days are filled with circle, exploring nature, caring for animals and plants, finding critters & tracks, doing primitive or nature arts and crafts, immersing in imaginative play, and developing a keen use of our senses. We have art projects often, both open ended (including available art projects on shelves they choose), as well as teacher-led art (such as Waldorf “Wet on Wet” watercolor or special artist guest led), and utilize resources found in nature often. We are always ready when opportunities emerge to incorporate learning the alphabet, math and Spanish. Some years we do an immersion time in Spanish, such as at snack time. If we have kids bilingual in other languages here, we will bring some of that language and culture into our program that year. Kids draw in their nature journals & dictate as the teacher writes about their picture. Mentors assist emerging writers to write so that by the end of their last year here many do a lot of their own writing. We have music at circle time every day. Usually Wednesday’s circle will feature Farmer Buzz with his guitar (or sometimes a banjo or ukulele). We progress from a focus on pure enjoyment to rhythm, melody, instruments, dance, and music genres. A couple of times/year the children perform some of the songs they’ve learned. Gardening provides wonderful opportunities to connect to nature, engaging all their senses including taste. They learn where their food comes from and practice **gratitude**, a cornerstone of our philosophy. In the fall, we are quite focused on the harvest season, including the kids setting up a farm stand for parents. Often some older kids write signs or play store, as our fall farm stand is a great opportunity for math and writing.

## RHYTHM

Rhythm is very important to young children at home, but especially important as they take their 1<sup>st</sup> steps into the world beyond their family. We strive for a balance between reassuring comfort of control in a world of big people who make decisions for them and honoring emergent play and wonder. There are so many teachable moments that we adults must stay flexible to meet the joy, opportunities, and comfort level of any given time. As the kids get more comfortable here, we may rearrange schedules if we see an improvement that better fits the needs of the kids. Below is a sample schedule, though it may change next year. The afternoon is moved up about 5 to 10 minutes on farm stand days (fall) when possible.

Here is a sample schedule:

9-9:30	Arrive, free play, short activity option such as gardening or art
9:30-10	Music
10-10:45	Snack, potty, etc.
10:50-12	Activity – art, farm stand prep, nature wanders, gardening, science, etc
12-12:30	Lunch
12:30-1:15	Free play, game, cleanup, etc.
1:15-1:45	Rest / Storytime (kids are asked to lay down for the story)
1:45-1:55	Goodbye circle
1:55-2	Kids gather stuff & go to gate to greet parents

## “GRACES AND COURTESIES”

The most important things to learn in any preschool environment are, as Montessori coined it, “graces and courtesies”. Preschool is their 1<sup>st</sup> big experience learning cooperation and social skills. We have a peace curriculum that pro-actively creates and reinforces an environment that supports and nurtures these skills, that enhances self-concept, and celebrates the most important value for lifelong happiness: **gratitude**. Every day we guide this by pre-emptive modeling of language and generosity. The peaceful community is necessary for learning to thrive.

## **DISCIPLINE** (“Peacemaking”)

With our pro-active peace curriculum, discipline is generally a non-issue. We have many tools for peace, starting with awareness by teachers of what’s going on in the kids’ world. From the “Peace Council” and talking stick, to recognizing Peacemakers, to role playing, puppet shows, songs, plays & stories, an important part of our program is giving children skills to navigate their emotions and social situations. When children have a conflict, we help them identify and communicate their feelings and needs, understand the others’, listen, and respond in a way that creates peace. We give them exact language sometimes & through repetition, within a couple of months, phrases can be heard like “It hurts my feelings when you...”, and “I feel...” Only about every 2-3 years do we have a child who needs to be escorted to “a peaceful space” (tipi, fort,) where he/she can “look inside himself”, sometimes with our help, sometimes by him/herself (always with us nearby and conversing afterwards). At that point, parent-teacher conferences are critical to create a unified team to assist the child in finding his/her peaceful true nature. If we feel a child is creating a situation where he/she or other children are repeatedly not safe, we’ll institute a strict policy of sending the child home immediately after each infraction. Parents need to be available to pick up in these situations. That’s only happened with 1 child in the 13 years of our school. If the behavior continues, a child may be dismissed from our program with the tuition pro-rated (no refund of deposit or enrollment fee).

## **MENTORS** (teachers)

Whenever we have more than 6 kids, we’ll have 2 mentors (what we call teachers here) with the children. Most likely Bev and 2 other mentors will trade off. Bev will teach Sept. to early December (though she’ll probably be gone a little in October) and from about April 21 to the end of the school year. Though Bev lives in the Tahoe in the winter, she stays connected, with lots of communication with parents and staff, creates the following year’s program and does registration, attends some staff mtgs via zoom, visits 1-3x, and even occasionally joins a parent-teacher conference by phone. While she is gone, we’ll have a carefully chosen licensed child care provider taking her place. We’ll try to involve her replacement some in the fall to connect with the kids & parents. Bev’s already in discussion with someone who would be a wonderful replacement. Our other teacher will be the constant with the kids, being with them all year long.

- Bev Buswell is the director, owner, and one of the mentors. She has a degree in Environmental Education, her Waldorf preschool and kindergarten training from Rudolf Steiner College, some Montessori training, and a class in Emergent Curriculum, as well as nature education classes such as Bird Language, Seeing With Native Eyes, The Art of Mentoring, and many primitive skills workshops. Bev has been involved in mentoring youth in some format for 45 years (since she was a teenager). She has experience as a Montessori teacher, Waldorf preschool teacher, garden teacher, park naturalist, environmental education director, teacher aide, reading specialist, special ed aide, scout leader, parent & grandparent. Bev brings creativity, spark, energy, leadership, and a plethora of enriching ideas to the school.
- Mark Buswell, aka Farmer Buzz, is our music teacher, bookkeeper, fixer upper and daily finder of cool stuff to show kids ☺. Buzz brings the practical, the special, the connection to the land & the birds. He has a magic ability to bring out the shy kids. The children love his stories and songs.

- SUBS: We've had many wonderful subs over the years. If you'd like to be on our sub list or know someone who'd like to, let Bev know. Parenting is the best experience and it's nice for the kids to have a familiar face as their sub (though many kids don't do well with parents present, many do well).

## **LICENSE**

There is no state license for a "preschool". That term is a cultural term for a type of program. There are licenses for "Day Care Centers" and "Family Child Care Homes". We are the latter. It takes a lot to get and keep such accreditation. We follow a tremendous amount of careful safety and health regulations that help keep your kids safer.

## **AGE REQUIREMENT**

Children must be 2 ½ years old by September 1<sup>st</sup> (maybe some rare exceptions). Kids must be potty trained by then as well. Multi-age classrooms provide beautiful opportunities for leadership and mentoring between students. If kids are going on to 1<sup>st</sup> grade straight from here, we'll consider accepting them on a case-by-case basis. If we get several who want to do their kindergarten year here together, we're more likely to accept kindergarteners.

# **WHEN & WHERE**

## **CALENDAR**

Our preschool program officially goes from September 7<sup>th</sup> to June 6<sup>th</sup> this year. See the next paragraph and the calendar for details on the 1<sup>st</sup> month. Our holidays are Gratitude week (Thanksgiving), 2 weeks at the end of December and the 1<sup>st</sup> week of January, 1 week in February, & 1 week in spring. We call our February break "Snow Week", as we encourage families to take at least a day to drive to the snow for children to play. (We strongly encourage family camping in each season, as that provides more opportunities for children to connect with nature than anything they'll ever do here!). We are committed to hosting various events that provide opportunities for families (most including grandparents & siblings) to gather, celebrate, sing, explore, share information, etc. as a collective, cohesive community. We have a Tea Party at the beginning of the year, a Harvest Festival in October, a "Gratitude Potluck" in November, a Solstice Spiral (& campfire songs & potluck) in December, a May Day celebration (short, school-time), a special Graduation ceremony in June, and *maybe* 1-2 other campfire potlucks with music. There are also field trips that parents & grandparents are welcome on.

## **DAYS & TIMES**

Tuesdays and Wednesdays will be at Wildflowers Nature School and Thursdays will be our field trip day. Tuesdays and Wednesdays will regularly end at 2pm and Thursdays will regularly end at 1pm. (See 1<sup>st</sup> month below).

## **SCHEDULE in the FIRST MONTH**

Especially since we lowered the entry age this year, it's important for the kids to get used to school at a comfortable pace. For the sake of those children that are a little hesitant, we'll all follow a slow warmup.

The week after labor day will consist of:

- "Practice School", just on Thursday 9/7 from 9:30-11:30, where a parent or other familiar adult attends along with the child
- 2 Community Workdays, on 9/3 and 9/9, where the kids experience comfortable free play with their new classmates while their parents are near.
- Parent orientation on Tuesday 9/5 from 4:30-6 (no kids at mtg, but one parent (or?) could experience the land with the kids, helping other parents to be undistracted by kiddos)

The 2<sup>nd</sup> week on will consist of our regular days, Tu & W on the Wildflowers campus & Th forest school. Our beginning time will always be 9am. Our ending times will be as follows:

- 9/12-14 will end at 12 noon. Lunch will not be needed.
- 9/19 will be our Tea Party. The kids will have their 1<sup>st</sup> lunch here and eat at 12. Parents can arrive between 12:15 and 12:30. (If child is hesitant, ONE parent can come at 12 to help their 1<sup>st</sup> lunch experience here). At about 12:30 we'll pull the magic veil off of the tea party and share healthy treats and tea together. The Tea Party is over at 1:15ish and all will go home by 1:30.
- 9/20 and 9/21 we'll end at 1pm.
- 9/26 on will follow our regular schedule

## **PARKING**

Wildflowers is located on an easement on a private drive that is shared with 2 other households. PLEASE, for this program to continue, it is imperative that everyone give the neighbors the utmost respect by **driving slowly and only parking in the driveway area of the school. Please pull as far in as possible to allow for the other cars to park in our driveway. Please don't park along the shared driveway!!!** It's fine to park in FRONT of the garage!

Be VERY CAREFUL pulling in & out, as children are hard to see. Keep children close to you when walking so that they are safe at pick-up & drop-off times.

It's against the law for you to leave a child in the car unattended. If you bring a sibling along, even a sleeping baby, you must take him/her out of the car with you when you're out of the car.

Apples, grapes, & roses on driveway belong to neighbors.

Please see important section under Tuition about the importance of Carpooling!!!!

## **PICK-UP AUTHORIZATION**

If someone's not listed on the "Identification and Emergency Information" form as someone your child can go home with, we will not be able to release your child to them unless the form is amended by you in writing. If your child is going to be picked up by someone other than the

other parent or a carpool parent on your form, please let us know (both on sign-in form & verbally) which of the authorized people will be picking up. Appropriate car seats are required. Parents carpooling should ask each other about insurance and carry info on the child & parents and carry written permission to authorize medical treatment needed in an emergency.

## **DROP-OFF & PICK-UP PROCEDURE**

Drop-off is at 9am all days. Pick-up is at 2pm on Tue & Wed. Pick-up is at 1pm on Thursdays. Please NEVER drop off or pick up a child without signing in or out and making sure you have visual and verbal acknowledgement by staff that you have dropped off or are leaving with a child. Please remind anyone else who is driving to do the same.

### **TUESDAYS & WEDNESDAYS**

**DROPOFF:** At 9am, bring child into schoolyard, put lunchbox and daypack in cubby, put water bottle in the basket, deliver children to us or let us know that they're here, say your goodbyes with little fanfare, then sign-in & read whiteboard for important messages for the day on your way out. After a couple of months, if your child gets responsible, capable, & comfortable with putting their stuff where it goes, it's ok to just let them in the gate **as long as you've made positively sure** a teacher knows that they have been delivered into our care. **If you arrive before 9am, please wait until 9 to get them out of the car so that teachers can finish preparing for the day!!**

**PICKUP:** Parents wait OUTSIDE of the gate. At 2pm, children will carry their own belongings as we escort them to the gate to meet parents. Please encourage kids to continue to carry at least some of their belongings and keep going right to the car. **This helps prevent problems from kids in that transition of supervision.** If parents are chatting and the kids are playing, they can easily push their boundaries by going into areas that are not set up for kids or worse, behind a car in the parking lot. It's fine to come 15 min. early to meet a parent to chat out of sight of the kids. Teach kids to never enter the pavement without being next to their parent /driver. Be very aware of your children near the parking areas. **Please try to be off school premises by 2:15.** Farm stand days (fall only) will be a little different, with us coming out the gate at 1:50 to prep the stand and sell veggies & apples, etc. to parents who *may* stay a little extra for the kids to fully experience running the farm stand.

### **THURSDAYS:**

THURSDAY drop-off is at 9am and pick-up is at 1pm and is to be done at the field trip location. For example, in September, we'll meet at Ragle Park playground at 9am. Pickup will be at 1pm at the Ragle Park playground. Sign-in and out is still very required! If you have an annual Regional Parks pass, it will be easier for you when we are meeting at a Regional Park. Practice your gratitude for parks & buy a pass if possible.

## **HEALTH & SAFETY**

### **TICKS**

We do immerse in nature. Please check your child for ticks EVERY SINGLE DAY. Long pants with tick repellent on them add protection (don't use DEET on their skin). Deer ticks are extremely small. Ask us for a "tick card" if you aren't positive how to ID them. If you find a tick, keep it moist and take it to Sonoma County Health Dept. for testing and let us know if it's a deer tick, please. If it bit your child (or you), see a Dr. versed in Lyme Disease as most doctors

dismiss the realities of the disease. One can be found through your local Lyme Disease support group (find online).

### **LOCAL OR NATIONAL EMERGENCIES**

We reserve the right to close the school if we believe that it is necessary for the safety of the children or adherence to law. If local schools (especially our closest one, Oak Grove), are closed, we'll lean towards taking their lead and closing. There have been 5 reasons in the past that we've needed to do that: 1) an outbreak of (possibly) swine flu, 2) local flooding & power outages, 3) unhealthy air quality, & of course 4) Covid. These are considered circumstances beyond our control and no reimbursement will be given to families for tuition paid unless any single continuous period (not cumulative per year) exceeds 9 continuous school days. Note: The Health Dept. said that if there's a local outbreak of a disease that kids are vaccinated for, kids without that vaccine may not be allowed to attend. See "Vaccines".

### **ILLNESS**

If a child has had any of the following symptoms in the last 24 hours before a school morning, please don't bring them to school: fever, sore throat, unusual fatigue, vomiting, upset stomach, stomach ache, diarrhea, skin problems, body aches, sneezing, coughing, eye or nose drainage or any other symptom you think might indicate they are just coming down with something. For your children's & other's health, please be ok with he/she having a **full day of wellness** before returning. Many times, a child comes back to school without that extra day of rest and is so tired they end up in tears to go home. Other times, the illness takes its next turn. If you have any questions or your child just tends to have a runny nose or a cough for days after an illness, **talk to the teacher**. If there have been contagious illnesses (flu, etc.) recently in your household, **please inform us**.

### **VACCINES**

As a licensed child care facility, we have to follow all the state health and safety regulations. Parents need to provide a copy of immunizations so that we can fill out the state mandated form we call "The Blue Card", an official immunization record we must have on file.

The only way now for your child to attend licensed child care or any school and not be vaccinated per state guidelines is by a "Medical Exemption". The law states:

**"For an immunization exemption to be valid, a parent must submit a request for a medical exemption through the Department of Public Health"**

<https://www.childcarelaw.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/Know-the-Law-About-Immunization-Requirements-for-Children-in-Child-Care-in-California-2.16.22.pdf>

If your child is unvaccinated, note that the County Health Dept. can require that your children not attend here during an outbreak. This is a risk you take for not vaccinating and lack of attendance will NOT be reimbursed.

For those who are on the fence about (or against) vaccinating, I recommend:

- Decide based your own medical situation and multiple scientific studies done by reputable institutions and researchers in an unbiased fashion. (PubMed is often good). The latest trend of ignoring real science lately goes contrary to an educated society.
- Talk to your well educated medical professional for their opinion. Perhaps your Dr. agrees that a previous reaction by your child or someone in the family warrants skipping that one and he'll write an exemption you can file with the state.

## COVID

It is really imperative that anyone on this property not bring Covid to all of us. Buzz and Bev are in their 60's with pre-existing conditions common at that age. Many kids may be in close contact with grandparents or great-grandparents.

Our 7 point covid policy is this:

1. **STAY AWARE** – Stay vigilant of both signs of illness and who you & your child are in contact with. You are not just analyzing your own risk, but the risk to ALL of us.
2. **ILLNESS** - ANY signs of illness will be cause for us to send the child home. (See “Illness” above). If the child OR a household member or anyone they’ve been in close contact with are showing signs of illness, it might be best to give the child a day off of school and the next morning test both the child and 1 adult in the house for Covid. If it’s negative and all signs of illness are gone, yes do bring them to school.
3. **QUARANTINE** – Some studies show that, after Covid, people can still be contagious 10 days, a few 21, and several say 14 days. If someone living in the household tests positive for Covid, please keep your child home for about 10 days, testing often. If your child tests positive, a 10 day quarantine is minimum. Every situation’s different, so let’s talk as it unfolds, to create a plan.
4. **TEST** – Any time you think you or your child might have been exposed, it would be thoughtful to do a home test just before sending them to school.
5. **MASKS** – Masks WORK. An N95 &, if worn perfectly, a KN95 or KF94, should reduce the amount of viral exposure by 94-95%. Cloth masks are about half of that. When you are in an indoor public place, or getting together with someone you think may have a lot of exposure, please think of all of us in deciding whether to wear a mask.
6. **GET FULLY VACCINATED** – The reason to vaccinate now is that if you are fully vaccinated and do get Covid, the illness is much milder and therefore the viral load you expose others to is lighter. Get your booster. Have your child boosted. See above on vaccines.
7. **HYGIENE** – It’s a good time to remind kids: cough or sneeze in your elbow, give people space, notice what you put in your mouth (something others touched or tasted, etc.), and wash hands before leaving home and immediately upon returning.

## MEDICATIONS / SUNSCREEN

If medication is necessary for your child (including SUNSCREEN!), please fill out the Medication Permission Form in the registration pkt. Please **DO NOT** give your child medicine to bring to school (**even sunscreen, vitamins, cough drops, herbs & homeopathic meds**)! We’ll only administer what is expressly authorized by parents on the form. We keep the following “medications” here in case children whose parents have authorized it need it: “Children’s Acetaminophen”; “Arnica” (homeopathic – calms most bigger owies); “Benadryl”; “Bactine”, & sunscreen. Please don’t rely on us to apply sunscreen, though. We suggest applying it every morning before sending them here. The reason we would use Benadryl is that since these kids may not have been exposed to something new like a bee sting, it’s possible they could go into a rare life or death anaphylactic reaction. Of course in such situations, calling 911 will be our 1<sup>st</sup> action, calling parent 2<sup>nd</sup>, and then if Benadryl is on the signed form, giving Benadryl.

## **WORKING FARM**

Wildflowers is a working farm. Please watch kids at pickup & dropoff to ensure they do not get into farm implements, tractor, etc. In the future, we may get farm animals again. If so, whenever they're visiting the animals, be there right next to your child. Farm kids get used to the life cycle of animals. They may witness births or deaths. They may find dead animals if we find dead gophers or a chicken killed by a racoon. We may have farm animals that we kill (never while kids are here) and eat. Many kids under 5 actually seem to not be bothered by this, but if they are not exposed to it under 5, they can have a hard time with it later in life. Seeing where food comes from (both animal & plant) is so important. If you're vegetarian, please note that on Health form so we can honor that with your child.

## **TREE CLIMBING**

The tall redwoods are closed to climbing. If your child had a sibling here years ago, please remind them when they're here, as they'll remember climbing them. The percent of time the kids put weight on dead branches has taught us that they just aren't yet consistently safe climbers to go that high up. PLEASE, for the sake of their nature education, take them to good climbing trees and coach them in tree safety: 1) Max height (you decide but never encourage higher than they go on their own), 2) "Is that branch alive or dead?", 3) "Is that branch as big as your arm?", & 4) "Is your foot or hand right next to the trunk?". We shorten those last 2 sometimes to "As big as your thigh or in the Y". We will do the same. Together, we can teach this important part of nature connection.

# **SELF CARE**

## **HANDWASHING**

Please have your kids wash their hands either right when they leave home, or better yet, right when you arrive at school. We have an outdoor sink with warm water. If they learn the same procedure at home & school, it's easier. (If you prefer a different system, let us know). This is the hand washing procedure we teach: 1. Roll up sleeves, 2. **Wet hands**, 3. **THEN** Apply 1 pump of soap or roll bar in hands 3 turns, 4. Make bubbles, 5. Use bubbles to scrub hands, 6. Rub hands together under water, 7. Rub dry. Getting hands wet before applying soap teaches them a) a method that works whether it's bar or liquid soap, and b) not to wash the soap off before using it to scrub.

## **POTTY TRAINING**

By the beginning of school, children must be potty trained and comfortable using the toilet away from home. Please either have your child use the bathroom *right before* leaving home or, better yet, take them to the school bathroom upon your arrival. Children will be taught to let a teacher know if they need to go to the bathroom & we'll take him/her there. We'll assist younger children with reminders to "check in with their body" and we schedule a regular potty visit for most. We understand in September some kids are freshly potty-trained so that in the 1<sup>st</sup> couple of months we will wipe after a BM **if** they or the parent asks, but we always add instruction how to wipe themselves. For instance, we'd do 1<sup>st</sup> & last wipe & they do the 2<sup>nd</sup>. We teach them to look at the TP and, if it's still dirty, to do more wipes. The hope is that, with parent and school communicating, they'll learn to do it all by themselves by October. If your child doesn't wipe themselves, we highly recommend you begin this at home now!

## **“DO IT MYSELF”**

In a society of so many 1-2 children families, many kids are very used to parents doing things for them way beyond necessity. It's best to set them up for success, express confidence, and then step away. Most need a continuum over time, from assistance to self-sufficiency. Here at school, they will put their own shoes & coat on & off, go to the bathroom & wash hands without our physical help, & put their belongings where they go. At lunchtime, they'll spread out their placemat, open their lunchbox on it, wait until we have a moment of silence, feed themselves, put their leftovers back in their lunchbox & compost, shake their placemat in the trash & put it away, & put their lunchbox in their cubby. At the end of the day, kids pack their backpack & carry it, their jacket & lunchbox to the gate. Please do not rescue them when they drop their pack 20 feet from the gate and say “YOU carry it”. Set up these “practical life” activities well at home. (Read Montessori in the Home). Give them the gift of rhythm, pride, and a sense of capability and confidence, by taking the time for gentle instruction, a “prepared environment”, and a lot of patience. (Note: Of course there are times we need to honor true tiredness in little ones and offer to help. We give plenty of nurturing, too.) Often parents need our assistance in getting kids to cooperate in rhythms such as caring for belongings and dressing for the weather. Do not hesitate to ask! Parents and teachers are a team here!

## **SAYING GOODBYE**

It can be a delicate issue for some children whether their parent stays for a while and how long. If a child does not know when the parent is leaving, there can be constant stress waiting for that moment and he/she may never fully settle. **Be very careful not to let them know you are worried about how they will do. Be matter-of-fact & smiling, like it's no big deal.** Children take a parent's nervousness as a signal that it might not be safe. ***That's why over-protective parents cause insecure children.*** We pride ourselves on many successes here of kids who had strong separation anxiety, learning gently and securely that it's ok to be without mom & dad and then reaping the rewards. The majority of children are fine from the 1<sup>st</sup> day. Of the remainder, most let go without tears within 2 weeks. Most tears upon goodbye last about 2-3 minutes. If you have a child who may have a concern about your departure, let's make a plan together *ahead*. Children are very different in what helps them with goodbye. It's important to tell your child what will happen and then do that exactly. Play dates with other children and spending time with them gardening, etc. here really help. I'm happy to put you in touch with some of the parents of kids in the past that had serious cases of separation anxiety that we assisted to adjust well here.

## **WHAT TO BRING (& not to bring)**

**Please label everything your child brings to school.**

### **WATER**

Each child should have a water bottle **that will not drip when on its side** and have their name on the bottom AND top in permanent marker. Your child should be able to open it & close it easily. Please remember to BRING IT EVERY DAY and, when arriving, please put water bottle into the basket. I suggest leaving a spare in the car in case you forget it.

## CLOTHING

Second-hand stores and garage sales should have most everything they need except rain pants, which can be found at Sebastopol Hardware and online shops (google forest school or outdoor school clothing). We spend almost all of our time outside every day, rain or shine, cold or hot. To ensure your child is protected from the elements, and feels comfortable to fully engage in play and exploration (including mud!), please have appropriate clothes available:

1. *All seasons (every day)*: Please provide one full change of clothes in a daypack (for outside) and one full change in a box (we provide) that will stay at school. Please remember to replace spares that come home.

2. *May, June, September, October (& any heat spell)*:  
Keeping cool - shorts & t-shirt or summer dress, swimsuit & sunhat.

**3. Nov. to May (AND any foggy day or when it's rained within 2 weeks):**

a. Keeping dry - **rain boots & rain pants** are needed (the grass, slide, chairs, trees, etc. will be wet with dew. Once dry, we'll help them take them off.) If it's raining, a waterproof raincoat is required. (Tip: Ball cap under hood keeps hood off their face.)

b. Keeping warm – a real winter jacket, double socks, hat & gloves, waterproof raincoat,

**In cold weather, 2 pairs of socks or one very thick pair should be worn under rain boots. A winter jacket is not just a fleece jacket or a lined raincoat.** It should have a good deal of padding to insulate the child from cold. Long underwear or tights underneath clothes is **essential** in less than 45 degrees. Layering is great, as temperatures can be in the 30's at 9am and then 70's at 2pm. If there are layers we might not notice, please let us know so we can remove long johns, etc. as the day unfolds.

4. SHOES: **From Nov.-May, most mornings the dew on the grass will soak through most shoes in 15 minutes. During those months, kids must come in waterproof boots here.** However, it's not a bad idea, for comfort and agility, to bring a change of shoes for later in the day (it's the kid's responsibility to decide to change, though). Ease of getting shoes on & off is important as we take shoes off if we go inside or sometimes at circle & story time. Hiking boots or work boots are great when it's not too wet outside, as kids can avoid wet feet, but still have good agility, **but they are very hard to get on & off**. There are a few types of waterproof shoes that are easy to get on & off that kids can still be agile in (Mucks lowtops, etc.). If you are not comfortable with your child being barefoot, please let us know and we'll do our best to honor your preference. Otherwise, yes we allow bare feet on warm days.

## TOYS FROM HOME / SHOW-N-TELL

To avoid conflicts, we ask that toys from home stay home. However, we think that "show and tell" is important for kids to develop social confidence and verbal literacy. We'll have a rotation of Show-and-Tell days. On your child's day, she/he can bring in items **that teach us something** (nature items, unique pets, books, small machines, antiques, musical instruments, etc.). **No toys or anything with TV/movie characters, please**. Small items from the natural world belonging to the season we are celebrating (or to all seasons) can also be donated or loaned to our Nature Shelves/Table at any time and/or shared in circle, as well.

## FORMS

The following are the forms you need to turn in no later than Parent Orientation. If they're not here BEFORE THE FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL, you & your child will have to leave to get them.

1. Registration Form ( <i>application can do</i> )	6. Identification and Emergency Information
2. Contract & Waiver ( <i>which references Calendar &amp; this document</i> )	7. Consent for Emergency Medical Treatment
3. Health & Safety Information ( <i>CA state form</i> )	8. Acknowledgement of receipt of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Notification of Parents' Rights</li><li>• Caregiver Background Check Process</li><li>• Consumer Awareness Information</li></ul>
4. Wildflowers Health & Safety Form	
5. Immunization Record ( <i>"blue card"</i> )	9. Food Program Enrollment Form
	10. (optional) Medication Permission (see medication in "Health & Safety" above)

## FOUND OBJECTS AT SCHOOL

Anything found on the property belongs to the school & owners, including but not limited to arrowheads and other historical artifacts, special rocks, etc. We do encourage nature collections by children so there will be plenty of natural objects they're allowed to take.

## LUNCH

Lunch should be in non-disposable containers that are re-usable (baskets, boxes, cloth bags, zip-arounds, etc.). They should have no advertisements or characters from TV, movies, or video games, or intense graphics on them. Note: We used to have them put their food on a plate, wash their plate, etc. With most lunchboxes now opening up as a big compartmentalized plate basically, we are giving up the complication and waste of a plate. Instead, to create a tidier eating area for them, we'll be setting the lunchbox on a placemat. Would anyone like to volunteer to make us placemats and napkins this year??

## SUSTAINABLE EATING

From the most local of our environments (our bodies) to the most global, the most sustainable food system thrives on fresh, locally produced foods. Please try to send zero waste lunches. For instance, instead of buying packaged individual items, you could buy in bulk and put in washable containers (such as a compartmentalized lunchbox). The recent realization that there will soon be more trash in the ocean than fish should be an alarm for changing our ways. Any waste coming to school with child will go home with child. There's a link for "Wildflowers Food Policy" on our website. Please read it to adhere to the philosophies of our program.

## SNACK

Once we receive everyone's health forms, we'll assess (based on food sensitivities) whether to do a shared snack or not. If there are just a few gluten free kids and nothing more, we'll probably create a snack rotation chart for Tuesdays and Wednesdays and kids can take turns bringing a snack for everyone to share on those days. On our Forest school day, Thursdays, children should bring their own snack. Please always pack snacks in a separate container from the lunchbox so that they don't eat all their lunch at snack. If you're vegetarian, please note that on Health form so we can honor that with your child. We've accommodated (more like embraced!) raw foodists, vegans, paleos, and many other diets here beautifully.

## **BIRTHDAYS AND HOLIDAYS**

We'll have celebrations of gratitude, seasons, and the cycle of life, as well as explore holiday traditions from cultures around the world. Using a Montessori tradition, each child on their birthday will carry a globe around a "sun" (usually a candle) for each year they are born. Family members are welcome to be present for the celebration, but it's fine if they don't (about half do). A "treat" that day *may* be brought by the birthday child's family, but it's very important that it's a healthy treat, doesn't create much waste, and doesn't require us to provide dishes. See our Wildflowers Food Policy on website for guidelines. Also please write ingredients out for us. If you want all kids to be able to eat it, ask about allergies. Birthday party invitations may be passed out at school **IF** ALL the students here are invited.

## **SCREEN TIME**

Yes, this is under "What not to bring". **Children who watch TV and video games really DO bring their screen time effects into the school environment and impact other children.**

Then school has a culture in which play is based on that, drawing them & other kids in to that media world. **Kids who watch more than about 1-2 times a month** spend a lot of energy in their make-believe and public speaking time working out the fantasies they have seen because 1) they're in an age of imitation, and 2) often they need to act out disturbing scenes to process them. Their subconscious may absorb it as if it actually happened in their living room. Every minute they're watching TV they are wiring their brains for thinking passively, being indoors, & needing high media stimulation instead of creatively interacting with the real world. My recommendation is no screens under 5. But I understand that for many, there are occasions when just preparing dinner seems impossible without help and help isn't there. So use sparingly and make every minute count. For instance, shows of real animals are helpful, as that's often the only way to see many of the animals we discuss & track. Beware of sensationalized nature shows. Many kids truly come here afraid they'll be eaten in the forest. If you can find shows on some of our local animals, insects, or birds, that's great. The greatest threat to returning our kids to the nature-based life children have had for thousands of years is today's electronic-based culture. As a group mentoring children to bring them closer to nature, we can create support structures for parents and kids to assist each other to unplug in a plugged-in world. Let's support each other in real-world immersion.

# **COMMUNICATION & COMMUNITY**

## **DAILY COMMUNICATION**

Personal info that might be needed on some mornings, such as whether a child didn't eat breakfast, had a "melt-down", stayed up very late the night before, has a runny nose, etc. is best communicated verbally with us. If anything major occurs (such as divorce, death in the family, etc.), please try to call us the day before school. It can be hard to pay full attention when parents are coming & going at drop-off time. If you need to contact a teacher during the school day, the best method is by text, but no guarantee we will check texts during class either. If there's an emergency, call & text all of our numbers, including Buzz's. One of us is bound to see it. Please consider that any email sent may not be seen for 24 hrs.

## **CONFERENCES**

Parent-teacher conferences are encouraged at least twice a year. September and December or January are good times, but feel free to schedule a conference at any time during the year. It's recommended that both parents attend and children do not, so please plan ahead. One good way to do this is for 2 families to trade off and care for kids on the land here, away from our conference spot.

## **CHATTING**

Having time for parents and teachers to chat together is important in keeping an ongoing open communication process so that we are a team educating and caring for your child here. Daily check-ins are often important. Having time for parents to chat with each other can be an important part of building community. But please keep 5 things in mind: 1) Never speak about sensitive matters or children in front of children. 2) Unless it's important about that very day, please reserve chatting with teachers for after school and reserve any morning chatting with parents to outside of the area that we are settling kids in (outside gate, etc.). At the beginning of school, it is best for our focus to be on helping children settle in. 3) Please respect that teachers need to get to their afternoon routines, so if you need more than about 10 minutes, it's best to schedule some time together or at least ask if it's an ok time to speak more at length. 4) Afterschool & especially at events, please keep your children under your watchful eyes at all times!!!! 5) Please be mindful of beneficial speech, avoiding gossip and negativity.

## **FAMILY AS RESOURCE**

Children, families, & staff all benefit when family members come to school to share music, stories, foods, traditions, cultural information, hobbies, interests, skills or careers. Grandparents are a great resource, bringing the elder in as a revered resource. A great way for kids to be exposed to cultural geography is if every family adopts a week to present a country (maybe their country of heritage or just one they're interested in). We had one set of grandparents teach us Greek dancing. Another came in traditional Korean clothing and served us an amazing feast including gifts of training chopsticks for all the kids. But we benefit from almost any presentation, from sharing a music box grandpa made to telling stories of Uncle Joe's farm to playing a balalaika to teaching the kids 3 words in a new language. PLEASE share your rich cultural heritage. If you don't know it, make this your opportunity. Or present a country you just visited.

## **VOLUNTEERING**

Families are expected to attend at least 3 of the community workdays, and to sign up to help prepare for or clean up after at least one school event per year. On some of our unusual Thursday field trips, having volunteers may be necessary. Offers to volunteer, whether during school to help kids' activities, or during non-school hours to help with projects, are greatly appreciated. We can always use help in the garden and nature trail, great arenas for helping WITH your proud child practicing stewardship. Some families have cured their kids' separation anxiety with such happy proud immersion time together, parent and child on the land. We also have projects we'd love a donation of, such as sewing placemats and napkins for the kids, or creating educational materials.

## COMMUNITY WORK DAYS

A core value of this program is to build and foster a sense of community among the Wildflowers' families. Families are asked to attend most of the community work days if possible. We plan on doing some stewardship for LandPaths as well this year.

- Strong communities create strong children. Shared experiences cultivate friendships and deepen ties among the Wildflowers' families, giving our "selves" a sense of place.
- Stewardship, caring for the land, is core to our philosophy. Our workdays are critical in making that part of the culture here.
- The Workdays provide a unique opportunity for parents and family members to spend time with their children in communal stewardship at Wildflowers. The children tend to show pride, as they show off "their" school to their parents and tend the land together.

Accordingly, we have set aside several workdays throughout the year. **We expect that every Wildflowers' family can commit to participating in at LEAST 3 Workdays per school year.** We understand that there are times when your family has commitments that conflict with these workdays. If so, please ask Bev about possibilities for alternative, flexible work assignments. If you feel the workdays are something you cannot generally do, you could opt for a one-time \$200 donation to the school instead, which we could use to pay for the work you might have contributed. We also offer "mini workdays", shorter, often on weekdays, and often on short-notice. Grandparents, relatives, siblings, and friends are always welcome at our workdays. It's a great way for next year's families to start to experience the school.

## **ADMISSIONS**

Procedure to apply is:

1. If your family has not had a child in our school, at least one parent & the child must take a tour of the school (though any other family members are welcome to come, too).
2. Send us your application (2 pages) by **Mar. 24th**. You could drop off, snail mail, or email the application (or send a link to a google doc). If you can get us both electronic & physical copies, that's best. If not, just let Bev know how you sent it to ensure we receive your application. Mail to **P.O. BOX 54, GRATON, CA 95444**. Email to [info@wildflowerkids.org](mailto:info@wildflowerkids.org). Either Paypal the \$35 application fee to [info@wildflowerkids.org](mailto:info@wildflowerkids.org) or mail a check to the address above.
3. Spaces are given with the 1<sup>st</sup> priority being to create a balanced class (gender, age, etc.), and 2<sup>nd</sup> priority being previous involvement with Wildflowers (such as alumni, siblings, events, classes, etc.). Our system is not "1<sup>st</sup> come, 1<sup>st</sup> serve" for acceptance, nor waitlist, but rather by what's best for the children to thrive together.
4. We'll inform parents of our decision by about Mar.31st. If you apply after that, admission will depend on whether there are any spaces. We may leave a spot or 2 for a particular demographic (i.e.; 4 year old boy, 3 year old girl, etc.) to get the right balance.
5. If you don't get a space, you'll be put on the waitlist. Don't despair! If you can hang in there for a month, something might open up. Typically many spaces that were offered wind up having to be passed on for one reason or another and then we offer that space to a matching demographic (gender/age) on the waitlist.

Note: We accept applications and students year-round and tuition can be pro-rated.

# **TUITION**

## **VALUE**

In the 3 years since we closed in March 2020, we only raised our rates \$50/mo, assuming most take the 3 day carpool installment rate. The 2 day rate is only \$5/mo more than 2019-20! We are not your average preschool. We have 12 children, not twenty-something. We always have amazing highly trained teachers with extensive education in related fields. We are the only licensed nature school in our county on their own land that kids can build a connection with. We have over 4 ½ acres for kids to run, climb, and explore in, including forest, field, orchard, and gardens, and backing to open space that often the owner gives us permission to explore, too. The kids bond to this special property they see as “their school”, doing stewardship activities, seeing it over seasons and usually years, and crafting using elements of their land here. Nurturing community is a core value of our program and activities to support this are built in throughout the year at no additional cost. (see “Calendar” on p.6) We host many school events, as well as amazingly enriching field trips such as exploring Bohemia Preserve, or everyone’s favorite, our Day of the Dead trip to the cemetery, most of which parents and grandparents are welcome. Alumni are part of the Wildflowers Family forever and attend many of our events. But most of all, we offer the chance for your child to be in a community of children that spend our days outside, just as their inner spirits call for.

## **WORK TRADE**

We may be able to arrange, but only for the 1<sup>st</sup> few people who ask, to do a work trade for a portion of the tuition. There won’t always be word available, but most months it can amount to a good deal of tuition. A work-trade is a volunteer position that we pay an hourly stipend for. We honor all human beings as being equally worthy of their time so trade is at a flat rate of \$19/hour regardless of task. (It’s possible if one’s extremely experienced, such as an electrician doing work an electrician is needed for, that we give a wage closer to market rate for that work.) The worktrade record is turned in by the parent with the associated reduction in the following month’s tuition installment. If hours are not put in, full tuition’s due. If the year’s tuition was prepaid, we can pay the stipend outright.

## **PUBLIC SUBSIDIES**

If you are low income (or maybe even lower middle income), there is public money to help you pay for child care! Please contact either River to Coast Children’s Services (Russian River & Occidental) at <https://rccservices.org/> or Community Child Care Council (“4C’s”) at <https://www.sonoma4cs.org/> to see if you qualify. If you do, let Bev or Buzz know and we’ll register with them and be paid directly by them. Usually they pay a lower amount than most programs charge and then you pay the difference directly to us.

## **REGISTRATION FEE**

There is a one-time \$300 registration fee for new students. When multiple siblings are attending the same program, the 2<sup>nd</sup> registration fee is \$150. It is usually paid at the time of paying the deposit.

## **LATE PICK-UP FEE**

If parents pick up their child more than 10 minutes late without previous arrangement, please put \$10 for every 10 minutes you are late into the donation can (or if not out, then put in "CarTax" can). If we don't see this being honored, you may get a bill. If parents are late without previous arrangement more than 4 x/ school year, we may terminate your contract.

## **DEPOSIT / TERMINATION OF CONTRACT**

Once your application's accepted, you have 10 days to pay the deposit to secure the spot. The deposit is 10% of the annual fee and fully applies to the annual tuition required. For instance, if you pay by installment, the deposit is your 1<sup>st</sup> installment. If you pay the year ahead, it's 10% of that annual tuition. If the deposit is paid to reserve a space and then the family decides that the child will not be attending after all, the **deposit shall be retained**. This is a commitment to a full school year of preschool. Early withdrawal after school starts does not relieve one of the responsibility of upholding the contract for the rest of the annual tuition. This is a contract for services. If you withdraw after paying your deposit, IF we can fill her spot, in addition to the pro-rated time the child attended plus the time the spot was vacant, we will retain the full deposit as compensation for the extraordinary amount of time it takes to fill an empty spot, especially after school started. We're sorry, but, 90% of the time, cancellation winds up costing us way more than the deposit was in lost tuition until we get the space filled with the right child, which often takes a couple of months. We reserve the right to only fill a vacant spot with a similar age and gender of child or even a personality match for a classmate that the one that dropped out was filling. We choose our class very carefully, making sure when possible that we have a balanced class and everyone has a likely buddy.

## **LATE PAYMENTS**

Whether we bill or not, any bills left unpaid will incur a **late charge of \$30 on the 10<sup>th</sup>** of every month. If you're having financial difficulties, please contact Bev or Buzz to discuss options. On the 10<sup>th</sup> of a 2<sup>nd</sup> month of not paying installments, unless prior arrangements are made, the student will not be allowed to return to school until the bill is paid. However, if payments are not completed by May 15<sup>th</sup>, unless other arrangements have been made quite in advance, child will be withdrawn from the school and not allowed to attend graduation and end-of-the-year campfire. Anyone leaving an unpaid bill for 2 months after leaving our school can expect to be taken to small claims court. It's our hope these measures will not be necessary with **early communication, creativity, & mutual respect**.

## **RESERVE RIGHT TO CANCEL**

If not enough children are signed up for a particular day (Tu, We, or Th), field trip, event, etc., we reserve the right to cancel that day, event, etc. (with appropriate refund) or offer it at a higher rate. In the extremely rare chance that there are any unforeseen circumstances (including, but not limited to, licensing ruling, insurance availability, natural disaster, serious illness in family, etc.) that makes it absolutely necessary that the school needs to close, we reserve the right to do so and fully refund pro-rated tuition.

## **INSUFFICIENT FUNDS**

Bounced checks will incur a fee of \$35. If more than 2 checks bounce in the year, we have the option of requiring the rest of the year's tuition be paid up front or possibly asking the family to give up their spot to someone on the waitlist who has sufficient funds.

## BILLING/ RECEIPTS

Most months, we do not do regular billing nor give receipts unless requested. If you pay in cash, please ask for a receipt or have us sign one you make upon delivery of cash or send text immediately after delivery to the person you gave it to so we have a record of everyone acknowledging the amount. If you're not sure what you owe, a bill can be requested with 7 days' notice. Don't hesitate to ask. Occasionally we will bill those who have forgotten to pay, but it may be after a late fee's charged. All installments are due on the 1<sup>st</sup> of each month.

## ANNUAL FEE / INSTALLMENT PLAN

Our tuition is an annual fee, not a monthly fee. Because it can be hard to pay that all at once, we offer an **option** of paying it in an installment plan. It is important to understand the concept of an installment. Installments are payments made on one fee instead of paying the whole fee at once. Most installment plans call for a specific amount due on specific dates. **Installments are not an attempt to charge by the month.** Some months have vacations and some don't, but the installment is the same. We divide the annual fee into 10 payments and add an administrative fee of about 5%. The 1<sup>st</sup> installment is paid as a deposit to secure the space and the other 9 are due on the 1<sup>st</sup> of the month from September to May.

## DISCOUNTS

- FULL PAYMENT UP FRONT: \*about **5%** discount if you pay the full annual fee by September 5 (tuition chart below shows the discounted rate).
- SIBLING DISCOUNT: **5%** discount on the 2<sup>nd</sup> child.  
See p18 for sibling discount on registration fee.

(\*-"about" because I round up or down to the nearest \$5 so it's easier for you to remember.)

## WILDFLOWERS NATURE SCHOOL TUITION 2023-24

<b>CAR POOLING IS REQUIRED FOR THIS RATE</b>	
<b>3 days</b>	
Year pd by 9/5/23 (5% off)	7115
Monthly installment (10)	750
<b>2 days at Wildflowers</b>	
Year pd by 9/5/23 (5% off)	5525
Monthly installment (10)	585
<b>2 days (1 day ends at 1p &amp; is field trip)</b>	
Year pd by 9/5/23 (5% off)	5090
Monthly installment (10)	540

## CARPOOL RATE

Please carpool out of: **1) duty to the planet, 2) compassion for the neighbors, 3) wanting to contribute to safety of our parking lot, 4) helping dropoff & pickup to flow smoothly, 5) building community, 6) helping our kids learn to be brave, friendly, and open to new situations, and 7) making new friends.** As soon as acceptances are sent out and deposits received, we'll create a class contact list. You'll have some networking time to arrange carpools at our workdays and at the Parent Orientation. Our base rate assumes you commit to carpooling every day. If one family drops off & picks up another family's child at the same time as theirs, that's a "carpool". We give September as a grace period. Your child may need the comfort of a parent in those 1<sup>st</sup> weeks. But as soon as your child is comfortable going to school in a friend's car, PLEASE begin carpooling as soon as possible.

### DAILY CAR TAX:

We've had problems in the past of people taking the carpool rate and slowly discontinuing carpooling. There will be days that your carpool falls through – illness, Dr. appt right after school, etc. So (after the September grace period) we'll put a "car tax" can out and for every car added to the road that day, you can pop \$5 in the can per leg of a carpool (\$10/day). If you prefer to add the car tax to next month's installment or pay a few at once on Paypal, that's fine, but please let us know your plan that day by either jotting it on the sign-in sheet or dropping a note to us in the car tax can. Generally, the family that cancelled the carpool would pay the car tax, but however you two work it out is fine. You may want to interview your carpooling choices for compatibility of longevity of the carpool. If you need to change your tuition plan to stop or start carpooling, we can change it mid-year once, pro-rating.

**NON-CARPOOL RATE:** Do not feel bad if you can't carpool. Everyone's situation is different. But to try and get those who can carpool to do so, we need to add a financial incentive.

<b>NO CARPOOL RATE</b>	About 8% more
<b>3 days</b>	
Year pd by 9/5/23 (5% off)	7685
Monthly installment (10)	810
<b>2 days at Wildflowers</b>	
Year pd by 9/5/23 (5% off)	5970
Monthly installment (10)	630
<b>2 days (1 day ends at 1p &amp; is field trip)</b>	
Year pd by 9/5/23 (5% off)	5500
Monthly installment (10)	580

**POLICIES & PROCEDURES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE \*\***