



"We believe that preparing children to become engaged, contributing and open-minded members of society begins by seeing children now as future makers, leaders and innovators."

-Excerpt from the Nierman Preschool Vision

Nierman Preschool FAMILY GUIDE 2023

J LAWRENCE FAMILY JEWISH COMMUNITY CENTER
JACOBS FAMILY CAMPUS

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IN CASE OF EMERGENCY/URGENT

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NIERMAN PRESCHOOL VISION STATEMENT

Our vision statement expresses our intentions & desired future for children, families & educators. The work of the Nierman Preschool fulfills the mission of the Lawrence Family JCC, which is to connect with Jewish heritage, identity, experiences & values to ensure the continuity and vibrancy of the Jewish community. We invite you to partner with us on this journey to embody & achieve our vision, described below.

Children

- We believe children are curious, capable, and creative risk takers (D'rash) who want to explore their environment to make sense of their world (Hit'orerut).
- We believe that preparing children to become engaged, contributing and open-minded members of society begins by seeing children now as future makers, leaders and innovators.
- We believe children are unique and natural learners who are able to drive their own learning.
- We believe children's self-directed learning helps their social-emotional, physical and intellectual growth, each along their own timeline (Tzelem Elohim).

Families

- We believe in fostering a strong connection (B'rit) between home, school and community where families are engaged and empowered as pillars of their child's educational journey (Masa).
- We believe that consistent and transparent communication between families and educators is the cornerstone (K'dushah) to creating a trusting and respectful educational environment.
- We believe that families, in collaboration with educators, create a supportive community wherein the enriching ideals and practices of Jewish life thrive (Tikkun Olam).

Educators

- We believe in educators who are friendly, passionate and professional.
- We believe in a warm, nurturing, healthy and inclusive environment for every learner who walks through our doors.
- We believe educators deserve competitive pay and benefits.
- We believe our educators can create respectful and individualized educational experiences for their students.
- We believe educators need multiple opportunities for professional development in cutting-edge Early Childhood Education, to facilitate their own lifelong learning (D'rash).

Environment

- We believe in providing a warm, sensory enriched, aesthetically inspiring and safe environment.
- We believe our preschool is the beginning of a lifelong connection to the JCC and serves as an asset to the broader San Diego community.
- We believe the environment serves as a welcoming home for families with young children as they begin their Jewish and educational journeys.
- We believe partnerships within our organization (including Performing Arts, Senior Programming, Sports and Fitness) as well as collaborations with local organizations beyond the walls of our JCC, inform the work of our preschool.



ABOUT NIERMAN PRESCHOOL

School Philosophy

Our focus is on creating a safe, nurturing and enriching environment that offers opportunities for exploration, discovery and most importantly relationship building. We strive to develop curiosity, imagination, self-esteem, caring for others, and the ability to play both cooperatively and independently. We are committed to expanding community access to programs for children of different abilities and diverse backgrounds.

The environmental components in the classroom are enhanced by the ta'am (flavor) of Judaism - the heritage and values - which allow the children to cultivate a positive sense of identity and within the greater community. Cultural diversity is promoted and respected among the preschool community.

Curriculum

Learning activities are designed to compliment the developmental stages of each child. Quality educators and specialists offer an integrated approach, interweaving skill development and learning as teachers build on what children can do, and challenge them to try new things. Language, pre literacy and numeracy skills, art, science, storytelling, movement, dramatic and imaginative play are part of their daily activities.

Jewish culture, traditions and heritage are shared and celebrated with songs, stories, dance, cooking, and crafts. Shabbat is celebrated each Friday in an atmosphere of joyful togetherness.

Preschool Schedule

Nierman Preschool has two schedules: Half Day and Full Day.

- Half Day: 9:00am-1:00pm (AM Extended Care available only)
- Full Day: 9:00am-3:30pm. (AM and PM Extended Care available)

Morning and afternoon Extended Care is available at an extra charge.

- AM Extended Care: 7:30am until 9:00am, Monday - Friday
- PM Extended Care: 3:30pm until 5:30pm, Monday - Thursday and until 5:00pm on Friday



CLASSES AND PROGRAMS

Spanish Immersion Classes

We offer Spanish Immersion classrooms for our 2, 3 and 4 year olds. Spanish is spoken by the teachers in classrooms most of the time.

Special Programs

Nierman Preschool offers a variety of special programs to provide meaningful and interactive opportunities to engage throughout the year:

- Rosh Chodesh: The translation is "head of the month" and acknowledges and celebrates the arrival of the new Jewish month. The children sing songs about the moon & the holidays within the new month.
- Live Music: We have school wide live music twice a week. Every Friday, Shabbat is celebrated with special songs and blessings. Children's birthdays within this week are also acknowledged.

- **Holiday Programs:** Holidays are a big part of the Nierman Preschool experience, and we celebrate them with great cheer. Some are celebrated school-wide and others are observed in the classrooms.
- **PJ Library:** We are part of an international network of PJ Library which brings Jewish ideas and inspiration through the provision of award winning literature into all of our classrooms and library.
- **Physical Education:** All children are engaged in physical education activities that are developmentally appropriate with Coach Davor through a partnership with Active Kids.
- **Healthy Living :** Through development of preschool garden areas, butterfly cultivation and the implementation of a nutritious eating curriculum and snack program, we are making healthy living a priority within the preschool.

AM and PM Extended Care

We offer an Extended Care program for children at an additional hourly cost. AM Extended Care is open from 7:30 – 9:00 am each day. This is available to both half day and full day children. PM Extended Care is from 3:30 – 5:30 pm, Monday through Thursday, and 3:30 – 5:00pm on Friday. Afternoon extended care is only available to children attending full day.

Nap Time:Children who take afternoon naps will sleep on cots in their designated sleeping room; others will have quiet play in another room. Afternoon snack, outdoor & indoor play, storytelling & circle times complete the day. Please send a sheet to cover the cot during the rest period and an additional small sheet or light blanket to cover the sleeping child. If the children have a favorite stuffy, send it along!

INCLUSION

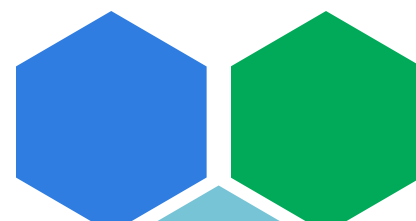
Nierman Preschool welcomes children with special abilities and needs.

Children of all abilities are welcomed and integrated into our general education program through mainstreaming. This is stipulated by the children with identified special needs having the individual support needed to participate in the activities with children in the classroom. In order to do this, the parents provide the professional support as needed for their individual child.

We believe that inclusion programs provide an excellent setting for children, and we work to make sure that each child is a fully integrated member of the classroom in which they are enrolled. Children benefit from an environment that promotes diversity and respect for differences.

The more we know about your child, the better prepared we are to enhance their preschool experience and can more fully meet their needs. Your partnership in this regard is critical. There are a number of steps we can take collaboratively to ensure that your child receives the most benefit from the preschool experience:

- The JCC Preschool works with the JCC Inclusion Director to consult with and support parents and staff regarding children’s individual needs.
- **Inclusion Services:** We offer early identification and screenings in areas of a child’s development at the request of parents. Referrals are made to public school district programs when appropriate, as well as early intervention services (Early Start) for children under the age of three.
- **Outside Resources: If your child has already been evaluated, we require that you share that with us and provide access to the reports and information, including IEP/IFSP. Failure to share this information can result in dismissal from the preschool.**



FAMILIES AS ENGAGED PARTNERS

Parents and educators look at young children’s learning from many different perspectives, with a common goal: making sure children engage meaningfully with the materials presented and grow from their experiences. We believe one way to foster children’s learning is through building partnerships between families and Nierman Preschool, with frequent and open communication and mutual respect.

Tzedakah

Tzedakah (seh.duh.kuh) is a word and action used frequently around Nierman Preschool. While it is often translated as meaning “charity,” tzedakah really has a much deeper meaning. It actually translates as righteousness. The act of giving tzedakah is a valued part of our weekly Shabbat celebrations. Families are asked to send coins with their children each Friday (any loose change works!). Each class has a special box called a Tzedakah Box. The children get to add their coins to the box as it is passed around the class. A few times a year, the money is donated. In the past, we have given funds for homeless services and to help grow trees in Israel. In this way, we are able to help the children explore and understand the Jewish value of Tikkun Olam (repair of the world). We appreciate you sending coins to donate weekly.

Holidays

Our curriculum follows the Jewish calendar where holidays are celebrated through a variety of hands-on experiences; music, food, crafts, and dramatic play. Children of all religious backgrounds attend our school, and differences are recognized and respected.

In adherence to LFJCC Policy, there are to be no class activities scheduled by Parent Ambassadors during the High Holy Days as noted in red on the Preschool Calendar by facility closures. High Holy Days include Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, and Passover.

While Christmas, Easter, Halloween, St. Patrick’s and Valentine’s Day are not celebrated, please be assured that a child’s mention of any home celebration is always treated with respect and interest.

FOOD

Lunches:

Lunch time is an important learning experience at school. Parents provide nutritious lunches and a drink. We highly recommend the drink to be water. Please do not send gum, candy, or soda to school. In accordance with the kosher policy at the Jewish Community Center, we ask for the following:

- All lunches must be vegetarian or dairy. Dairy refers to non-meat and non-fowl foods. Fish such as tuna fish and salmon are considered pareve (neither meat nor dairy) and are acceptable.
- Please do not send any meat or meat products (such as chicken, pork or beef) or any shellfish or shrimp. They are not allowed at school. This includes kosher meat.
- **Peanut and tree nut allergies are becoming very common. If your child has any allergies or foods that should be avoided, please contact the School Office! You will be notified of any serious allergies in your child's classroom.**

Healthy lunch Ideas:

- Sushi (no shellfish)
- Pasta
- Quesadillas
- Egg or tuna salad
- Fish (no shellfish)
- Cheese
- Fresh fruit
- Fresh Vegetables with low fat ranch dip
- Yogurt
- Hummus or veggie dip
- Whole-grain crackers with low fat cheese
- Cottage cheese with fruit
- Black bean and corn salad

**Provided Snacks:**

A healthy morning and afternoon snack is provided daily. All snacks contain a combination of fruit, protein, and carb. A snack menu will be provided. Within classrooms there will be a developmentally appropriate healthy eating curriculum.

Sugar:

Please do not send cakes, cookies, cupcakes, or items with frosting. Also, hard candy and lollipops are prohibited as they present a choking hazard. (See Birthday Celebrations below for an occasional exception.)

Drinks:

Water is best and this is our first choice in the preschool. We have plentiful water available, and we will never serve anything labeled as fruit drinks or soda. On occasion, 100% fruit juice will be served.

Birthday Celebrations:

Children's birthdays are celebrated in the classroom at a birthday circle and at the all school Shabbat. Parents may provide a special snack, but hard candy and lollipops are prohibited as they present a choking hazard. Feel free to join the celebration in the classroom if you would like. Also, please be aware of any food allergies in the class and send any treats accordingly. Please note: birthday invitations are not to be distributed for these classroom parties. Invitations for private birthday parties may be distributed at school only when all children in the class have been invited.

Challah:

Challah, a sweet braided egg bread, can be ordered online from the Preschool for your weekly home Shabbat observance. These challahs will be delivered to the classrooms each Friday. Parents who sign their children up via Remini to be the class mensch (good friend) for Shabbat can order a special challah for that week. Order your Challah online by Wednesday.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Sick Child Policy

Nierman Preschool reserves the right to temporarily deny any child admittance to the preschool for reasons of obvious illness, or to request early departure should symptoms become apparent during the course of the day. Children who seem unable to participate in our program for any reason will be sent home. Parents are expected to pick up their child within 1.5 hours of the phone call. We realize that most of you are working parents and we do try to accommodate you as much as possible. However, for the health and well being of everyone we feel it is vital to maintain a strict wellness policy. We ask for parents to assist by keeping sick children at home. We do take into consideration your physician's recommendations, nevertheless it is up to our discretion when your child may return to school.

A child should not be in school when she/he has:

- Nausea or vomiting, or has vomited during the night;
- Diarrhea;
- Frequent coughing or sneezing, green/yellow nasal discharge;
- Evidence of a communicable disease such as a rash or unusual sores;
- A temperature of 100 degrees or above;
- If febrile, the child may not return to school until there has been no fever for 24 hours without Tylenol or Motrin (please note that the school may not administer these medicines);
- Sore throat;
- Unusual watery, burning, red, or crusted eyes;
- An unexplained or contagious rash;
- Head Lice;
- Health reasons which preclude his/her playing outdoors

We promise transparency in sharing information regarding communicable illnesses within the classroom. You will be kept informed while complying with HIPAA laws.

Please notify the school immediately if your child has been exposed to or has contracted a contagious disease.

State law requires that we send home any child exhibiting signs of illness. The JCC does not have on-site nursing capacity and therefore your prompt arrival is greatly appreciated. Please remember that these guidelines are meant to protect the health of all the children and staff at the preschool. A note from your child's physician stating that they are able to attend school does not mean that they do not pose a risk to classmates or staff and does not merit immediate readmission to school. It is up to the discretion of the school to determine whether your child has met the criteria after an illness to return to school.



Biting

Biting is a normal part of development and is a common behavior among young children. It is typical for young children to communicate with their bodies quickly and spontaneously. Reasons for biting may include exploration, frustration, excitement, teething, health problems and limited language skills. Biting is not necessarily an indication of aggression toward another person. When biting occurs, the teacher will show concern for the bitten child and provide immediate comfort and care. Both children are treated with dignity and respect. After a biting incident, it is our policy to contact parents of both children to inform them of what happened. To respect the confidentiality of all parties, we will not share with parents the identity of the other child who was involved. If a child develops a pattern of biting, our staff will work closely to identify triggers and will meet with the parents to address the behavior. Oftentimes this requires implementing accommodations and teaching the child more effective strategies to deal with the emotions and situations they are experiencing.

Child Abuse Policy

Children are to be treated with respect and dignity at all times. Striking or rough handling is never permitted. We are required by law to report suspected child abuse to Child Protective Services. We report any suspicious marks, complaints, or actions to the Director and a report will be made to CPS.

Emergency Information

It is imperative that emergency contact information is updated as soon as changes occur. This includes new address, phone information, and/or email address. Should an emergency occur while the children are at school, we will follow the JCC's emergency procedures.

Medication and Allergies

If your child requires special medication during school hours, the school must have written, dated, and signed instructions and forms from your child's physician and signed by the parent. Medication must be handed directly to Preschool faculty. Do not send medications in lunch boxes.

In order to assure that the staff is properly trained in administering emergency treatment to children with severe allergies, a complete packet of information must be completed by the parent, physician, and teacher after being trained, prior to the start of school. Please notify us in writing of all allergies. As per licensing requirements, you must provide a prescription for an Epipen.

When appropriate, we will ask parents to provide all food, snacks, and special treats in order to assure that your child's specific needs are addressed.



ENROLLMENT

Admissions Policy

Priority for registration is given to current preschool families, JCC members and families enrolled in Shalom Baby. Registration is confirmed with a non-refundable application fee. Children attending Nierman Preschool must be between the ages of 18 months and 5 years of age. No child will be denied admission because of race, religion, or national origin.

Admissions Forms

- It is the parent's responsibility to furnish the following completed forms to the Preschool Office prior to the first day of class. These forms are required by the California State Department of Social Services and the San Diego County Department of Health.
- Identification and Emergency Information
- Consent for Medical Treatment
- Physician's Report (signed by your child's physician)
- Acknowledgement of Parent's Rights Notification
- Pre-Admission Health History
- Personal Rights
- Physician's Recommendation for Medication (if needed)
- Copy of Immunizations: Medical Exemptions must be authorized by your child's MD

Required Information includes

- Family Information Sheet (FISH form)
- Sunscreen/Diaper Cream/Wound and Burn Care application Waiver
- Treatment package for children who must take medication including original prescriptions on an ongoing basis or for children with severe allergies
- Nierman Preschool Policies and Waivers
- Family Information Sheet (FISH)

Refund Policy

Nierman Preschool does not provide refunds or make-ups for absences including vacations, extended travel or illnesses.

Cancellation Policy

The JCC cancellation policy states that you must inform us at least 30 days before your child's last day. The sooner you let us know is optimal, but 30 days is required. You are responsible to pay 30 days after the last date of attendance of your child.



A BEGINNER'S GLOSSARY OF JEWISH WORDS

Nierman Preschool offers an enriched curriculum, imbued with Judaica. Many of the words, phrases, and rituals are expressed in the Hebrew language. Here is a beginner's list of some holiday vocabulary your child and you might encounter. There's no test at the end of the year – just enjoy learning!

The Sheva (Seven) Jewish Lens that serve as foundational guides to ethical living, working and learning within our school and our Nierman community:

1. Masa: Journey; reflection, return and renewal.
2. B'rit: Covenant; belonging and commitment.
3. Tzelem Elohim: Divine Image; dignity and potential.
4. K'dushah: Holiness; intentionality and presence.
5. Hit'orerut: Awakening; amazement and gratitude.
6. D'rash: Interpretation; inquiry, dialogue and transmission.
7. Tikkun Olam: Repair of the World; responsibility.

Shabbat

Sabbath: which begins at sundown on Friday night and ends Saturday evening.

Challah: A braided loaf of white bread. (On Rosh Hashanah it is baked in a circular shape).

Hamotzi: The blessing over bread or any meal in which bread is eaten.

Havdalah: A ritual which marks the end of Shabbat.

Kiddush: Prayer at the beginning of the Sabbath & Jewish holy days which is recited or chanted over wine.

Rosh Hashannah and Yom Kippur -The High Holy Days

Rosh Hashannah: Jewish New Year. Literally, "head of the year."

Yom Kippur: Day of Atonement. Day of fasting, prayer, and reflection.

Kol Nidre: Prayer which ushers in Yom Kippur. It is sung by the cantor. During this solemn prayer, the Torah scrolls are removed from the ark and held before the congregation.

L'Shana Tovah Tikatevu: "May you be inscribed for a good year." Sometimes shortened to "Shana Tovah" or, in Yiddish, "A Gut Yohr."

Machzor: Prayer book used for Rosh Hashannah and Yom Kippur services

Selicot: Communal prayers said at night, the Saturday night preceding Rosh Hashannah.

Shofar: Ram's horn blown on Rosh Hashannah and Yom Kippur

Teshuvah: Hebrew word for repentance. The days between Rosh Hashannah and Yom Kippur are called the ten days of teshuvah.

Sukkot

Festival of Booths celebrated for seven days marking the time of the Fall harvest.

Etrog Fragrant fruit: The lulav and Etrog are the major symbols of Sukkot

Lulav: Palm branch with a holder containing myrtle and willow sprigs over which a blessing is recited and which is shaken.

Sukkah: Hebrew word for booth – a temporary structure built for this holiday to remind us of the flimsy structures in which the Israelites lived for 40 years in the desert.



Hanukkah

Festival of Rededication which commemorates the victory of the Maccabees over the Syrians in 167 B.C.E. and the dedication of the Temple in Jerusalem. This post-biblical holiday lasts for eight days.

Hanukkah Gelt: Gifts of money sometimes given to children on Hanukkah. We also know it as chocolate coins.

Hanukkiyah: Candelabrum with one arm for each night – eight lights - of Hanukkah plus one extra light, the shamash, from which the other lights are lit.

Sevivon: A four sided top with the Hebrew letters Nun, Gimel, Hay and Shin on each side. Used for a special Hanukkah game. Also referred to as dreidel in Yiddish.

Latkes: Potato pancakes traditionally eaten on Hanukkah. Delicious with applesauce or sour cream!

Purim

Celebration of Mordechai's and Queen Esther's victory over wicked Haman told in the Book of Esther.

Grogger: Noisemaker used to drown out the name of Haman each time it is read in the Megillah

Hamantashen: Triangular pockets of dough filled with poppy seeds, stewed dried fruits, or jam.

Megillah Usually refers to the book of Esther which is read in the Synagogue on Purim.

Pesach/Passover

Spring Festival celebrating the Israelite's Exodus from Egypt observed for eight days.

Afikoman: A piece of matzah which is hidden, at the beginning of the Seder, to be found by the children. Once found, it is distributed to all to signal the conclusion of the seder.

Chametz: Food which is not permissible on Passover because it contains leavening or certain leavened grains.

Haggadah: The book containing the narrative of Israel's slavery in Egypt and the deliverance from bondage to freedom. It is read aloud at the Passover Seder.

Matzah: Unleavened bread. It comes in flat, thin, perforated sheets. It is a reminder of the bread which the Israelites ate when they hurriedly left Egypt.

Seder: The festive meal which ushers in the festival of Passover during which the story of the Exodus from Egypt is dramatically retold; special symbols are displayed and songs sung.

General Terms

Kosher: Refers to something which is fit to eat, according to the Jewish dietary laws. Food which is not kosher is called "treif."

Mezuzah: A small container which is affixed, at a slant, to the right side of the front door of a Jewish home. Inside the mezuzah is a parchment in which printed are verses from Deuteronomy 6: and 11: 13-21, 4-9

Eretz Yisrael: The land of Israel

Mazal Tov: Literally "good luck," often used meaning "congratulations."

Greetings

Yom Tov: General holiday greeting meaning, "good holiday."

Shabbat Shalom: Peaceful Sabbath.

Boker Tov: Good morning

Erev Tov: Good evening.

Laila Tov: Good night.

Shalom: Hello, Goodbye, Peace.





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