

# Board Manual

For

## Early Childhood Education Centers



Of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America



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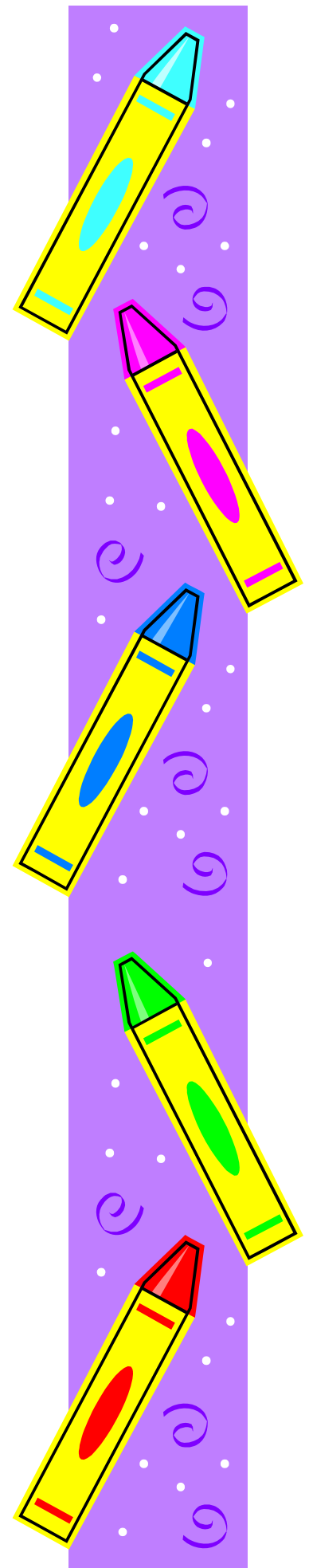


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## Introduction

When new early childhood education (ECE) centers have their beginnings they most likely began with a task force. The task force explores the feasibility of starting an ECE center. They did the initial work of getting the ECE center filled with students, hire staff, and set policy for the day to day running of the ECE center.

Now it is time to engage a permanent board of directors. The questions now become, "How do we do that?", "Who should serve on the board of directors?", "Where do we start?", and I'm sure many more questions come to mind. Remember that affirmation of those who have now completed their work is very important.

Be sure to show them appreciation for their hard and tireless efforts on behalf of this new ministry for God's children and their families.

If you are reading this manual because your congregation has an ECE center, but the board never had a solid start, needs to be restructured, or just needs to be reenergized, this is also the resource for you.

It is the board of the ECE center that is responsible for establishing the vital relationship between your congregation and ECE center. This fact needs to be kept in mind as you establish or reestablish your board.

Whatever your reasons for looking at this resource, we hope you will find it helpful.

### Possible Board Candidates



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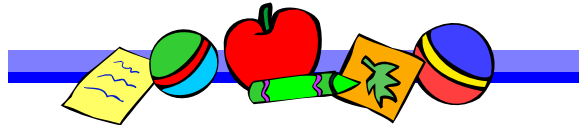
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# Role & Function of ECE Board

The ECE center board has the responsibility to provide for the efficient management and operation of the center so that it achieves its distinctive purpose. The purpose of the ECE center will reflect and the support the congregation's mission, philosophy and objectives.

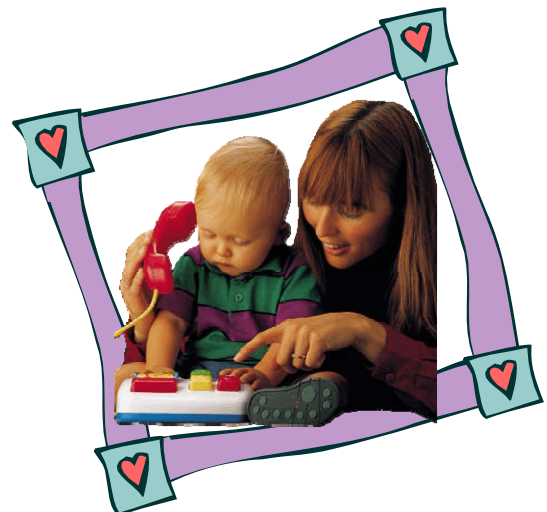
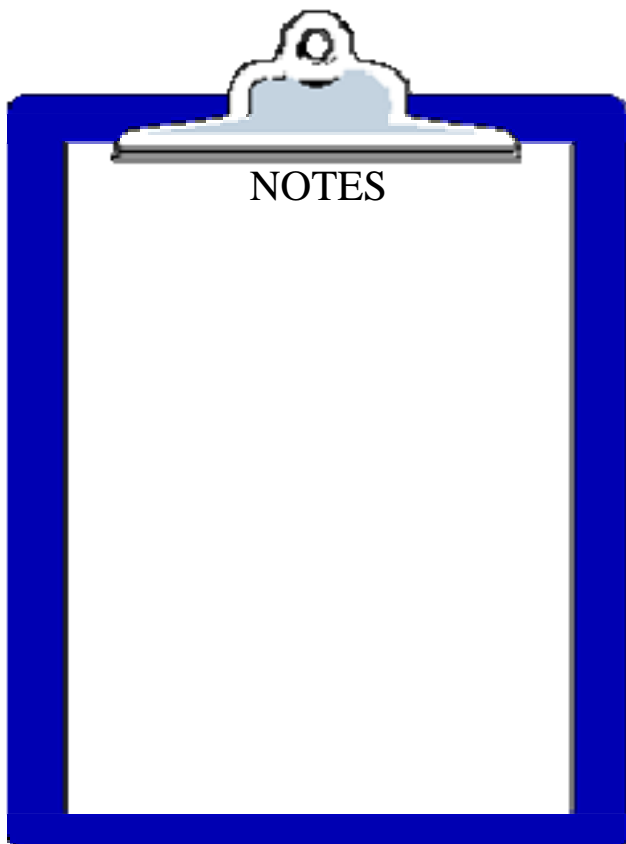
## Board Obligations:

- Keep ECE center's focus on the congregation's mission, philosophy and objectives
- Advocate for the needs of children and staff to the congregation and community.
- Establish and review policy to guide daily operations
- Ensure that the ECE center maintain a religious education program
- Hire, supervise and evaluate the ECE center administrator
- Secure adequate funding
- Monitor finances
- Maintain and update long-range Strategic plans
- Communicate with the congregation



## Individual Board Member Responsibilities:

- Continually pray for board members, ECE center staff, volunteers, students and their families, the pastor and congregation
- Attend meetings regularly and show commitment to all board activities
- Be well informed on issues and agenda items in advance of meetings
- Contribute skills, knowledge and experience when appropriate
- Listen respectfully to other points of view
- Participate in program decision making
- Financially support the program
- Assume leadership roles in all board activities, including fund raising
- Represent and advocate for the ECE center to the congregation and the community
- Educate yourself about the needs of the children and families you serve
- Maintain confidentiality on all matters



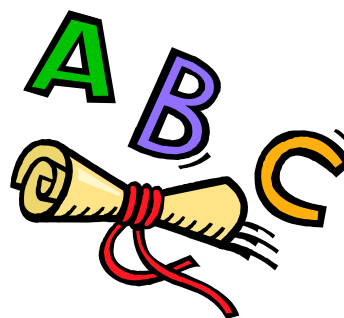
# Board Governance Policies

The major responsibility of the board is to achieve the objectives of the ECE center's mission statement by keeping the focus on the congregation's mission and vision for the church.

The board should thoughtfully and efficiently govern the organization to reach long-term goals in a manner consistent with the productive use of people and resources.

## **The following are suggested board governance policies:**

1. Responsibilities of the board shall be clearly distinguished from the responsibilities of the administrator.
2. The board's main emphasis must be on long-range goals and issues. Current and short-term issues are addressed as appropriate.
3. The board must speak as one voice to the director, staff, congregation and public. Individual board members only have authority as explicitly delegated by the full board.
4. Board meetings must follow a planned agenda.
5. The board must hold the director responsible for the division of work and accountability issues regarding the day-to-day operating procedures of the center.
6. The board must establish and may redefine values that must be adhered to in developing policy and action in all ECE center programs.
7. Every policy developed by the board should be judged against the mission of the program and its sponsoring congregation.
8. When board members act as volunteers to help get jobs done, they



are volunteers, individuals under the supervision and control of staff.

9. The board must annually evaluate itself by using a self-evaluation tool. This assists the board to strengthen and energize the board for the next years work. (see appendix for examples)
10. All new board members will participate in an orientation prior to attending their first board meeting. This orientation will include the following:
  - discussion of the ECE center's mission
  - history
  - board policies
  - personnel policies
  - currently approved budget
  - board meeting minutes
  - finance reports
  - other miscellaneous information

A tour will also be conducted as part of this orientation. The orientation will be conducted by the director and current board chairperson. Current board members are encouraged to participate.
11. Board members must be free from conflict of interest. Although there may be instances where the organization chooses to purchase goods or services from a board member, the use of influence for personal gain is both unethical. Any board members who think they may have a conflict of interest on any issue before the board should state the concern prior to any discussion and/or vote. This is a matter of discussion for the full board.



## Board Organization

Board members should be carefully selected to provide work, wisdom and wealth in support of the ECE center. The size of the board is often determined by the size of the ECE center, the congregation and the responsibilities assigned to the board. The ideal board has from five to seven members. Boards that are too large have difficulty maintaining high attendance and members' full responsibility. Boards that are too small sometimes lack a variety of perspectives and leadership skills.

Congregationally based ECE center board members are solicited from the members of

the congregation. It is recommended that those with voting capability have the best interests of the church and ECE center at heart and therefore be members of the congregation.

Boards may also include non-voting advisory members. Advisors serve as objective members of the board. They may serve on an *ongoing* basis such as the pastor who is the spiritual advisor to the board and ECE center or on an *as needed basis*. Examples of advisors may include a parent who is not a member of the congregation, a member of the legal profession, an accountant, or an educator who is not a member of the congregation. Clear definition of the role and responsibilities of advisors is necessary.

## Length of Term

A term of two or three years is suggested to ensure continuity in the management of the ECE center. In addition board members may serve two consecutive terms. In order to ensure continuity, terms should not expire simultaneously.

## Officers and Committees

The composition of board officers and committees varies from one board to another. Each officer should be provided with a job description that outlines the responsibilities of the office. Board committees may be standing committees or assigned as needed. Examples of the chairperson's responsibilities follow.

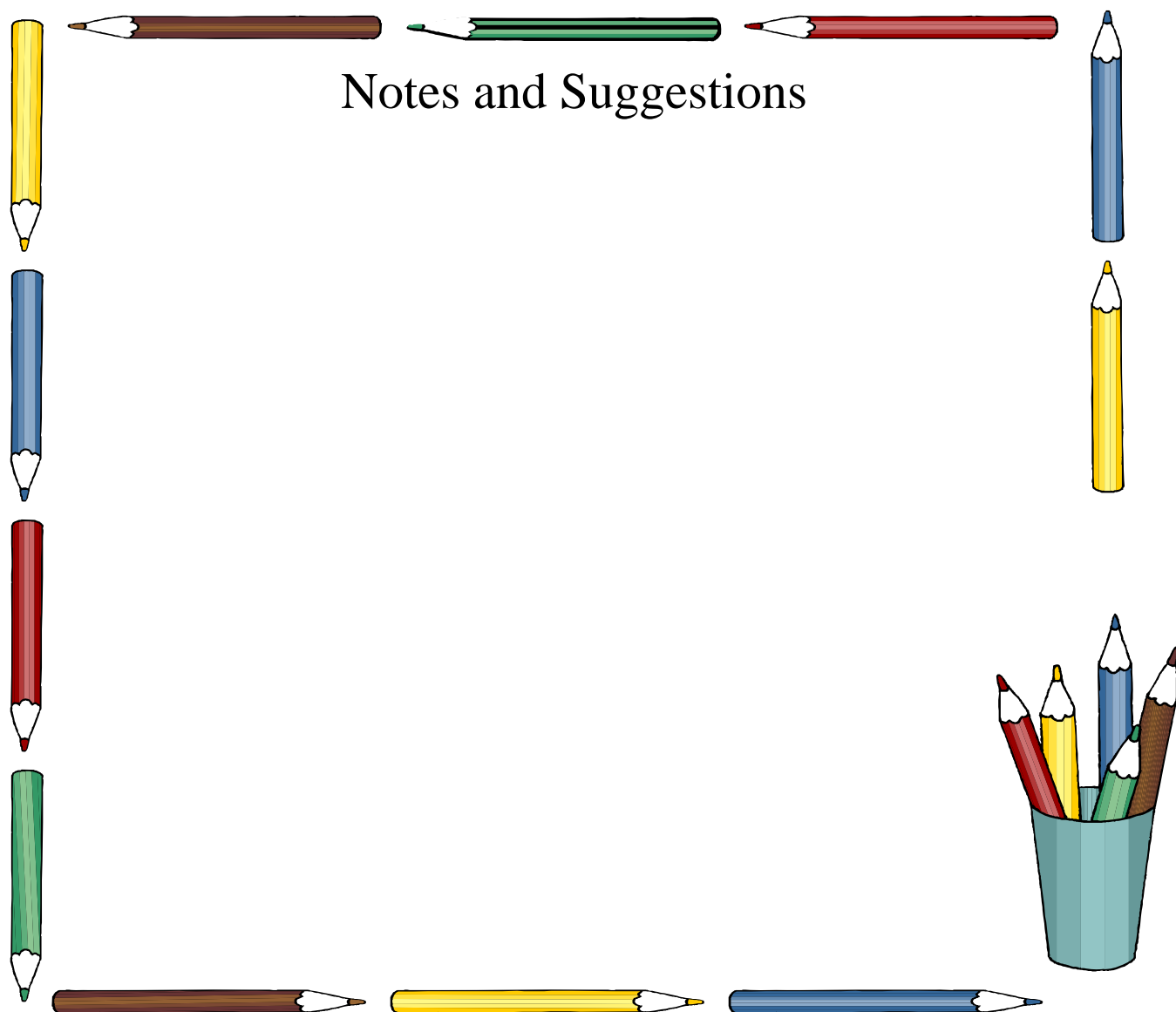
The chairperson will:

- Work with the director in planning meeting agendas.
- Utilize the parliamentary authority adhered to by the board. (ex: Roberts Rules of Order, newly revised should be the parliamentary authority on all questions not provided in policy or procedures of the board.)
- Ensure that all agenda items receive adequate hearing and are addressed in an efficient manner. (*The agenda many include the amount of time allocated for each agenda item*)
- Ensure that adequate information has been gathered, organized and distributed to the board.
- Ensure that all board members have equal opportunity to participate by sharing their views.
- Be sensitive to the feeling of all and seek to maintain a positive spirit.
- Avoid lengthy debates.
- Help members talk to the subject at hand; help board members understand various viewpoints and see both their merits and shortcomings.
- Close discussion when expression of ideas becomes redundant.
- Help members achieve consensus.
- Avoid hasty decisions particularly when some members may be puzzled or require additional information.



## Invitation, Application and Selection and Orientation

A sample letter of invitation, a board member application, a job description and interview questions can be found in the appendix of this document. These should be personalized for your program. It is recommended that letters are placed on your program letterhead. Be sure to include a contact name and number for the potential member's response.



## Board Commitment and Orientation

Each member of the board should be provided a Board Service Commitment and an orientation to their new role. The following includes a sample statement of commitment and a suggested outline for orientation.

### Board Service Commitment

As an elected/appointed as a member of the board team I will:

- Pray daily
- Exemplify the heart of Christ through daily actions
- Listen carefully to my fellow board members
- Respect the opinions of my fellow board members
- Respect and support the majority decisions of the board
- Recognize that all authority is vested in the full board only when it meets in legal session
- Keep well informed of developments relevant to issues that may come before the board
- Participate actively in board meetings and actions by attending at least 80% of the monthly meetings and by participating actively on at least one committee
- Participate and assist with fund raising activities
- Bring to the attention of the board any issues that I believe will have an adverse effect on (name of ECE center) or those we serve
- Refer complaints to the appropriate authority
- Recognize that my job is to insure that (name of ECE center) is well managed, not to manage operations
- Represent all the students and families (name of ECE center) serves and do my best to ensure that it is well maintained, financially secure, growing and always operating in the best interests of those we serve
- Continue and strive toward improvement as a board member
- Declare conflicts of interest between my personal life and my position on the board and abstain from voting when appropriate
- Financially support (name of ECE center)
- Follow the current board member job description as provided to me



As a member of the board I will not:

- Criticize fellow board members or their opinions in or out of the boardroom
- Use my position as a (name of ECE center) board member for my personal advantage or that of my friends or relatives
- Discuss the confidential proceedings of the board outside the boardroom
- Interfere with the duties of the director or undermine their authority with staff members

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Board Member's Signature

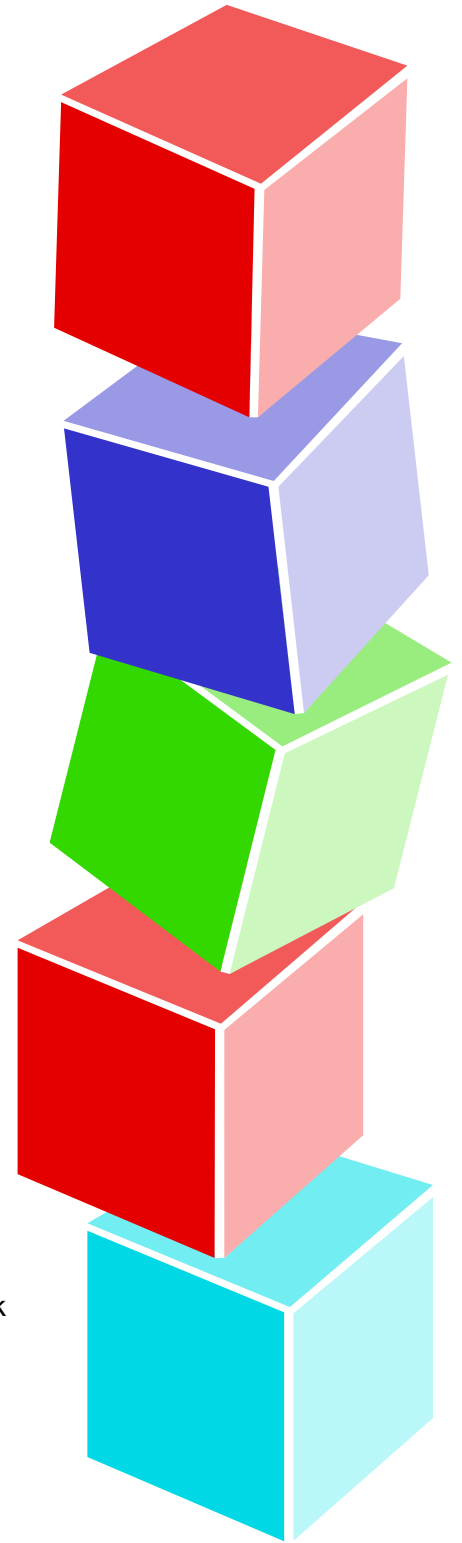
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Date



# New Board Member Orientation

1. Welcome, Brief Introductions and Review of Agenda
2. Mission of ECE Center & Mission of Congregation
3. History & Background of ECE Center:
  - Past year's meeting minutes
  - Annual report & audit
  - Brochures, promotional materials
  - Accreditations
  - Association memberships
4. Review of Governing Documents
  - Bylaws and/or constitution
  - Articles of Incorporation, if applicable  
(most centers are not separately incorporated)
  - Legal and tax requirements for boards of non-profits
  - Insurance
  - Regulatory requirements
5. Organizational Structure (use chart)
  - Congregation and ECE center relationship
    - \*relationship to other ministry areas
    - \*relationship to ELCA Churchwide
  - Board structure
    - \*Officers
    - \*Board roster
    - \*annual calendar
    - \*committees
  - Board/administrator relationships
  - School calendar
  - Annual board agenda
6. Review Job Description, Governing Policies and Board Handbook
7. Current Issues Before the Board
8. Tour of Facilities and Grounds
9. Adjournment



## Board Meetings

Monthly or bi-monthly board meetings serve the purpose of:

- Planning and goal setting
- Developing policies
- Receiving operations reports
- Evaluation
- A time of corporate prayer for your ECE center and congregation

- Evaluation of board performance
- Short and long-range planning
- Evaluation and planning of funding
- Policy review (It is helpful to review one section of policy per meeting to assure all policies are reviewed annually.)

## Annual Agenda

It is advisable to prepare a comprehensive agenda for the entire year. An annual agenda serves as the boards planning calendar in the following ways:

- Gives assurance to the board that nothing is forgotten
- Alerts members to items coming up for consideration
- Allows for planning time
- Is a basic document for planning individual monthly agendas.

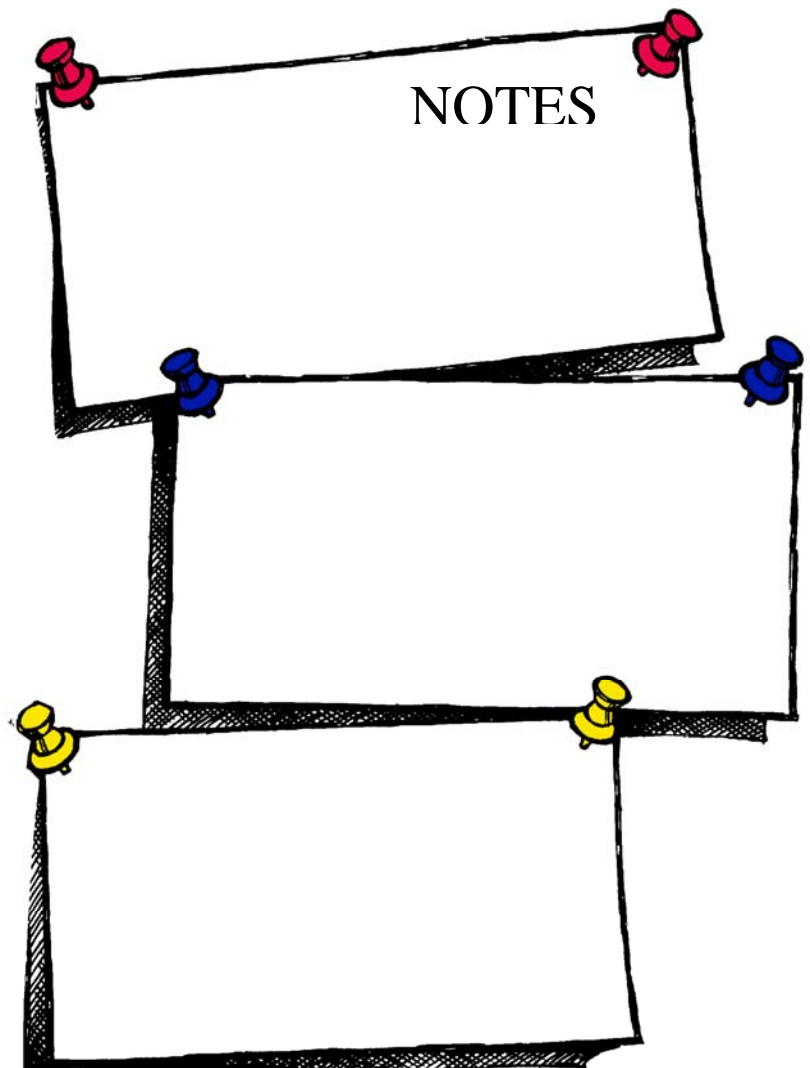
Some key items to be included on the annual agenda are listed below. Key tasks need to be scheduled in advance by the month to coincide with the planning calendar of the congregation and the ECE center.

The annual agenda may include:

- Review of mission statement
- Setting annual goals
- Program evaluation and planning
- Evaluation of director
- Budget planning including tuition rates, salaries and benefits
- Review of risk management
- Evaluation of buildings, grounds and facilities
- Review of ECE center's purpose
- Evaluation and planning of marketing program

## Sample Monthly Agenda

1. Opening prayer and devotion
2. Overview of agenda
3. Approval of minutes
4. Major topic
5. Items for board action
6. Reports to the board
7. Policy review
8. Closing of meeting and prayer



# Planning and Policy

## THE MISSION STATEMENT

A mission statement should clearly state the purpose for which the ECE center exists. Ideally, it should be brief so that members can easily recall it when called upon to answer the question: Why does your congregation operate an ECE center?

Since the ECE center is part of the congregation's ministry of outreach it should reflect the congregation's mission statement. The ECE center's mission statement will not be identical to the congregation's mission statement.

To develop a mission statement for the ECE center the following is suggested:

- Brainstorm ideas to be included in the statement
- Each participant is invited to write their version of a mission statement based on the gathered ideas
- One person takes all the written versions and uses them to draft a mission statement
- The draft is discussed and changed as needed
- The draft is submitted for final review and approval by the entire board



## THE VISION STATEMENT

The vision statement should answer the question: What will our early childhood ministry look like in five years." Developers should consider the manner in which the trends and issues impacting American society, education, and the church give direction to the vision for their ECE center.

The members should brainstorm ideas that express their vision for the early childhood ministry in five years. You may then wish to follow the process outlined in forming a mission statement to finalize this process.



## PLANNING AND POLICIES

Once mission and vision statements are in place, the next step will be to engage in the process of strategic planning for the ECE center. When you begin strategic planning you need to be clear on how the results will be implemented. Someone who has expertise in this area is needed to guide your board through the process.

The board will be responsible for developing its own governing policies and assisting the ECE center's director by approving center policies and procedures which support the implementation of the strategic plan.



## ECE CENTER POLICIES

Policies outline the ECE center's intentions for achieving its mission and vision. These statements establish guidelines for the daily operation of the center. Policies help the director and the staff make decisions which are consistent with the philosophy of the program. They reflect the congregation's commitment to providing a nurturing and appropriate environment for young children.

The ongoing responsibility for developing policies rests with the governing board of the facility.

Also, the need for new policies or adaptations of existing policies over time may originate from the observations and concerns of the director. **Communication between the board and the director is a vital step in the formulation of workable policies.** Once policies are established, the director assumes responsibility for carrying out the procedures needed to implement those policies.

All policies for the program are recorded in written format. Having written policies reduces the potential for misunderstanding among staff, board members, and parents. Written policies offer an effective reference source for all members of the community.





## CREATING POLICIES FOR THE EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION PROGRAM

Although a great deal of information needs to be included, it is important to make the policy statements as clear and concise as possible. You may wish to start with an outline of categories and then define the policies in those areas. It is the director's responsibility to create the procedure for the policies set by the board. The following categories will get you started:

- Program overview
- Personnel policies: issues related to staff
- Enrollment policies: ages of children served, admission procedures; removal policies
- Grouping policies: age division, ratios, movement to next level
- Discipline policies: guidelines for managing behavior, including biting, hitting, referrals, etc.
  - Field trip policies: be sure your liability is minimized – legal counsel is advisable
  - Health and sanitation policies: requirements and procedures for maintaining health of the children and staff, such as diaper changing policies, surface sanitation policies, etc.
  - Medication and allergy policies: if and how medications will be dispensed – how allergies are handled (bees, peanuts, etc.)
  - Meal or snack & celebration food policies: selection and preparation of foods; i.e. birthday cakes, etc. must be store bought, not homemade; if meals are brought from home, what will your policy be on reheating foods, meeting USDA requirements, etc.
  - Safety policies
  - Emergency policies including a crisis management plan
  - Tuition and financial assistance policies: how tuition and fees are established, collected, and any penalties for late payments, procedures for granting tuition assistance
  - Parent involvement policies: options for involvement with ECE center
  - Communication policies: how information is dispersed within the ECE center, congregation, and community
  - Conflict resolution policies: ways that disagreements are mediated and resolved



# BOARD RESPONSIBILITIES REGARDING ADMINISTRATION OF THE EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION CENTER

The effective director will help ensure that your ECE center is the best it can be. The director is the key person in achieving the purpose of your ECE center with Christian distinctiveness and educational excellence. The director is responsible for the day-to-day operation of the ECE center. Your director needs to understand the mission of the congregation and the purpose of the ECE center. This section includes the following:

- the elements of a position description
- guidelines for engaging an effective director
- the board's role in supervising and evaluating the director

## THE POSITION DESCRIPTION

### Understanding the Position Description

A clear position description for the ECE center director is needed for the board and director to understand the role and responsibilities to be carried out by the director. A position description serves as a guide for the board to carry out its responsibilities of supervision and evaluation.

The director's position description has three major parts:

- Statement of ECE center's purpose
- Role and function
- Responsibilities

The director's position description is a policy statement that tells the director what is to be done and for what purpose. The director will develop plans for carrying out each responsibility. The plan will state how, when and by whom the responsibility will be carried out.



### Mission and Vision Statements

The ECE center's mission and vision statements govern everything the board and director do. They are the foundation for all policy statements. The mission and vision statements of the ECE center must appear in the director's position description. These statements will have been developed by the board and adopted by the church council and congregation prior to hiring a director.

### Role

The position description should contain a brief statement of the role and accountability of both the director and the ECE board. The role of the board is to provide for the administration of the ECE center by establishing policies and the role of the director is to develop the procedure to carry out the day-to-day administration of the ECE center as outlined in the position description.

In most ELCA congregations the ECE center board is accountable to the congregation through its reporting to the church council. The board is responsible for reporting to the congregation concerning the ECE center. The director is accountable to the board for carrying out the responsibilities as outlined in their position description.

### Responsibilities

The responsibilities listed in a position description are clear statements of the duties of the director. Each responsibility statement is in reality a policy statement and the director is responsible for carrying out that policy.



The responsibilities below are grouped under three major headings. Examine the responsibilities below to determine whether they fit the purpose and needs of your ECE center.

## 1. Leader for ECE Program Climate



### Responsibilities as spiritual leader:

- Provide opportunities for spiritual growth for staff
- Provide for weekly worship experiences
- Provide faith development curriculum for students
- Provide avenues for incorporation of school families into the church and church members into the school
- Provide referrals for Christian counseling for staff and ECE families



### Responsibilities for ECE center environment:

- Plan for equipping indoor and outdoor areas to reflect a Christian environment
- Plan for and aid in providing an environment developmentally appropriate for young children
- Maintain positive relationships among students, teachers, parents, pastor, congregation and community

## 2. Manager of the ECE Center



### Responsibilities to carry out mission and vision of the ECE center:

- Recommend policies in accordance with the purpose of the ECE center
- Provides guidance to, serves as an ex-officio member of, and interfaces on a regular basis with the ECE board, particularly with the chair
- Accompanies the board liaison from the church council to council meetings



### Responsibilities for finances:

- Assist in the preparation of the annual budget
- Operate within the budget
- Handle petty cash
- Prepare monthly and yearly budget reports
- Develop procedure for the collection of fees and tuition and maintenance of records



### Responsibilities as liaison between congregation and the ECE center:

- Represent the ECE center in congregational activities
- Communicate the ECE center to the congregation using electronic and printed communications



### Responsibilities for public relations and communication:

- Maintain an active system of parent-school relationships
- Plan and administer parent education programs
- Maintain a parent's library or resource program
- Prepare parent newsletters
- Keep parents informed of progress and special needs of their children
- Speak of the ECE center's purpose in all written communications



### Responsibilities for recruitment and admissions:

- Promote enrollment at the ECE center through the congregation and community
- Interview parents of prospective students
- Provide enrollment materials that reflect the philosophy of the ECE center
- Provide promotional brochures and activities
- Plan for the orientation of new students



### **Responsibilities for administration:**

- Implement all federal, state and local licensing requirements – whether exempt or not
- Handle all concerns and issues related to the administration of the ECE center
- Prepare and retain records
- Supervise classroom schedules, space and equipment, responsibilities of staff, and the ECE center's annual calendar
- Arrange for necessary repairs and maintenance
- Order and manage supplies and equipment
- Arrange for custodial care
- Keep health records as required by the state
- Prepare and periodically update a staff handbook
- Keep personnel records as required by state regulations
- Assist the board in preparation of position descriptions
- Maintain a referral system for children with special needs
- Plan and implement a safety program for the school
- Plan for and conduct disaster and fire drills
- Keep informed of the school's legal responsibilities and liabilities
- Have regular checks on safety of all space and equipment

### **3. Educational Leader**



#### **Responsibilities for curriculum development:**

- Plan a curriculum that is age-appropriate for the children and that meets the stated purpose of the ECE center
- Plan for the management of children's programs and routines

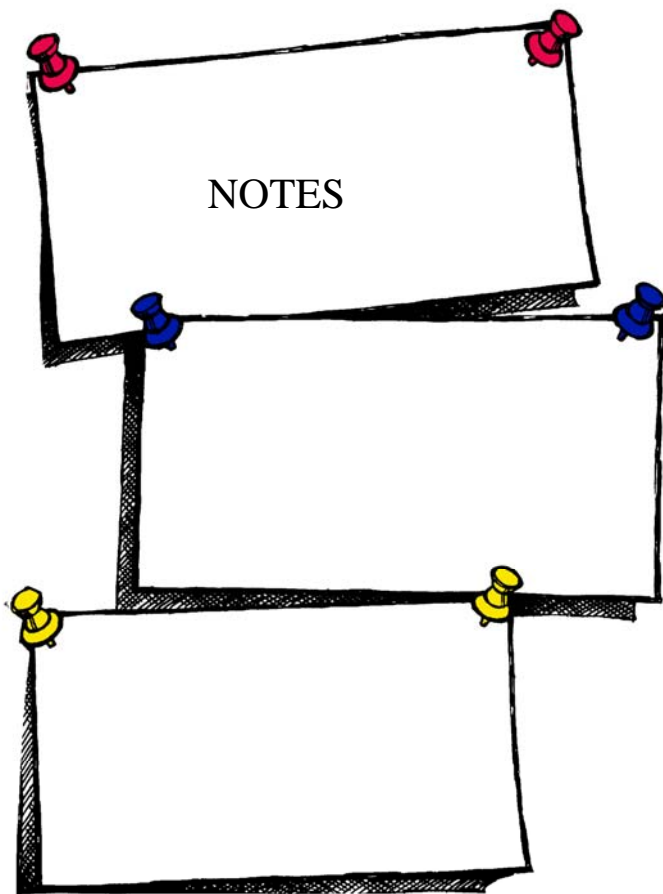
- Consult with the pastor to provide a developmentally appropriate religious curriculum and chapel opportunities
- Plan and implement enhancement opportunities such as the invitation of community helpers, special guests or entertainment to the center, etc
- Plan for the evaluation of the students in relation to their school progress, abilities and special needs
- Arrange a sound nutritional program



#### **Responsibilities for staff development:**

- Provide for the spiritual and physical wellness of staff
- Plan and implement a program for professional growth
- Keep abreast of research and new developments in the field of early childhood education
- Maintain a professional library
- Participate in professional organizations
- Assist board in preparation of position descriptions
- Arrange for and participate in interviews of potential staff members
- Provide orientation for new staff members
- Provide in-service training for staff members
- Conduct regularly scheduled staff meetings
- Keep staff personnel records as required by state regulations and good administrative practice
- Prepare staff handbook
- Provide for regular staff supervision and development





## HIRING A DIRECTOR

The ECE center board is responsible for engaging a director when a vacancy occurs. This search will be in accordance with the congregation's hiring policies and procedures.

After the mission and vision statements are reviewed, the board must determine the qualifications for the new director of an ECE center that is a ministry of a congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

If your center is replacing a previous director, you should begin with an exit interview. Much information can be gained from an exit interview with the outgoing director. This information will be helpful in refining the qualifications and responsibilities of the incoming director.



### Qualifications:

You want the best qualified person to carry out the policies established by the board in day-to-day operations of the ECE center. Look for the following qualifications in the leader of your ECE center:

- Christian by faith affirmation and example.
- Active member of a Christian church (preferably Lutheran). If they are not a member of the supporting congregation are they willing to attend special services and events, as requested by the congregation
- Willing to share God-given talents with the ECE center, congregation and community on a voluntary basis
- Trained and certified for ECE center leadership, as required by state agencies
- Willingness to grow both spiritually and professionally
- In good health
- Have a good sense of humor
- Have a good self-concept
- Be well groomed
- Supervisory experience
- Educational requirements
- Business management background



### As the manager of your ECE center the following

#### Qualifications are essential:

- Honesty
- Dependability
- Resourcefulness
- Capable to handling financial responsibilities
- Good communicator
- Organized
- Capable of managing a group of young children



**As the educational leader of your ECE center, the following qualifications are desirable:**

- Up-to-date knowledge of how young children learn through developmentally appropriate practice
- Ability to develop a developmentally appropriate curriculum including religious curriculum for the ECE center
- Able to relate to children and accept each as a unique child of God
- Flexible and able to adapt to change
- Creative
- Able to develop and maintain a schedule
- Willing to share in all duties of ECE center work
- Capable of managing a group of young children
- Work as a team with ECE center, staff, pastor, and congregation



**When qualifications for the ECE center director have been determined, the next steps are:**

1. Finding qualified candidates
2. Interviewing prospects
3. Preparing employment agreement and related documents
4. Determining salary and benefits
5. Welcoming your new director



**Finding Qualified Personnel:**

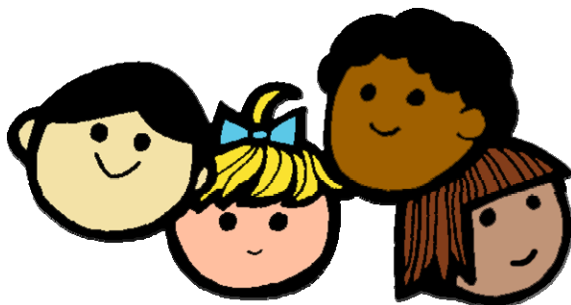
The following list represents some of the places that you might begin your search for a new director:

- Look within your present staff, but remember that because someone is a good teacher doesn't automatically make them a good director. Look for some who has leadership qualities and goes the extra mile to be a learner as well as a teacher. Choosing the wrong person could set them up for failure.

- Go to [www.elca.org/schools](http://www.elca.org/schools) and click on the *Teacher Clearinghouse*. This is a service of the Vocation and Education unit of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Here you can search for possible candidates as well as post your position for director. To post a position use the code CAN3522.
- Check with the education departments at local colleges and universities and request their assistance in your search for director candidates.
- Advertise in the Sunday bulletin or newsletter of local Christian churches in your community
- Place an ad in your local newspaper
- Search the web for other sites that have clearinghouses for teacher and director candidates

**Next Steps in the hiring process:**

- list your prospective candidates
- evaluate them based on the qualifications you have set for you new director
- select those you want to send applications
- a personnel application form should be sent to the candidates - check your state regulations and adapt your form accordingly
- include information about your ECE center and a position description
- set a due date for return of forms
- evaluate returned forms
- select those persons you want to interview





## Interviewing Prospects

The ECE board has responsibility for interviewing candidates for the director of its center. Consider including the pastor, a teacher, the chairperson of the congregation, or the director of Christian Education on the interview team. Three or four persons should attend the interview with a list of predetermined questions.

Conduct the interview in a comfortable and informal setting in order to put the candidate at ease. Use a friendly and conversational manner. Begin the interview with prayer. Review the position description with the candidate. Following are questions that can be used:

- How would you describe a developmentally appropriate, Christ centered curriculum?
- What would you do to promote the spiritual growth of the staff?
- What action would you take if you observed your teachers engaged in private conversations on the playground rather than being involved with the children's activities?
- Name some techniques you would use to relate the program of the ECE center to the parents, congregation, and community?
- What would you do if a mother tells you something must have happened at school because her son doesn't want to come anymore?
- Discuss your idea of an effective team ministry in a church-based ECE center.
- What do you see as the greatest challenge as the director of an ELCA ECE Program?

Use these questions as guides to develop interview questions that reflect the needs of your congregation and community. Keep in mind the character of your present staff, the socio-economic and ethnic mixture of families you serve, and the philosophy of your ECE center.

After interviews are completed and reviewed, pray for the power of the Holy Spirit to continue to guide the decision-making process. The final decision is made by the board or governing body as prescribed in your congregation's constitution or by-laws.

Many church-based ECE centers use a letter of intent or employment agreement with their director which sets forth the basic terms of employment. Be very cautious with wording that involves a specific time period or is called a "contract". In the event that the employment situation does not work you may be liable for paying the salary of that director for the entire time period specified, even if you terminate the director prior to the end of the stated time period. The best council is to consult an attorney for advice in developing your documents.



## Determining Salary and Benefits

When hiring a director part of the process is to determine the director's salary and benefits. The decision is expedited if the congregation has adopted a salary schedule and benefit package for all its workers. Know that the early childhood education field carries a high degree of professionalism and that a director's position description is wide and varied, requiring many skills. Salaries should reflect those paid in your area to ECE center directors with similar responsibilities.

Arbitrary establishment of salaries determined by a small group or committee often leads to unfair practices and dissatisfied personnel. Church workers, including ECE center director and educators, deserve to receive remuneration commensurate with talents, education, responsibilities and experience.

The ELCA encourages congregations to offer medical and dental insurance, disability insurance, and participation in a retirement plan for its ECE center staff.

*Compensation Guidelines* is a resource available from the ELCA to assist in this process. See appendix for availability.





## Welcoming Your New Director

When your director elect informs you of their decision to accept your position, the ECE center board and congregation have reason for giving thanks and for celebration.

Here are some things your board can do:

- Notify ECE center children, families, the congregation and community
- Help your new director become acquainted with the board, staff, families, pastor and the congregation
- Plan and conduct an installation service and reception for the new director
- Provide welcoming atmosphere
- Plan orientation activities related to the ECE center
- Express joy, enthusiasm and support for the new director



## Supervising the ECE Center Director

Supervision involves supporting, helping and cooperating; it is not watching, checking, or controlling. An effective ECE center is one in which the board, director and pastor work as a team. Both director and board know and understand the purpose of the ECE center and work together toward common goals.

With the new director, quarterly meetings of the board (or a subcommittee) with the director are recommended. Each meeting is a review of the position description. The director describes what they are doing to accomplish the task assigned to them in the position description. This gives the board the opportunity to affirm the director for accomplishments, discuss areas of improvement and identify ways to give help and support to the director. These meetings give the director the opportunity to ask for clarification of various listed tasks and for suggestions from the board. Beginning with the second year, semi-annual meeting may be adequate. This depends on how your new director grows in their position.



There may be times when board members and director hold differing views on a matter. It is at this time that effective problem-solving techniques are used. As Christians working together, a spirit of cooperative helpfulness and mutual respect is necessary.

## Evaluating the Director

In addition to quarterly or semi-annual informal sessions with the director, the board will provide a formal evaluation of the director annually. There are a number of excellent forms available which will be helpful; Many directors find that an evaluation of their work by staff members, as well as from the board, is helpful. Sample evaluation forms are available in the appendix.



## Board Responsibilities Regarding Finance

As a ministry of the congregation, the ECE center will exemplify Christian responsibility and stewardship in all financial matters. The wise use of time, abilities, and resources within the center are important responses to God's goodness and grace. The congregation's willingness to offer space, money, and support for their ECE center provides an opportunity for the church to join the program as a partner in caring for and nurturing young children and their families.

Financial resources provide for...

- staffing needs
- competitive salaries and benefits
- new equipment and supplies
- insurance
- licensing fees
- utilities (if agreed upon)
- maintenance costs
- staff development and conferences
- the day to day operations of the ECE center

The board is responsible for the financial health of the ECE center. The budget, the accounting information system and financial policies are the tools the board uses to exercise its fiscal responsibility.

The board sets a firm foundation for the center when it establishes policies and works with the director of the ECE center to establish the day to day operating procedures related to the center's finances. The director and the board need to be familiar with bookkeeping techniques, development of an accurate budget, and the ability to outline steps for recording income and expenses. This will insure the long-term financial success of the center. Remember that financial decisions should be determined with the mission and vision statements of the center and the supporting congregation clearly in mind.

As the policy-setting entity, the board is responsible for setting policies in the following areas:

### 1. Financial Management Policies:

The following are three common ways for financial management of the program:

- The ECE center's board treasurer manages all finances cooperatively with the director and congregation's treasurer.
- The ECE center's finances are managed cooperatively by the church treasurer (or finance committee) and the ECE center director. Salaries are paid by the church treasurer while all other finances are handled through the ECE center's director or board treasurer. A separate checking account is established for the ECE center. Line items are established within the church's budget for ECE center income and expenses
- The congregation's treasurer manages all financial aspects of the ECE center which is incorporated into the church budget. The treasurer does this in collaboration with the ECE center director.

No matter which procedure you use, there are four important things to have in place:

- security
- efficiency
- effectiveness
- accountability

#### Things to consider as you develop financial policies:

- The treasurer responsible for the ECE center's finances understands that non-profit accounting does not call for a zero balance at the end of the year – if they are not familiar with non-profit rules, provide training.
- Establish a written policy and procedure for the collection of tuition. Teacher and director involvement in the collection process is not recommended. The use of a tuition collection agency



- Establish a written policy that includes handling of delinquent payments and dismissal or withdrawal from the ECE center. This includes refund of or final payment of monies. This policy should be included in your parent handbook.
- Create a financial agreement based on your written policy. This agreement must be signed by parents and the director. ***Remember, whatever your financial agreement is, it will only be effective if it is enforced.***
- Decide if you will accept checks, cash and/or credit cards. Issue receipts immediately. Record incoming funds on a daily basis and keep an individual record of payments from each child (easy to do with appropriate software).
- If the ECE center will be making a contribution to the general congregational account to assist with utilities and building maintenance, be sure it is labeled as such. Do not use the word rent. It is NOT rent! The ECE center is a direct ministry of the congregation the same as the youth group, Sunday school, choir and the like.
- Deposit all funds promptly. Never use undeposited funds to make purchases.
- Do not keep cash on the premises unless you have a locked, fire proof safe designated for that purpose.
- If you choose to keep petty cash available, you must provide receipts for all purchases from that money.
- Be sure that the ECE center has appropriate systems in place for handling of payroll tax deposits, quarterly filing of all IRS required forms, state unemployment and worker's compensation report filing, any state-subsidized funding forms, and the like. Be sure the person in charge of payroll and employment forms as well as the director are well trained. They should have a working knowledge of payroll accounting procedures, taxes and related employment filings.

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## 2. Budget:

Developing the budget requires a continual dialogue between the ECE center board and the congregation's finance committee. Budget and program are developed simultaneously; each affects the other throughout the process. Not everyone will agree about priorities. The give-and-take of a budget process can strengthen the program and make it fiscally sound.

It is important to begin your ECE center budget planning so that it works with the budget planning schedule of your congregation.

There are many good computer accounting software programs that are tailor-made for ECE centers. This software serves to simplify the budgeting process and assist in financial accounting, billing, and record keeping of the ECE center. Many companies will send you or allow you to download a free demonstration. A list of companies used by ECE centers of the ELCA are listed in the appendix.

The following is a list of typical ongoing operating expenses that should be kept in mind during the budget process:

- Staff salaries
- Staff benefits
- Social Security & Medicare
- State Unemployment Insurance
- Substitutes to cover staff vacation and sick days
- Staff continuing education
- Pre-employment background clearance procedures, fingerprinting, TB tests, Hepatitis B vaccines, etc. for staff
- Classroom furniture & equipment
- Office furniture & equipment (including computers, photocopier, etc.)
- Office supplies
- Phone and internet installations and monthly bills
- Insurance (liability, Worker's compensation, fire & casualty, etc.)
- Classroom supplies (consumable)
- Employment advertising & marketing costs
- Janitorial costs
- Licensing fees
- Utilities
- Web site development and maintenance costs
- Membership dues for professional associations (See appendix for a listing of early childhood associations.)
- Staff appreciation celebrations
- Repairs/improvements necessary to meet licensing code and to improve facility
- Playground fencing, cushioned surfacing and equipment
- Food
- Parent education
- Financial aid or scholarship for needy families
- Consultants
- Miscellaneous
- Legal counsel

Establish a chart of accounts for budget planning, accounting and financial reporting.

Most computer accounting software programs have an easy method for establishing a chart of accounts in the program. Every item in the chart of accounts needs careful study and planning. The dollars entered into the budget for each item must be based on accurate data and calculations. This is true when entering income projections as well as expenses.



Be cautious when setting salaries. Teacher salaries should be based on adequate planning and classroom time. Directors and teachers, who know the developmental needs of children, relate well with children and adults, are sensitive to family needs and can organize and coordinate programs deserve to be paid a professional's salary. **Do not permit low salaries or lack of benefits to subsidize your program.**

## Income:

When a congregation decides to serve families through an ECE center, it must determine how the program will be funded. The income side of the budget is just as important as the expense side.



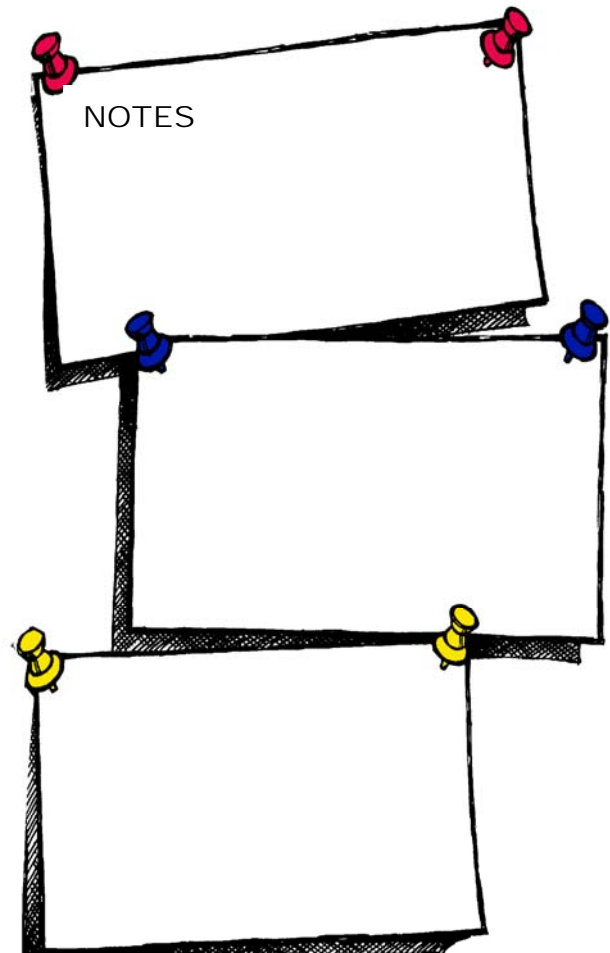
- Determine the amount of actual income and all income sources. Determine the percent of your total income to be received from each source. Create a chart similar to the one below. Add additional lines if necessary.
- Prepare a tentative funding formula for the next three to five years. For each income source, estimate the percentage of increase or decrease that is desirable, possible, and practical. Determine whether you can develop additional funding sources during those years. Then develop a graph to project your funding formula for the next three to five years.
- On the basis of your three to five-year plan, project a funding formula for the next school year. Indicate the percent of the total for each income source. This procedure will help to ensure that financial details are carefully covered.

Income Source	Amount of Income	Percent of Total
Congregation Income:		
Tuition and Fees:		
Third Source Income:		
TOTAL:		100%

***The congregation is the first source of support for the ECE center. When your ECE center is viewed as an integral part of the congregation's mission, the congregation will provide funds from its budget and encourage members to provide additional support.***

Tuition and fees will normally be the largest dollar amount of income. You will want to establish fees competitive with programs in your community. You should consider establishing a tuition assistance plan for those in need. Be sure to budget this ahead of time.

When budgeting, remember to include your registration fee which is collected at the time a child is enrolled in your center. Registration fees usually equal 2-5% of projected income, depending upon geographic expectations and what the fees are intended to cover.



### 3. Security

A system of checks and balances is essential for security. Security is a matter of following established rules of bookkeeping and accounting. An efficient system uses time productively and avoids unnecessary paperwork and procedures. Effectiveness implies that the plan you adopt provides accurate information with which to make intelligent decisions.

- Check-signing should be done by someone other than the person who receives the money, keeps financial records or handles petty cash.
- If the check-signer is also the treasurer of the congregation, two signatures should be required on all checks over a set dollar amount.
- The person in charge (board treasurer or congregation treasurer) must be bonded.
- Monthly or quarterly reports are shared with the ECE center board, the church treasurer, finance committee and church council.
- All checks should be stamped "For Deposit Only" immediately after being received.
- Audits of records are scheduled annually. The congregation's governing body has responsibility to request an audit. Adopt a board policy for a time line and procedure for audit, including spot checks, financial reporting on a regular basis, etc.
- The use of a petty cash account is discouraged. If you choose to maintain a petty cash account, receipts **MUST** be provided for all purchases. The petty cash account must be reconciled at the end of each month.
- **MOST IMPORTANTLY:** Request that your bank return all canceled checks and have someone other than a signer on the account re-reconcile the account and scan through the checks on a



monthly basis. This is absolutely your best line of defense to prevent theft of funds. To provide for complete security there needs to be physical inspection of the written checks.

### 4. Third source income:

#### Special Gifts

A number of supporters of your ECE center may be willing to give a one-time or a reoccurring gift. These supporters may be parents of current or previous students or congregational members who are known to support children's ministries. Be specific about what you need. List needs in your congregation's weekly or monthly newsletter. Tell the members why you need them and how these gifts will help support and grow their ECE center. Create a concrete aspect to gift-giving. (We need a set of Bible story books at \$25; three tricycles at \$120 each; a piece of climbing equipment costing \$3,500; a set of unit blocks at \$400.) Gifts of cash and some non-cash items are tax-deductible. Ask donors to participate in any employee or fraternal association member matching gift programs. Make sure that the center has a set procedure to receive such gifts. **Acknowledge all gifts with a receipt and a thank-you letter in a timely fashion.**

#### Fundraising

Fundraising should not be viewed as a substitute for Christian stewardship. You must work with your congregation's established policies regarding fundraising activities.

Keep in mind that fundraisers generally require a lot of time and effort on the part of volunteers and/or staff. Be selective and consider available people power, the interests of your constituency, timing, your target group, needed upfront money, and the relationship of the activity to your program goals.

Fundraising should be viewed as more of a "signature event", tying the name and mission of your ECE center to the congregation and community, rather than a significant source of funds.



If you choose to do a fundraiser, thank all of those who worked on any project that raised money and awareness for your ECE center and congregation.

### **Fraternal Organizations**

When your ECE center has a special event, matching funds are frequently available from organizations such as Thrivent Financial for Lutherans. Check with Thrivent to find out who your congregation's representative is and see what matching funds are available. They can assist you to make your special events a bigger success.

Thrivent offers their members a process through the *Giving Plus Program* to assist your ECE center financially. If you have Thrivent members encourage them to take advantage of this program. Contact your Thrivent representative for information on enrolling in this program.



### **Grant Proposals**

A number of foundations have grant monies available for worthy causes including religious based non-profit ECE centers. The key to obtaining grants is research, research, research.

First, organize a grant proposal committee. The committee should include at least one person with writing skills and one person with the time to research foundations. Impress upon the committee members that this is a long-term, year-round commitment.

The grant proposal committee will be faced with a good deal of up-front work which may take six to eight weeks of dedicated effort. Once the preliminary foundation research is completed and the first grant proposal is written, the work becomes routine. The efforts of the committee still have to be fully coordinated.

See the Appendix for lists of foundations and websites to search for potential grantors, and instructions on writing grant proposals.

### **Government Sources**

Congregations do not receive direct government funding because of the separation of church and state established by the U. S. Constitution. However, there are a number of block-grant funds available for ECE centers that are administered through state and local agencies, such as Child Care Resource & Referral agencies, State licensing agencies, etc.

In addition, families are eligible for support in paying their ECE center tuition fees through a variety of federal and state-supported programs. Using these programs does create additional paperwork for the center and may put some restrictions on your program. Check with your state for more information about these types of programs.

### **Deferred Gifts**

Quite often individuals want to thank the Lord for the blessings he has given them. They do this in the form of deferred giving and estate planning. You may have members in your congregation who would like to support your ECE center through planned giving. Your local Thrivent Financial for Lutherans representative can offer direction to your ECE center and those who would like to consider this way of supporting your ministry.

### **Memorials**

Families and individuals may contribute to a memorial fund in memory of a loved one or in honor of a special person still living.

**Remember this option is only viable if you make it visible to the congregation and the families in your ECE center.**



## LEGAL AND LICENSING ISSUES

There are certain legal processes and licensing regulations that are outlined by state, local and federal agencies that the ECE center must comply with. The centers board and the director are responsible for identifying and understanding these issues. They are also responsible for seeking legal advice when necessary. Following these procedures and meeting standards will help to ensure the long-term success of the ECE center.

There are some legal issues that must be addressed before the center opens like incorporation and tax-exempt status. Other legal matters such as documentation of medical records or withholding taxes will require annual review.

Each state sets its own licensing requirements for ECE centers. It must be remembered that these standards are set to meet minimum requirements. As a church related ECE center you will want to go beyond that and strive to provide the highest quality care in ministering to children that you are able. You will also want to examine programs for accrediting ECE centers.

Understanding insurance coverage for children, staff, and the facility is a necessary step in protecting the ECE center. A number of policies are outline in this area. We have also included information related to the relationship with the congregation, parents, and staff members.

Although this area outlines important legal issues it is not intended to give legal advice nor does it attempt to cover comprehensively all legal issues that might affect your ECE center. It is always recommended that you retain the services of an attorney when considering regulations and legal matters.



### Legal Advice

All ECE centers have situations that exist and have the potential to cause problems related to negligence. Staff member are susceptible to legal action for failing to act with reasonable care in performance of their duties. The ECE center may be sued or fined because it has not met guidelines or set standards. The following suggestions may help you avoid legal difficulties:

- be in consultation with an attorney for all matters related to legal issues
- consider asking an attorney to be a member of your ECE board
- Provide accurate job descriptions for all employees
- Hire staff to perform specific duties
- Assure adequate supervision of children at all times
- Properly maintain facility and equipment
- Document all accidents and other incidents
- Carefully screen and hire responsible employees

### Incorporation and tax exempt status

The issue of incorporation in the church-related ECE center may be addressed in the following two ways:

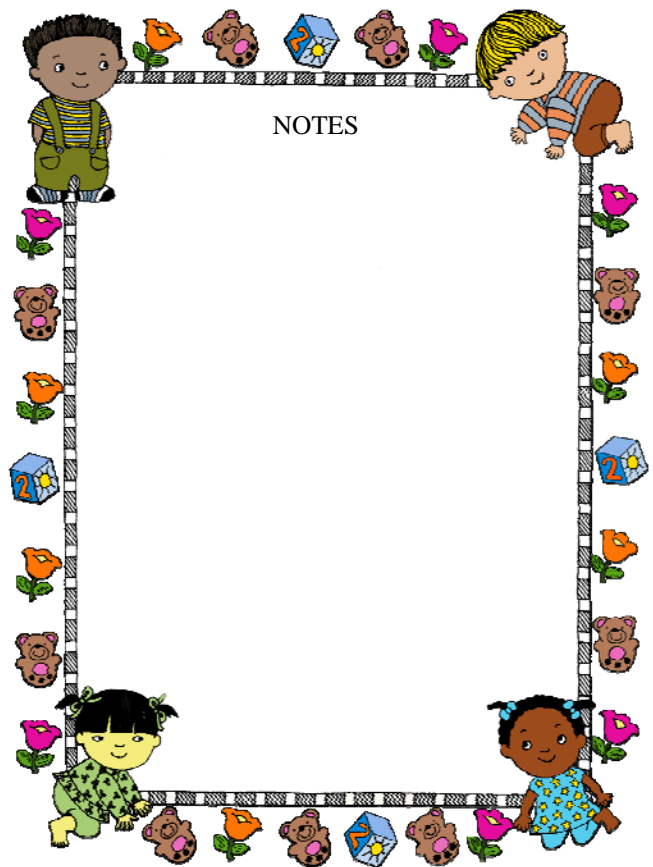
- The ECE center is operated as a direct ministry of the congregation with the ECE center protected by the incorporation of the church. In the case of churches of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America this incorporation is held by the national church body. This is the preferred means of operation of the ECE center. This option also emphasizes the direct connection between the congregation and the center.

In this case the tax exempt status is held by the ELCA through your congregation. A copy of the IRS ruling and appropriate numbers are available from the ELCA Vocation and Education unit, Director for Schools.

- The second option is for the ECE center to become separately incorporated through their state of operation. Under this model the ECE center board is under contract to the congregation but the ECE center operates independently. The center is still considered a ministry of the congregation sharing a common mission and purpose. In this case, legal liabilities of the church and center are distinct. In this option the tax exemption of the center can be accomplished in one of the following ways.
- Contact the ELCA Vocation and Education unit Director for Schools for information related to the separately incorporated ECE center falling under the umbrella of the ELCA IRS (501C3) non-profit tax exempt ruling
- Obtain IRS form 1023 to apply for your own IRS non-profit tax exempt ruling

ECE centers should consult an attorney when considering the issue of incorporation. They will help you identify the most appropriate and responsible decision for your ECE center. If you choose to be separately incorporated through your state of operation the following steps are necessary:

- The planning team with the assistance of an attorney draws up articles of incorporation which will provide information about the corporation
- The attorney sends two copies of the proposed certificate of incorporation, a letter of intent, and a copy of the proposed budget to the state officer responsible for incorporation
- The state returns the necessary forms and guidelines
- The paperwork is reviewed by the planning team and attorney
- It is either accepted or rejected



## By-Laws

ECE centers that are separately incorporated through their state of operation must develop a set of by-laws to obtain tax-exempt status. These written rules explain how the organization is to be governed. Although not required this is a good idea for the ECE center which is a direct ministry of the congregation as well. By-laws clearly define the governance structure of the ECE center.

The following items should be covered in the by-laws:

- Name and address of the early childhood education center
- Purpose of the organization
- Governing board (method of selection, term of office, procedures for making replacements, administrative responsibilities, policy for funding, hiring a director, definition of board and staff responsibilities, authority)
- Officers, standing committees, and their responsibilities

- ## Local Codes



Plans should be made early to meet with local officials to become familiar with local requirements. Often meeting local codes is a lengthy and expensive process. The various codes that might exist in your location would include:

- Zoning codes
- Building codes
- Fire codes
- Health codes
- Transportation codes

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## Licensing

Each state establishes its own rules and regulation which govern the licensing of ECE centers. These ensure the minimum standards for the care and education of young children. A license represents legal approval of the state for your ECE center. Licensing agencies also vary from state to state. You will need to check with your state for the agency that licenses your type of ECE center.

In some states church-related programs may be exempt from licensing. The following are reason that might apply for securing a license even if exempt:

- The ability to demonstrate state approval in the case of a law suit
- May be required to secure insurance
- Helps staff, parents and the congregation work together to provide a safe facility and developmentally appropriate education programs for children
- May be needed to accept federal support or grants

## Accreditation

The purpose of accreditation is to attain more than minimal professional status for the ECE center as required by licensing programs. Accreditation is a voluntary, self-regulated procedure by which an ECE center strives to achieve model standard for a program of excellence.

The primary objective of accreditation is to raise the quality of care and education for the children in the ECE center. Through establishing high developmentally appropriate standards, ECE centers create and build environments that promote the spiritual, social, emotional, and intellectual growth of the children in its care.

The benefits of accreditation far out weight the expense and the time it takes to accomplish the process from receiving the materials to conclusion of the site visit. The benefits are:

- Parents, staff, and the congregation are assured that the ECE center meets the highest standards set for young children
- Clear goals are identified for continual improvement of care and programming
- Continuation of monitoring factors that influence the growth and development of the children in the center



## Internal Revenue Service

There are a number of legal regulations that must be followed by all ECE centers including church-related centers. It is advisable to work with an accountant annually. This will help you to verify that you are in compliance with the IRS.

Legal regulations include but are not limited to:

- Employer identification number (EIN) – If your center has salaried employees and the center is a ministry of the congregation you would use their EIN. If you are separately incorporated you must apply for your own EIN. (Form SS-4)
- Tax Returns – Employers are required to fill quarterly tax return forms for each of their employees.
- Withholding exemption certificate – This form is used to determine taxes to be withheld based on marital status and the number of dependents. (IRS form W-4) This must be completed by each employee before their first check is issued. An annual statement of taxes withheld from employees pay must be issued by January 31 for the preceding year. (IRS W-2)
- IRS Form 5578 – This is sent each year by the ELCA Vocation and Education unit. It is a declaration of non-discrimination and is required for each center to fill out, except when an IRS 990 form is filed.



## Insurance

Adequate insurance is a necessity for the ECE center. The center must be protected even when insurance is difficult or expensive to obtain. Of insurance types, liability and accident insurance are essential. State and federal law may require certain insurances that provide protection for the staff members. The director and board are responsible for having a clear understanding of the amounts and types of insurance needed to meet legal and licensing requirements.

In many situations insurance for the ECE center may be able to be added to the congregational policy. The services of a good insurance agent will be able to assist the center to balance its needs with cost and coordinate service with the congregation.

*Liability Insurance* policies protect the ECE center if the staff or facility is found to be negligent. Liability policies generally cover the following:

- Personal injury
- Immediate medical relief
- Legal costs to defend the staff
- Accidents where no one is at fault
- Defense cost in physical and sexual abuse cases
- Damage to property



A Comprehensive plan may also include the following:

- Any new hazards which may occur
- Activities that occur away from the center such as field trips

Attention to the importance of planning for the children's safety and well-being at all times is still the best protection for all ECE centers. The following suggestions may help reduce the potential for negligence within the ECE center:

- Routine safety checks
- Regular maintenance of the entire facility
- Strict compliance with licensing codes
- Adequate staffing
- Supervision at all times and in all places
- Prompt reporting of all accidents
- Use of a licensed insurance agent or broker

*Accident Insurance* pays for the care required for a child or staff member injured at the center. For a small fee, the center is able to supplement family coverage. Group coverage may be available for families to purchase through the ECE center.

*Corporation Insurance* (or general Liability insurance) protects the officers of the board in the event the ECE center is sued for negligence.

*Personal Injury Insurance* provides legal coverage for the ECE center from claims related to false arrest, libel or slander, or violation of privacy. This policy would also include lawsuits related to the reporting of suspected child abuse.

*Fires and Theft Insurance* policies protect the facility and its contents. The ECE center should keep accurate inventories and photographs of all the contents of the center. A safety deposit box is recommended.

*Vehicle Insurance* is necessary when the center owns and operates motor vehicles. Be sure to check with a broker before securing insurance for vehicles.

*Social Security Tax* is required to be paid for all employees of the ECE center. The rate of tax is set as a percentage of salary. One-half is paid by the employer and one-half is paid by the employee. The ECE center is responsible for making quarterly payments and filing reports with the local Social Security office.

*Workers Compensation Insurance* provides compensation to employees injured in accidents which occur in the process of carrying out their assigned responsibilities. It is required in most states, but there are exemptions for some groups of workers. Check with your state for more information.

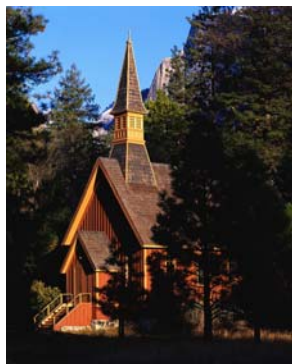
*State Unemployment Insurance* requirements are set by each individual state. Insurance rates are related to salaries and the profit or non-profit status of the ECE center. Employers must notify staff if this insurance is not provided for its employees.

*Health Insurance* may be offered by the center or paid in part by the center staff. Because of the rising cost of health care, this insurance offers an important benefit to attract and keep highly qualified personnel.

### Agreements

#### **With the Church...**

Although not a legal requirement, it is recommended that you have a shared space agreement with your congregation. Verbal agreements are open to a wide variety of interpretations from which misunderstandings may occur. Written agreements provide a tool for assisting present and future board members to understand the relationship that exists between the ECE center and the supporting congregation. Guidelines for developing a shared space agreement are found in the appendix of this resource.



#### **With Parents...**

Parents must be notified in writing of issues that relate to the enrollment of their child in the ECE center.



Misunderstandings are avoided when there are clear descriptions of the services provided by the center. All policies should be reviewed and updated each year before the beginning of registration for the following school year.

The ECE center should have a parent handbook that addresses the following areas:

- Specific dates during which the ECE center is in operation, all holidays, and the hours of operation
- All fees and tuition, the manner and frequency of payments, late pickup fees, and failure to pay procedures
- Number of required weeks for advance notice of withdrawal
- Health forms required and date due
- Emergency form required and date due
- Requirements for clarifying custody arrangement where applicable
- Requirements or plan for accident insurance
- Nature and duration of absences from center for which payment is not required
- Emergency, medical, first aid, and medication procedure
- Identification of those who may pick you child up at the end of the day

You may want to consider developing an enrollment contract in the form of an agreement. Often, this document has binding legal effects and should be regarded as a formal contract. Consulting an attorney will assist you to determine if this is true in your state. A sample agreement is included in the appendix.





## Custody Arrangements

When you have children in your program who are from single family homes, under the legal custody of the state or in foster care you must take the following steps to ensure compliance with court decisions:

- Clarify who makes decisions on behalf of the child
- Clarify custody arrangements for all children at the time of enrollment
- Keep on file the names, addresses and phone numbers of those authorized to pick up the child
- Inform the parents that no child will be released to any individual who is not authorized on the card unless special arrangements have been made in advance with the center by the person having custody
- When an unauthorized person attempts to pick up the child the following is suggested:
  - Explain the procedure
  - Show a copy of the authorization card
  - Notify the individual who has custody
  - Notify the ECE director of the situation
  - Notify authorities if the unauthorized person refuses to leave

## Reporting Suspected Child Abuse

State laws govern the reporting of suspected child abuse. The board and the director need to know the laws for the state in which they operate. All ECE centers must have written policies and procedures regarding suspected child abuse. All staff must be aware of these policies and procedures. After abuse is reported, written documentation must be submitted within twenty-four hours. Those who are required to report are not liable in either civil damage or criminal prosecution cases as a result of making a report in good faith. The following information should be included in all reports:

- Name of the child
- Child's present location
- Type and extend of suspected abuse
- Age of the child
- Names and addresses of the parents
- Name of the individual making the report
- Individuals designated
- Time and date of the report
- Who the report was made to

## Legal Issues Related to Staff

There will be a number of legal implications for the staff of the ECE center. Forms pertaining to these areas should be filed in the director's office. Requirements will vary from state to state. Make sure that you are in compliance for your state of operation.

- Copy of current teaching certificate or license
  - Some state will require a college transcript
  - Current certificate indicating physical and mental health
  - Certificate for the absence of tuberculosis
  - Accident forms related to any incident involving an injury to child or adult, or damage to property
  - A staff emergency card including the following:
    - Physician's name and telephone number
    - Contact name and telephone number for an emergency
    - Authorization for emergency treatment
  - Contracts (if you use these they should be reviewed, updated, signed annually and filed)
  - Fingerprinting is required in many states for those who work with children to clear them of any possible child abuse records
- Completed forms should be on file

# A Board Members Essentials

## How to Build a Board Book



It is important that the board, whether new members or returning members, have at their disposal the materials necessary to fulfill their commitment to the ECE center and the supporting congregation. This will make it possible for them to provide the best relationships and policies that they can. It will also provide them the means to chair committees, review policy, and provide appropriate reporting based on the organizational structure of the church, without having to search for the information.

ECE center's Mission Statement

Brief history of the ECE center

Brief history of the congregation

Organizational structure chart

Board member position description

Board member service commitment

ECE center directory

Congregation directory

Board structure

Board assignments

ECE center calendar

Budget information

Audit information

Strategic plan

By-laws

Policies and procedures

Licensing and accreditation certificates

Insurance certificates

Application for employment package

ECE center statistics  
(enrollment, tuition, salaries etc.)

Minutes from the past year's meetings

Staff Handbook

Parent/Student Handbook

Copy of the agreement with the  
congregation

Anything else that is deemed important  
to the operation of an effective board