



# *Almond Blossoms Schoolhouse*

Employee Handbook

AUGUST 17, 2020

## **SECTION 1: ALMOND BLOSSOMS SCHOOLHOUSE: WHO WE ARE**

### **Mission Statement:**

Teaching the next generation to walk in love, love to learn, and learn to walk in achievement. By cultivating their gifts, helping to uncover the greatness in them. By teaching them to honor each person's significance. And by inspiring them to become creative problems solvers who offer positive contributions to the community around them.

### **Our Philosophy:**

*Passion and Purpose* – Children are only children for a little while. We have the wonderful opportunity to help them discover what unique gifts that they have to offer to the world. Our program focuses on cultivating these gifts in literacy, math/logical, spatial, inter-personal, intrapersonal, music, bodily/kinetics, and nature. This allows children to find where their talents are and use their strengths to fortify their weaknesses. These practices help to instill, self-worth, self-confidence, problem solving skills, grit & growth-mindset, and an appreciation for individuality. Every child has greatness in them; a passion and a purpose that should be nurtured and cultivated until it is ready to bloom.

*Play* – Children interact with the world through play. Play is the beginning of all learning.

*Creativity* – Children will be encouraged to practice their creativity. This is best achieved when play materials are simple and basic. When people learn to tap into their creativity, they lead happier lives, develop strong problem-solving skills, and make positive contributions to society.

*Environment* – We strive to keep the environment as warm and nurturing as possible.

*Nutrition and Health* – Nutritional quality is of the utmost importance at our centers. Children are taught about healthy eating habits, gardening, and environmentally responsible practices. Children are also given ample outdoor play to promote healthy and wellness.

### **Inclusion**

Almond Blossoms stand by its mission to help every child reach their full potential, value their uniqueness, and find their contribution to society. Therefore, all children are invited to participate in all the activities in their class. All activities are designed with levels of achievement so that all the children will find an appropriate amount of success and challenge.

## **Almond Blossoms Schoolhouse Social Responsibility**

- Help to raise a generation that walks in honor, love, and success
- To remember that the children we raise today, will be the leaders of our tomorrow
- Provide quality care and education to children
- Honor & cultivate the gifts and talents in the lives we touch
- Honor the members of our community
- Help to strengthen family units
- Safeguard children and advocate for children's rights
- Support community needs for childcare and education

## **SECTION 2: Almond Blossoms Schoolhouse Ethics Policy**

Ethics are integral to the successful achievement of our mission at Almond Blossoms Schoolhouse. Employees are expected to comply with this policy and to uphold to the highest ethical standards. By understanding this policy, employees will recognize the situations and activities that must be strictly avoided and those that require disclosure or prior approval. Employees must treat all co-workers, clients, and external parties with honor, honesty, integrity, and fairness in all regards. Employees must also represent Almond Blossoms Schoolhouse well both on and off duty.

### **1) Operate in Excellence**

Almond Blossoms Schoolhouse strives to operate in excellence. The foundation of this is adhering to 100% of the State Childcare Regulations, 100% of the time. Upon this foundation we endeavor to creatively and effectively educate, care for, and cultivate the gifts and talents in every child. This often means supporting the whole family and the child's care team.

### **2) Abuse or Neglect**

All staff is to complete the mandated reporter training before working at the center. Staff must fully understand what being a mandated reporter means and adhere to the mandated reporter guidelines. Staff must report anything that could possibly be considered as abuse or neglect to the state. No staff member should ever tell anyone not to report something to the state. No staff member should ever let anyone tell them not to report something to the state (even if it is a supervisor). If there is any concern, a report should be made to the state.

The abuse or neglect (including lack of supervision) of a child by staff of any kind is grounds for immediate dismissal and will be reported to authorities. If a staff member suspects abuse or neglect is happening and does not report it to the Director, it is grounds for immediate dismissal. Keeping children safe is our number 1 priority.

If a parent arrives to pick up a child under the influence of drugs or alcohol, the Director is to be notified immediately.

### **3) Open Communication**

Almond Blossoms Schoolhouse values the input from our staff. Staff should share their concerns, provide input, seek information, and resolve work-related issues by professionally discussing them with their supervisors. The simplest, quickest and most satisfactory solution is often reached at this level.

If discussion with the employee's supervisor is not able to resolve the matter, the staff is encouraged to bring the concern to the next level of management.

#### **4) Conflicts of Interest**

Employees must manage their personal financial and business affairs to avoid conflicts of interest or the appearance of a conflict of interest. A conflict of interest arises when an employee's personal interest in a transaction, or an obligation s/he owes to someone else, comes into conflict with the employee's obligation to Almond Blossoms Schoolhouse or its clients.

If an employee is confronted with a conflict of interest, s/he must disclose the conflict to her/his manager, describe the facts giving rise to the conflict, and excuse her/himself from any deliberation or decision with respect to the transaction.

Employees must not accept anything of value from clients, suppliers, or others in return for any business, service, or confidential information of Almond Blossoms Schoolhouse.

#### **Relationships with Families in our Care**

Employees are to keep relationships with Almond Blossoms Schoolhouse families professional. They should refrain from contacting, or connected to, families through social media (e.g. being Facebook Friends) or by their personal phone or email. Employees should not accept side "baby sitting" or nanny jobs from Almond Blossoms Schoolhouse families.

#### **5) Confidential Information**

Rules pertaining to the use and disclosure of confidential information are listed below:

- Information entrusted to employees must be treated as confidential and privileged, and must not be disclosed to anyone, either inside or outside Almond Blossoms Schoolhouse, who does not have a legitimate need for the information.
- Confidential financial information about Almond Blossoms Schoolhouse must not be disclosed to outsiders.
- Using confidential information for personal gain is strictly prohibited.

"Confidential Information" is defined to mean confidential information of Almond Blossoms Schoolhouse, including, but not limited to, Almond Blossoms Schoolhouse's existing and contemplated products and services; procedures of distributing, pricing, selling and marketing products and services; confidential and proprietary information related to current, former, and prospective clients; confidential and proprietary information related to vendors and suppliers; trade secrets and proprietary information; treatments, applications, procedures, and testing methods; marketing, business and financial plans; proprietary literature and publications; and other confidential and proprietary information of Almond Blossoms Schoolhouse, all of which are unavailable or not known to the general public or to individuals or entities working in the same or similar industry.

## **Confidential, Proprietary and Other Nonpublic Information**

The protection of confidential information and proprietary inventions is vital to the interest and the success of Almond Blossoms Schoolhouse. Such confidential information includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Donor Names/Information
- Employee data
- Family/Client information
- Financial information
- Research and development initiatives
- Pending projects and proposals

The disclosure of Almond Blossoms Schoolhouse's confidential, proprietary or other nonpublic information, whether intentional or unintentional, will be subject to disciplinary action (up to and including possible discharge), even if he or she does not actually benefit from the disclosed information. Please refer to Section 5: Employee Conduct, Electronic Communication for further explanation.

### **6) Substance-Free Workplace**

The Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988 requires Almond Blossoms Schoolhouse, as a federal contractor and grant recipient, to certify that it will provide a drug-free workplace. As a result the following is prohibited:

- Reporting to work under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs or substances, including the illegal use of prescription drugs;
- The illegal use, sale, manufacture, distribution or possession of drugs while on organization business or premises and while operating vehicles on organization business;
- The use, sale, possession, transfer or purchase of alcoholic beverages on organization premises or while performing organization business, except in connection with organization-authorized events;
- Working under the influence of prescription or nonprescription drugs that could impair judgment or motor functions and potentially place persons or property in jeopardy.

Almond Blossoms Schoolhouse will not condone criminal activity on its property, or on property under its direct control, and will take appropriate action up to and including terminating an employee or requiring him or her to participate in a drug abuse assistance or rehabilitation program.

As a condition of employment, employees must abide by the terms of this policy and must notify Almond Blossoms Schoolhouse of any criminal drug statute conviction for a violation occurring in the workplace not later than five days after such conviction.

Almond Blossoms Schoolhouse has the right to conduct a search of all property owned or controlled by us (desks, computers, cabinets, etc.) and employee property on the facilities, such as handbags and briefcases, if there is reasonable suspicion to believe that a violation of the substance abuse control policy has occurred. Almond Blossoms Schoolhouse may, but is not required, to obtain the employee's consent when property belonging to or used by an employee is to be searched.

#### **7) Equal Employment Opportunity Policy**

Almond Blossoms Schoolhouse is an equal opportunity employer and it is our policy that employees and applicants will not be subjected to unlawful discrimination or harassment based on race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, citizenship, veteran status, marital status, genetic information, pregnancy, or any other basis prohibited by applicable state, federal or local laws.

Accordingly, Almond Blossoms Schoolhouse will hire, train, and promote individuals in accordance with this Equal Employment Opportunity Policy; make decisions according to the principle of equal opportunity by imposing only bona fide occupational qualification requirements for employment opportunities; and administer all personnel practices and programs (including, but not limited to, compensation, benefits, transfers and training) in accordance with this Equal Employment Opportunity Policy.

No employee shall practice any act of discrimination of any kind.

#### **Americans with Disabilities Act**

Almond Blossoms Schoolhouse is committed to complying with all applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and offers equal employment opportunities for qualified individuals who may have a physical or mental disability, but can still perform the essential functions of the job.

Consistent with this policy of nondiscrimination, Almond Blossoms Schoolhouse will provide reasonable accommodations to a qualified individual with a disability, as defined by the ADA, who has made Almond Blossoms Schoolhouse aware of his or her disability, in writing, provided that such accommodation does not constitute an undue hardship on Almond Blossoms Schoolhouse.

#### **8) Anti-Harassment and Non-Discrimination**

Almond Blossoms Schoolhouse wants to provide all employees a work environment that is free from harassment and discrimination. Therefore, it shall be Almond Blossoms Schoolhouse's policy to prohibit discrimination or harassment of employees based on race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, citizenship, veteran status, marital status, genetic information, pregnancy, or any other basis protected by state, federal or local laws.

Almond Blossoms Schoolhouse expects that all relationships among persons in the workplace (whether it be employee, client, or other) will be businesslike and free of bias, prejudice and harassment. Sexual harassment typically is serious offensive conduct directed towards an individual because of his/her gender and is unwelcome by the individual. Sexual harassment does not refer to casual conversation or compliments of a socially acceptable nature.

Federal Law defines sexual harassment as unwanted sexual advances, requests for sexual favors or visual, verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

- (1) submission to such conduct is made a term or condition of employment; or
- (2) submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as basis for employment decisions; or
- (3) such conduct interferes with an individual's work performance; or
- (4) conduct creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment.

The following list provides some examples of conduct that could be viewed as sexual harassment. This list does not cover every type of behavior that could constitute sexual harassment. It is meant to provide employees with some idea of the type of conduct that is prohibited under this policy.

- Sex oriented verbal "kidding," "teasing," or jokes
- Foul or obscene language or gestures
- Physical contact such as patting, pinching, or brushing against another's body
- Pressuring someone to go on a date
- Comments about an individual's sexual activity, deficiencies, or prowess
- Displaying sexually suggestive objects, pictures, or cartoons
- Unwelcome leering, whistling, body gestures, suggestive or insulting comments
- Inquiries into one's sexual experience and discussion of one's sexual activities.

Communication of any harassing material by e-mail, voice mail, organization bulletin boards or otherwise is a violation of Almond Blossoms Schoolhouse's policy against harassment.

### **Reporting Harassment**

Almond Blossoms Schoolhouse encourages employees to report any problems they experience or observe concerning harassment, including sexual harassment, discrimination or retaliation. Employees should report harassment before it becomes severe or pervasive.

- Any employee who believes that he or she has been subjected to objectionable conduct prohibited by this policy is encouraged (but not required) to let the offending person know immediately and firmly that the behavior is offensive.
- Any employee who believes that he or she has been subjected to objectionable conduct prohibited by this policy must report it to their immediate supervisor or a member of management if the supervisor is the offending individual.
- Every reported incident of unlawful harassment or discrimination will be investigated.
- Individuals reporting complaints or providing information in good faith in connection with an investigation will not be retaliated against for their participation in this procedure.

### **Investigation**

Almond Blossoms Schoolhouse will promptly undertake an investigation of all complaints of harassment, discrimination or retaliation. The investigation will include a private interview with the person filing the complaint, and with witnesses if applicable. The person alleged to have engaged in harassment will also be interviewed.

Confidentiality will be maintained throughout the investigatory process to the extent consistent with an adequate investigation and appropriate corrective action.

### **Responsive Action**

Employees found to have engaged in conduct in violation of this policy will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

No employee will be disciplined or otherwise retaliated against for filing a complaint or participating in the investigation of a bona fide complaint. However, an individual who brings a false or frivolous complaint is subject to discipline up to and including termination.

## **SECTION 3: CURRICULUM**

### **Curriculum Planning**

Curriculum should be designed in such a way that all the children in the classroom can enjoy and learn from the experience. Teachers should think about how to best use the skills and talents that a child has, to work on their growth opportunities. For example: Using music to help a child build their math skills. By creatively pairing different learning styles together the children are able to enjoy the learning process; even when engaging in areas that are harder for them.

Please keep these 8 different knowledge areas in mind when planning lessons:

Interpersonal skills

Intrapersonal skills

Spatial skills

Math/Logic skills

Language/Literacy skills

Body/Kinesthetic skills

Music skills

Nature skills

Lesson plans should include all 8 of these areas through out the week. Again, different combinations of these skills will help ensure that all children are reached and progressing.

### **Grit and Growth Mindset**

Learned failure is the enemy of all education. Teachers should acknowledge that all children grow and learn at different rates. Lessons should be planned so that there are different levels of achievement that can be obtained. Children should walk away from each activity with a "win." This means that there should be some new task or continued growth that they achieved. These particular tasks should be praised by teachers in the classroom. Sometimes this is going to look like, "Wow Sally! You wrote your name!" Other times it will look like, "Billy I am so excited that you have sat in circle for 3 min and have kept your hands to yourself!" We must praise the behavior we want to see and let the children feel the success of that win.

In partnership with feeling the win, children should always have a new obtainable goal ahead of them. For Sally this may be, "Do you want to learn how to spell your last name?" For Billy this may be, "Tomorrow let us try to stay seated in circle for 4 min! I bet you can spend for min in circle with your hands to yourself!"

By continuing to challenge each child at an appropriate level, and by helping them to feel the success of those wins, we are conditioning children to be overcomers. This enables children to have a positive relationship with school, education, and goals. This will carry with them into adulthood and give them a strong foundation for a pattern of success in their lives. We are not just watching children; we are raising a generation.

### **Themes and Emergent Curriculum**

Teachers should coordinate monthly themes within each center. This is a broad topic that the teacher, lead by their students can develop. What this should look like in the real world:

The center staff decided that in April we will be learning about Oceans.

The first week the teachers set up some age appropriate activities for each class.

Teacher 1 starts off with fish. The kids are really into it, so she keeps up the fish related activities for the next 2 weeks. When the kids start to get bored with it, she switches to seaweed.

Teacher 2 starts off with boats. The children are only loosely engaged with it. So, she switches to shells. The kids love the shells and the conversation moves from shells to other ocean animals and ends up with why we should not throw trash on the ground. This results in the teacher suggesting that the next month's theme is on recycling.

Teacher 3 breaks the ocean theme into 4 sub themes and works on 1 per week. The kids stay engaged, but not enough to stay committed to a sub theme more than a week.

All these examples are excellent ways to marry themes and emergent curriculum to make sure that children are engaged and excited about learning.

### **Special Projects**

Teachers are encouraged to engage children in ongoing special projects. This could be a number of things. Such as: a gardening project, a quilting project, some sort of craft, a dance group, a dinosaur club. Any activity that there seems to be a group of children that are really into. Time and space can be made for these activities on a regular basis. Let's get the kids excited about things!

If there is an activity that you are particularly, about and would like to spend time in each classroom teaching, please communicate that with the Director. This could look like, teaching a small music lesson in each classroom every week. Organizing kickball for each classroom. Or: Baking, story time, environmental lessons, Kinesphere, anything you are excited about!

***Please view the Power Point on the Montessori, Waldorf, and Reggio Emilia Approach, as they are encouraged at the center.***

### **Celebration of Holidays and Religion**

Teachers are encouraged to teach students about holidays celebrated around the world. They are allowed to teach what religions around the world believe, as long as they are not encouraging the children to believe, or practice said religions.

Yoga is a religion and is not to be practiced at the centers. Although stretching and exercise is encouraged. The names of these yoga moves themselves are celebration of the religion and are not to be used at the centers. There are plenty of ways to stretch and exercise without practicing this form or religion/exercise.

Magic play is not encouraged at the center and will be redirected. We firmly believe in encouraging children's imagination and introducing them to the wonderful possibilities that science has to offer. We try to steer conversations in this direction. Play involving magic potions, magic spells, etc. will be redirected to conversations regarding chemistry, physics, foreign language, and other science-based learning.

Recently the lines between mindfulness and meditation have been blurred in our culture. Meditation is also not allowed at the centers. Although teaching the life skill of being conscious about what you are thinking about is. Teachers are encouraged to teach children how to think about what they are thinking about, learn to breathe to calm themselves down, be conscious of their emotions and how they affect their bodies and reactions, take a break to relax their body and think about relaxing their body, other efforts to teach children how to manage their mind, body and emotions. What is not allowed: encouraging children to empty their minds, visualizing that you are in another place, visualizing spirit guides or animals, etc. There is a difference between teaching children how to think about the situation they are in and teaching them to avoid the situation and go on a spiritual journey. Meditation is a religion and is not practiced at the centers.

## **SECTION 4: Employee Conduct**

### **As a Teacher**

Please remember that we are raising people, not just watching children. We have an opportunity to shape our tomorrow by teaching children to honor one another and themselves, learn to love learning, learn what they are passionate about, and become productive members of society. We are not a daycare, we are a world shaping machine.

### **Honor**

We are to foster an environment of honor at all times. This means that we show ourselves, our children, our families, our coworkers, and our community love, respect, understanding, and support at all times.

### **Appearance**

Employees have a direct impact on the image of Almond Blossoms Schoolhouse and should appear neat, clean, and dressed appropriately for the work being performed. In some cases, safety gear or uniforms are required. Please check with your supervisor for more information on workplace attire expectations and requirements in your area.

### **Phone Usage**

Personal calls and/or texts and other phone use should be kept to a minimum and should not interfere with the employee's work. Excessive use of the phones during work time will result in disciplinary action and or termination of employment.

### **Smoking Policy**

There is absolutely no smoking on the premises (even in a vehicle). Employees are not to smell like smoke while they are at work.

No additional breaks beyond those allowed under Almond Blossoms Schoolhouse's break policy may be taken for the purpose of using tobacco or similar products. Violation of this policy is subject to disciplinary action.

## **SECTION 5: SCHEDULES, COMPENSATION & ABSENCES**

### **Employment Classification**

All employees are classified as either "exempt" or "non-exempt" from overtime compensation according to the overtime provisions of state and federal laws. Non-exempt employees are entitled to overtime pay. Exempt employees are not.

In addition, employees will be classified as the following:

*Full-time:* An employee who is normally scheduled to work a standard 35 hours or more a week.

*Part-time:* An employee who is normally scheduled to work less than 35 hours per week and is not temporary.

*Regular:* An employee who has completed their introductory period.

*Temporary:* An employee who is hired to temporarily supplement the work force or to assist in the completion of a specific project. Employment beyond the initial stated period does not in any way imply a change in employment status. This includes employees that are in their trial 3 month period, and employees that are only working for the summer or during school breaks.

### **At-Will Employment**

Employment with Almond Blossoms Schoolhouse is at-will, meaning that either you or Almond Blossoms Schoolhouse may terminate the employment relationship at any time with or without a reason or notice.

Statements or promises, information in this Employee Handbook, or in any other publications cannot modify this at-will employment relationship. Only a written and signed contract by the Executive Director or the Board can change an individual's at-will employment status.

### **Introductory Period**

The introductory period is broken into 2 categories:

1) The first 2 weeks: During this time either the employee or the employer may end the employment relationship at will at any time during with or without cause or advance notice.

The Introductory Period is intended to give new employees the opportunity to demonstrate their ability to achieve a level of performance acceptable to Almond Blossoms Schoolhouse and to determine whether the new position meets their expectations. Similarly, Almond Blossoms Schoolhouse uses this period to evaluate the employee's capabilities, work habits, and overall suitability for the job.

2) Three months: After 3 months, full time regular employees will qualify PTO, paid holidays, and paid snow days. After 3 months is when we can also discuss paid professional development, such as the TEACH program, CPR/First Aid, and other approved trainings.

The completion of the Introductory Period does not represent a guarantee of continued employment, as employment is always at-will.

### **Performance Evaluation**

Supervisors and employees are encouraged to discuss job performance and goals informally, as needed. A formal written performance evaluation will be conducted at the end of an employee's introductory period.

Additional formal performance reviews are conducted quarterly to provide both supervisors and employees the opportunity to review job tasks, recognize strengths, identify and correct weaknesses, and discuss positive approaches to achieving goals and career development strategies. During these reviews IPDP's will be gone over to make sure that both the employee's goals and the centers goals are being reached.

### **Resignation**

Resignation is a voluntary act initiated by the employee to terminate employment. While the law does not require advance notice, Almond Blossoms Schoolhouse requests at least two weeks' written resignation notice from all employees.

### **Work Schedules**

Almond Blossoms Schoolhouse retains the right to vary work schedules according to its needs. Staffing needs and operational demands may necessitate amendments in start and end times, as well as variations in the total hours that may be scheduled each day and week.

Your supervisor will inform you of your expected work schedule and when/if amendments are needed.

### **Recordkeeping**

All employees are responsible for timely and accurately recording the hours they work. This should be done through the fingerprint scanner at the front computer. If the computer is out of order, the time should be recorded on the employee sign in sheet next to the computer, and the Director should be notified. You should also record the beginning and ending time of any departure from work for personal reasons and breaks. Your supervisor must always approve overtime work before it is performed.

All employees (including exempt employees) are required to record any and all vacation and/or sick time taken.

Altering, falsifying or tampering with pay records is strictly prohibited and considered theft. It will result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Employees must also sign in and out of each classroom that they are working in. This is not a timecard; this is how we track who was in each classroom at any given time for the state. Please keep these records accurate.

### **Breaks/Lunch for Hourly Staff**

All staff working 5 hours or more will receive one 15 min paid break. Depending on Employee preferences AND staffing needs employees may or may not have a designated clock out time for meals and breaks. Whether or not you should clock out for a break will be communicated to you on the weekly schedule. We cannot always accommodate the preferences that you have for scheduling and cannot promise that you will get exactly what you want. However, we will do our best to come as close as we can. If your scheduling preferences change, please communicate them to management. We genuinely desire that you have a work life balance that you want and strive to have happy employees.

### **Payroll Deductions**

Almond Blossoms Schoolhouse is required by law to deduct from your paycheck, federal, state and local withholding taxes, social security taxes and any court-ordered withholding such as garnishments or child support payments. These amounts, which are designated on your paycheck stub, are forwarded directly to the appropriate entity.

Almond Blossoms Schoolhouse will also make other deductions that have been authorized by you, such as your elected insurances or other benefits.

You must maintain a current, valid IRS W-4 form designating the number of exemptions for federal tax withholding. We cannot honor oral or email requests to “stop withholding” or “just use 99 exemptions this week.”

### **Sick/Emergency Call ins**

Please **CALL** the Director as soon as you realize that you may not be able to report to work on time or at all. Almond Blossoms Schoolhouse reserves the right to require a doctor’s note for the employee to return to work. Not calling to inform Almond Blossoms of an absence will be considered job abandonment and will only be overlooked in extreme circumstances (such as hospitalization). Some

extreme circumstances may inhibit an employee from calling out before the beginning of their shift. However, it is expected that the employee will notify Almond Blossoms as soon as possible of any situation that would prevent the employee from showing up as scheduled.

### **Attendance/Absence/Tardiness**

Almond Blossoms aims to provide professional and reliable care to the families that we serve. Therefore, employees are expected to be on time, neatly dressed, and reliably cover all of their scheduled shifts.

Reliability (including punctuality, preparedness, and attendance), is a highly valued trait, and is one of the main factors considered in performance reviews. Excessive tardiness or absences could lead to dismissal.

If you need time off for vacation or an appointment, please request it in writing to the Director at least 2 weeks in advance. Time off will be given in a first come first served basis. We will do our best to accommodate everyone.

### **Emergency Situations**

In the event of an emergency (e.g. government lock in due to catastrophe or extreme weather), staff will be expected to stay beyond their normally scheduled shift until the families are able to retrieve their children.

Staff is required to stay up to date with all emergency evacuation procedures.

### **Emergency Conditions/ Safety/Closing**

Emergency conditions, such as severe weather, power outages, or fire can disrupt operations and interfere with work schedules, as well as endanger employees. These extreme circumstances may require the closing of the work facility.

When operations are closed due to an emergency, the time off from scheduled work will be paid for full time regular employees only. In the event of an emergency or severe weather your supervisor will notify you of any schedule changes or closures. If in question, please check the WCAX website to see if the center is closed.

### **Holidays**

According to applicable restrictions, Almond Blossoms Schoolhouse will grant paid holiday time off to all full time regular employees after their 3 month introductory period.

The calendar of paid holidays and in-service days will be posted by the end of each calendar year for the next year.

To be eligible for holiday pay you must have worked your scheduled hours the days before and after the holiday. If a recognized holiday falls during an eligible employee's paid absence (e.g. vacation, sick leave), holiday pay will be provided instead of the paid time off benefit that would otherwise have applied. If a recognized holiday falls during an eligible employees' unpaid absence (e.g. unpaid leave of absence), no holiday pay will be provided. The privilege of holiday pay is revoked once an employee has given their notice to leave employment.

## **Workers Compensation**

Almond Blossoms Schoolhouse provides a workers' compensation program to our employees. The program reimburses certain out-of-pocket costs and may provide reimbursement for lost wages sustained as the result of injuries or illnesses sustained in the course of employment.

If you are injured or think you have been injured while working, no matter how slightly, you must report the injury immediately to your supervisor to protect your eligibility for compensation and alert Almond Blossoms Schoolhouse to any potential workplace hazards.

Workers' compensation is intended to cover only work-related injuries and illnesses. Because of this, neither Almond Blossoms Schoolhouse nor the program will be liable for the payment of workers' compensation benefits for injuries that might occur outside of work or during employees' voluntary participation in off-duty recreational, social, athletic or community-based activities, even if sponsored by Almond Blossoms Schoolhouse.

## **Sick time, Vacation/Time off**

Employees are allotted a number of paid days off a year that is negotiated upon hire or during a yearly review. The days are earned over the course of the year.

## Almond Blossoms Schoolhouse Salary Scale

### Early Childhood Education Salary Averages

	High School Diploma	High School + CDA	A.A. in ECE	B.A. in ECE	M.A. in ECE
<b>Classroom Aide</b> 1-2 years experience 3-5 years experience	<b>Salary Range</b>	<b>Salary Range</b>	N/A	N/A	N/A
	\$10.75	\$11.00			
	\$11.50	\$12.50			
<b>Assistant teacher</b> 1-2 years experience 3-5 years experience	<b>Salary Range</b>	<b>Salary Range</b>	N/A	N/A	N/A
	N/A	\$12.00			
	N/A	\$14.50			
<b>Associate Teacher</b> 1-2 years experience 3-5 years experience	N/A	N/A	<b>Salary Range</b>	<b>Salary Range</b>	<b>Salary Range</b>
			\$13.50	\$14.00	\$15.00
			\$15.50	\$16.50	\$18.00
<b>Lead Teacher</b> 1-2 years experience 3-5 years experience	N/A	N/A	<b>Salary Range</b>	<b>Salary Range</b>	<b>Salary Range</b>
			\$13.50	\$14.00	\$15.00
			\$15.50	\$16.50	\$20.00
<b>Licensed Teacher</b> 1-2 years experience 3-5 years experience	N/A	N/A	N/A	<b>Salary Range</b>	<b>Salary Range</b>
				\$15.00	\$16.50
				\$20.00	\$22.00
<b>Program Director</b> 1-2 years experience 3-5 years experience	N/A	N/A	<b>Salary Range</b>	<b>Salary Range</b>	<b>Salary Range</b>
			\$15.00	\$16.00	\$18.00
			\$17.00	\$20.00	\$22.00
<b>Assistant Director</b> 1-2 years experience 3-5 years experience	N/A	N/A	<b>Salary Range</b>	<b>Salary Range</b>	<b>Salary Range</b>
			\$14.00	\$15.00	\$16.00
			\$16.50	\$17.00	\$19.00
<b>Executive Director</b> 1-2 years experience 3-5 years experience	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	<b>Salary Range</b>
					\$20.00
					\$30.00

## **SECTION 5: Employee Orientation**

### **Sanitization and Safety for Handling Hazardous Materials**

Employees must maintain a safe and clean environment in the classrooms at all time. Food prep surfaces must be cleaned and sanitized before and after each use. Diapering areas must be sanitized after each use. The diapering and handwashing procedures that are posted in the center must be followed. Employees are to use gloves before coming into contact with any blood. Blood and other bodily fluids are to be thrown away in a plastic bag. Please see VT State Regulations for full description of all procedures.

**Please see family handbook for positive behavior management model**

### **Supervision of Children**

Please see VT State Regulations for classroom teacher to child ratios. Teachers need to keep children in their sight at all times. If there are areas of the classroom that cause a problem with this, please bring it to the Director's attention and they will help you find a classroom set up that allows children to be safe at all times. The exception to this rule is school age children will be allowed to cross the hall to use the restroom. The teacher should be in sight of the doorway to make sure that they safely enter and exit the restroom. 1 school age child at a time is allowed to use the rest room.

### **Medication Administration**

Staff must go through the medication administration class before administering medication. Staff is to ensure that the parents fill out the proper forms and instructions when asking us to administer medication. Medication must be in original container with original label on it. Medication administration must be properly documented in the medication log.

### **Nutrition and Food Safety**

Teachers must wash hands and have children wash hands before eating. Children's food allergies should be clearly listed in the classroom. Any other life threatening allergies should be brought to the Director's attention immediately. Teacher is responsible for knowing which children have allergies and how severe the allergy is. Teachers need to communicate this information to the Directors as well. Together they can set up a plan for a safe environment for the children.

### **Curriculum**

The lead teacher in each classroom is responsible for working with the Director to ensure that the center curriculum standards are being met. Teachers that are responsible for the curriculum in the classroom will receive 1 paid hour a week to develop quality curriculum.

### **Accidents**

Teachers are responsible for filling out a health check form when children arrive at the center to document any injuries that children arrive with.

If something happens when the child is in our care, the child is to promptly and appropriately have their needs tended to and then an incident report needs to be filled out. If in doubt, fill out the incident report.

**Please see family handbook for safe sleep practices.**

**Please see family handbook for Safe Release of Children**

**Please make sure to read and sign the mandated reporter statement.**

**Please review the family handbook on sick child procedure concerning when children are safe to attend the center.**

**All staff must agree to follow the VT State Regulations for a Licensed Childcare Center. Failure to do so can and will result in termination.**

**All staff are responsible for reading and understanding the emergency response plans in the binder.**

**All staff are responsible for reading and understanding the family handbook.**

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND RELEASE FORM**

I understand that I am an at-will employee, and I therefore understand that my employment may be terminated at any time, with or without prior notice, and with or without cause or reason by Almond Blossoms Schoolhouse. Likewise, I understand that I am free to resign at any time, for any reason. No employee, agent, or representative of Almond Blossoms Schoolhouse other than its executive officers has authority to enter into any agreement guaranteeing employment for any specified period of time, or to make any representations, promises or agreements contrary to the foregoing. I further understand that any such agreement authorized by executive officers shall not be enforceable unless it is in writing and signed by both an executive officer and myself.

No employee handbook can anticipate every circumstance or question about policies. As Almond Blossoms Schoolhouse changes, the need may arise to change policies described in this handbook. Almond Blossoms Schoolhouse reserves the right to revise, supplement, or rescind any policies or portions of the handbook from time to time as it deems appropriate in its sole and absolute discretion. As soon as practical, Almond Blossoms Schoolhouse will notify all team members of such changes, and they will be applicable even if I have not signed a new Acknowledgment and Release Form for them. This Handbook supersedes any previous Employee Handbook.

I understand and acknowledge that violation of the Employee Handbook or any other workplace rule may result in immediate disciplinary action against me, up to and including termination of employment.

My signature below indicates that I have read and understood this statement and have received a copy of the Employee Handbook. My signature further acknowledges and agrees that I will read and familiarize myself with its contents and follow the policies and rules indicated.

Employee Printed Name

Employee Signature

Date