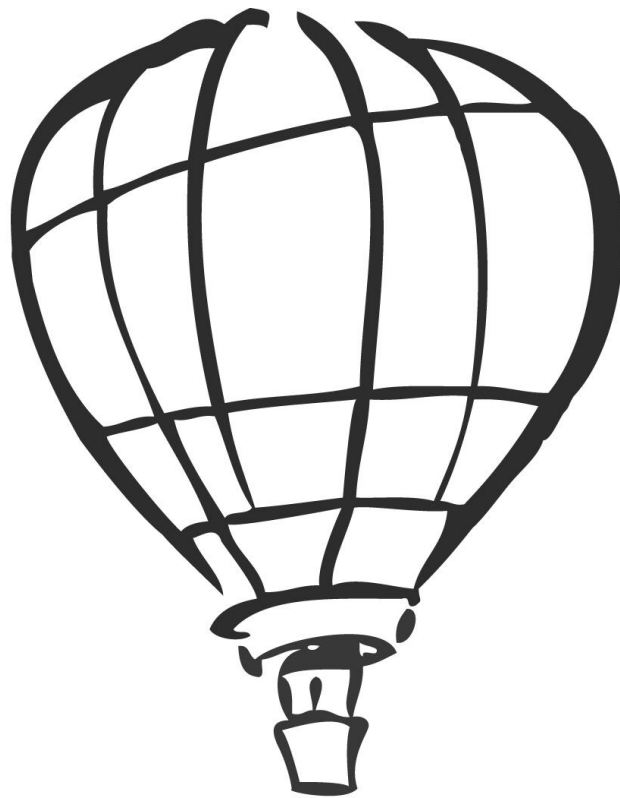


# Parents and Children Learning Together

<http://www.rcpreschool.org>

2009-2010



Redmond Parent  
Cooperative Preschool

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RPCP Handbook 2009-2010

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## **Redmond Parent Cooperative Preschool (RPCP) Mission**

RPCP's mission is to foster the development of a strong family unit by involving parents in the early education of their children and in their own education as parents.

## **Welcome to Preschool!**

Welcome to RPCP. We hope that you and your child have a great year with us.

RPCP is a cooperative Parent Education Program, affiliated with Lake Washington Technical College (LWTC). Our primary goal is to supply you with useful parenting information, while at the same time providing a creative and nurturing environment in which your child can grow and learn. At RPCP, our children learn from their environment, each other, their teachers, and other adults. With parents and teachers working together, and parents helping and learning from one another, all of our children will benefit.

You make it work! The success and value of any parent cooperative Preschool depends on the conscientious effort of each parent. Under the guidance of LWTC instructors, parents gain insight into the behavior of their child in particular, as well as children in general. RPCP is a serious educational project for both parent and child, requiring dedication and commitment of time, talent, and energy of each individual member. The benefits for you and your child will more than compensate for the day-to-day work involved in keeping the Preschool functioning.

RPCP strives to provide quality education and serves families from diverse backgrounds. Joining co-op means joining a network of supportive families who are also working to give their children superior learning experiences while continuing to grow themselves. Co-op parents have the privilege of seeing their children interact in a classroom setting. Co-op children benefit from witnessing the spirit of mutual helpfulness modeled by theirs and other parents.

Monthly parent education classes are designed to help you increase your understanding and enjoyment of your child's development. Your weekly involvement in the Preschool classroom allows you to share new friends and experiences with your child. We also have books in our library (both parent education and children's titles) that you can check out. Each month you will have the opportunity to purchase top quality books through our Scholastic Book Program.

RPCP is run by a Board of Trustees. The Board consists of ten executive Board members and a Parent Leader from each class. All positions are voluntary and held by members of the cooperative. A copy of the RPCP Standing Rules and Bylaws can be found at <http://www.rcpreschool.org> for your review. The Board generally meets the 4th Monday of each month at the school. The Board of Trustees is here to serve you, and welcomes your input.

We are looking forward to an exciting year, and we hope that you and your child will enjoy and benefit from this program.

*Board of Trustees,  
Redmond Parent Cooperative Preschool*

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## **RPCP Overview**

This section provides a brief overview of the Preschool and its teachers and students. For more details, read the Standing Rules and Bylaws found at <http://www.rcpreschool.org>.

### ***The Preschool***

RPCP is affiliated with Lake Washington Technical College. The caregiver attending preschool with the child is a student at LWTC. Every Preschool parent takes on several responsibilities in addition to being a LWTC student to ensure that the Preschool functions smoothly.

In addition, some parents run for and are elected as officers to a Board of Trustees. The Board manages the daily operations of RPCP and establishes policies and procedures. Your representative on the Board is your Parent Leader.

RPCP operates as a non-profit 501(c)3 corporation within the State of Washington under IRS rules. RPCP is a charitable corporation for which LWTC assumes no fiscal management responsibilities and is managed by the RPCP Board of Trustees. RPCP is eligible to receive charitable contributions from companies that offer matching programs to their employees (e.g. Microsoft, Boeing, etc.).

### ***The Teachers***

The teacher serves as an instructor for the parents and as a teacher for the children. We have discovered that it is most effective for the Preschool teacher and the parent instructor to be the same person. Our teachers are professional people with experience and education in working with both young children and adults.

### ***The Students***

The co-op student is the parent enrolled with LWTC. Each student has educational, workday, cleaning, committee, and financial responsibilities to the Preschool. Responsibilities are summarized in the Student Responsibilities section that follows and are detailed in Article IV of the Standing Rules available at <http://www.rcpreschool.org>. As an officially registered student of LWTC, you receive college credit upon successful completion of your responsibilities.

### ***The Philosophy***

Play is the young child's way of learning. Children learn by doing, watching, and feeling; by being free to experiment and try out materials and equipment without adult ideas and standards imposed on them. For Preschool children, the process of learning is much more important than the product. Good equipment that is carefully supervised and a well-planned program stimulate this learning process. Age-appropriate formal instruction is desirable at this age, and RPCP provides that with circle and story time.

RPCP gives children an opportunity to use and experiment with equipment and materials that individual families may not have at home. With help and encouragement when necessary, the children grow in their abilities and skills to use various materials and equipment. Each success brings the satisfaction and accomplishment necessary for them to feel good about themselves.

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Preschool is a beginning step in learning to live with and become part of a group. With understanding and careful guidance on the part of adults, children gradually become aware of the rights and feelings of others as well as a growing consciousness of their own rights. This is how children grow socially.

RPCP offers a unique opportunity for children to know and work with adults other than their parents, as well as for the adults to know and understand other children. Children feel and learn from the good spirit that develops from people working together, sharing responsibilities and experiences. As you and your child share together in these opportunities, there comes a sense of belonging. From this sense of belonging comes the real joy of working together toward a common goal: that of becoming a more competent parent with a happy and secure child.

### ***Discipline at Preschool***

You should intervene in children's play only when necessary to prevent a real problem or when requested to do so. Keep a watchful eye, for often it is possible to prevent a problem before it starts by tactfully suggesting a diversion. Usually, it is better if a parent does not interfere when his or her own child is involved. Let the parent in charge of that area handle the situation.

If you, as a parent, have a happy and relaxed attitude regarding Preschool, your child is apt to feel likewise. When a problem, question, criticism or suggestion comes up, please communicate it to your Parent Leader, Teacher or the President. Your Parent Leader is particularly eager to help settle any difficulties and does not regard it as an imposition on her/his time to assist in any way possible. Idle gossip can ruin the morale of the Preschool.

### ***Student Responsibilities***

Students have a variety of responsibilities that ensure the smooth and enjoyable operation of the Preschool. This section outlines your educational, workday, cleaning, committee, and financial responsibilities. See the Standing Rules Article IV for further details.

### ***Parent Classes***

Parent classes are held once a month in the evening. These classes include discussion of the developmental stages of Preschoolers, and they often provide an opportunity to brainstorm solutions for current parenting issues. These classes also serve as a time when your whole class can make decisions and prepare for the upcoming month's activities. Each year, three of these parent meetings are all-school meetings. An outside parent education expert is usually brought in to speak at these meetings.

It is a college requirement that one parent per family attend the parent class each month. This requirement is strictly enforced so that we keep our standing with LWTC as a parent education cooperative. A parent can only miss one parent class without a required make-up. If you cannot attend your class's meeting, you may attend a meeting of another class that month. If you miss more than one parent class, see the Standing Rules Article IV, Section B for how to make-up the missed meeting.

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#### ***Workday***

You must attend Preschool with your child one day each week to work in the classroom. Each parent is assigned to a work area on a two-week rotating basis. The duties are straight-forward and are posted on the wall of each area. Be flexible: if there are no children in your area, check to see if another parent needs help. Parents should refrain from visiting with each other during work times. Many crises can be avoided if parents are observant and aware of what is going on in their area.

During outside play, some parents are outside to supervise and help the children on the play equipment, while others are completing work duties inside.

If you are unable to work on a certain day, it is your responsibility to find a substitute. Typically you can simply exchange workdays with another parent. You can also arrange for a spouse or other approved substitute to take your place.

You will have a more relaxed time if you wear comfortable, washable clothing that may be damaged by spatters of paint or puddles. Likewise, try to persuade your child from wearing his/her most recent acquisition. Label all boots, mittens, caps, jackets, etc. with the child's name.

#### ***Cleaning***

We have 10 classes of Preschoolers going through our Preschool each week, so there is a lot of dirt and grime to clean up. Each student must perform one weekend cleaning per school year. This is typically done with one other parent and takes about three to four hours. It is your responsibility to obtain a Preschool key before the weekend you are assigned to clean. Lists of duties are posted on the cleaning bulletin board at the Preschool.

In addition to the weekend cleaning, each class is required to do one semi-annual deep cleaning of the school. These cleanings take about two to three hours. If you are unable to work when scheduled, contact the Facilities Chairperson as soon as possible to arrange an exchange. Refer to the Standing Rules Article IV Section E for more information.

## **RPCP Leadership**

#### ***The Board of Trustees***

The RPCP Board of Trustees is comprised of the school officers and school teachers (school teachers hold non-voting positions on the Board).

The Board of Trustees does the following:

- Make expenditures as the Board deems expedient.
- Collect dues and assessments to be paid by the members of the corporation.
- Manage and conduct the affairs and business of the corporation and generally do and perform or cause to be done and performed any and every act which the corporation may lawfully do and perform.

#### ***Officers***

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The following table lists Preschool officers:

President	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Serves as principal executive officer of the corporation and supervises and controls all of the business and affairs of the corporation.</li> <li>• Presides at all meetings of the members of the Board of Trustees and performs all duties as may be prescribed by the Board of Trustees from time to time.</li> <li>• Obtains a majority vote from the Board of Trustees before entering into a legal contract on behalf of the Preschool.</li> </ul>
First Vice President	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acts as the chairperson of the standing committee for the Ways and Means.</li> <li>• In the absence of the President or in the event of his or her inability or refusal to act, performs the duties of the President.</li> </ul>
Second Vice President	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Responsible for buying non-academic supplies, handling safety duties and student folders, acting as college liason with regard to special events, and expedites the insurance process.</li> <li>• Chairs the Safety Committee and assists the First Vice President as needed.</li> </ul>
Treasurer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keeps full and accurate accounts of the receipts and disbursements of the corporation.</li> <li>• Receives, deposits, and disburses all money and other valuables of the corporation as directed by the Board.</li> <li>• Submits financial statements and audits to the Board of Trustees.</li> </ul>
Secretary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keeps minutes of the meetings of the members of the Board of Trustees in one or more books provided for that purpose.</li> <li>• Completes the school inventory every year at the beginning of the school year.</li> <li>• Plans the refreshment schedule for all Board meetings.</li> </ul>
Parent Leaders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assists the members as necessary throughout the school year.</li> <li>• Sets up workdays and orients new members in the school activities.</li> <li>• Serves as liason between the class and the Board.</li> </ul>
Registrar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Arranges tours and answers questions for prospective members.</li> <li>• Registers all new members and collects enrollment fees.</li> <li>• Arranges publicity for the Preschool and implements public relations activities.</li> </ul>
Parent Education Chairperson	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Arranges and coordinates speakers for the parent classes.</li> <li>• Maintains a Parent Education Library and oversees the Scholastic Book Committee.</li> </ul>
Committee and Special Events Chairperson	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Responsible for assigning and coordinating committees.</li> <li>• Responisble for the following special events: school pictures, Holiday food drive, Snowflake Giving Tree, Camp Gilead, and</li> </ul>

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	end-of-year activity.
Facilities Chairperson	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Responsible for all maintenance and repair of Preschool facilities, equipment and toys.</li> <li>• Responsible for organizing weekend, mid-year, and year-end cleaning of the Preschool.</li> </ul>
Computer Chairperson	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Responsible for maintaining the school computer and website</li> <li>• Maintains Preschool class lists.</li> </ul>

***Committees***

Parents are required to serve on one of the following standing committees:

Scholastic Book Club	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Distribute book order forms when received.</li> <li>• Collect orders and submit for each age group.</li> <li>• Organize distribution of orders when received.</li> </ul>
Cut and Snip	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with teachers to prepare materials for class projects as requested.</li> </ul>
Maintenance/ Facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assist with maintenance of Preschool facility and outdoor play area.</li> <li>• Assist in small repair/replacement jobs.</li> <li>• Handle the recycling for the Preschool.</li> <li>• Repair and maintain toys and outdoor equipment.</li> <li>• Coordinate weekend cleaning schedule.</li> </ul>
Parent Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with Parent Education chair to arrange speakers for group meetings.</li> <li>• Solicit suggestions for parent education topics.</li> <li>• Maintain parent education library, article file, and bulletin board.</li> <li>• Arrange set up, clean up, and refreshments for all-school parent meetings.</li> <li>• Coordinate children's library and parent ed library.</li> <li>• Rotate a selection of library books into the story room weekly.</li> <li>• Submit recommendations for new library materials.</li> </ul>
Pet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feed and care for pets (currently Guinea Pigs) on a weekly basis, including occasional weekend cleans as necessary.</li> <li>• Arrange and/or conduct pet care during school holidays and vacations.</li> <li>• Purchase and maintain all pet supplies.</li> </ul>
Playdough/ Woodworking/ Bulletin Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Purchase supplies and prepare playdough every week.</li> <li>• Supply materials for woodworking area.</li> <li>• Maintain woodworking tools in good order.</li> <li>• Plan and decorate bulletin boards seasonally three times a year.</li> <li>• Rotate posters and postcards in the art corner of the story room.</li> </ul>

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Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assist 2nd Vice President in verifying that forms are in and complete in student files.</li> <li>• Complete quarterly safety checklist of Preschool facility and equipment.</li> <li>• Keep safety bulletin board current. Update all evacuation plans as necessary.</li> <li>• Check first aid kit and emergency supplies monthly. Restock and replace items as needed.</li> <li>• Assist Secretary with school inventory.</li> <li>• Organize class thank you cards after field trips.</li> </ul>
Special Events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plan and organize special events such as school pictures, holiday food drive, Snowflake Giving Tree, Camp Gilead, Remlinger Farms day.</li> </ul>
Ways ‘N’ Means	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with 1st Vice President organizing all fund-raising events.</li> </ul>

Each committee is important to the operation and success of the Preschool. The committees are assembled at registration and apportioned to best meet the needs of the Preschool. Consequently, if you change classes after registration you may be required to change committees. Some committees have regularly scheduled responsibilities, while others operate on a periodic basis. Committees may be changed at the discretion of the Board.

***Financial Responsibilities***

RPCP parents have the following financial responsibilities to the Preschool:

- An enrollment fee, paid at registration time. This initial, non-refundable fee covers costs to get the Preschool up and running every year with things such as art supplies, carpool bags, etc.
- Tuition fees are collected on a monthly basis except for September tuition which is collected at Spring Orientation. Tuition covers the variety of expenses incurred over the course of the Preschool year, such as LWTC registration fees, insurance, daily operating expenses, facilities lease, teachers’ salaries, etc. See Article VI Section I of the Standing Rules for more information.
- Families are required to participate in yearly fundraising to help pay for operating costs not covered by tuition. Fundraiser proceeds pay for items such as playground equipment and new games and toys. Additional fundraising activities may be held throughout the year. Families are encouraged to participate in these but are not required to do so. See Standing Rules Article IV Section C for more information.
- Small costs for items such as snacks when you are kitchen parent, possible field trip fees, snacks for parent meetings, Valentine’s Day and Halloween treats, etc.
- Costs for optional items such as school pictures, Scholastic Books, and the Preschool campout in the spring.
- Refer to the Standing Rules Article VI Section I for specific registration and tuition fees. All fees are subject to change at the Board’s discretion. All fees must be paid by check to the preschool; no cash allowed.

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**NOTE:** Scholarships are available to those who cannot afford monthly tuition as well as special activities. If you are in need of financial assistance, or you would like to contribute or know of a business or organization that might contribute, please contact your teacher, Parent Leader or the Treasurer.

**NOTE:** RPCP is eligible to receive charitable contributions from companies that offer matching programs to their employees (e.g. Microsoft, Boeing, etc.). If you make a cash donation to RPCP and you work at such a company, please contact the Treasurer to ensure that your charitable contribution is matched.

## **Policies**

This section describes some of the key policies that RPCP has implemented to keep the Preschool operating smoothly. See the Standing Rules for further details and other policies.

### ***Call If Absent***

If you can't attend a class workday or evening parent education class, please contact your Parent Leader and Teacher to let them know what arrangements you've made for your absence. If you are unable to work, it is your responsibility to find a substitute. In this case, the substitute may be required to meet Washington State Health Department standards (i.e. TB test) if attending more than three times. If you are scheduled to work in the kitchen or story room, be sure to offer to provide the snacks or plan the activity for the substitute. Refer to the Standing Rules Article IV Section A for more information.

### ***Time Schedule***

Your prompt arrival is appreciated. This is particularly important on your workday, as your work area cannot be opened until you arrive. In consideration of others, please leave the classroom as quickly as possible after school ends. The next class may need your parking space and the teachers need time to eat their lunch and set up for the next class.

### ***Parking***

The parking lot has a single center row surrounded by perimeter parking. It works best if parents working in the classroom park in the center row while those who are dropping off children park on the perimeter.

The church and the Preschool both schedule evening meetings. The church has asked that we park offsite for our evening meetings. This leaves the church's parking lot open for church members attending meetings.

### ***Family Leave/Newborns***

You may take a family leave of up to six weeks if necessary. You may bring your newborn to Preschool in a front pack until three months of age as long as their presence is not disruptive or keeps you from performing your duties. See Standing Rules Article III Section F and Article VII Section B for more information.

### ***Visitors***

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Dads, Moms, grandparents and other adult visitors are welcome. Please discuss their visit with your teacher prior to their visit.

***Vacations***

You are responsible to arrange for workday substitutes if you choose to miss class due to vacation. You must continue to pay tuition to hold your class spot. See Standing Rules Article VII Section D for more information.

***Emergency Closures (i.e. snow)***

When the Lake Washington School District (LWSD) closes for a full day due to weather conditions, RPCP cancels its classes for the whole day. When LWSD is delayed one hour or more, the 9:00 AM Preschool class will be canceled. Parent Leaders of afternoon classes will consult with the teachers and parents to determine if it is appropriate to hold class. Listen to local radio stations early in the morning for any anticipated school delays or closures. Cancelled classes may be made up during the quarter in which they are missed at the discretion of the Board. See Standing Rules Article III Section C for more information.

***Calendar Year and Holidays***

The Preschool class year runs from September through May. RPCP observes the LWSD calendar for Mid-winter and Spring breaks. The Winter break may vary from the LWSD schedule. See Standing Rules Article III Section A for more information.

***Illness Guidelines***

It is extremely important that your child not come to school unless s/he is free from illness. Please notify the Parent Leader of any contagious disease as soon as possible. One sick child can quickly spread their illness to the other members of the Preschool. All open sores must be covered with a bandage. Following are some guidelines that will help you decide whether to keep your child at home. Use your good judgment.

**DO NOT SEND YOUR CHILD** if s/he has any of the following symptoms:

- **Fever:** (temp. of 100°F or higher) by itself or accompanied by a sore throat, rash, vomiting, diarrhea, earache, irritability, or confusion;
- **Diarrhea:** 3 or more watery stools (BM, poop) in a 24 hour period;
- **Vomiting:** two or more times within the past 24 hours;
- **Rash:** body rash, especially with fever or itching;
- **Sore throat:** with fever and swollen glands;
- **Eye discharge:** thick mucus or pus draining from the eye, or pink eye;
- **Not Feeling Good:** unusually tired, pale, lack of appetite, confused or irritable.

A child with any of these symptoms may infect other children. If all parents keep sick children at home, everybody's children will stay healthier. To summarize our illness policy: a child must be fever free and symptom free for 24 hours.

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If a child comes to school with any of the above symptoms or develops them while at school, we will call you or your emergency contact and ask that your child be picked up. See Article III Section D of the Standing Rules for more information.

***Chicken Pox***

If a child has been exposed to chicken pox, and it is day 7 through 21 of the exposure, they may remain in class until cold symptoms develop and/or fever (please check right before coming) and/or blisters appear.

***Sick Child on Your Workday***

If your child is sick on your workday, do your best to find a replacement. We realize it is difficult if your child gets sick the day of or the night before Preschool. However, if your child is sick we would rather that you miss your workday than risk your child exposing other children and parents. See Article IV Section A for more information.

***Allergy Symptoms***

If your child has chronic allergy symptoms, please let the teacher and Parent Leader know.

***Outside Play***

If your child is not well enough to go outside, s/he should not be at school. Please dress your child appropriately for outdoor play as all children are expected to go outside, weather permitting.

**General Information**

***Birthday Celebrations***

You can bring a special treat to celebrate your child's birthday; we'll provide a birthday crown and singing. If your child has a summer birthday, you can celebrate it individually on the half birthday or together with all other summer birthdays on our last picnic day.

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#### *Show & Tell*

The children will participate in a Show & Tell activity. You should bring one Show & Tell item in a sack labeled with your child's name. When you arrive, place the sack in the Show & Tell basket. Each teacher will explain her Show & Tell procedure. Show & Tell will not be made up for absences, due to illness or vacation.

#### *Story Time*

One of your work area responsibilities is to have story time with half the children while the teacher conducts a group activity with the other half. You are responsible for planning in advance and selecting stories to read to the children. You can select books from our large library at the Preschool or bring books from home. You are free to substitute a science experiment, games, etc. in the place of a story.

#### *Snack Time*

When the kitchen is your work area, you are expected to provide a snack for the children and parents working that day. **RPCP is a peanut and nut product-free school.** Please do not bring any food containing peanut or nuts into the school, during preschool hours, or for evening meetings.

We encourage you to bring simple, healthy snacks that the children can put together or make themselves. Water is the usual beverage. Try to include bread, protein, fruit and/or vegetable, and a dairy product in the snack. Keep in mind the time of day the children will be eating and be mindful of any food allergies in your class. The more creative you are, the more little helpers you will have! Here are some ideas:

- Fruit tacos.
- Homemade pretzels (from frozen bread dough) with yogurt.
- Veggies and dip (made with sour cream) and crackers.
- Banana bread or muffins. Have each child make his/her own butter by shaking one Tbsp. whipping cream in a baby food jar.

## Services

#### *Library*

Our library has many wonderful books for both adults and children to read. The check out period for all books is two weeks. You may check out three children's books and one adult book at the same time. If you would like to check out a book, sign your name and class (e.g. 3AM) on the card. Then, file the card under your class name in the file box.

When checking your book back in, please pull the book's card from the file box, cross off your name, place the card in the book and return the book to its proper place on the bookshelf. Place damaged books in the Parent Ed box. We are continually adding new books so have fun and check the library out!

If you would like to donate children's or parent education books to the Library, please place them in the Parent Education Chairperson's box in the kitchen. Include a note on the book with

