

## **LABYRINTH PARENT HANDBOOK**

### **WHO WE ARE:**

Labyrinth was founded in 2004 to facilitate a strong sense of community among home school families on the Eastside by providing classes, organizing events and providing a place where homeschoolers can meet. Our group consists of families united to meet their needs and aspirations with the common purpose of educating our children. Labyrinth is an all-volunteer organization. Labyrinth Board Members and its members volunteer their time and talent to make Labyrinth the strong and vibrant community that it is. By cooperative effort we can provide classes and a strong community to all members.

### **NEW FAMILIES/REGISTRATION**

#### **1. How do I join Labyrinth?**

Please send an email to [info@labyrinthcoop.org](mailto:info@labyrinthcoop.org). Our new families' coordinator is glad to discuss Labyrinth with you. Once your family is interested in signing up for classes, we ask that you fill out and return a family contract prior to obtaining a Labyrinth login. This helps to ensure a serious interest in our community and helps us to maintain an accurate database. You will be set up with a web login and instructions on how to register for classes.

Once you register for classes your co-op fee, tuition for the first session classes, as well as class material, and supply fees must be received to hold your seats in the selected classes.

#### **2. How do I change my password and add my contact information?**

Log on to the Labyrinth website. On your welcome screen will be a button to "Update Family Information." On this screen, you can update your address, email address, phone numbers and change your password. There is also the section where you note your preferences for your co-op job. (See Jobs section). Remember to click on "Update" at the bottom of the screen to save your information.

### **3. How do I sign up for classes?**

On your Welcome screen, click on “Registration”. Click on the appropriate name and use the drop down boxes to select classes for your child or yourself. Classes within the grade level will show under each hour, out-of-grade level classes are shown at the bottom of the selected hour. Be sure and click on “Submit Registration” to save your class choices.

### **4. What if I want to register my child in a class out of their grade level?**

You can add out of grade level classes to your child’s registration. However, you must obtain permission from the instructor. To do this, you can click on class description, find the class you are interested in and click on the instructor’s name. You can also use the “Contact Members by Email or Phone” section on your Welcome page to contact the instructor

### **5. What if I am not sure how my child will do in the class?**

Email the teacher to find out more information and discuss the class with the teacher as well as any needs your child might have.

### **6. Can I attend classes with my student?**

Yes, we welcome parents in the classroom. Please observe quietly. Siblings are not allowed in classes they are not registered in. Infants and young siblings are allowed with the parent as long as they are not disruptive to the class.

### **7. My child has special needs. Can Labyrinth work for us?**

We welcome all families and all learners. Please use the class descriptions to find classes that would be appropriate for your child and talk to the teachers to see how to work together to make your child successful at Labyrinth. Different teachers have different levels of expertise. We strive to meet the needs of all students, but please recognize that some children will require more one-on-one help than our teachers can provide. Open, frequent communication will help both the teacher and parent decide if the class is a good fit for both parties.

## **ATTENDING LABYRINTH/GENERAL POLICIES**

### **1. Can I drop my child off while they attend Labyrinth?**

No, we require a parent or legal guardian to be present on site the entire time a child is at Labyrinth.

### **2. What do parents/siblings do while a student is in class?**

We have a large common area (the “Snack Room”) where our families gather. Families set up at tables to study, chat and eat. It is a great way to meet families and gather support. Students must be in class or with a parent in the snack room/gathering room. If there is space, we will have a parent-supervised study hall. Please see the class schedule for times and room. At certain times, the nursery is available to parents and their young children. Please be aware this room is to be cleaned by the families using the room.

### **3. Can my children play outside?**

No, we do not have use of the playground or other areas of the church. Please be respectful of the church offices and other users of the building, especially the two non-Labyrinth preschools within the building.

### **4. Can I sell my products and services at Labyrinth?**

No, this is against our contract with the church. We do have a Kids Craft Sale day once or twice a year as well as a day to sell/swap curriculum. If you have non-Labyrinth information about activities that would be of interest to other homeschoolers, you may bring printed flyers to the information desk and obtain permission from a Board Member to place them out for distribution. As a non-profit organization, we do not allow dissemination of political flyers. Please see Labyrinth policies for further clarification.

### **5. Where can we eat lunch while at the Co-op?**

All food must be eaten in the snack room/common room. Food is not allowed in any classroom. Labyrinth operates a small concessions area (The Spot) where families may

purchase drinks, snacks, coffee and other small items. We have a “Pizza Day” once a month..

## **6. How is information sent to members?**

We try to handle as much of our information as possible via the web and email. Each week a weekly reminder is sent by the Facilities Liaison.. If you have information to include, please email her. Please do not use our website and email feature to send broadcast emails to the group. Any information you wish to pass on to the group needs to go through the Labyrinth Board.

## **7. What and when is Pizza Day?**

Pizza day is the 4th week of each session. Pizza is ordered from Costco. Purchase your pizza for \$2 a slice at the Spot the week prior or before 10AM. on the day of the pizza sale. The pizza will be delivered to the snack room just before noon for everyone. Proceeds from the Pizza sales help to defray the costs of our Labyrinth sponsored activities and the craft days.

## **8. Where can I park?**

The church has asked that we park on the south side of the parking lot, nearest the door we use to access Labyrinth. This is the left side of the parking lot as you face the church. Please leave the north side of the lot for church staff and visitors. Parents are asked to not wait in cars for their children and not allow your children to play in the parking lot.

## **9. Do you have a Lost and Found?**

Yes, located near the Information Desk. If you do not see it, please ask; we might have forgotten to set it out. All items remaining in the Lost and Found will be donated prior to Winter break and end of the school year. Notices will be in the weekly reminders.

## **10. What about Weather Closures?**

In case of snow or ice, listen to KVI 570AM radio for the school emergency closures. If Issaquah School District is closed or delayed, Labyrinth classes will be cancelled. The decision to close is made the morning of the Co-op. An email will be sent to all families. In rare instances, Mary Queen of Peace will close the church if the parking lot is deemed unsafe due to ice. It is a good to check your email prior to leaving for Labyrinth on winter mornings. In the event of a power outage our website is sometimes down. It is a good idea to note emergency phone numbers in case you need to contact someone on Labyrinth days. Kristin Easter can be reached at 425-241-4493.

### **11. What are Kids Craft Days?**

Three or four times a year our craft coordinator sets up a section of the snack room for crafts for the children to do. Adults are on hand to assist the children in making the crafts. A small fee is charged for the crafts. If you are crafty and want to help out, let a Board Member know!

### **12. What is Kids Sale Day?**

This is the day each year that kids can bring in and sell crafts that they have made at home. It is fun to see the amazing and various talents the children have as well as their entrepreneurial spirit.

## **CLASSES: ADDING AND DROPPING**

### **1. My child is having trouble in a class, what do I do?**

Start with communicating with the teacher. Our teachers are anxious to work with families and students to help them address their education needs. Our smaller setting enables more interaction between students/teachers and parents. However, please be respectful of the teachers' class time and the short breaks between classes. A phone call, email, or conference is often helpful. Ask the teacher when might be the best time to talk about your student.

### **2. How do I drop a class?**

If you need to drop a class for any reason, please use our online drop procedure on the registration screen. Classes need to be dropped before Payment Summaries are run the Sunday before the 3rd week of each session. If a class is not dropped before the deadline

of 5pm it will show up on your Payment Summary, families are responsible to pay all fees on their Payment Summary.

### **3. How do I add a class after the start of the school year?**

Please use the online registration to add classes during the school year. Discussing your plans with the teacher will help clarify if the class is a good fit for your child.. Classes may be added at anytime and will be prorated.

## **LABYRINTH SET UP AND CLEAN UP**

As with any large group with particular needs renting a great space such as Mary Queen of Peace, we have a great deal of set up and clean up each day. If you arrive early in the morning, it would be great if you helped the set up team with the tables and chairs in the Snack Room. Transforming this space from a completely empty room to a room filled with tables/chairs/microwaves and a snack area requires many hands.

Our end of the day, Snack Room clean up begins at 12:30, right after lunch. By staging the cleanup of this large area in thirds, we are able to maintain a group space (of diminishing size) while not leaving a big cleanup job until the very end of the day. At 12:30, the Spot, our concessions area, closes, and tables/chairs in that area are put away. If you have been sitting in the area closest to the Spot, be aware you will be asked to move south, closer to the door near The Information Desk. The center area is cleaned at 1:30, (so those sitting there will need to move south at this time), and the final break down and cleaning is at 2:30.

## **JOBS**

### **1. Do I have to have a job?**

Yes. “Co-op” is short for “co-operative.” There is no paid staff at Labyrinth to do this work. A co-op requires the effort of all the members, and the Labyrinth adult family member will be assigned a Co-op job for which s/he is responsible every week (including weeks s/he cannot attend for any reason). With the adage of “Many hands make light work,” we all will find the Co-op more pleasant and productive if we all do our jobs, help out others where and when we can, especially when a family asks you to substitute for them in their job due to absence. Please see our detailed job policy on the Welcome page under “Jobs.”

## **2. How and when do I note my job preferences?**

First, review the Job Summaries on the Labyrinth website to familiarize yourself with the range of jobs that need doing to make the Co-op run smoothly. At registration time or during the summer prior to the new Labyrinth school year, express your 1st, 2nd, and 3rd job preferences using the section for job preferences on the Update Family information screen on the Labyrinth website. Furthermore, note here all preferences you have, in addition to specific job titles, taking into consideration your children’s class schedules (starting and ending times, open class periods, etc.).

For example, note if you would prefer set up or clean up under Job Team and the Job Time as to before lunch or after lunch help, our Job Coordinator fit the job to you. In addition, if you are chosen to be a teacher’s helper, indicate whether you would want to be assigned to a class your child attends. “Special Circumstances” is where you can type any special notes you have, such as having a young infant with you, any physical limitations you have or time constraints to be noted. Remember to click Update at the bottom of the screen to save the information. The more specific you are, the better we can find a job that fits you and your family.

## **3. Where can I find information about my job?**

To find out specific directions for your job use the Job Summary on line. If you have questions regarding your job, please talk to Kristin Easter, the Mid Year Jobs Coordinator.

#### **4. How do I find a back up person for my job?**

Often just asking around the snack room will do the trick to locate a backup. Maybe that person needs a backup in return. You can also use the Job Report by Job on the Labyrinth website to help you identify someone who has a similar job at a different time. It is important that each family identifies a backup person early in the year and has contact information for that person. Advise your backup person as early as possible in the event you are unable to do your Labyrinth job for any particular class day. Please ask Kristin Easter for help if you need help in finding a back up after reasonable attempts to find one.

#### **5. Can I request a job change?**

Yes. If your schedule changes or you have found you cannot do your assigned job on an ongoing basis for some reason, please contact Kristin Easter. As per our Job Policy, you will be required to continue to work your job until a replacement can be found.

### **TUITION**

#### **1. When is tuition due?**

Labyrinth sessions are divided into 4 week sessions paid in advance. Tuition can be paid on the 3rd week (Early Tuition) and MUST be paid on the 4th week of each session for the following 4 weeks. (All of these dates are reflected on the Labyrinth calendar on the website.) Tuition must be accompanied by a Payment Summary and received by 1pm on the 4th week or a late fee of \$20 will be applied.

#### **2. Why do I write checks to the teacher and turn them into Labyrinth, can't I write one check to Labyrinth?**



Checks are written directly to the Instructors. Labyrinth collects and records tuition and material/supply fee payments prior to making them available to teachers. We do this to help maintain records of tuition paid for our families and our teachers. Checks to teachers are released on the first week of the new session.

### **3. Why do you have a late fee? Sometimes it is hard to remember my checkbook.**

A late fee of \$20 is assessed if payments are not received on time. The late fee is payable to Labyrinth. Late fees are only waived if a board member has approved special arrangements for payment. Late payments create a significant amount of extra work for our volunteer check processor. It is our intention that the late fee will give families an added incentive to get their checks in on time.

### **4. What if I am sick the 4th week?**

You must contact a Board Member and our tuition processor by phone or email by the end of the day tuition is due to make arrangements to pay your tuition. If your tuition is not received by the date agreed upon with the Board Member, late fees will apply.

### **5. What if I am dropping a class?**

Classes should be dropped by the running of invoices (the Sunday before the 3rd week in the session) to avoid being charged for the following session. This is to ensure that teachers do not purchase materials for students that will not be attending the class.

### **6. Where do I find the Payment Summary?**

The Payment Summary button is found on your Welcome Screen. Payment Summaries are available at the Information Desk the 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of each session. If you forget to pick yours up, please print one at home and turn it in with your checks.

### **7. Can Labyrinth bill a public school alternative program?**

No, we are sorry that we cannot provide this service. Printing out invoices and Invoice History should provide you with the appropriate information for you to send to the alternative program.

**8. I paid the co-op fee and for the first month of classes over the summer, but my plans changed. Can I get a refund?**

No, Tuition Payments are Non-refundable

It is often emotionally difficult for the Board and for our instructors to enforce our payment policy. Families generally do not make the decision to withdraw from classes lightly and are sometimes forced to make that decision due to a family hardship. Our strict no refund policy protects our teachers who commit to the classes, purchase supplies, and spend their summers preparing. In a larger institution operating with more capital, rather than a small co-operative group covering only expenses, it would be easier to waive the policy as our heart would wish.

Once we accept tuition payments as deposits to reserve class spaces, those checks belong to the instructors and are not refundable. We try to make that as clear as possible on our Registration Screen. We hold the checks until mid-August and then release them to the instructors. If a situation arises and a teacher is not able to offer their class, those checks are returned.

**9. We are planning a long trip, can we stop paying for Labyrinth while we are gone?**

Leave of Absences are not permitted

Labyrinth does not support leaves of absence. Many of our instructors purchase supplies in advance and rely on a minimum number of students to make it financially practical to maintain their classes. We do not feel it is fair to teachers to ask that a student's seat in a class be held unless tuition has been paid to do so. We also do not feel that it is reasonable to expect teachers to supply class supplies or materials for missed classes.

Families wishing to leave Labyrinth temporarily are asked to drop out of Labyrinth and rejoin when they return. There is a small re-instatement fee for re-joining, which we hope will deter families from making the decision lightly.

## **PLANNING CLASSES FOR THE NEXT YEAR**

### **1. I would love to teach a class at Labyrinth. What do I need to know?**

There are instructions for teacher proposals on the website. In early spring we send out a call to parents and interested people to suggest classes and teachers. At that time a proposal can be submitted. If you have a great teacher that you would like to see at Labyrinth, have them request via email to have website privileges so that they can consider proposing a class for our co-op. Families are involved in helping to choose what classes get put on the schedule

### **2. I have a great idea to improve the co-op, who do I tell?**

Come find one of the Board Members, or shoot us an email. We are always happy to hear a great idea and tap into the talents and skills of our co op members.

As always, if you have any other questions or concerns, please let one of the Board Members know.

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