

A brochure design that is inviting is more likely to be read. Choose a typeface for the co-op's name and presentation that can be repeated on all printed materials so that a consistent "look" is maintained. There are few organizations with as many appealing brochure cover options as a preschool or child care cooperative. Pictures of children and families, drawings by children, or quotes by children or parents are great options. Color limitations are dictated more by the printing cost than "appropriateness."

The brochure should accurately describe the program in statements that are succinct and well written. It should include the mission statement, a general philosophy about children's learning and activities, and a brief presentation of the services or programs offered. Resist being too wordy — it needs to be inviting and easy to skim.

Highlight the special features of the program in the brochure. Be certain to say that the program is a cooperative. Present the general features of the program without getting too specific. For example, do not present the specific fee structure in the brochure, but state that costs are minimized in the program by the participation of parents.

Costs of producing a brochure vary widely. Look to the cooperative members for help and expertise — if the expertise isn't available firsthand, members may know someone willing to help. It is likely that the cooperative has a person experienced with design who can help in layout, or someone who has access to computer layout software. There may even be a professional printer among co-op parents or their families! Always compare prices; don't spend so much on the brochure that it costs too much to give away. A slick brochure doesn't cause people to join the co-op, it just brings them in for a closer look.

Advertising

Depending on your community, there are probably certain places where advertising is essential. For example, it is usually advisable to pay for a listing or an ad in the yellow pages of the telephone directory. If expertise exists within the parent or staff group, a website is fairly inexpensive to establish and maintain. Some communities have parent magazines that are widely read and offer relatively inexpensive advertising. Usually, advertising is expensive and few schools have the luxury of funds for ongoing flashy ads. Therefore, be strategic and purposeful in advertising. Learn to use community resources to get the bulk of advertising for free — this is the basis for truly effective public relations.

Steps to Gaining Media Attention

1. Know the local media sources and the specific reporters and columnists that cover issues relevant to the co-op: children and families. Maintain a record of media information, including key contacts, deadlines, supplement schedules, special interest issues, and requirements for each media source. Likely community media sources include:
 - A. general and neighborhood newspapers
 - B. special interest publications, particularly those that focus on children or families
 - C. local radio and television stations
2. Focus on events that are newsworthy. Begin by making a list of co-op events that have attracted media attention in the past or events that media sources would see as noteworthy. Usually a newsworthy event is one that involves a lot of people or has the potential to be interesting to a large number of people. Some examples include:
 - A. Special events like a kindergarten graduation ceremony, an open house, a school remodeling, or a reunion of co-op members. Even special fundraising events may be noteworthy, particularly when they are organized for a specific goal.
 - B. Community outreach events, like a special canned-food drive or fundraiser for charity, a field trip to a local business, or children's visit to a senior citizens' center.
 - C. Unique events like grandparent visitation day, junior career week, a "living history" celebration, or co-op anniversary or birthday.
3. Prepare for attracting media attention. Every event should include explicit plans for publicity. The media coverage received not only contributes to the specific event but it contributes to the public image of the co-op.
 - A. Prepare a media packet that is always available. The packet includes items that enable the co-op to easily publicize events and allows the co-op to have information readily available for press dissemination. The packet would include:
 - A formatted news release form (see example)
 - Listing of relevant media sources, names, due dates, and copies of relevant event submission forms (sometimes the media source may require that information be on a specific form or in a specified format)
 - Photographs of children and families with pertinent information on the back

- Co-op brochure
 - Additional information about the specific event
- B. Submit written articles to papers. Small newspapers, particularly those that are newsmagazines targeted to a specific audience like young children and families, often welcome articles. Make sure that each article is concise and well written in an "inverted pyramid" news style. In this style, the most important information — who, what, when, where and why — is presented early in the article and information is presented in order of diminishing importance. This allows an editor to easily cut from the bottom up without eliminating essential information.
4. Know how to respond to unsolicited negative media attention. Strategies for addressing a poor image or negative incident include:²²
- A. Be quick to respond to the media, but be prepared. Anticipate questions.
 - B. Have a single message to convey and let it guide responses.
 - C. Be brief, honest, and diplomatic. Do not speculate.
 - D. Offer what the co-op plans to do — try to turn it into a positive.
 - E. Keep at the media, flood them with news releases that send a positive message about the co-op.

The News Release

A news release allows the co-op to notify the press about upcoming events or activities. The release should be mailed, faxed, or e-mailed several times. Once about a month before the event, another, 2 weeks before the event, and if no response has been heard from the media source, try a final release 1 week before the event. A news release should be printed on letterhead stationery (or some facsimile), be double-spaced, one to two pages, and may be formatted and organized as specified in Feature 22.

The Crucial Role of Alumni Members

A 47-year-old California parent co-op was in dire financial trouble. In addition to declining enrollment, the school had overextended itself financially. The school's new program director was earning more than any previous director and many on the board felt she was not a good match for the co-op.

The board took action.

22. Paul Pfothenhour and Maril Stratton. University of California Media Workshop. January 27, 1995.

In desperation, the board searched for grants to address their financial problems. Grants took too much time (for the short run). The cooperative followed a suggestion to focus on alumni to address the problems. Most alumni families have fond feelings for their co-op nursery school. Board members looked through the co-op's records and found telephone rosters dating back to 1960. The board formed a committee of two current members and two alumni to go through the names and update addresses. They ended up with an alumni mailing list of 200 names.

FEATURE 22

SAMPLE PRESS RELEASE

SEPTEMBER 4, 2004

TO: *Identify name and press organization*

For immediate release

For more information Contact: Rosalyn Peters

NEW DISCOVERIES PRESCHOOL CO-OP

1123 Child Lane

Langley, California

Ph: (530) 924-2408

Fax: (530) 924-8024

Include:

- Brief paragraph indicating who, what, where, when, and possibly why.
- Paragraph that provides more detail on "what."
- Paragraph that provides more detail on your organization and, if applicable, the people involved.
- End with miscellaneous information that might include a copy of a photo with the note: "photograph available on request."
- If a second page is included, indicate "more" at the bottom of page one, and indicate "page two, New Discoveries Press Release" at the top of page two.
- Indicate end of release with: "###."

For more information, contact New Discoveries Preschool Co-op, (530) 924-2408.

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At the same time this was going on, the board decided not to renew the contract with the program director. The alumni search had included previous school directors and one of them recommended a student who had 2 years experience as a cooperative teacher and met program director education requirements. The student was interested in the job at a rate of pay the co-op could afford — significantly less pay than the previous program director.

A traditional social event/fundraiser at the co-op is Casino Night. The board decided to make it a special reunion Casino Night that would celebrate the cooperative's 47th anniversary; the theme was *Fresh Start*. A letter was sent to alumni inviting them to the reunion, asking for donations, and also asked families to "tell us news about your family and we'll create a newsletter."

The process ended up rejuvenating and uniting the families at the co-op. One board member commented, "This was really like a rebirth. We have 27 families — almost all new families with no co-op past." Alumni wrote letters to the school that were inspiring. Each letter was read aloud. This created excitement. Cash donations included a \$200 donation from an alumni family that had moved to Colorado, but had five children who had each attended the school.

The event brought in over \$1,200. Three of the school's previous program directors attended the fundraiser. Families from the 1970s and a big group from the 1980s attended the event. One organizer noted: "The 80s people were still friends and met at the Casino Night."

Public relations for the school and the event contributed to the success. The co-op recruited a freelance photographer, and pictures and information were submitted to newspapers. Because the event was newsworthy, it was covered in four newspapers, including the Los Angeles Times. The combination of financial contributions, publicity, and especially the current member enthusiasm generated by the event saved the co-op. It endures today.

Troubleshooting: Not-So-Uncommon Problems that Arise and Strategies to Address Them

The best strategy for addressing problems is to prevent them. Ongoing strategies for avoiding problems, or identifying them when they are small, include:

- Ongoing training and education of board, members, program director, and staff

- Healthy, respectful work environment for staff that includes attention to compensation and benefits
- Excellent internal communication
- Ongoing marketing of the co-op
- Institutionalizing meaningful annual evaluations for the program, program director, and staff
- Being responsive to problems when they are first revealed (investigate, then act)
- Ongoing communication with stakeholders (including previous members)

Below are the most common problems experienced by parent cooperatives, followed by suggested strategies for addressing them. In addressing problems, it is important to carefully initiate necessary changes. *Ensure that changes do not alienate current members. Communication is extremely important because the cooperative doesn't want to lose its current, loyal members.*

Declining Membership

Survey results from the Center for Cooperatives' 1998 survey indicated that a large number of parent cooperatives could be grouped into two areas — those that were doing well and wondering what to do with their burgeoning waiting list, and those that were experiencing declining enrollments.²³ In terms of parent cooperative e-mail and telephone requests for assistance at the Center for Cooperatives at the University of California declining enrollments has been the single largest issue for more than 5 years.

If enrollments are declining, the cooperative can immediately begin to initiate research into possible reasons for the decline. Strategies include:

1. Ask people familiar with the co-op for their ideas — examine responses for patterns.
2. Visit and/or obtain information about other community preschool and child care programs, particularly those that are popular. Compare the co-op with the "competition" in terms of hours, fees, physical appearance, staff, client responsiveness, and so forth.
3. Make follow-up calls to all visitors or people who inquired about the cooperative. Thank them for their interest and indicate that the

23. Unpublished data, Center for Cooperatives, University of California. Similar results were revealed in a 1991 co-op survey — see Coontz, 1992a.

cooperative is evaluating the program and would appreciate their feedback — What did they like about the co-op? What did they not like about it? What factors made them choose the program they did?

4. Initiate a telephone survey to current members and members who have left within the past 2 years, asking the same questions that were posed to visitors.
5. If the community has a local child care resource and referral agency, arrange to meet with the director, explain the problems, and ask for assistance and advice. What are their impressions of the co-op? What do they hear from other parents looking for a program for their child?
6. The board can do a self-critique of the program and policies, including school appearance, staffing, pricing, parent participation requirements, program hours, public relations, and networking practices.
7. The board can look critically at elements of the program that might restrict enrollment and consider:
 - Program hours — are they too restrictive for employed parents?
 - Participation requirements — are they too demanding?

Improve the program by addressing weaknesses. Carefully evaluate all results and discern how to best address the weaknesses. Let current members know why the cooperative is interested in implementing strategies to increase enrollment. (If a primary concern is participation, see heading below.)

Brainstorm all possible issues, then evaluate strategies for making program modifications that could make it feasible for employed parents to join the co-op (see "participation requirements," below). Consider:

1. Offering additional hours of care for children whose parents desire it. Sometimes just a few hours of extended care can make it possible for employed parents to join the co-op.
2. Offering options: drop-in care, and child care that extends the established program hours.
3. Establishing fees for additional hours of child care. Compare local prices and charge at least enough to meet expenses.
 - Charge set monthly or weekly fees for consistent extended care.
 - Charge more for drop-in care, and offer it on a "space-available" basis.

4. Effectively marketing the co-op. Lay the groundwork for marketing by establishing a sound public relations and marketing program (see previous section in this chapter).

Participation Problems

Participation issues usually include requirements that are perceived as too demanding, uneven participation among parent-members, or lack of follow-through on participation commitments. In any of these circumstances, the cooperative can consider the following:

1. The board leads an investigation of the issues. Begin by critiquing all aspects of participation policies — examine job descriptions, recruitment strategies, and participation requirements. Consider: Are jobs described in an inviting way? Is too much being required of parents? Are there alternative strategies?
2. Objectively evaluate current classroom and related participation requirements, maintenance work, and parent-education requirements.
 - Can the time requirements for any of these be reduced without jeopardizing program quality? If specific types of jobs need to be eliminated, begin by removing jobs that do not enhance parent-child interaction or understanding, such as routine cleaning and maintenance.
 - Calculate the costs involved in hiring a person (who may be a parent-member) to replace volunteer work.
3. Allow interested parents the option of paying a higher fee to *buy out* of a portion of their participation requirements. This can be an effective strategy as long as the following conditions are met:
 - When establishing the buyout cost, be certain to charge enough to compensate for the lost participation.
 - Use the funds to purchase the service. Avoid placing increased demands on other parents.
 - Do not allow a complete buyout of all participation. The practice can change the dynamic of the cooperative by creating two distinct groups of parents (co-op parents and non-co-op parents), and may divide rather than strengthen the program.
4. Allow parent substitutes, such as family members or a nanny, to complete participation requirements. This issue is a difficult one in some cooperatives. Although many co-ops allow relatives (like grandparents) to complete parent participation, they frown on nanny participation because it could jeopardize the "parent" part of the co-op. This can be addressed by one or a combination of the following:

- Establishing a per-family percentage limit for participation time contributed by substitutes.
- Allowing a certain percentage of enrollees to enter as "substitute caregiver" families.
- Allow the practice on a case-by-case basis, considering the circumstances of the family.

Considerations specific to the problems of uneven participation and lack of follow-through include:

1. Approach: being welcoming and encouraging promotes participation. If a parent is made to feel different or isolated, s/he will be much less likely to volunteer.
2. Education (Theme: We participate because it is good for our kids!)
 - Have clear, explicit participation expectations.
 - Explain the importance of participation at new-parent orientation.
 - Assign a mentor for each parent (particularly if a parent starts mid-year when an orientation isn't offered).
 - Job description summary or a binder that parents can leaf through helps parents find jobs they like.
 - "Selling" (marketing) participation: show how meaningful the job is!
3. Implement "carrots" (incentives) like:
 - Offering choices with flexibility in fulfilling participation requirements.
 - Doing everything possible to make jobs appealing.
 - Recognizing contributions, including: "Parent of the month," publish participation hours of hard-working parents, give verbal praise.
 - Group monitoring.
 - Reduced fees for doing undesirable jobs (e.g., a "Work Scholarship" reduction for labor-intensive jobs: laundry, janitorial, purchasing).
4. Cautiously consider additional carrot/stick strategies — (if the problems are serious and other strategies haven't worked).
 - In the newsletter, publish a quarterly summary of participation hours; include names.
 - Institute fines for being late or leaving early, or for lack of participation.
 - Establish and follow through on policies that permit expulsion for serious violations of participation requirements.

Negative Rumors and Gossip

The reasons that rumors and gossip emerge are diverse and multifaceted. Sometimes they begin with a person's attempt to make sense of a confusing circumstance or observation. Some people start or spread gossip because it can be entertaining or fun. Some people spread rumors maliciously; some want attention. Whatever the root cause is, parent cooperatives can take steps to avoid rumors and prepare a plan for addressing the issue if it arises.²⁴

Positive, open communication among the program director, staff, and parents, and being well integrated into the community foster a good, solid image of the co-op and can help insulate against the potentially negative effects of rumors and gossip.

The program director of a campus child care co-op received a telephone call from a local reporter late one Friday afternoon asking about the role of an accused child molester who worked as a student volunteer in the co-op. Although the student's volunteer time had occurred prior to her tenure with the center, the program director quickly found records verifying that he was a volunteer for a short time 6 years previously. She shared with the reporter that his sole responsibility was cleaning the rabbit hutch and painting some shelves. The conversation with the reporter was brief, but the program director surmised that this might be a major news story so she immediately took action. She prepared a brief letter explaining what she had shared with the reporter and reiterated the screening policies relating to volunteers that were in place. She placed a copy of the letter in each parent's school mailbox. She telephoned the co-op president and each staff member so that all were well informed about the situation. Her quick action, the school's practice of good record keeping, and her utilization of effective, straightforward communication averted the potential for devastating bad publicity and rumor around the co-op.²⁵

Raising a Substantial Amount of Money to Fund a Large Project or Reduce Debt

If a co-op is experiencing immediate financial debt and related problems, the program may not qualify for a loan, and time constraints make it difficult to apply and qualify for grant funds. Emergency situations require creativity. The most effective strategy may be a

24. Hewes, 1982.

25. Hewes, 1989. Some elements of the scenario have been changed for applicability.

fundraiser that involves alumni. Other options include loans from members and identifying local sources of grant funding or special loans.

Moving and expansion issues are usually intertwined with the need to acquire necessary funds. With increasing competition among large-scale grant programs, it is useful to know that grant funding may be difficult to obtain if the cooperative does not serve a specific disadvantaged population. Identify potential regional grant sources from private endowment funds or gifts or grants provided by local businesses. Sometimes wealthy families have an endowment that they use for private gifts. A loan, particularly from a development bank or cooperative bank, may be obtained at a competitive rate.

To help with moving or/and renovation costs, it may be useful to reach out to the community with requests for donations. Begin by dividing the project into items to be purchased — for example, the prices of specific play structures, moving expenses, pieces of furniture, painting, trees and shrubs, or renovating a particular room. Prepare a list of the items with the cost (add 5% or 10% to each price, just in case there is an increase before actual purchase), and ask individuals, community members, and local businesses to donate the funds for particular items. Affix a plaque to items purchased with donations indicating the source of funds. The plaque will last for years. Include the cost of the plaque in the estimated price of the item.

Internal Conflicts

Internal conflicts arise within any organization. Most seasoned program directors of parent cooperatives can relate stories of particular boards or groups of people where conflicts were more prevalent. If unresolved conflicts include members of the board or parent-members of the cooperative, the program director should avoid being placed in the middle of a disagreement — these are issues that the board should address. Similarly, if there is unresolved conflict between particular board members and the program director, the board should address the problem.

When concerns are brought to the board by parent-members, treat the parent respectfully, even if the board feels that the issue is trivial. Many times just being heard and knowing that issues are taken seriously is enough to dissipate potentially large (yet trivial) conflicts. When addressing issues involving specific people and conflicts that involve issues pertinent to the cooperative, the board can exercise the prerogative of "executive session" — where board members engage in

a closed session. Although the outcome of the executive session will be shared, the content and context of discussion in executive session remains confidential.

A much-loved cooperative program director enjoyed years of excellent rapport with the parent boards of the cooperative. During the 16th year of her position, this changed. There were personality conflicts between the president and the program director — they just didn't get along. Other board members, including the president, understood that the issue really wasn't a performance issue for the program director. The board discussed the issue in an executive session and decided to have the vice president handle all communication with the director, then report the results to the president. This solution took a good deal of maturity on the part of the president and others involved and worked out beautifully.

If an unresolved conflict involves tensions between children, or the behavior of a particular child, the issue is an operational issue that can probably be addressed best by the program director. The program director is educated and experienced in handling issues with children, and it is important to recognize and respect this expertise. If the program director feels that the behavior problem demands an action such as expulsion, the issue is usually brought to the board. If the board disagrees with the program director's recommendation, the board should consult with another expert in child development before making a decision. Discussions about a particular child or family almost always remain confidential.

If conflicts are causing serious problems for the school, gain assistance. Begin by seeking advice and possible assistance from other parent cooperative programs or associations. See if an impartial parent at the school may be able to mediate the conflict. If other strategies fail, consider hiring an outside arbitrator. In every case, conflicts are best addressed when they are small.

Poor Performance or Program Director Incompetence

If a board is concerned about the performance of the program director, the problem is an issue for discussion in executive session. Discussion should focus only on job performance issues. A clear presentation of performance concerns should be carefully identified in writing for the program director. The evaluation should spell out what the program director needs to do to address the concerns and the time frame within which the changes need to occur. Sometimes

the process of preparing this document reveals that the issue is more a philosophical difference than a performance issue. It is important that the board reviews school policy and is certain that the program director is indeed performing below standards.

If there are performance issues, they should be addressed immediately. Treat the program director respectfully and, if possible, give her/him an opportunity to perform to the desired standard. The board should not discuss job performance issues outside the boardroom. Specific issues are kept confidential. If a member reports performance issues to the board, the member can be told that the board is aware of concerns and is addressing the issue but cannot share any more information than that. While respecting the confidentiality of the issue, seek advice from a parent cooperative association, and if the problem is serious, from an employment attorney.

Chapter Summary

Parent cooperatives depend on good, high-quality staff for survival. The program director plays a crucial role in the cooperative and balances potentially difficult roles. The cooperative needs to treat employees well by maintaining good communication, establishing policies for compensation and benefits, and working with the program director to maintain a healthy cooperative.

Ongoing education is crucial to cooperative success. Education in the parent cooperative is divided into three distinct areas: parents, members, board members, and staff.

Because parents are working with children, all parents engage in learning through their participation, which is enhanced by co-sponsored classes on child development and other issues. Parents also need to clearly understand their role as members of a cooperative.

A separate education program should also be routinely provided for board members. Board education should focus on understanding the board's role in relation to the program director, legal responsibilities, implementation of effective policies, monitoring co-op performance, and planning for the future. Board education is particularly important in the parent cooperative because of the relatively high turnover caused by the short duration that children are enrolled in the program.

Virtually every professional career is enhanced by ongoing education. The director, teachers, and related staff should be encouraged to

participate in education that contributes to their knowledge of the education and care of children. In addition, their participation and education related to cooperatives will benefit the parent co-op.

Communication is important to cooperative members and necessary to effectively monitor the performance of the co-op. An annual or six-month member evaluation survey can be an effective tool to obtain valuable feedback about the cooperative.

Developing an effective mission statement helps guide strategic planning and establish long- and short-term goals for the cooperative. Cooperatives benefit from the development of marketing strategies to maintain business and financial efficacy. Learn to effectively utilize media sources to sustain a positive image and leverage free publicity.

Parent participation is central to the cooperative program, yet it can also be a source of potential problems. Implement strategies that educate parent-members about the importance of participation, yet permit flexibility and choices. Expectations should be clear, and participation should be organized so that the meaningful contribution it provides is readily apparent to members.

Some common issues that arise in parent cooperatives can be best addressed by prevention strategies. When problems arise, they should be addressed in a careful, analytic fashion that draws on the experiences of other cooperatives and applicable professionals.



Final Words

... Relationships matter. They provide the nurturance that strengthens children's security and well-being, offer the cognitive challenges to exercise young minds, impart many essential catalysts to healthy brain growth, and help young children discover who they are and what they can do.¹

Ross Thompson, Ph.D.
Carl A. Happold Distinguished Professor of Psychology
University of Nebraska

Parent cooperatives emerged in response to the need for early childhood education programs for children. Through the 1950s, members of cooperatives were primarily middle-class families with a mother who was a full-time homemaker. As families have changed, so have cooperatives. Today, more and more cooperatives provide programs and hours that accommodate working families. Fathers and single parents are more active in today's cooperatives. The cooperative model is flexible enough to meet the changing needs of families.

The unique social aspects of cooperatives can be beneficial to contemporary families by counteracting some of the social and economic conditions that tend to isolate families. The structure of the parent cooperative encourages friendships among families with children of the same age who share in common at least the similar interests that drew them to the cooperative. Friendships that transcend the cooperative program, and the co-op years, can bolster support networks for families.

Cooperatives have much to be proud of. The programs have a rich history of success. They can be models for quality child care and early childhood education programs. The parent involvement integral to parent cooperatives is associated with a host of positive outcomes for children and for parents. These sentiments are captured by the father of a 3-year-old at Redbud Montessori in Davis, California: "We all feel that

1. Thompson, 2001, p. 30.

when we pay our monthly tuition or we come out for a quarterly workday ... (that) ... we're paying ourselves and paying our kids because we're helping to create something that's for them."²

Cooperatives can also be effective tools for economic development and empowerment. Parent cooperatives create community-based jobs, and the child care provided enables members to work, attend classes, or seek employment. At the same time, members learn a wide variety of skills and have opportunities to discover their hidden talents. Parent cooperatives can serve parents from diverse income groups.

Starting a cooperative can be as problematic as starting any enterprise. With effective use of committees and delegation, however, the work can be divided among the organizing group members so one person is not overly burdened. Sharing the organizing workload can set in motion the expectations for parental involvement that fuel a healthy parent cooperative.

Parent Cooperative Preschools International (PCPI), as well as state and regional associations, offer support for parent cooperatives. The Internet provides a cost-effective tool for PCPI and parent cooperative associations and councils in California, Maryland, Michigan, Oregon, and Virginia, as well as British Columbia, Ontario, and Vancouver Island.³ They use attractive, informative websites to promote cooperatives. Cooperatives were once well integrated into professional early childhood education associations, including the National Association for the Education for Young Children; restoring those close ties could be mutually beneficial to cooperatives and to the associations.

Program directors and teachers tend to remain in their positions with cooperatives for many years. The average pay and benefits in cooperatives may be slightly better than the average for other child care and preschool programs. Indeed, offering competitive staff salaries and benefits contributes to retention. Interviews with program directors and teachers suggest that the work itself is rewarding. The comments of a teacher at GeoKids parent cooperative in Menlo Park, California reflect those of many teachers: "working with the parents so closely, building a trust relationship with them, and becoming a part of their family is really rewarding and fulfilling."⁴

2. *The ABC's of Cooperative Child Care*, 2002.

3. PCPI website; see Parent Cooperatives Preschools International, 2002.

4. *The ABC's of Cooperative Child Care*, 2002.

At the same time, the program director in the parent cooperative has the challenging job of effectively involving parents so that education benefits parents as well as children. This process also promotes learning on the part of the director/teacher(s). PCPI uses the symbol of a triangle to represent the important roles of child, parent, and teacher in the cooperative. The relationship among parents, the director/teacher(s), and the child can encourage an optimal learning environment for each member of the triad.

Keys to a Successful Parent Cooperative

There are three primary components to a cooperative: strong member commitment and participation, a quality child care environment for children, and sound business practices. Member engagement and a strong staff contribute to a well-structured, vibrant program that meets measurable, objective quality standards for children. At the same time, the program cannot endure without the financial health assured by sound business practices. Below is an outline of the chief ingredients to each key to success.

1. Strong Member Commitment and Participation

- A. Clear program mission. Members who understand the cooperative and their crucial role as members.
- B. Ongoing education for members and the board of directors. Education includes information about the cooperative structure, the roles and responsibilities of members, board members, and the program director, as well as education about child development and working with children.
- C. Reasonable, clearly understood member responsibilities.

2. High-Quality Program

- A. A high-quality children's program meets or exceeds quality recommendations established by the National Association for the Education of Young Children, particularly for child-to-adult ratios and group size, and meets or exceeds all other legal requirements. The co-op is attentive to the education and experience of the director/teacher.
- B. A work environment for the program director and staff that promotes excellence and staff retention.
- C. Professional development and ongoing education for staff.
- D. Clearly defined and understood roles for board members and the program director promote optimal co-op functioning.

E. Clearly articulated quality-control standards that ensure that the cooperative is bright, clean, and orderly, and that parent volunteers know what is expected of them.

3. Sound Business Practices

- A. Feasible, thorough business and/or strategic plan that is monitored and clearly understood by the program director and the board of directors.
- B. Sound operating practices, including good bookkeeping and accounting practices, and a board that understands the basics of reviewing financial statements.
- C. Integration into a network of other parent cooperatives, related community programs for children, and professional associations.
- D. Use of professionals, when needed. Professional advisors and consultants (including competent legal and accounting assistance) who have experience with cooperatives can save time and money by steering the co-op away from predictable pitfalls.

The Future of Parent Cooperatives

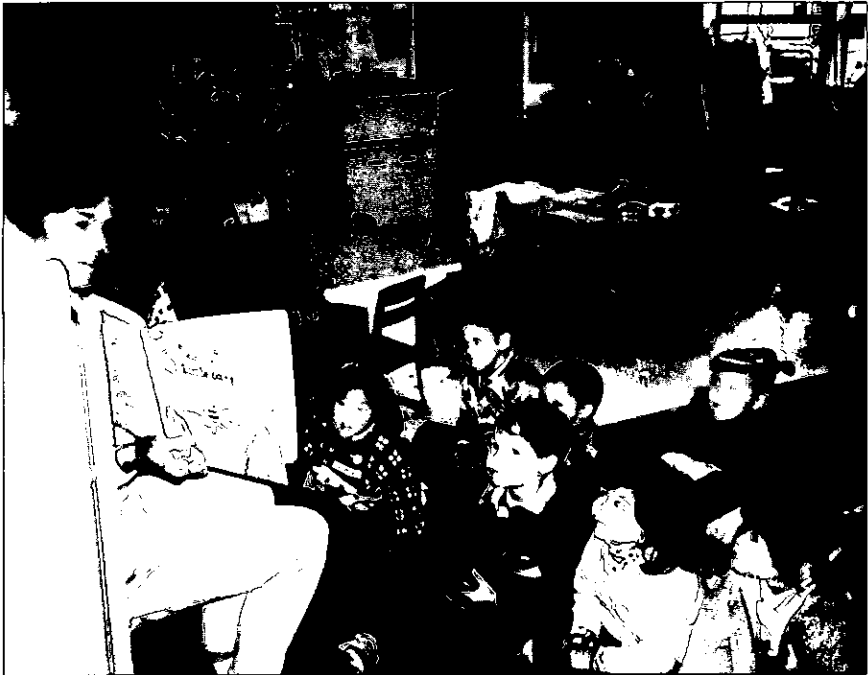
Although parent cooperatives are approaching their centennial year they are largely overlooked when child care and enrichment strategies are explored. Increasing parent demand for child care, rising costs, the importance of quality care, inadequate subsidies and programs for eligible parents, budget deficits and a reluctance to expand public services, as well as social welfare policies that insist on the labor force participation of parents,⁵ signal a desperate need for innovative models of providing quality, affordable child care. Parent cooperatives are one such innovation.

At the same time, academic research specific to parent cooperatives remains sparse. Parents, child advocates, economic and community developers, and parent cooperatives can support such research by advocating for and cooperating with research endeavors. Areas of useful study could focus on children, parenting, or staff work environments. Research could investigate assertions of people who credit their experiences with parent cooperatives as their motivation for becoming elected officials, professors, and other professionals. Studies that examine this link could glean information useful to community and economic development.

5. See, for example, Rowley, 2003.

At a very basic level, cooperatives offer a fundamental child care option for parents. Madeline Fried, a consultant with a long history of involvement with parent cooperatives, captures the essence of this option:

(for parents) there is this real sense that just because I've decided to go to work doesn't mean I need to relegate responsibility to somebody else. I want to be responsible. I want to have some control over my child's environment. The cooperative model really lends itself to that. Because you are the co-op.⁶



Storytime at Hansel and Gretel PPNS in El Sobrante, California.

6. *The ABC's of Cooperative Child Care*, 2002.





Appendix I

SAMPLE CHILD CARE NEEDS SURVEY

Important—Please Complete This Family Survey!

Name of organization is exploring all aspects involved with developing a child care center that would serve the families of name of community/region/workplace. Please help by completing this questionnaire.

1. Are you pregnant or do you have children under the age of 13 currently living in your home?
 Yes
 No—BUT I expect to have children within the next 4 years. Please skip to #13 and answer based on your expectations.
 No—and I don't expect to have children within the next 4 years. Please answer #14.
2. Please state the ages of children who currently live with you (if you're pregnant please write "pregnant" next to age):
Child, age: _____ Child, age: _____ Child, age: _____ Child, age: _____
3. Please indicate which of the following best describes your household:
 Two-parent household Single-parent household
 Grandparent/relative caring for related child
 Guardian/custody of unrelated child
 Other, please identify: _____
4. Do you expect to have more children in the next 4 years?
 Yes No Uncertain
5. Does lack of child care limit your ability to work, to look for work, or to take classes to improve your job possibilities?
 Yes No
6. Do you need to have someone care for your children while you work or attend classes?
 Yes No

7. Looking ahead over the next 4 years, do you expect to need someone to care for your children while you work or attend classes?
- Yes No Uncertain
8. How is your youngest child currently cared for?
- By you or your spouse, in your home
- By a relative
- By a babysitter or housekeeper at home or away from home
- In a family day care home
- In a child care center
- Child cares for self
- Other, please identify: _____
9. How do you pay for child care?
- Not applicable (you or your spouse provide care).
- I pay for care myself.
- Paid for by a government program.
- Some costs are paid by a government program, and some I pay for.
- Care is provided free of charge, without any government assistance.
- Other, please identify: _____
- _____
- _____
10. Approximate the *total* cost of the child care you currently use for your youngest child (please include all payments paid for by government or other sources).
- \$ _____ per (choose one) hour/ week/ month,
for about _____ hours per week.
11. During what hours do you usually need child care for your youngest child? (Please check all that apply.)
- Mornings Afternoons or after school Evenings
- Weekends Other, please specify: _____
- _____
- _____

12. Using a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being very dissatisfied and 5 representing the highest degree of satisfaction, please circle the number that best describes how well the current arrangements for your youngest child meet your child care needs.

Does not meet my needs						Perfectly meets my needs
(Dissatisfied)	1	2	3	4	5	(Very Satisfied)

13. If a child care center that you felt good about and could afford opened in or near your neighborhood, would you consider enrolling your child?

Yes No Uncertain

14. Are you interested in becoming involved with this project?

Yes (please include contact information after #15 below)

No Uncertain

15. Approximately what is your family's annual income?

\$10,000 or less \$10,001–20,000 \$20,001–35,000

\$35,001–50,000 \$50,001–65,000 \$65,001 or more

We welcome your comments:

If you feel comfortable providing contact information, please complete the following and we will notify you of progress with the project, etc.


Name _____

Telephone _____

Address _____

E-mail _____

Thank You!!!



Appendix II

CONDUCTING PARENT FOCUS GROUPS TO SHARE INFORMATION AND DISCERN INTEREST IN COOPERATIVE CHILD CARE

Focus Group Participants: Parents who are likely to be interested in the cooperative.

I. Meeting Preparation

Arrange the meeting(s) in the early evening, a weekend day, or other time convenient to families. Allow for an hour and a half meeting, even though the group will probably only meet for an hour. Sometimes people use special enticements to encourage focus group participation like a drawing or promise of a special small gift. If this is used, a child's book or other child-related items usually work well.

Two to three weeks before the meeting, send invitations with an RSVP note to telephone if they can attend the meeting. A general mass mailing is not usually effective. Try to personalize the invitation as much as possible. For example, if a flyer is being used, put a sticky note on it and write, "I hope you can make it" and sign the first name of the contact person indicated on the flyer. A local group or individual should be the sender and receiver of RSVP responses. Build an invitation list from applicable community members, from people who expressed interest in their survey responses, or a similar method. Invite at least three times as many people as you need. If you end up with too many, form another focus group.

Call the day before the meeting to remind responders about the meeting and confirm their attendance.

It is important to offer free child care during the meeting. Make it easy for participants to attend the focus group without the distraction of children. Be certain to have age-appropriate activities, toys, and videos for the children.

II. Day of the Focus Group

Besides one or two people to care for children in a space near the focus group meeting room, the facilitator should arrange for at least one person to assist with the meeting. The assistant will greet parents as they arrive and direct those accompanied by children to the child care area. During the

meeting, the assistant will sit by the door to direct latecomers, or take care of unintended circumstances or facilitator needs. Either this assistant or a second assistant should take detailed notes during the meeting.

Room arrangement: Table large enough to seat all participants, or chairs arranged in a circle. If video equipment is used, it should be set up to be easily viewed from the configuration of chairs, and be ready to start. Prepare a participant sign-in sheet with spaces for mailing address, telephone, and e-mail address.

Sometimes parents feel uncomfortable leaving their children with care attendants. If a participant prefers to bring a baby or child to the meeting do not discourage their attendance unless the child is disruptive.

As participants enter the room, the facilitator and/or assistant should welcome them and ask them to prepare a name tag and add their name and contact information to the sign-in sheet. Have water or coffee/tea available and encourage parents to help themselves to a beverage and be seated.

Special instructions for meeting note taking: Notes should be detailed. Identify remarks using initials so that the remarks of one person can be followed through the text. This helps to not over-generalize particular remarks.

III. Conducting the Focus Group

When the meeting begins the facilitator should welcome the group and thank them for helping with the project. Except to start a video or distribute papers, the facilitator should remain seated.

A. Introductions and meeting ground rules

The facilitator begins by introducing herself/himself and the organization s/he represents. Introduce the assistant(s), and explain their roles as non-participants. Try to encourage an informal, conversational atmosphere. The facilitator can set the tone by sharing the same type of personal information that participants will be asked to include in their introduction. Participants should be asked to include information about their children's ages and why they decided to attend the meeting.

The facilitator opens the meeting by sharing the goals of the focus group — to understand the child care needs and desires of participants, to share information about cooperative child care, and to understand the participants' interest in or concerns with cooperative child care. Inform participants that the group is part of the process of determining whether there is sufficient community interest to start a cooperative child care center.

Let parents know that you need the participation of each person to make this meaningful. Assure them that their confidentiality will be respected. The

helper's notes will be shared in summary form without identifying the source of specific remarks. Participants' names and contact information will only be shared with permission.

B. Initial questions

The facilitator begins by going around the circle of participants for each question, yet encouraging participants to be fairly brief with their answers:

1. Please share the need for child care that you currently have or expect to have in the future. (*Here you are looking for ages of children, hours, and whether they need full-day or night child care or are looking for an enrichment program for their child.*)
2. In general, what have you liked most and least about child care you have used in the past?

C. Next, a video on cooperative child care can be shown, or a brief presentation about child care cooperatives can be shared.

At the end of the video ask if participants have any general reactions or questions.

D. Questions about cooperative child care

Note: At this point, the facilitator should seek a less formal style of participation. General input can be shared while encouraging the participation of less vocal participants; discourage domination by one or two.

These follow-up questions will help gain more information:

3. What aspects of a cooperative seem positive or appealing to you? Do you see advantages to cooperative child care?
4. What aspects of a child care cooperative seem negative, or do not appeal to you? Do you have concerns about cooperative child care?
5. What factors would influence your decision to join a child care cooperative?

If there is time:


6. What do you think other parents might see as the positive aspects of cooperative child care?
7. What do you think other parents might see as the negative aspects of cooperative child care?

E. Wrap-up

The facilitator should wrap up the meeting by asking who wants to be kept informed about the project. Let them know that those indicating interest will be contacted within the next week to see if they are still

interested, have any questions, and whether they feel comfortable having their contact information shared with others interested in starting a cooperative.

The meeting should close with words of appreciation to participants—especially for their willingness to share their valuable time to help with the project. And tell them their candor has been very helpful.



Appendix III

FUNDRAISING IDEAS

Discussions with cooperative leaders, reviews of preschool newsletters, feedback from state associations and Parent Cooperative Preschools International reveal multitudes of creative, successful fundraising events held by cooperative preschools each year.

Most schools require parent participation in fundraisers, which is minimally defined in terms of a specified number of participation hours. Some cooperatives require a specific amount of money that each family is expected to generate through fundraising.

Some fundraising events generate supplies for the program rather than money. These fundraisers usually include commercial toy, book, and video sales that credit the school with a dollar amount of products based on sales made.

The successful fundraisers described below were derived from a Center for Cooperatives' telephone survey conducted in 2001, and gleaned from co-op newsletters, including *The Preschooler*, the newsletter for the California Council of Parent Participation Nursery Schools, and *Cooperatively Speaking*, the newsletter of Parent Cooperative Preschools International. Fundraisers that are not focused on generating cash are not included.

Live/Silent Auction

One of the most popular major fundraisers for parent cooperatives is some form of live or silent auction. Cooperatives with annual auctions unanimously describe the event as both fun and lucrative. Reports of earnings ranged from \$12,000 to over \$30,000 from this single event. The affair is usually well advertised and welcomes community members, alumni, and other prospective guests. Parents donate items and solicit donations from local businesses. From these commonalities, many variations are possible.

At Davis Parent Nursery School in Davis, California the auction begins with a dinner catered by a restaurant. Tickets cost \$8, and parent volunteers serve as waiters and bartenders. All families are expected to participate in some way. Past members and community members participate. Goods and services have included airline tickets or a weekend at a vacation home.

Children make art projects that are incorporated into larger items by parent volunteers, such as a table covered with tiled handprints or a quilt with squares made by each child.

Children's Cottage Co-op in Larkspur, California combines the auction with a community-wide dinner-dance that is catered by a local restaurant. Tickets are sold for \$30 per couple, but parents who invite four or more friends are admitted free. The parents serve dinner, DJ the dance, and coordinate the auction.

In San Francisco, some of the fastest-selling items at Laurel Hill Cooperative Nursery School's annual auction and potluck supper include parent donations of haircuts, babysitting, lawn mowing, or a loaf of freshly baked bread delivered once a month. Auction items at Cedar Hills Co-op Kindergarten and Preschool in Portland, Oregon have included rototilling, pressure washing, gourmet dinners, use of backyard hot tubs, and airplane rides.

Carnival

Bunker Hill Parent Participation Nursery School in San Mateo, California combines their silent auction with a carnival and a raffle. The carnival is a community event that includes games and activities. Face painting is one of the children's favorite diversions.

Theater Production

The primary annual fundraiser at First United Methodist Preschool in Eugene, Oregon is a play and shadow puppet show for children performed by parents. Videotapes of the performance are for sale

Plant Sale

A popular fundraiser at Oregon City Preschool in Oregon is an annual plant sale. With Mother's Day in mind, members sell orders to families and friends that are filled by a local nursery.

Booth(s) at Community-Sponsored Events

United Methodist Cooperative Preschool in Burlingame, California participates in a community-wide arts and crafts fair by sponsoring one or two booths where members may sell pizza or offer face-painting for youngsters. Red Barn Cooperative Preschool in Estacada, Oregon has a food concession at an annual community-wide Christmas craft sale.

Delivery for Florist during Peak Holidays

Bear Valley Community Nursery School in Big Bear Lake, California has a win-win arrangement with a local florist. Parents earn money for the co-op by making flower deliveries for Valentines' Day and Mother's Day. No deliveries are made on Valentine's evening or Mother's Day.

List of Fundraising Activities

Sale of Scrip: Important advice—implement a system of tracking and monitoring funds.

Bike/Trike-a-thon: Children are sponsored to make laps around the basketball court.

Raffle: Raffle off a quilt designed by the children or special donated item(s).

Co-op Restaurant or Shopping Night: Arrange with a local merchant to donate a percentage of all sales during that night to the school.

Children's Art Show: Arrange with a local business, hospital, or organization to host a children's art opening/show. Carefully frame and/or mat children's art. The children are respected as serious artists; bids on the artworks are welcome, and each piece has a minimum opening bid. Invite grandparents, friends, city council members, and the community.

Bingo or Casino Night: Win prizes, not cash.

Sell Child-Decorated Tiles: Designs can include children's handprints or drawings for family hanging or to be placed in the co-op yard as part of a play structure or other fundraiser.

Rummage Sale: Can specialize in children's and maternity items.

Sell:

- Plant bulbs
- Commercial gift wrap
- Commercial candy or cookies
- Commercial T-shirts
- Magazines
- Cookbooks
- Pancake breakfast
- Co-op logo T-shirts and sweatshirts
- Commercial frozen cookies
- Commercial pizza
- Coupon books
- Baked goods or other food items
- Christmas trees
- Pictures with Santa, Easter Bunny ...

Fundraising Advice from Parent Co-ops

- *Focus on what interests your members.*
- *Combine at least one fundraiser with a fun social event.*
- *If you have a fundraising requirement for parents—enforce it!*
- *Don't work the parents to death, don't fundraise to death; focus on a few items that yield the most money for the least amount of time.*
- *Stay creative.*
- *Put on one big, community-oriented fundraiser and ask parents for donations to "buy out" of participating in additional fundraising activity.*
- *Advertise, advertise, advertise!*

Grants/Large Donations

Many parent cooperatives have successfully obtained grants for specific purposes. Some examples include play structures, storage sheds, computers, music programs, and scholarships for low-income families.

Alumni

Most cooperatives maintain a list of alumni and invite them to major fundraising events. Some cooperatives interviewed commented that alumni often donate items for an annual auction, one received generous responses to a donation request when the co-op needed to relocate, another sends interested alumni an annual newsletter with a special section on "alumni news."



Appendix IV

SAMPLE BYLAWS

BYLAWS
OF
RAINBOW KIDS CO-OP
333 Co-op Ave.
Co-op, California 95000

ARTICLE I: NAME

The name of this nonprofit corporation is Rainbow Kids Co-op. The corporation will be referred to as the "cooperative" or as the "corporation" in these Bylaws.

ARTICLE II: PRINCIPAL OFFICES

The initial principal office for the transaction of the business of the corporation is located at 333 Co-op Avenue, Co-op, California. The Board of Directors may change the principal office from this location to another within this city.

ARTICLE III: OBJECTIVES AND PURPOSES

The specific purpose of this corporation is to establish and operate a child care center with the following objectives: (a) provide high quality, reasonably priced child care in an enriching, safe, and nurturing environment; (b) promote developmentally appropriate preschool education and positive learning experiences for children; and (c) promote and foster parent governance and involvement and experiences for families that help strengthen family relationships and increase parent's understanding of children and parent/child relationships.

ARTICLE IV: DEDICATION OF ASSETS

The properties and assets of this corporation are irrevocably dedicated to charitable and educational purposes [meeting the requirements of Section 214 of the California Revenue and Taxation Code]*. No part of the net earnings, properties, or assets of this corporation, on dissolution or otherwise, shall inure to the benefit of any private person or individual, or any member, officer, or Director of this corporation. On liquidation or dissolution, all remaining properties and assets of the corporation shall be distributed and

* The bracketed language is applicable only in California.

paid over to an organization dedicated to charitable and/or educational purposes [meeting the requirements of Section 214 of the California Revenue and Taxation Code]*, which has established its tax-exempt status under Internal Revenue Code Section 501(c)(3).

ARTICLE V: MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. Eligibility and Classification

- a. The corporation shall have one class of members. All parents of children enrolled in a program of the corporation shall be eligible for membership. Members shall have equal rights except that, with regard to enrollment in the child care center, priority will be given to the children who have or in the past had siblings in the program. Other specific standards and membership acceptance priorities are set out in the Standing Rules, which are presented in the Parent Handbook.
- b. The corporation shall not discriminate on the basis of race, ethnicity, language, physical disability, or other basis prohibited by law.

Section 2. Membership Qualification

- a. All members shall comply with uniform conditions as prescribed by the Board of Directors or the Standing Rules.
- b. Each member shall have job responsibilities as specified in the Standing Rules.
- c. Each prospective member must agree to and sign a Membership Agreement before acceptance for membership.
- d. Each member shall be expected to attend membership meetings as prescribed in the Membership Agreement.
- e. Each member shall pay all dues, tuition, and fees, and shall assist with fundraising activities as required by the Standing Rules and specified in the Membership Agreement.

Section 3. Termination of Membership

The Directors for cause may also terminate any membership. Such cause shall include but not be limited to: failure to comply with the corporation's Rules or Bylaws; conduct detrimental to the stated purposes and goals of the corporation; failure to pay tuition; or failure to perform according to the Membership Agreement.

- a. **Procedure for Termination.** Should the Board of Directors determine that grounds appear to exist for termination of a membership, the following procedure shall be followed:
 - (i) A written notice shall be delivered personally or sent by first class mail, postage prepaid, to the most recent address of the member as shown on the corporation's records, setting forth the proposed grounds for discipline. Such notice shall be sent at least seven (7) days before the

* The bracketed language is applicable only in California.

date upon which the Board proposes to act upon the termination. The notice to the member of this meeting shall state the date, time, and place of the meeting;

(ii) During the time between the notice of possible termination and the determination meeting, the Board of Directors shall have the option of suspending the parent member and/or enrolled child(ren) from participating in the program. A suspension of this nature should only be invoked when the Board deems it in the best interests of other children in the program. Members will not be charged fees for the suspension period. The amount may be either refunded to the member within thirty (30) days or deducted from outstanding debts;

(iii) The member being terminated shall be given an opportunity to be heard, either orally or in writing, at or before the Board meeting specified in the notice of proposed termination, at the option of the Board;

(iv) Following the meeting, the Board shall decide whether or not the membership should be terminated. Notice of this termination shall be sent to the member in the same manner as the notice of the meeting. The determination of the Board shall be final;

(v) If the Board votes to terminate a membership, fees for child care cease upon the established termination day. Prepaid fees may be either refunded to the terminated member or subtracted from the member's debt to the cooperative.

Section 4. Transfer of Membership

No member may transfer membership or any rights arising from it.

Section 5. Voluntary Termination

Members shall give written notice of voluntary termination of membership to the Board of Directors at least sixty (60) days prior to the effective date of termination, in order to avoid further financial obligation.

Section 6. Family Membership

A membership shall stand in the name(s) of the parent(s) or guardian(s) of the children in the program. For purposes of member votes, calling of membership meetings, quorum at membership meetings, and any other matters that may require action by the members, each family shall be entitled to only one (1) vote and shall be considered only one (1) member regardless of the number of parents or guardians there are or the number of children they have enrolled. If only one votes, the act binds all. If more than one votes, a majority controls. If a tie, the vote is cast to abstain.

ARTICLE VI: MEETINGS OF MEMBERS

Section 1. Place of Meeting

Regular meetings of the membership shall be held in Co-op, California at the corporation's principal office or such other place in the city designated by the Board of Directors.

Section 2. Regular General Meetings

- a. Regular general meetings will be held routinely as specified in the Standing Rules or as prescribed by the Board of Directors. So long as no vote is taken, notice may be by any reasonable means, including notice in writing, in the school handbook, newsletter, or by posted notice. The place, date, and hour of the meeting will be specified. Otherwise, notice shall be given as provided in Section 4.
- b. A regular annual meeting shall be held in the month of June of each year. The Board of Directors shall fix the place, date, and hour of the annual meeting and notify members as provided in Section 4. At this meeting, Directors shall be elected and any other proper business may be transacted.

Section 3. Special Meeting

- a. **Authorized Persons Who May Call.** A special meeting of the members may be called at any time by any of the following: the Board of Directors, the President, or by five percent (5%) or more of the members.
- b. **Calling Meetings by Members.** If a special meeting is called by members other than the President, the request shall be submitted by such members in writing, specifying the general nature of the business proposed to be transacted, and shall be delivered personally or sent by first class, certified, or registered mail or by facsimile transmission to the President, a Vice President, or the Secretary of the corporation. The officer receiving the request shall cause notice to be promptly given to the members entitled to vote, in accordance with the provisions of Sections 4 and 5 of this Article VI, that a meeting will be held, and the date for such meeting, which date shall be not less than thirty-five (35) nor more than sixty (60) days following the receipt of the request. If the notice is not given within the twenty (20) days after receipt of the request, the persons requesting the meeting may give the notice. Nothing contained in this subsection shall be construed as limiting, fixing, or affecting the time when a meeting of members may be held when the meeting is called by action of the Board of Directors.

Section 4. Notice of Members' Meetings

- a. **General Notice Contents.** All notices of meetings of members shall be sent or otherwise given not less than ten (10) nor more than ninety (90) days before the date of the meeting. The notice shall specify the place, date, and hour of the meeting, and (i) in the case of a special meeting, the general nature of the business to be transacted; and no other business may be transacted, or (ii) in the case of the annual or other regular meeting, those matters which the Board of Directors, at the time of giving the notice, intends to present for action by the members, but any proper matter may be presented at the meeting. The notice of any meeting at which Directors are to be elected shall include the names of all persons who are nominees when notice is given.

- b. **Manner of Giving Notice.** Notice of any meetings of members at which a vote is to be taken may be given either personally or by certified or first-class mail, telegram, fax, electronic mail, or other means of written communication, charges prepaid, addressed to each member either at the address of that member appearing on the books of the corporation or the address given by the member to the corporation for the purpose of notice. If no address appears on the corporation's books and no address has been given, notice shall be deemed to have been given if either sent in writing to the corporation's principal office or published at least once in a newspaper of general circulation in the county in which the corporation's principal office is located. Notice shall be deemed to have been given at the time when delivered personally, deposited in the mail, or sent by telegram, fax, electronic mail, or other means of written communication.

Section 5. Quorum

- a. **Percentage Required.** Forty percent (40%) of the members, present in person or by proxy, shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business at a meeting of the members.
- b. **Loss of Quorum.** The members at a duly called or duly held meeting at which a quorum is present may continue to transact business until adjournment, notwithstanding the withdrawal of enough members to leave less than a quorum, if any action taken (other than adjournment) is approved by at least a majority of the members required to constitute a quorum.

Any members' meeting, regular or special, whether or not a quorum is present, may be adjourned by the vote of the majority of the members represented at the meeting, either in person or by proxy. But in the absence of a quorum, no other business may be transacted at the meeting, except as provided in this Article.

Section 6. Voting

- a. **Eligibility to Vote.** Members entitled to vote at any meeting of members shall be those members in good standing as of the record date determined under Section 9.
- b. **Manner of Casting Votes.** Voting may be by voice or ballot, provided that any election of Directors must be by ballot if demanded by any member before the voting begins.
- c. **Only Majority of Members Represented at Meeting Required, Unless Otherwise Specified.** If a quorum is present, the affirmative vote of the majority of the members represented at the meeting, entitled to vote and voting on any matter, shall be the act of the members. Cumulative voting is prohibited. In any election of Directors, the candidates receiving the highest number of votes are elected. Each member shall have the right to vote for as many nominees as there are vacancies on the Board of Directors to be filled by the members.

Section 7. Waiver of Notice or Consent by Absent Members

- a. **Written Waiver or Consent.** The transactions of any meeting of members, either regular or special, however called or noticed, and wherever held, shall be as valid as though taken at a meeting duly held after regular call or notice, if a quorum be present either in person or by proxy, and if, either before or after the meeting, each person entitled to vote, who was not present in person or by proxy, signs a written waiver of notice or a consent to a holding of the meeting, or an approval of the minutes. The waiver of notice or consent need not specify either the business to be transacted or the purpose of any meeting of members.
- b. **Attendance.** A member's attendance at a meeting shall also constitute a waiver of notice of and presence at that meeting, unless the member objects at the beginning of the meeting to the transaction of any business because the meeting was not lawfully called or convened.

Section 8. Action by Written Consent Without a Meeting

- a. **Action by Unanimous Written Consent.** Any action that may be taken at any regular or special meeting of members may be taken without a meeting and without prior notice if all members consent in writing to the action. The written consents shall be filed with the minutes of the member proceedings.
- b. **Action by Written Ballot.** Any action that may be taken at any regular or special meeting of members, including the election of Directors, may be taken without a meeting and without prior notice by written ballot. Approval by written ballot shall be valid only when ballots are received from a number of members at least equal to the quorum applicable to a meeting of members, and the number of approvals is at least equal to the number of votes that would be required at a meeting of members. All such written ballots shall be filed with the Secretary of the cooperative and maintained in the cooperative records. All solicitations by ballot shall indicate the number of responses needed to meet the quorum requirement, the percentage of approval necessary for passage of the proposal(s), and the time by which the ballot must be received to be counted.

The cooperative shall distribute a written ballot to every member entitled to vote on the matter. The ballots shall be distributed in the manner required in Section 4(b) regarding the giving of notice. Such ballot shall set forth the proposed action, provide an opportunity to specify approval or disapproval of any proposal, and provide a reasonable time in which to return the ballot to the corporation.

Section 9. Record Date for Member Notice, Voting, and Giving Consents

- a. **To Be Determined by Board of Directors.** For the purposes of determining which members are entitled to receive notice of any meeting, to vote, or to give consent to corporate action without a meeting, the

Board of Directors may fix, in advance, a "record date," which shall not be more than sixty (60) nor fewer than ten (10) days before the date of any such meeting, nor more than sixty (60) days before any such action without a meeting. Only members of record on the date so fixed are entitled to notice, to vote, or to give consents, as the case may be.

b. **Failure of Board to Determine Date**

(i) **Record date for notices or voting.** Unless fixed by the Board of Directors, the record date for determining those members entitled to receive notice of, or to vote at, a meeting of members, shall be the next business day preceding the day on which notice is given, or, if notice is waived, the next business day preceding the day on which the meeting is held.

(ii) **Record date for written consent to action without meeting.** Unless fixed by the Board, the record date for determining those members entitled to vote by ballot on corporate action without a meeting, when no prior action by the Board has been taken, shall be the day on which the first written ballot is mailed or solicited. When prior action of the Board has been taken, it shall be the day on which the Board adopts the resolution relating to that action.

(iii) **"Record date" means as of the close of business.** For purposes of this paragraph 9(b), a person holding membership as of the close of business on the record date shall be deemed a member of record.

Section 10. Proxies

- a. **Right of Members.** Every member entitled to vote shall have the right to do so either in person or by one (1) or more persons authorized by a written proxy, signed by the member and filed with the Secretary of the corporation.
- b. **Revocability.** A validly executed proxy shall continue in full force and effect only for that meeting which the member is unable to attend.
- c. **Proxy Voting Is Permitted Only When Extenuating Circumstances Prevent a Member from Attending a Meeting.** For this reason proxy voting use is limited to one (1) meeting per year, per family, regardless of the circumstances.

ARTICLE VII: ELECTION OF DIRECTORS

Section 1. Nominations and Solicitations for Votes

- a. **Nominating Committee.** The President shall appoint a committee to nominate qualified candidates for election to the Board of Directors. This Committee shall consist of two (2) non-Board members from the outgoing Board and two (2) members from the cooperative. The nominating committee shall recommend to the Board of Directors a slate of candidates at least thirty (30) days before the date of the election. The Secretary shall forward to each member, with the notice of meeting

required by Article VI, Section 4, the Board-approved list of candidates nominated.

- b. **Nominations by Members.** Any member may nominate candidates for the Board of Directors at any time before the fifteenth (15th) day preceding such election. On timely receipt of a nominating petition signed by the member, the Secretary shall cause the name of the candidate to be placed on the ballot.
- c. **Nominations from the Floor.** If there is a meeting to elect Directors, any member present at the meeting, in person or by proxy, may place names in nomination.

ARTICLE VIII: BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Section 1. Number and Qualification of Directors

- a. The authorized number of Directors shall be no less than seven (7) and no more than eleven (11). The Board of Directors shall fix the exact number of Directors from time to time, within these limits. Up to two (2) Directors can be non-members of the corporation. Certain Directors shall be elected by office as provided in Article IX.
- b. The President, at the close of his or her term of office, shall automatically be seated as a Director for the following year. One (1) Director shall be a member of the community with expertise in early education, child care, or cooperatives, and shall not be a parent of a currently enrolled child. This community expert serves as a bridge to the community outside of the cooperative. Other Directors can include a grandparent or other relative of a currently enrolled child (so long as a parent or guardian of the same child is not also a Director), another community member, or a representative of the site on which the program is located.
- c. No more than one (1) parent, guardian, or other person from the same family shall serve concurrently as Directors.

Section 2. Election and Term of Office of Directors

Directors shall be elected at each annual meeting of the members to hold office from the next regular meeting of Directors; however, if any annual meeting is not held or the Directors are not elected at any annual meeting, they may be elected at any special members' meeting held for that purpose. Each Director, including a Director elected to fill a vacancy or elected at a special members' meeting, shall hold office until expiration of the term for which elected and until a successor has been elected and qualified.

Section 3. Vacancies

- a. **Events Causing Vacancy.** A vacancy or vacancies in the Board of Directors shall be deemed to exist on the occurrence of the following: (i) the death, resignation, or removal of any Director, (ii) the declaration by resolution of the Board of Directors of a vacancy in the office of a Director who has been declared of unsound mind by an order of court or convicted of a felony, (iii) the vote of the members to remove a Director [vote of a

- majority of the members if the cooperative has fewer than fifty (50) members), (iv) the failure of the members, at any meeting of members at which any Director or Directors are to be elected, to elect the number of Directors to be elected at such meeting; or (v) failure of any Director to attend two (2) consecutive Board of Directors' meeting or meetings of a Board committee of which the Director is a member. A Director removed as a result of part (v) above may be reinstated by a vote of the Board upon a showing of a valid excuse for failure to attend.
- b. **Resignation.** Except as provided in this paragraph, any Director may resign, which resignation shall be effective on giving written notice to the President, the Secretary, or the Board of Directors, unless the notice specifies a later time for the resignation to become effective. If the resignation of a Director is effective at a future time, the Board of Directors may elect a successor to take office when the resignation becomes effective. No Director may resign when the cooperative would then be left without a duly elected Director or Directors in charge of its affairs.
- c. **Filling Vacancies.** Except for a vacancy created by the removal of a Director by the members, vacancies on the Board may be filled by vote of a majority of the Directors then in office, whether or not the number of Directors then in office is less than a quorum, or by vote of a sole remaining Director. The members may fill any vacancy not filled by the Directors.
- d. **No Vacancy on Reduction of Number of Directors.** No reduction of the authorized number of Directors shall have the effect of removing any Director before that Director's term of office expires.

Section 4. Place of Meetings. Meetings by Telephone

Regular meetings shall be held at any place designated by resolution of the Board, or, if not designated, at the principal office of the corporation. Special meetings of the Board shall be held at any place within the State of California that has been designated in the notice of the meeting or, if not stated in the notice, or if there is no notice, at the principal office of the corporation. Notwithstanding the above provisions of this Section 4, a regular or special meeting of the Board of Directors may be held at any place consented to in writing by all the Board members, either before or after the meeting. If consents are given, they shall be filed with the minutes of the meeting. Any meeting, regular or special, may be held by conference telephone or other communications equipment permitted by law, so long as all the Directors participating in the meeting can communicate with one another, and all such Directors shall be deemed to be present in person at such meeting.

Section 5. Annual Meeting

Within two (2) weeks following each annual meeting of members, the Board of Directors shall hold a regular meeting for the purpose of organization and the transaction of other business, the time and place to be prescribed by the President Elect.

Section 6. Other Regular Meetings

Other regular meetings of the Board of Directors shall be held at least monthly each school year, or as prescribed by the Board of Directors. Notice of such meetings may be given as provided in Section 7 with respect to special meetings, or specified in a schedule provided to each Director.

Section 7. Special Meetings

- a. **Authority to Call.** Special meetings of the Board of Directors for any purpose may be called at any time by the President, or a Vice President, the Secretary, or any two (2) Directors.
- b. **Manner of Giving Notice.** Notice of the date, time, and place of special meetings shall be delivered personally to each Director or communicated to each Director, at the contact numbers provided by the Director, by telephone (including a voice messaging system which records and communicates messages, and including communication with a person at the Director's office who would reasonably be expected to communicate such notice promptly to the Director), facsimile, or electronic mail at least forty-eight (48) hours before the time set for the meeting, or communicated by telegraph, express mail service, first-class mail, or by other means of written communication, charges prepaid, addressed to the Director at the Director's address as it is shown upon the records of the corporation, deposited in the mails or given to the telegraph company or express mail company or other carrier at least four (4) days before the date of the meeting. The notice need not specify the purpose of the meeting.

Notice of a meeting need not be given to any Director who signs a waiver of notice or a consent to holding the meeting or an approval of the minutes of the meeting, whether before or after the meeting, or who attends the meeting without protesting, prior to the meeting or at its commencement, the lack of notice to such Director. The waiver of notice or consent need not specify the purpose of the meeting. All such waivers, consents, and approvals shall be filed with the corporate records or made a part of the minutes of the meeting.

Section 8. Quorum

At least fifty-one percent (51%) of the Directors then in office shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business, except to adjourn. Every act or decision done or made by a majority of the Directors present at a meeting duly held at which a quorum is present shall be regarded as the act of the Board of Directors, unless a greater number is required by the Articles of Incorporation, these Bylaws, or by law. Directors may not vote by proxy.

A meeting at which a quorum is initially present may continue to transact business, notwithstanding the withdrawal of Directors, if any action taken is approved by at least a majority of the required quorum for that meeting.

Section 9. Adjournment

A majority of the Directors present, whether or not constituting a quorum, may adjourn any meeting to another time and place.

Section 10. Notice of Adjournment

Notice of the time and place of holding an adjourned meeting need not be given, unless the meeting is adjourned for more than twenty-four (24) hours, in which case notice of the time and place shall be given before the time of the adjourned meeting to the Directors who were not present at the time of the adjournment. Such notice may be waived in the manner provided in Section 7.

Section 11. Action Without Meeting

Any action required or permitted to be taken by the Board of Directors may be taken without a meeting, if all members of the Board, individually or collectively, consent in writing to that action. Such action by written consent shall have the same force and effect as a unanimous vote of the Board of Directors. Such written consent or consents shall be filed with the minutes of the proceedings of the Board. Any Director may conduct an informal poll by telephone of all Board members.

Section 12. Self-Dealing Transactions

Except as approved in Section 13 below, the Board shall not approve a self-dealing transaction. A self-dealing transaction is one to which the corporation is a party and in which one (1) or more of the Directors has a material financial interest or a transaction between this corporation and any person (other than a California nonprofit public benefit corporation*) in which one (1) or more of the Directors is a Director or between this corporation and any person in which one (1) or more of its Directors has a material financial interest. A Director shall not be deemed to have a "material financial interest" in a contract or transaction that implements a charitable program of this corporation solely because the contract or transaction results in a benefit to a Director or his or her family by virtue of their membership in the class of persons intended to be benefited by the charitable program, as long as the contract or transaction is approved or authorized by the corporation in good faith and without unjustified favoritism.

Section 13. Approval of Self-Dealing Transactions

The Board of Directors may approve a self-dealing transaction if the Board determines that the transaction is in the best interests of, and is fair and reasonable to, this corporation and, after reasonable investigation under the circumstances, determines that this corporation could not have obtained a more advantageous arrangement with reasonable effort under the circumstances. Such determinations must be made by the Board, in good faith, with knowledge of the material facts concerning the transaction and the Director's interest in the transaction, and by a vote of the majority of the Directors then in office, provided that a quorum is present, without counting the vote of the interested Director or Directors.

** This Section is applicable in California.*

Section 14. Mutual Directors

No contract or other transaction between the corporation and any California nonprofit public benefit corporation of which one (1) or more of its Directors are Directors of this corporation is either void or voidable because such Director(s) are present at a meeting of the Board which authorizes, approves, or ratifies the contract or transaction if the material facts as to the transaction and as to such Director's other directorship are fully disclosed or known to the Board and the Board authorizes, approves, or ratifies the contract or transaction in good faith by a vote sufficient without counting the vote of the common Director(s), or if the contract or transaction is just and reasonable as to the corporation at the time it is authorized, approved, or ratified.

Section 15. Restriction on Interested Directors*

Not more than forty-nine percent (49%) of the persons serving on the Board of Directors at any time may be interested persons. An interested person is (1) any person currently being compensated by the corporation for services rendered to it within the previous twelve (12) months, whether as a full-time or part-time employee, independent contractor, or otherwise, excluding any reasonable compensation paid to a Director as Director; and (2) any brother, sister, ancestor, descendant, spouse, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, mother-in-law, or father-in-law of any such person. However, any violation of the provisions of this section shall not affect the validity or enforceability of any transaction entered into by the corporation.

ARTICLE IX: OFFICERS AND COMMITTEES**Section 1. Officers**

The officers of the corporation shall be a President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer (Chief Financial Officer), each of whom shall be elected by the membership at the annual meeting. The corporation may also have such other officers as may be appointed in accordance with the provisions of Section 2 of this Article IX. Neither the Secretary nor the Chief Financial Officer may serve concurrently as either the President or the Vice President. No person may serve in the same office for more than three (3) consecutive years.

Section 2. Subordinate Officers

The Board of Directors may appoint, and may authorize the President or another officer to appoint, any other officers that the business of the corporation may require, such as an Assistant Secretary or Assistant Treasurer. Each such officer shall have the title, hold office for the period, have the authority, and perform the duties specified in the Bylaws or determined from time to time by the Board of Directors. Such officers need not be Directors.

* This Section is applicable in California.

Section 3. Resignation of Officers

Any officer may resign at any time by giving written notice to the corporation. Any resignation shall take effect at the date of the receipt of that notice or at any later time specified in that notice; and, unless otherwise specified in that notice, the acceptance of the resignation shall not be necessary to make it effective. Any resignation is without prejudice to the rights, if any, of the corporation under any contract to which the officer is a party.

Section 4. Vacancies in Offices

A vacancy in any office because of death, resignation, removal, disqualification, or any other cause shall be filled in the manner prescribed in these Bylaws.

Section 5. Duties of Officers

In addition to the duties specified in this Section 5, officers shall perform all other duties customarily incidental to their office and such other duties as may be required by law, by the Articles of Incorporation, by these Bylaws, or by the Standing Rules, subject to control of the Board of Directors, and shall perform such additional duties as the Board of Directors shall from time to time assign.

- a. **President.** The President shall preside at all meetings of the members and the Board of Directors; shall execute in the name of the corporation, together with the Secretary, all contracts and other documents authorized either generally or specifically by the Board to be executed by the corporation; and shall appoint special committees as may be needed at any time, or appoint committees as directed by the Board of Directors or the members. The President shall, in general, supervise and conduct the activities and operations of the corporation, shall keep the Board of Directors fully informed and shall freely consult with them concerning the activities of the corporation, and shall see that all orders and resolutions of the Board are carried into effect. The President shall be notified immediately by the Membership Chairperson of all new memberships and/or terminations. The President shall maintain an up-to-date notebook.
- b. **Vice President.** The Vice President shall perform the duties of the President in the absence or during the disability of the President. The Vice President shall chair the Personnel Committee and the School Program Committee. The Vice President shall be responsible for the monthly programming of the school's Regular General Meetings. The Vice President shall maintain an up-to-date notebook.
- c. **Secretary.** The Secretary, together with the President, shall execute in the name of the corporation all contracts and other documents authorized either generally or specifically by the Board to be executed by the corporation. The Secretary shall be present at all meetings of the members and of the Board of Directors, and shall keep records of all proceedings

thereof. The Secretary shall take a roll call at all meetings and maintain a record of attendance. The Secretary shall give all notices of meetings required by these Bylaws. The Secretary shall maintain a record of changes in the Bylaws and Standing Rules, with the dates voted as well as noting these changes in the minutes. The Secretary shall receive assistance as necessary. The Secretary shall be a member of the Personnel Committee. The Secretary shall be notified immediately by the Membership Chairperson of all new memberships and/or terminations. The Secretary shall maintain an up-to-date notebook.

d. **Treasurer.** The Treasurer shall maintain the following:

(i) **Books of Account.** The Treasurer shall keep and maintain, or cause to be kept and maintained, adequate and correct books and records of accounts of the properties and business transactions of the corporation, including accounts of its assets, liabilities, receipts, disbursements, gains, losses, capital, retained earnings, and other matters customarily included in financial statements. The books of account shall be open to inspection of any Director at all reasonable times.

(ii) **Deposit and disbursement of money and valuables.** The Treasurer shall deposit all money and other valuables in the name and to the credit of the corporation with such depositories as may be designated by the Board of Directors; shall disburse the funds of the corporation as may be ordered by the Board of Directors; and shall render to the President and Directors, whenever they request it, an account of all of his/her transactions and of the financial condition of the cooperative.

(iii) **Bond.** If required by the Board of Directors, the Treasurer shall give the cooperative a bond in the amount and with the surety or sureties specified by the Board for faithful performance of the duties of his/her office and for restoration to the corporation of all its books papers, vouchers, money, and other property of every kind in his/her possession or under his/her control on his/her death, resignation, retirement, or removal from office. The corporation shall pay the cost of such bond.

Section 6. Committees

The Board of Directors may appoint advisory committees consisting of one (1) or more persons that do not have the authority of the Board. Minutes shall be kept of each meeting of any committee and shall be filed with the corporate records. The Board of Directors may adopt rules consistent with the provisions of these Bylaws for the government of any committee. The committees include a Nominating Committee, Personnel Committee, and School Program Committee. Other committees may include the following:

a. **Education.** The Education Committee shall further the educational aims of the school, especially through preparation of the school handbook, arrangement of field trips, adult courses, and workshops. The Education Committee Chairperson shall be a member of the Program and Personnel Committees. He/she shall be responsible for maintaining an up-to-date

notebook. He/she shall work with the Professional Staff in planning and conducting orientation sessions at the beginning of each semester. He/she shall have such other duties as may be prescribed by the Board of Directors or Standing Rules.

- b. **Membership.** The Membership Committee shall maintain a list of applicants and shall present them to the Board of Directors for acceptance. The Membership Committee Chairperson shall inform inquiring parents of the purposes and goals of the school; secure applications for membership; and inform those on the waiting list of the date that they can be admitted to the School. He/she shall secure and keep on file a health record of each child admitted to the School. He/she shall notify the other Directors of new memberships and/or terminations. He/she shall be responsible for maintaining an up-to-date notebook. He/she shall have such other duties as may be prescribed by the Board of Directors or Standing Rules.
- c. **Participation.** The Participation Committee shall ensure that every member-designated teaching and non-teaching position in the school is filled. The Participation Committee Chairperson shall ensure that each member has a position and that they carry out their responsibilities. He/she shall follow up on member-teacher's attendance and coordinators' jobs. He/she shall ensure that each non-teaching member is scheduled for observation days. All new coordinator positions must have Board approval. He/she shall be notified immediately by the Membership Chairperson of all new memberships and/or terminations. He/she shall be responsible for maintaining an up-to-date notebook. He/she shall have such other duties as may be prescribed by the Board of Directors or Standing Rules.
- d. **Ways and Means.** The Ways and Means Committee shall be in charge of fundraising and publicity activities deemed necessary. The Ways and Means Committee Chairperson shall be Chairperson of any Fundraising Committee. He/she shall supervise membership participation in Directory work. He/she shall be responsible for maintaining an up-to-date notebook.
- e. **Publicity.** The Publicity Committee Chairperson shall gather, organize, edit, print, and distribute the monthly newsletter and welcome new members and new births in the newsletter. He/she shall be responsible for any other publicity deemed necessary.

Section 7. Program/Staff Director

The Program Director shall manage and operate the daily school program designed to implement the school philosophy and goals. The Program Director reports to the Board of Directors and works with the Board of Directors in the selection of staff teachers. Salary and duties shall be outlined in writing by the Board of Directors, and signed by the President and Treasurer. The Program Director is responsible for the performance of the professional staff and in turn is responsible to the Board of Directors.

ARTICLE X: INDEMNIFICATION AND INSURANCE

Section 1. Indemnification

To the fullest extent permitted by law, this corporation shall indemnify its agents, including its Directors, officers, employees, and volunteers, and including persons formerly occupying any such position, and their heirs, executors, and administrators, against all expenses, judgments, fines, settlements, and other amounts actually and reasonably incurred by them in connection with any proceeding, and including an action by or in the right of the corporation, by reason of the fact that the person is or was a person so described. Such right of indemnification shall not be deemed exclusive of any other rights to which such persons may be entitled.

To the fullest extent permitted by law and except as otherwise determined by the Board of Directors in a specific instance, expenses incurred by a person seeking indemnification in defending any proceeding shall be advanced by the corporation before final disposition of the proceeding upon receipt by the corporation of an undertaking by or on behalf of that person to repay such amount unless it is ultimately determined that the person is entitled to be indemnified by the corporation for those expenses.

Section 2. Insurance

The Board of Directors may adopt a resolution authorizing the purchase and maintenance of insurance on behalf of any agent of the cooperative against any liability asserted against or incurred by the agent in such capacity or arising out of the agent's status as such, whether or not this corporation would have the power to indemnify the agent against that liability under the provisions of this section.

ARTICLE XI: RECORDS AND REPORTS

Section 1. Inspection Rights

Any voting member of the corporation may:

- a. Inspect and copy the records of members' names and addresses and voting rights during usual business hours on five (5) days' prior written demand to the corporation, stating the purpose for which the inspection rights are requested; and
- b. Obtain from the Secretary of the cooperative, on written demand and on the tender of the Secretary's usual charges for such a list, if any, an alphabetized list of names and addresses of members who are entitled to vote for the election of Directors, and their voting rights, as of the most recent record date for which that list has been compiled, or as of a date specified by the member after the date of demand. The demand shall state the purpose for which the list is required. This list shall be made available the later of ten (10) days after the demand is received or the date specified in it as the date by which the list is to be compiled.

- c. Compliance with (a) or (b) above is contingent upon the cooperative's determination that the information is sought for a proper purpose reasonably related to the member's interest as a member. If the corporation reasonably believes that the information will be used for a purpose other than one reasonably related to a person's interest as a member, or if it provides a reasonable alternative, it may deny the member access to the membership list.

Any inspection and copying under this section may be made in person or by an agent or attorney of the member and the right of inspection includes the right to copy and make extracts.

Section 2. Maintenance and Inspection of Articles, Bylaws, Tax Exemption Application, and Annual Information Returns

The cooperative shall keep at its principal office (a) the original or a copy of its Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws as amended to date, which shall be open to inspection by the members and Directors at all reasonable times during office hours, and (b) a copy of its federal tax-exemption application and its annual information returns for three (3) years from their date of filing, which shall be open to public inspection and copying to the extent required by law.

Section 3. Maintenance and Inspection of Other Corporate Records

The accounting books, records, and minutes of proceedings of the members and the Board of Directors and any committee(s) of the Board of Directors shall be kept at such place or places designated by the Board of Directors, or in the absence of such designation, at the principal office of the corporation. The minutes shall be kept in written or typed form, and the accounting books and records shall be kept either in written or typed form or in any other form capable of being converted into written, typed, or printed form. The minutes and accounting books and records shall be open to inspection on the written demand of any member, at any reasonable time during usual business hours, for a purpose reasonably related to the member's interests as a member. The inspection may be made in person or by an agent or attorney and shall include the right to copy and make extracts. These rights of inspection shall extend to the records of each subsidiary corporation of the corporation.

Section 4. Inspection by Directors

Every Director shall have the absolute right at any reasonable time to inspect all books, records, and documents of every kind and the physical properties of the cooperative and each of its subsidiary corporations. This inspection by a Director may be made in person or by an agent or attorney, and the right of inspection includes the right to copy and make extracts of documents.

Section 5. Reports*

If the corporation has at least \$25,000 in gross revenues during the fiscal year, the Board of Directors shall cause an annual report to be sent to all Directors and members of this corporation, within one hundred twenty (120) days after the end of the corporation's fiscal year, containing the following information:

- a. The assets and liabilities, including the trust funds, of this corporation at the end of the fiscal year;
- b. The principal changes in assets and liabilities, including trust funds, during the fiscal year;
- c. The revenues or receipts of this corporation, both unrestricted and restricted for particular purposes, for the fiscal year;
- d. The expenses or disbursements of this corporation for both general and restricted purposes during the fiscal year; and
- e. The information required by law concerning certain self-dealing transactions involving more than \$50,000 or indemnifications involving more than \$10,000 which took place during the fiscal year.

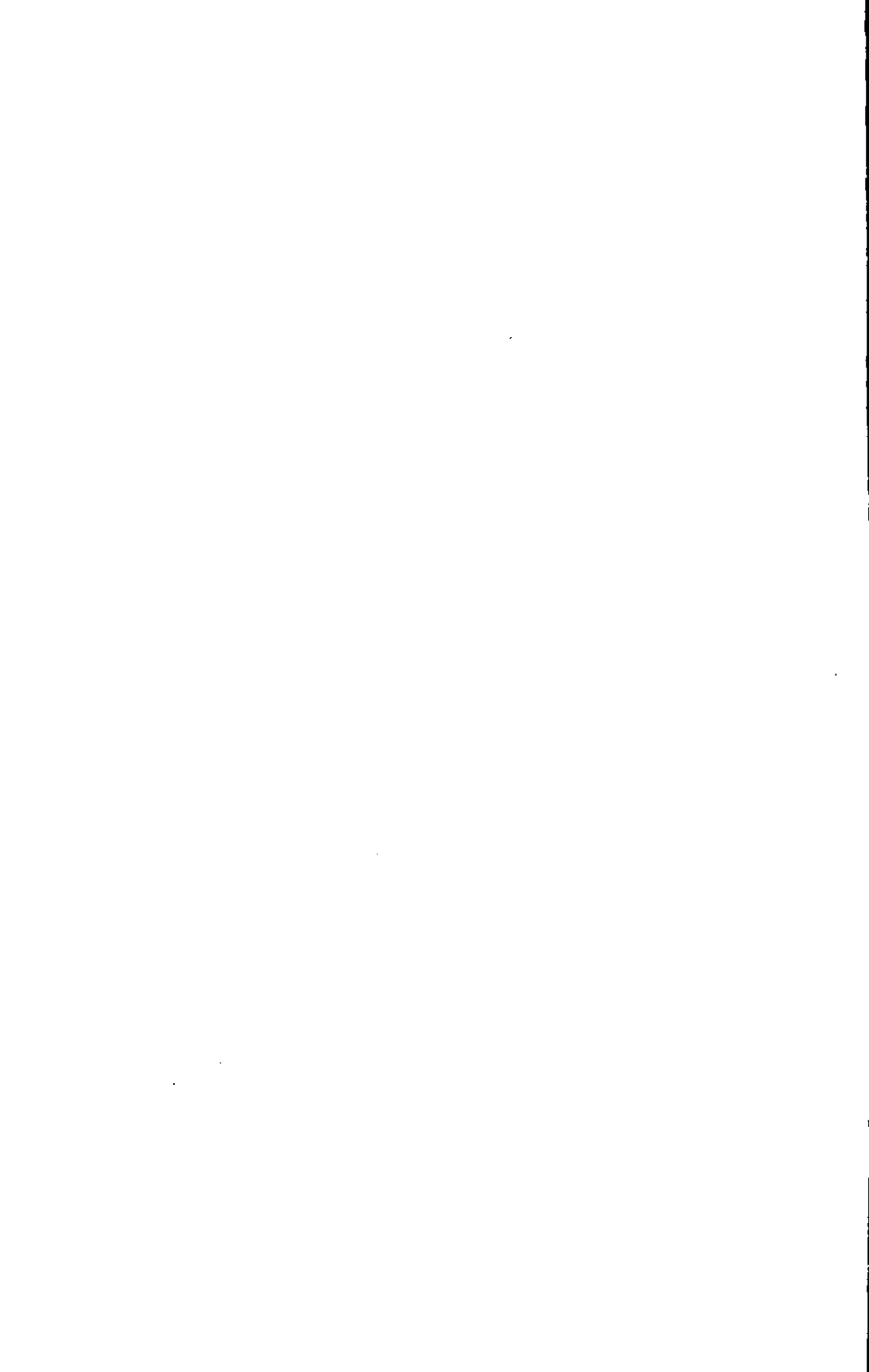
The report shall be accompanied by any pertinent report of independent accountants, or, if there is no such report, the certificate of an authorized officer of the corporation that such statements were prepared without audit from the books and records of the corporation.

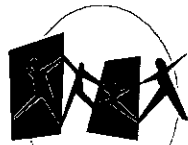
The corporation shall furnish any member who so requests a copy of any report filed by the corporation with the California Attorney General. The corporation may impose reasonable charges for copying and mailing this report to a member.

ARTICLE XII: AMENDMENTS**Section 1. Amendment by Members**

New Bylaws may be adopted or these Bylaws may be amended or repealed by approval of the members.

* This Section is applicable in California.





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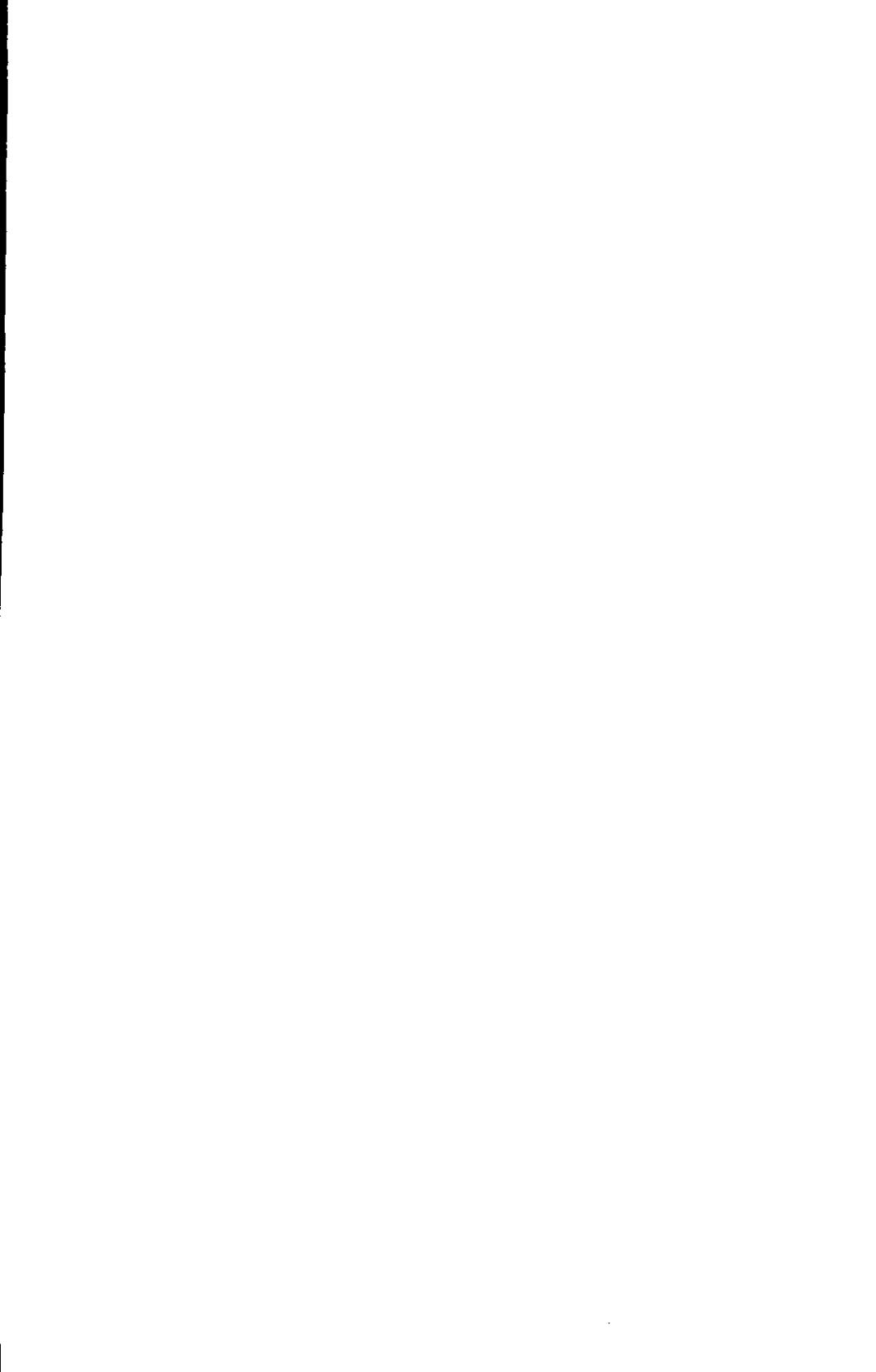
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Bringing Families Together: A Guide to Parent Cooperatives shares information about an important strategy for creating high-quality, cost-effective care and enrichment programs for children. Parent cooperatives are parent-governed non-profit programs that prioritize parent involvement. The approach promotes healthy partnerships among parents and professional staff in a way that maximizes positive outcomes for children. Cooperatives offer unique opportunities for parents to strengthen family bonds while becoming integrated into a child-focused community of caring families and staff.

Written for a diverse audience that includes parents, early childhood professionals, community developers, and others interested in unique care models for children, *Bringing Families Together* presents the context and fundamentals of cooperative models of child care as well as detailed information about organizing and operating a parent cooperative. Examples of successful programs are woven throughout the text. The well-defined chapters are designed to allow the reader to focus on specific topics without becoming bogged down in details that may be of less interest.



E. Kim Coontz is recognized nationally for her expertise in preschool and child care cooperatives. During her 14 years as a cooperative specialist with the Center for Cooperatives at the University of California, Kim has written and published numerous articles, regularly conducted education programs, and has been active in the development of child care cooperatives. She has been working with, advocating for, and researching children's programs for over two decades. Her academic

experience and master's degree in sociology are highlighted by real-life experiences gained from being the mother of four children.

Kim has worked extensively with many types of cooperatives. She co-authored start-up manuals for worker and marketing cooperatives, a California and a West Coast cooperative directory and resource guide, and has written articles about worker, arts and crafts, consumer, housing, and other cooperatives. She developed and conducted numerous surveys of cooperatives and the public. Kim is active in the professional community of cooperatives, conducts education programs and presents at professional conferences.

The **Center for Cooperatives** was established by the California State Legislature in 1987 in response to the growing need for information and technical assistance by California's cooperatives.

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