



Member Handbook

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Member Requirements and Expectations

DICE is a community of families that value education at home. Our purpose is to provide support, opportunities, events and community to families who are interested in homeschooling, are currently homeschooling, or have previously homeschooled and want to continue to be a part of our community.

DICE is a welcoming and inclusive community for everyone regardless of educational philosophies & styles, religious or political preferences, ethnicity & race, marital status & family structure, physical development & mental health challenges, gender identity & expression, or sexual orientation. We will not tolerate shaming, name-calling, hate speech, harassment, bullying, or violence. We recognize that children are still learning to navigate social interactions. We ask that adults help intervene when needed while redirecting toward appropriate ways to deal with conflict and collectively working toward a solution. In addition, we also encourage you to have discussions with your children about boundaries and consent.

Please be respectful of other people, the environment/space we are in, and any equipment or supplies. Please leave everything in the same or better condition than when you found it. DICE is financially liable for any damage to the facilities we use. Any member, parent or a member who is a minor, who damages facilities will be expected to reimburse DICE for any financial liabilities incurred due to the damage.

These policies and guidelines are set to minimize and prevent conflict inside our community and outside of our community as we work with field trips and event hosts. Conflicts will inevitably arise and these guidelines help all of us to work through them.

Safety and Security Policy

The safety of everyone attending is always a priority. As such, the following protocols are in place:

- 1. Every child must have a parent or other designated adult on the premises that is responsible for them at all times for any activity, class, field trip, or other event.**
2. All participating adult Teachers, Teaching Assistants, Hall Monitors, and Board members must complete and pass a background check performed by the DICE board. Background checks will be conducted every year. Any findings on a background check will be at the Board's discretion to determine if the adult is able to teach or volunteer within DICE.
3. All participating adult Teachers, Teaching Assistants, Hall Monitors, and Board members must read and agree to DICE's Child Protection Policy by signing an acknowledgment form every year.
- 4. Illicit or controlled substances, alcohol, smoking, vaping and weapons of any kind, real or fake (guns, knives, pocket knives, etc.), are prohibited at all DICE student events.**

- If someone brings any item of the previous description, they will be directed to leave and remove the item from their possession. This may also result in the removal from DICE pending a majority vote of the Board.

For more information on safety and security, **all** members are strongly encouraged to read DICE's Child Protection Policy. You may also contact the Director of Safety (listed below) or any Board member.

Meenakshi Simmons
DICE Director of Safety
517-489-9059
msimmons@dicemichigan.org

Class Day Policy

Each parent/guardian/caregiver is responsible for helping their children learn and follow the rules and expectations.

Classroom Behavior Expectations

Behavior expectations in class will vary based on the class location, content, style, and Teacher. We do our best to include information in the class descriptions that will help you decide if a class is a good fit for your child. If you have any questions or concerns about this, please contact the Teacher directly prior to registering.

We recommend Teachers set clear expectations on the first day of class. With classes being mixed ages and abilities, class management can sometimes be challenging. Teaching Assistants are expected to redirect students to minimize disruptions for the Teacher. We rely on parents to be responsible for their children's actions and behavior by being present when needed. **Parents will be contacted if a behavior problem arises, and if the problem persists the parent or designated adult will be asked to attend class with their child.** If the parent is teaching during that hour, the child will be brought to the class the parent is teaching to remain with them for the duration of the class time.

If a parent/designated adult is not cooperative in being responsible for their child's actions and behavior, it will jeopardize their participation in DICE, and the Board reserves the right to deny participation to any student or family. For more information on member removal, please refer to the Conflict Resolution Policy.

Follow the rules of our space at East Olive Community Center

1. Please remember we are guests in the facility. Our goal is to leave the building in as good or better condition than we found it. Any member, or parent of a member who is a minor, who damages any facilities will be expected to reimburse DICE for anything financial liabilities incurred due to damage.
2. Use indoor voices.
3. No running or roughhousing inside the building.
4. Do not disrupt activities. Be respectful by listening, participating, and waiting your turn to the best of your ability.

5. All children 8 years and under must be supervised by their parent, designated adult or Teacher at all times. To keep everyone safe while attending a class, your child must remain in the classroom space with the Teacher until class time is over and will not be dismissed until a designated adult is present.
6. Students not enrolled in classes at any given time are not allowed in the classrooms or gym and must remain in the community areas with a designated adult.
7. Children are only permitted in designated DICE areas and classrooms. This boundary is to help keep everyone safe and accounted for while respecting East Olive's space.
8. Students may not be in the parking lot or cars except for arrival and dismissal unless with a designated adult.
9. Lunch will be held in room 110.
10. DICE has a no weapons policy. Out of respect, please bring non-violent toys. More specifically, please do not bring toy guns, swords, knives, sling shots, and other toys that are used to shoot, stab, hit, or poke people.
11. DICE asks that no peanut or tree nut products be brought to East Olive in order to reduce the chance of allergic reactions. There is no way we can prevent exposures, but we do our best to limit them on behalf of vulnerable members.
12. Adults are only allowed to smoke/vape **within their personal vehicles** while on the property of East Olive Community Center. Cigarette butts and other waste from tobacco use must also stay confined to personal vehicles: **cigarette butts, etc. are NOT allowed to be disposed of on the ground of the property or in trash cans.** Use of drugs, including marijuana, are not allowed on East Olive property.

We encourage all families to teach classes/volunteer. We are primarily family-led, and each family has unique skills and abilities to share.

If your child's class has a materials fee, please be sure to provide payment the first day of class, for each class.

Emergency Procedures for Class Day

"If you see something, say something." Members who notice something odd or frightening should immediately tell a Teacher or a Board member.

Class Registration Process

Due to the need for children to be in class during times that their parent or designated adult is teaching or volunteering, registration will happen on a tiered basis and in the following order:

- Teachers
- Volunteers (Hall Monitors, Teaching Assistants, etc)
- Everyone else

Teachers who teach one class will receive priority registration for the whole day. Teaching Assistants who volunteer one or two hours will be able to early register for the hours in which they are volunteering. Teaching assistants and Hall Monitors who volunteer for three or more hours during the day will be able to register for the whole day during their early registration time (this can be a combination of the two roles to fulfill the three hours).

Refunds

Our family membership fee is non-refundable. Please remember when deciding to withdraw from a class, there is a high chance there are other participants on the waitlist and the sooner someone withdraws, the more opportunity we have to open that spot to someone else. Participants may withdraw from a class or make changes to their enrollment up to the class start date. A credit will remain on the account to be used toward a future enrollment. If the participant opts to not receive a credit and would like a refund in the original form of payment, the following terms apply:

- If a refund is requested prior to class start date, 100% of the class fee will be refunded minus a \$5.00 service charge.
- If a refund is requested after the class start date, but before the 2nd week of class, 75% of the class fee will be refunded minus a \$5.00 service charge.
- Withdrawals made on or after the date of the 2nd class are non-refundable nor will they qualify for any form of credit.

Missing Child Policy

Purpose

Parent, guardians or care-givers are required to remain on-site at all times, and to supervise and monitor their child or youth at lunch hour, between class times, and any time a child is not attending a registered class. This section refers to instances when a child goes missing from a classroom while under the supervision of the teacher and teaching assistant of said class and outlines the procedures followed in the case of a missing child on the premises of DICE weekly classes. Currently these classes are located at:

East Olive Community Center
2583 Green Road
St. Johns, Michigan 48879

Age Policy

It is the policy of DICE that any child who is age eight (8) or younger cannot enter or leave a classroom in which they are a registered participant without their designated caregiver's presence in dropping them off or picking them up from that classroom. If a child is nine (9) or older, they must have written permission from their parent or guardian to leave a classroom without their caregiver at the end of a class period. If a child is nine (9) or older, but the teacher has concerns regarding this child being outside of the classroom without an adult, this will be discussed further with the caregiver and solutions sought on a case-by-case basis.

Procedures

When the teacher of a class recognizes that a child is missing from their classroom, they or another available adult will:

1. Conduct an immediate search of the classroom, hallway and nearby areas to locate the child.
 - Another adult must be designated to stay in the classroom while searching.
2. If the child is not found within 10 minutes, the child's caregiver will be contacted using the phone number provided on the class registration document or other

phone number provided by the caregiver, to determine if the child is with their caregiver.

3. If the child is not with their caregiver, the teacher will then contact the Director of Safety. (If the Safety Director is absent or unavailable, another Board member should be contacted immediately.)
4. The teacher will provide the following information about the child:
 - name and age
 - physical description, including clothing items, hair color and approximate size
 - area last seen
 - relevant behavioral information (example: non-verbal)
5. A Board member will then direct available adults to perform a more extensive search of the area, dividing into different building and outdoor sections:
 - lunch room and adjoining hallway
 - gym and front entrance
 - front classroom hallway and adjoining classrooms
 - back classroom hallway, adjoining classrooms (if applicable) and library
 - front exterior of building and parking lot
 - exterior sides of building
 - playground and rear exterior of building
6. A Board member may also send out a message or alert via email, text message or other communication systems notifying the larger group of DICE participants of the situation and child's information.
7. If the child is not found on the premises within 15 minutes of larger search efforts, the President, Vice President or Safety Director will contact local law enforcement.

If the child is found safe and unharmed by the teacher within the first 10 minutes, the parents will be notified as soon as reasonable, but within 24 hours of the child leaving the classroom unattended. Risk mitigation strategies including having the parent remain outside the classroom during class will be discussed on a case-by-case basis.

If the child is found safe and unharmed by the larger group search effort after parent and group notifications have been deployed, an "all clear" notification will be sent out to the group as soon as possible, the teacher will arrange to discuss with the situation and risk mitigation strategies for future classes with the caregiver, and a debriefing will occur at the next scheduled board meeting, with the Teacher, child's parents and President or Vice President and Safety Director in attendance.

If the child is found safe and unharmed by law enforcement, a Board meeting will be called as soon as possible with the child's caregivers, Teacher(s), President or Vice President and Safety Director in attendance for debriefing and discussion of risk mitigation strategies, and an individual will be designated to discuss with law enforcement any paperwork, legalities or other measures needed.

Field Trip Policy

Follow the rules of the field trip location:

1. A parent or designated adult must accompany every child.

2. Treat the location and staff respectfully and keep/leave the site in as good or better condition as you found it.
3. Do not disrupt the field trip. Be respectful by listening to, participating, and waiting your turn to the best of your ability. Parent or designated adult, please remove yourselves from the field trip group if a child is continually disruptive.

Refunds

Field trip fees are non-refundable.

Waitlist

If needed, a waitlist will be started for the trip. If a member drops out, the Field Trip Coordinator or Events Director will connect the member with the next person on the waitlist. It is the responsibility of the two members to exchange any money for the trip.

Transportation

All members are to provide their own transportation to the field trips. If your child is being transported by someone other than the child's parent, DICE is not responsible or liable for incidents that occur during transportation to the field trip.

Park Day Policy

Follow the rules of the park and:

1. All children must be supervised by their parent/guardian/caregiver.
2. Treat the location respectfully and keep/leave the site in as good or better condition as you found it.
3. Be respectful of the playground equipment.

Sick Policy

Please do not attend events if anyone in your household has had symptoms such as fever, vomiting, or diarrhea in the last 24 hours, is positive for COVID-19, flu, or strep, or is generally unwell. We expect our families to be proactive and conscientious in keeping our group well and functioning.

Symptoms or Testing Positive for Any Infectious Disease

If you have tested positive (even without symptoms) for any contagious illness, please do not attend classes or events until you are no longer experiencing symptoms. As with any activity in public, there is an inherent risk of contracting any circulating contagious illness while at our events.

Anti-Harassment and Anti-Bullying Policy

DICE is committed to providing all members with a safe and supportive environment. Members are expected to treat each other respectfully and demonstrate by example that all community members are entitled to respect. Harassment or bullying of any adult or child member violates this policy and will not be tolerated.

Examples of harassment/bullying by any person, adult or child, may include, but are not limited to:

1. Verbal Bullying
 - Direct Bullying: taunting, teasing, name-calling, put downs, racial remarks, threats
 - Indirect Bullying: spreading rumors, gossiping
2. Physical Bullying
 - Direct Bullying: hitting, kicking, tripping, punching, using any violence and any unwanted physical contact, theft of property, or taking anything that does not belong to you without permission
 - Indirect Bullying: enlisting a friend to assault someone
3. Nonverbal/Non-physical Bulling
 - Direct Bullying: threatening or obscene gestures
 - Indirect Bullying: being deliberately unkind, excluding others from a group, manipulating friendships, threatening email, setting someone up to be humiliated
4. Cyberbullying
 - Direct Bulling: cyberbullying occurs through technology, including using any electronic devices using social networks, text messaging, Discord, instant messaging, websites, email, or other electronic means. A person participates in direct cyberbullying if they directly carry out the behavior.
 - Indirect Bullying: indirect cyber bullying is carried out by those who assist, encourage or fault report the bullying behavior in any way. Often, the virtual bystanders are responsible for the repeated humiliation felt by victims.

Any person who believes they have been subject to harassment, bullying (including verbal, physical, nonverbal/non-physical, and cyber) or a hostile environment or has observed this conduct based on one or more of the characteristics noted above — whether such harassment, bullying or hostile environment is created by a fellow student, Teacher, or parent/guardian/caregiver — is encouraged to report the conduct to the DICE board. If a person is found to have engaged in bullying , harassment , or other acts that create a hostile environment, the person may be subject to discipline, including but not limited to removal from the organization.

Conflict Resolution Policy

Purpose

Problems, misunderstandings and frustrations may arise within our community. It is Diverse and Inclusive Collaborative Education's intent to be responsive to community members and their concerns. Therefore, a community member who is confronted with a problem may use the tips and procedures described below to resolve or clarify their concerns.

The purpose of this policy is to provide a quick, effective and consistent process for community members to resolve conflicts.

Tips on Managing Conflict as an Individual

Helpful Definition: "Conflict arises from differences. It occurs whenever people disagree over their values, motivations, perceptions, ideas or desires. Sometimes these differences look trivial, but when a conflict triggers strong feelings, a deep personal and relational need is at

the core of the problem — a need to feel safe and secure, a need to feel respected and valued, or a need for greater closeness and intimacy.” (“Conflict Resolution Skills”, 2009)

1. Deal with conflicts when they are small and more easily managed.
2. Express your need to the individual and/or group of individuals.
3. Review the following questions depending on the complexity of your conflict.
 - Why is there a conflict in the first place? Write it down or discuss it with someone.
 - Are you able to see the other person’s point of view?
 - What’s really important?
 - What are your priorities?
4. Try to keep conversations professional and emotions to a minimum.
 - Negative feedback should always be to help someone to improve and never to tear them down. Be kind.
5. Can the need be met?
 - If so, the conflict is resolved.
 - If not, suggest a compromise. Focus on a win-win resolution or can we agree to disagree?
 - Still no resolution? Ask a Board Member or Group Leader for assistance. If there is still no resolution, refer to the Formal Complaint procedure below.

For more on “Conflict Resolution Skills” document written by Edmonds College, refer to <https://www.edmonds.edu/counseling/documents/Conflict.pdf>

Procedures to File a Complaint with the Board of Directors

1. Submit a complaint in writing by mail or email to the current Board President or Vice President. Please include in the complaint:
 - The problem and the date when the incident occurred.
 - The names of all parties involved in the conflict.
 - Suggestions on ways to resolve the problem.
 - Any prior written correspondence regarding the complaint that you wish to share.

To submit a complaint by mail, send to:

Diverse and Inclusive Collaborative Education
P.O. Box 516
Laingsburg, MI 48848

To submit a complaint by email, send to:

Abby Foster
President
afoster@dicemichigan.org

- or -

Beth Holtz
Vice President
bholtz@dicemichigan.org

The President and Vice President will decide the urgency of the complaint and address it using any of the 3 options below:

- Assist directly with the complaint, if appropriate, to try to find a resolution.
- Call a special meeting with the Board to discuss the complaint and appropriate action to resolve.
- Add the complaint to the next Board Meeting agenda to be discussed at that time.

2. The Board of Directors will accept written statements and/or meet with all parties to hear all relevant concerns pertaining to the complaint. No action shall be taken without a good faith effort being made by the Board of Directors to include all parties by contacting them by email, phone, or mail and allowing 10 days for a response.
3. A meeting between the Board of Directors will take place to discuss ways to mediate, suggest alternative resolutions, or take appropriate actions if necessary. Any actions taken will be by majority vote of the Board.

Board of Directors Contact Information

Abby Foster
President
afoster@dicemichigan.org

Beth Holtz
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