Dimensions™
Education Programs

Family Handbook

2020–2021 School Year

Education Programs Locations

7700 A Street
(A Street)

(402) 480-6319
M-F 7:30-5:30

1551 S. 70th Street
(First Lutheran Church)

(402) 488-0919
M-F 7:30-5:30

2000 D Street
(First-Plymouth)

(402) 476-8304
M-F 7:30-5:30

Programs Office

2045 E Street
(402) 476-8304
M-F 8:30-4:30

Director: Michelle Zimmer
Assistant Director: Meagan Nelson
Education Programs Coordinator: Shelby Hines

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We're glad your child will be a part of our program this year. Read through this handbook carefully. It will help us all work together to provide the best possible experience for your child. We welcome any questions, suggestions or concerns you may have. Your input is valuable as well as essential in achieving a successful year. Feel free to call the office any time. Thank you.

Dimensions Education Programs provides a hands-on, experiential approach to learning. Through inspiring environments, quality materials and exemplary teachers, children initiate their own curriculum opportunities to:

- Develop a foundation for life-long learning.
- Grow socially by practicing problem solving, negotiation and group participation.
- Develop compassion and empathy for others, a positive sense of self and an appreciation for cultural diversity.
- Learn about wellness including physical development, healthy eating and body competence.
- Cultivate intellectual development through investigation and discovery of math and science concepts with teacher support.
- Experience language and literacy through exposure to quality literature, various writing opportunities and introduction to languages other than English.
- Discover the arts including music, creative movement and visual arts.

Our Education Programs are part of the Dimensions Educational Research Foundation, so on-going research and new resources are always available to our children. Much of the on-going research that happens at our Education Programs provides a foundation for our national Nature Explore Program that supports children's connections with nature. Our cadre of consultants conducts research-based educator workshops and design consultations throughout the country. (Visit **natureexplore.org** for more information). Dimensions Foundation also owns Exchange Press, which publishes a professional journal for teachers (Exchange magazine) and creates new resources such as books and training DVDs.

We are inspired by the Reggio Emilia philosophy of learning and the High Scope Foundation Early Education Curriculum. These form a base for program activities, along with resources developed through Dimensions Foundation Research. (Visit **dimensionsfoundation.org/research** for more information). A pluralistic mentality and an appreciation for all people and cultures is encouraged. Divergent thinking is valued as the children are supported in using their own good ideas and creativity.

Dimensions Education Programs are planned to work well whether children stay for part-time sessions or longer days. Our teachers are professionals who spend many hours planning and studying together each week. Our goal is to provide the best early education experience possible for each unique and special child.

Who We Are

At Dimensions, we are teachers, families, neighbors and friends coming together as a community to provide the best quality experiences for our children…

The Arts

It has been a long-standing tradition at Dimensions to provide meaningful, thought-provoking experiences for children that inspire creative thinking and support cognitive, perceptual, emotional and imaginative development. An integral part of our regular curriculum development, experiences with visual art, creative movement, storytelling and music are incorporated to help children make sense of their environment and to provide a format for children to express their interpretations of the world around them. Engaging in artistic experience becomes part of the children's language as they communicate their thoughts, ideas, perceptions and knowledge.

Connecting with Nature

Through our ongoing research and field testing we have learned that a thoughtfully designed and well planned outdoor classroom becomes the framework or backdrop that supports holistic development and learning. It is a space where children grow and learn physically, intellectually and emotionally during everyday interactions with the outdoors. Our certified Nature Explore Classrooms accommodate all age levels as children have opportunities to explore, experiment, create and discover. As children work in the Nature Explore Classroom, meaningful learning takes place. Children learn through their creativity and imaginative play. As they develop important skills that support their developmental growth, they learn to be innovative thinkers.

Language & Literacy

We strive to provide a language-rich environment. Children have the opportunity to learn words of different languages, such as Spanish and Sign Language, based on their interests and the language(s) spoken by the children in the group. Research has shown that language and literacy development begins in the first three years of life with their earliest experiences with books and stories. It is important to provide reading and literacy materials, as well as adults to support children's interests.

> *"Early literacy skills develop in real life settings through positive interactions with literacy, materials and other people."*
>
> **From Early Literacy/www.zerotothree.org/BrainWonders**

Teaching Collaboration Groups

Continuing research shows that the quality of an early childhood program is directly related to the professionalism and knowledge level of the staff. Our teachers meet on a regular basis in teaching collaboration groups to:

- Plan experiences based on the interests of the children.
- Work on documentation for research and children's portfolios.
- Keep up on the latest research in the early childhood field.

Research and Documentation

Dimensions Education Programs serves as the primary research site for Dimensions Educational Research Foundation. This research is used to support Foundation workshops, outdoor classroom design, and the development of natural products. Teachers closely observe children and document their learning as forms of authentic assessment. This documentation is shared with families in children's portfolios.

Involvement Opportunities

At Dimensions, we understand the importance of a strong partnership between family and school to provide a successful and inspired education for your child. Your involvement is critical to both the school and your child's development and growth while here at Dimensions. We look forward to having a strong partnership with all our families. There are many ways in which you can be involved in the program.

Your involvement at our events is a vital part of our program and an opportunity to build friendships with other families.

All events and activities are scheduled but will be held only if it is safe to do so.

Eat & Explore Night & Pizza Dinner (February 4, 2021)

First-Plymouth Location

Enjoy an evening of food and fun with all Dimensions families. There will be many nature-inspired activities for all ages and a time for families to talk with teachers from both locations.

Nature Walkathon (April 22 & 23, 2021)

First Plymouth, A Street and First Lutheran Locations

Dimensions will hold its seventh annual Nature Walkathon this spring. This fundraiser is a great way for family, friends and neighbors to help enhance our Nature Explore classrooms and support our overall Programs.

Family Potluck Picnic (May 7, 2021)

A Street Location

All Dimensions families are welcome to gather for an evening of food and fun in the Nature Explore Classroom.

50th Anniversary Celebration (May 14, 2021)

We will celebrate an amazing 50 years of connecting children, families and community. We invite you to an evening of fun, food and entertainment. This is an adults only event to help us raise the funds to keep the connections growing.

Virtual Home Visits

Dimensions Education Programs offers the opportunity to meet your child's teacher at your home. This short virtual visit gives your child the chance to get to know their teacher in a familiar environment and the opportunity for the teacher to meet your child and family before school starts. It is helpful if you have read all of this handbook and if you have specific questions, please ask your teacher when they come to visit. Teachers will contact you by phone and/or email to set up a time that works.

The health and safety of everyone within our Dimensions family is very important to us. Unfortunately, because of COVID-19, we will not be able to have volunteers in our classrooms.

We know what an enriching experience volunteers in the classrooms can be for both volunteers and children, we will resume all volunteers when it is safe to do so.

Preschool Classroom Involvement

(Because of separation issues, we utilize Classroom Volunteers for Preschool only. However, we welcome and encourage parents of infants and toddlers to be involved in many other ways.)

Helping in our indoor and outdoor classrooms is one of the many ways parents, grandparents, aunts and uncles might enjoy being involved in Dimensions Education Programs. This is a wonderful opportunity to learn first-hand what children are experiencing during their time at Dimensions and a great way to support the teachers and the program.

There are several ways for you and other family members to be involved in the classrooms. These opportunities enhance children's experiences and support teachers. Visitors and volunteers should be planned in advance so that our classrooms will not be too full of adults and we can always provide the best possible experiences for children. **All volunteers and visitors MUST sign in AND out at the Education Office or Reception Areas. Please contact your site if you have questions.**

Volunteers and/or visitors may not take photographs while at Dimensions. We have some children who are not allowed to be photographed, and families have signed waivers for photos to be taken for Dimensions' use only.

- **Classroom Volunteers***: Help with the groups MORE than one time throughout the year, in the classroom by serving snack and meeting other needs of the teachers.
- **Group Volunteers*:** Coordinate with the teacher and plan to come MORE than one time throughout the year to help with a project, read to the group, share an interest, etc.
- **Group Visitors:** Coordinate with the teacher to schedule a one-time visit with a group to share an interest, read to the group or help with a project.
- **Lunch Visitors:** Notify the teacher ahead of time, if possible. You must sign in and out when visiting (please see above).
- **Visitors:** Notify your site (in advance, if possible). It is important for us to know who is in the classrooms as well as make sure the number of adults in the classrooms is not distracting for children. You must sign in and out when visiting (please see above).

Due to licensing regulations, **all volunteers coming more than one time** during the year must complete required forms and read required information **BEFORE** they can be in the classrooms. It is not possible for children to bring friends to visit for a day.

**Classroom and Group volunteers will receive an email to sign up online for the day(s) that work in their schedule.*

Nature Explore Classroom Volunteers

You can help take our outdoor classroom to the next level by helping to maintain our spaces. We welcome any adult volunteers – grandparents, neighbors, past parents of the program, current families, friends, etc. There are many areas in which we need help, such as working with children as they learn to care for the space, helping on grounds and gardens, organizing workdays, and finding materials donations.

Staff Appreciation

This group helps our staff feel supported by providing meals during conferences, treats and other small tokens of gratitude throughout the year.

Children's Library

At Dimensions, we want to provide appropriate quality literature for your children and are fortunate to have a large children's library. We need volunteers to help shelve books after children and teachers have used them and to repair our much-loved books.

Advisory Council

The appointed Advisory Council meets at least four times a year. They advise on budget, program mission and goals, and help to ensure successful events throughout their two-year commitment. Contact Michelle Zimmer if you are interested.

Sponsor-a-Child Fund

We work very hard to keep our tuition affordable. However, our tuition covers only part of what it actually costs to provide a quality early childhood program. We do have many requests from families who would like to attend our program, but simply cannot because of the cost. Donations to this fund help families in many situations provide a safe and nurturing environment for their child. Contact the office at any time to make a tax-deductible donation to this fund or visit *dimensionsed.org* and click on the "Donate" tab.

Important Information

Communication

With everyone's busy schedules, we strive to communicate efficiently with our families. We have several ways in which we will keep you informed about what your child(ren) are doing and what is happening in the program. We ask for your help to take time to read the information that comes to you.

SchoolCare Works:
Our online information and communication portal. (It is a good idea to write down or note your username and password.) This online portal will have vital program information such as our Handbook, updated health and safety COVID-19 procedures, immunization records, consent forms, announcements, auto-pay information, child care tax receipts, authorized pick-ups, etc.

Email:
Communication will also be sent through SCW, make sure the email address you have on your account is current and checked regularly.

Dimensions Connection:
We will periodically email our ***Dimensions Connection***. This will have general information and news of upcoming events. Please forward this on to others who may drop off and pick up your child, etc.

Private Facebook Pages:
Each group will have a private Facebook page that is ONLY for parents/guardians. This page will give you an insight into what is happening during your child's time at Dimensions. Watch for more information.

Group notes:
Teachers will communicate to families in a variety of ways about experiences happening specific to their group.

Phone:
Dimensions phones will be answered from 8:00am-5:30pm. If you call before or after hours, you may leave a voice mail message. If we leave a message on your voicemail, please listen to the message before returning our call.

Our Staff

All of our staff work together to help our entire program function as a unified whole. As your family joins our program, we want to work together as a team to make sure your child has the best experiences possible while at Dimensions. Please do not ever hesitate to contact any of our staff if you have any questions, concerns, ideas or if we may help in any way.

Daily Arrival and Pick-Up

- Teachers come early and work hard to set up all the wonderful activities that take place during the day.
- Please bring your child at their scheduled arrival time.
- It is important that children walk with an adult through the parking lot and into the entryway.
- Do not leave your car running or with unattended children in the parking lot.
- Do not leave purses in unlocked cars. If you leave your purse in your car, be sure it is out of sight.

We take every precaution possible to ensure children are being released to an authorized person. Your child will be released ONLY to the guardians on their account and people listed under "Contacts" in SchoolCare Works. A photo ID will be required for everyone listed other than parents or guardians.

Dimensions First-Plymouth Preschool Entrance: Use the East Entrance (21st & E). Thank you for not parking in front of the steps or in reserved spaces. For safety's sake, do not allow your child to use the handicap ramp. This is reserved for wheelchairs and strollers only. This entrance is monitored by a camera and intercom system. When you arrive, please enter your PIN number on the small black keypad to your right. Please refrain letting others enter without entering their PIN. ***(We will not have PIN numbers until it is safe for families to come in the building.)***

Dimensions First-Plymouth Infant & Toddler Entrance: Use the West Entrance (20th between D & E). Park in the cut-out or along the street for drop-off and pick-up. The door by the northwest parking lot will be locked for safety reasons; use only to exit. This entrance is monitored by a staff person or teacher located in the Reception Area.

Dimensions A Street Toddler & Preschool Entrance: Use the North Entrance (behind the building). Please park in a designated spot in the lot. The entrance is secured, you may use your PIN number to enter. ***(You will not use a PIN until it is safe for families to come in the building.)***

Dimensions A Street Infant Entrance: Use the South Entrance (in front of building). This lot is reserved for families with Infants and Dimensions Foundation Visitors. The entrance is secured, you may use your PIN number when families are again allowed to enter. At this time, there will be a teacher in the entry way to greet you.

Dimensions First Lutheran Church Entrance: Use the main entrance, a teacher will be there to greet you. If not, please let the receptionist know that you are there to drop off or pick up your child.

Clocking Your Child(ren) In and Out

You will use the Connect App to clock your child in/out. Please have this app downloaded prior to the start of the year. Instructions to download the app and to enable this feature can be found in the Communications section in your portal.

Pick-Up

Your child must be picked up by the time in which you have enrolled. We must remain in teacher/child ratio at all times based on licensing regulation and therefore expect that you will be on time.

Early/Late Fees

Please drop-off and pick-up your child at their enrolled times.

- After two times of dropping off early or picking up late, you will receive an email from the office letting you know each time you were early/late. From that point, a $25 late fee will be charged on your next tuition payment.
- You may want to consider adjusting your child's schedule. Please contact **admin@dimensionsed.org** to see if our teacher/child ratio will allow for your child to come early or stay late. If we cannot accommodate the time change, we expect you to be on time.

Change Fees *(All changes are based on space availability)*

There will be a $25.00 charge for schedule changes made after August 24th:

- Permanent changes in session or hours.
- Any short-term or daily schedule change.

Please contact **admin@dimensionsed.org** for any change requests.

Office/Reception Areas

Dimensions Education Programs office is located at 2045 E Street (the red brick house next to the east parking lot). Our office hours are 8:30-4:30, if the office is locked, please ring the doorbell if you need assistance. There may be times when staff are helping in the classrooms and unavailable in the office.

Dimensions Education Programs First-Plymouth location reception area is located in the church on the west side of the building. One of our staff will be monitoring the doors and answering phones for Dimensions and First-Plymouth Church from 8:00-5:30.

Dimensions Education Programs A Street location reception area is located inside the North Entrance. The site manager will be available in the reception area from 8:30-4:30 to answer the phone and help with any questions you may have. If they are away from their desk, they will return shortly.

Dimensions Education Programs First Lutheran Church reception area is located inside the main entrance and is staffed by the church.

Tuition and Payments

Tuition payments will be automatically withdrawn from your checking account or credit card on the first business day of the month. Tuition for the school year (August-May) is figured on your basic session total plus extended hours (if requested and approved) and then divided into ten equal payments.

In the case of a returned payment (non-sufficient funds), there will be a $30 fee:

- Your tuition payment and fee is due (paid online, cash, or cashier's check) by the TENTH of the month of the returned payment unless you have contacted the business office to make other arrangements.
- It MUST be brought to: Dimensions East Office (2045 E Street) OR Dimensions 7700 A Street Reception Area (North Entrance).
- If this deadline is not made, your child may not attend until full payment is made.
- If full payment has not been made by the end of the month, your child's spot will be forfeited.

Changes in payment account information MUST be updated in your SCW portal one week BEFORE the first business day of the month. You may also view your tuition statement and tax information in the SCW portal. For billing questions, email **admin@dimensionsed.org**.

Cancellation Policy-School Year

You have signed a contract for August-May. If you must terminate enrollment, we require a minimum of two weeks notice IN WRITING. There will be **no refund for tuition already collected**. If your child's last day at Dimensions falls in the middle of the month, we will adjust tuition for that month.

Child Care Subsidy (Title XX)

Dimensions accepts Title XX as payment. It is the parents' responsibility to contact their caseworker to get initial and updated authorizations. If your authorization is not current, you will be responsible for the payment. Please contact **admin@dimensionsed.org** if you have questions. We appreciate if you make every effort to bring your child. We do not get paid for the days they are absent.

Donating Toward the Full Costs of Our Program

Since our tuition covers only part of what it actually costs to provide a quality early childhood program, additional donations from parents are gratefully accepted at any time. Many parents choose to contribute something each month toward these costs. Please email **admin@dimensionsed.org**. This is a tax-deductible contribution. We appreciate and need your help if this is something you are able to do.

Supplies

To help with our supply budget, we ask each family to provide a few basic supplies. Toddler and Preschool classrooms will be utilizing individual pencil boxes for basic art/writing supplies. Please refer to your email about items you will need to supply throughout the year. If you would like to provide donations throughout the year, a teacher list of requests will be online. All donations are needed and appreciated, and they are tax-deductible.

Nut Free Classrooms

Safety for all of our children is always our first priority and due to an increase in children with nut allergies, we have nut-free classrooms. Please keep this in mind when packing a lunch for your child, or providing snacks for the classroom. This includes peanuts as well as tree nuts such as almonds, cashews, walnuts, pine nuts (pinon), etc.

Creating an environment which reduces the risks to children who are allergic and/or at risk for an anaphylactic reaction will require the cooperation and understanding of families, volunteers and staff.

If your child has an allergy that requires any action, please make sure we have an action plan on file. Contact admin@dimensionsed.org to get a copy.

There are many websites which provide ideas and options for nut free foods, but please always double check the labels of any food you send in your child's lunch or if you are providing snack.

Health

In order for us to provide a healthy and safe environment for all children, it is important that we all follow our illness policies. Please refer to these when you are making decisions about whether or not you should send your child to school. **Please CALL your site if you are keeping your child home for any reason. Please do not contact your child's teacher.** The Health Department encourages us to keep records of the types of illnesses in our program so we will ask you why your child is absent. ***Some of this information may be different as a response to COVID-19. Please see the COVID-19 Procedures.***

Keeping Your Child At Home

- The following are symptoms that require your child to stay home from school:
- Misery with a cold, including mattery, watery eyes, running nose or other physical symptoms
- Undiagnosed rash
- A deep or chesty, croupy or constant cough or wheezing
- Draining of ears or open sores
- Any symptoms of possible infectious disease (such as red or mattery eyes, loss of appetite, fatigue, aches)
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea (Refer to the Definition below)
- Fever (Refer to the Definition below)
  Taken axillary/under the arm (99° - Infants / 100° - Toddlers/Preschoolers)
- Inability to cope in group situations because of not feeling well
- Head Lice

If your child has been sick with a fever, vomiting or diarrhea we require a waiting period of at least 24 hours without any of these symptoms, without medications, before returning to school. Occasionally, some of the above symptoms occur for reasons that are not contagious and are not illness-related. If this is the case, send a note from your child's doctor stating that your child is not contagious. However, if we feel a child's condition could cause other children or staff to become ill, we will ask that your child remain at home until all symptoms have cleared. We use the Lincoln/Lancaster County Health Department's guidebook as our over-arching policy for when children should be kept home. Staff and classroom volunteers should also adhere to the same illness policies.

Definition of a fever: ***Please refer to COVID-19 Procedures.*** Any child who has a fever of 100°F (99°F for infants) or more will be sent home and should remain home until he/she has been fever free for 24 hours without medication. If your child has a fever which has been recurring more than 48 hours (goes down with medicine then back up again when medicine wears off) the child will be sent home and we'll recommend consultation with a physician. We are not able to administer medicine to regulate a child's temperature. If acetaminophen or ibuprofen is prescribed for pain, the container's label must reflect dosage for your child's age. For labels reading "if under age_____ consult physician" we must have a doctor's note stating dosage amount and reason for administering.

Definition of Diarrhea: Loose, watery, or uncontained bowel movement. Uncontained meaning leaks out of diaper or the child is not able to control enough to use the toilet. If your child has diarrhea, 2 per hour, 3 within 24 hours, or 1 uncontained, the child will be sent home and we ask he/she not be brought back until having a solid bowel movement at home. Bowel movements must continue to be solid when returning.

Head Lice: If a case of head lice is discovered the child will be sent home immediately and can return after successful treatment, meaning when there are no live nits. Our office has helpful information regarding treatment and infestation prevention. It's crucial to report any case to Dimensions immediately, so that we can take steps to prevent infestation. We respect your right to privacy and will ensure your family and child will remain anonymous.

Sending Your Child Home

If we need to send your child home because of illness:

- They will get an "Illness Form" in their cubby. This sheet will help eliminate any confusion about why your child was sent home and when they can return to school.
- If we call you to come and pick your child up, we ask that you make arrangements to come as soon as possible.
- **Do not bring your child back to school until they are symptom-free and fever-free for 24 hours without any fever reducing medications.**
- There may be times when your child does not have a fever, but we still feel they are not able to participate in daily activities because they are not feeling well. We will call and ask that you come and pick them up.
- We are required to notify the Health Department if any enrolled child has a doctor confirmed reportable disease or fever of 100.4 or more.

For some illnesses, it will be necessary to present a doctor's note to indicate your child is no longer infectious. In some cases, even if your physician has cleared your child to return, we will ask that you keep them home. As a program, we must look out for the health of ALL the children attending and the final decision regarding your child's attendance will be made by administration.

Handwashing
When arriving teachers will make sure your child has washed their hands.

Medication
If your child needs medication administered during his/her time at Dimensions, you will need to fill out the medicine authorization form completely.

- **Medication must be in its original, labeled container with the child's name on it.**
- If your child has any type of food allergy or medical condition that would require us to administer any type of medication, such as an epi-pen, you **MUST** indicate this information in your paperwork AND notify the Education Programs office immediately so we can send you our allergy and medical conditions information. You will be required to meet all the requirements BEFORE your child may attend the first day.

Nebulizer Treatments
If your child needs a breathing or nebulizer treatment, we ask that, if possible, these treatments be spaced so that they can be given at home or a parent or guardian can come to school to do the treatment. If this is not possible, call your site to make other arrangements.

Sunscreen Policy
Dimensions' mission is to help children connect with nature. Since we are committed to spending as much time outside as possible, it is important that children are protected from the sun's harmful rays.

- Parents **must** apply sunscreen to their child BEFORE bringing their child each day.
- If permission authorizing the application of sunscreen is on file, sunscreen will be reapplied to children by teachers or staff if outside longer than usual.
- Teachers will NOT be applying sunscreen to your child's face. Please make sure they have a hat available to wear outside.
- One brand/type of sunscreen with an SPF of at least 30 will be provided for all children for whom we have been given authorization to apply sunscreen.
- If your child has a sensitivity to certain sunscreens, you will be responsible for bringing your own labeled with your child's name. **Please give it to a teacher. It may NOT be kept in a child's cubby. It must be kept out of reach of children.**

Safety

We always want to make sure the children at Dimensions are safe and it is important that families are informed and aware of the policies that help us to achieve this goal.

Phone Numbers and Emergency Contacts

We require daytime phone numbers for you and at least two other emergency contacts. Please include work numbers for emergency purposes and make sure numbers are updated at all times. It is important that we have current phone numbers each time you drop your child off. Remember to let both your child's teacher and the Education Programs Office (402) 476-8304 know if the number is different for the day.

We must always know where to reach at least one parent/guardian during the sessions. Please make sure your voicemail box is set up and not full. We will always leave a message since you may not recognize the number that we are calling from. Notify the Education Programs office if you need a phone number changed.

Cell Phone Usage

In order to make best use of our opportunities to communicate with you, as well as to connect with your child, we ask that you not use your cell phone during your time at Dimensions.

Photos and Video

Dimensions uses photos and video of children for research, documentation, print materials, social media, portfolios and also takes class photos at the end of the year. If you choose to NOT ALLOW your child to be photographed, they will not be included in ANY photos/videos during their time at Dimensions, including class photos.

CPR & First Aid

Teachers are trained in CPR and first aid procedures but are glad that they rarely, if ever, need to use their training. Safety is always stressed. In the event of a bump or scrape, teachers will fill out an incident report and place it in the child's cubby. If teachers feel the injury is more serious, they will contact a parent/guardian. Our policy is to always call a parent/guardian in the case of any sort of head bump.

Emergencies

If you need to contact your child's teacher DURING the session, you may call your child's site. Be sure to leave a detailed message if necessary. If you indicate that it is an emergency, your call will be put through to the teacher, if possible. If it's not an emergency, you can leave a message and the teacher will call you back when she/he is not with children.

Photo ID's

We require anyone other than parents or guardians picking up your child to show a photo ID. However, we may ask you to show your ID until teachers get to know you. Please inform others who may pick up to make sure they have their ID with them. It is important to keep the list of people picking up your child(ren) updated. We will NOT release to older siblings unless we have talked to a parent first.

Child Custody
Without a court document, both parents/guardians have equal rights to custody. We are legally bound to respect the wishes of the parent/guardian with legal custody based on a copy of the most recent court order, active restraining order, or court-ordered visitation schedule. We will not accept the responsibility of deciding which parent/guardian has legal custody where there is no court documentation.

Snow Emergency/School Closings
We follow the Lincoln Public School emergency weather closings. If LPS is not in session, please follow UNL closings. Listen to the local radio and TV stations for updates. You may also check our website or Facebook page.

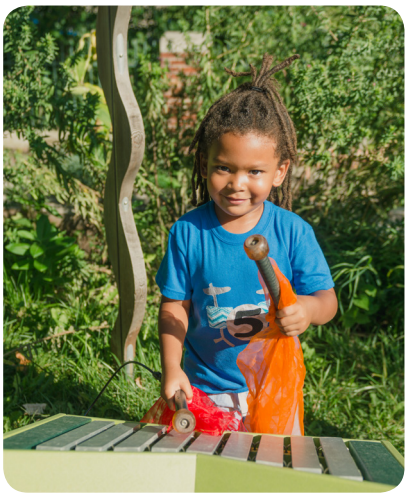
Emergency Response
Emergency plans have been put into place for many different types of situations. Our staff is trained in the appropriate actions necessary during these emergencies and in helping children deal with their feelings during these situations. If any of these emergencies occur, it is important that you know what your job will be to help us keep the children safe and maintain order until the situation is over.

Lockout
This plan would be put into place in the event of unsafe outside conditions or threats. In this plan, children will be cared for indoors and the building will be locked to restrict entry.

Evacuate
If it is not safe for the children to remain in the building, we have a plan in place to evacuate to a predetermined alternate site within walking distance. If we are not allowed back in the Dimensions building, parents will be notified to come and pick up their children at the alternate site.

In the event of an actual emergency, we recommend that you please not call the office. It is important that we keep the phone lines open and all of our staff will be focusing on the emergency situation.

Fire Drills/Tornado Drills
Fire and tornado drills are practiced regularly according to licensing and fire code. It is important to us that we do this in a way that does not scare children.



Dimensions' Expectations

Clothing

At Dimensions, children are active learners both inside and out. We provide many experiences based on the interests of the children and some of them can get a little messy. It is also our mission to inspire children to connect more deeply with nature and we will be going outside in all kinds of weather. We want to make sure that all children are dressed appropriately for the weather conditions. Please make sure you:

- Dress your child so that they are comfortable for play both outside and inside.
- **Send your child in appropriate shoes for running and climbing. (No flip flops or crocs.)**
- Label all clothing
- Send appropriate winter weather clothing in a BAG:
    - *Coat*
    - *Hat*
    - *Mittens/Gloves (waterproof preferred)*
    - *Boots*
    - *Snowpants (Snowy weather)*

Toilet Training

Toddlers: As you begin to toilet train your child at home, let the teachers know what routines you use at home so that we can be consistent with your child at school. Please make sure that you have several changes of clothes at school.

Preschool: We are not equipped to change diapers during the Preschool sessions, but we certainly are prepared to deal with "accidents" from time to time. Emergency clothing is on hand for just that reason. We do require, however, that your child be out of diapers and pull-ups.

Snacks

Your child will be provided a healthy snack each day. If you are interested in sending a snack to share, each month, you will receive a link for snack sign-up. **(All snacks must be unopened, store bought items with ingredients listed on the label).** If you bring fresh fruit or vegetables, please make sure it is in a closed bag or container and **DO NOT** prepare or cut it at home.

Our philosophy is to promote healthy eating for all of the children and because of the rise in childhood obesity, related complications, and for medical reasons, such as diabetes, allergies and other medical conditions we ask that you do not bring any of the following:

- **no sweets**
- **no items with peanuts or tree nuts**
- **no home-made items**
- **no high-sugar content foods**

Children are so excited when it is their day to bring snack for their group. Providing a healthy snack for your child's group is a wonderful learning opportunity for your child and helps defray program costs. We encourage you to sign up to bring a nutritious snack as often as you can. Each teaching team will have their own monthly online sign-up. Watch your email for the link.

Birthdays and Holidays

Our classroom teachers are ready and excited to celebrate birthdays with every child. If you would like to contribute to snack on that day, we encourage you to send unopened special cups or napkins and/or a non-sweet treat. **Sweet treats (such as cookies, cupcakes, etc.) will NOT be served.** Please do not send any additional treats or non-food items for birthdays or any other holiday. Please do not put party invitation or treat bags for birthdays or holidays in children's cubbies. This helps avoid hurt feelings among children. You will receive a class list with parent information if you want to contact for parties.

Toys
We work very hard at providing wonderfully enriching materials and experiences for your child. Please help us by keeping your child's toys at home.

Field Trips
Groups may take walking field trips to areas around our neighborhood. Parents will be notified in advance if children leave the building grounds.

If Your Child Stays for Lunch...
Lunch boxes will need to be either plastic or cloth (no paper bags) as they will be sprayed upon arrival.

- You will need to send a lunch and beverage with your child each day (remember eating utensils, if needed).
- Children will not have access to a refrigerator or microwave for lunches.
- If you have foods that need to stay cold, you could use a frozen cold pack (available in grocery stores).
- Be sure to put your child's name on the outside of his/her lunch box.
- Help us by keeping sweet, sugary foods to a minimum.
- Lunches do not need to be large. We provide nutritious snacks. *Most young children usually don't eat much at one time.*
- Due to licensing changes and our increased awareness of the value of a balanced diet, we encourage families to send lunches that meet the USDA requirements.

  Please visit links below for balanced meal requirements:
  Infants: dimensionsed.org/infant-meals
  Children: dimensionsed.org/child-meals

Safe Sleep Policy
Infants under 12 months:

- All teachers have received the required training "Safe with You" and will follow the steps for SIDS prevention, including:
  - *Place infants under the age of 12 months on their backs when in cribs.*
  - *Require a doctor's statement if a child needs to sleep in alternative positions or not in a crib for medical reasons.*
  - *Will encourage use of pacifier when sleeping.*
  - *Will not use swaddling devices while an infant sleeps.*
  - *Will not use blankets or soft toys in the cribs.*
- Parents will need to provide the following for naptime:
  - *Winter and summer sleep sack*
  - *Crib Sheet*

Infants over 12 months, Toddlers, Preschool:

- Please bring a SMALL pillow, blanket and crib sheet for your child to store at school.
- Label all items.
- Please choose items that do not need to go home each night.
- Until further notice, all nap items will need to stay at school and Dimensions will wash.

Infant Room Environment
The infant room is a shoeless environment. This allows for a cleaner floor surface for children to enjoy while exploring in the classroom. When you drop off and pick up your child simply remove your shoes and join us in the classroom. There is a place provided for your shoes near the entry. Shoe covers will be available if you prefer that option. You might notice the teachers might be wearing shoes. This is because they have brought them to wear only in the infant room.

If you have older siblings with you while dropping off or picking up, please have them wait by the door.

Behavioral and Developmental Challenges
It takes time for children to adjust and settle into a routine. It is important for teachers and parents to remember that some children's behavior might be challenging, but most children respond when consistency and routine are in place.

If your child is already receiving special education services from Lincoln Public Schools or another provider, we want to make sure that we are implementing and following the strategies and goals of the IEP or IFSP. Please notify admin@dimensionsed.org **BEFORE** your child's first day.

If there are challenges that continue after the teachers, administration and parents have used the strategies that have been outlined for them, Dimensions Education Programs will ask parents to:

- Call Lincoln Public School at (402) 436-1920 to start an evaluation process. (At that time, parents will be given two weeks to request an evaluation.)
- If a child qualifies for LPS services, all meetings with LPS staff must be scheduled through our office at (402) 476-8304.
- It is important that all requests from LPS and Dimensions be followed through by parent(s) or we may need to ask you to give up your spot in the program.

If your child has been identified for special services while attending Dimensions and we have not yet been part of the process, please notify admin@dimensionsed.org.

It is our goal to work together as a team to best meet the needs of every child.

Session Schedules and Fees

We operate on a school-year calendar (August–May) with sessions for ages 6 weeks until kindergarten and offer summer sessions through grade 1.

Three and seven hour sessions are offered. Extended hours from 7:30am to 5:30pm are available on a limited basis. If you are interested in extended hour rates go to:
dimensionsed.org/programs/rates-and-application.

For scheduling, billing and tuition assistance questions, please contact **admin@dimensionsed.org**.

Important Dates for 2020–21 School Year

Updated August 6, 2020

2020

August 3–7	Closed
August 10	First Day of School Year Sessions
September 7	Closed (Labor Day)
September 21 & 22	Parent/Teacher Conferences at A Street Location
September 22	Parent/Teacher Conferences at First Lutheran Location
September 28 & 29	Parent/Teacher Conferences at First-Plymouth Location
October 15 & 16	Closed (Office Open)
November 26 & 27	Closed
December 23–January 1	Closed

2021

January 11 & 12	Parent/Teacher Conferences at First-Plymouth Location
January 18 & 19	Parent/Teacher Conferences at A Street and First Lutheran Locations
February 4	Eat & Explore at First-Plymouth location
February 9	Classroom Visits at A Street and First Lutheran Locations
March 8 & 9	Closed
April 2	Closed
April 22 & 23	Walkathon at all locations
May 7	Family Potluck Picnic at A Street location
May 20	Last Day of School Year Sessions
May 21	Closed
May 24	First Day of Summer Session
May 31	Closed (Memorial Day)