



# **By-Laws**

**First Light Early Learning Center  
446 Camden Ave.  
Moorestown, NJ 08057**

**856-235-6100**

**Approved April 8, 2008**

# **BYLAWS OF FIRST LIGHT EARLY LEARNING CENTER**

(Revised 3/3/2008)

## **ARTICLE I Name and Address**

The name of the school is First Light Early Learning Center. The mailing address of the school is First Light Early Learning Center, 446 Camden Ave., Moorestown, NJ 08057.

## **ARTICLE II Mission Statement and Philosophy**

### **Section 1. Mission Statement**

As a ministry of First United Methodist Church of Moorestown, First Light Early Learning center will offer a developmentally appropriate, stimulating and nurturing environment that fosters Christian faith and discipleship.

### **Section 2. Program Philosophy**

First Light Early Learning Center offers an environment that fosters Christian faith and discipleship. We believe meaningful learning involves active, firsthand experiences and participation. Therefore, we provide for each child an educational experience designed to help him/her grow intellectually, socially, spiritually, emotionally and physically. We maintain a program that is child centered and experience based. We believe play is a young child's work and natural way of learning. We believe that young children need to experience that they are loved, valued and enjoyed.

## **ARTICLE III Articles of Organization**

### **Section 1. Bylaws**

The school is a nonprofit organization organized under the laws of the State of New Jersey, operating under the same tax ID number as First United Methodist Church of Moorestown. Bylaws as from time to time amended form the "articles of organization" adopted for the regulation and management of its affairs.

### **Section 2. Policy and Procedure Manual**

Guidelines for the day to day operation of the school shall be incorporated into the *First Light Policy and Procedure Manual*. The Director of the school and the members of the Board of Trustees will annually review and update the handbook, publish it, and distribute it to all staff and Board members.

**ARTICLE IV**  
**Board of Trustees**

**Section 1. Management by the Board of Trustees**

The affairs of the school shall be managed by a Board of Trustees. The decisions of the Board of Trustees constitute the final authority on all school matters, including but not limited to, matters regarding the operation, personnel and finance of the school.

**Section 2. Authority of the Board of Trustees**

The Board of Trustees is granted the authority to take actions necessary to effectively and efficiently operate the school.

**Section 3. Composition of the Board of Trustees**

The Board of Trustees shall consist of a minimum of fourteen Trustees (11 church representatives and 3 parents), the Director of the school, the teachers, and the Financial Secretary/Registrar. The Director of Christian Education of First United Methodist Church shall be a non-voting liaison to the Board of Trustees.

**Section 4. Election of the Board of Trustees**

The Trustees shall be elected by the members of the First United Methodist Church Council in the spring of each year.)

- A. In March, the Director of the school shall request volunteers from the church congregation and the parents to serve on the Board of Trustees for the next school year.
- B. After volunteers come forward, the Director of the school and the Chairperson of the Board of Trustees, along with a non-board member appointed by the Chairperson, shall form a slate to be presented to the members of the Board of Trustees at their May meeting. A vote shall be taken to get approval of the slate;
- C. After approval of the slate by the Board of Trustees, the slate shall be submitted to the Church Council, who shall vote on final approval of the slate.

**Section 5. Voting**

All elected members of the Board of Trustees, the Director of the school, the teachers and the Financial Secretary/Registrar shall be voting members of the Board of Trustees. The Director of the school, the teachers and the Financial Secretary/Registrar, however, are excluded from participating in any discussion or vote on the following areas: salaries, benefits and personnel matters.

**Section 6. Eligibility**

Parents in good standing with children enrolled in the school and individuals appointed in accordance with Section 9 of the Article are eligible to serve on the Board of Trustees.

**Section 7. Term of Office**

The members of the Board of Trustees shall serve a one-year term, from September 1<sup>st</sup> to August 31<sup>st</sup>.

**Section 8. Term Limitation**

All non-employee representatives to the Board of Trustees may serve a maximum of three consecutive years on the Board of Trustees. However, no Trustee may hold the same position for more than two consecutive years. Following three consecutive years of service, a one year leave of absence is required in order to renew eligibility for participation on the Board of Trustees. Any person serving in an appointed position for six months or longer shall be deemed to have served a full year. Any person serving an appointed position for less than six months shall not have that period of service counted in

determining eligibility to run for a Board position. Term limitations may be relaxed by a vote of the membership.

**Section 9. Vacancies on the Board of Trustees**

The Board of Trustees has the authority to fill any unfilled or vacated Board positions by appointment. Individuals appointed by the Board of Trustees shall serve only for the unexpired term. In filling Board positions, the Board of Trustees must first solicit qualified individuals from the church congregation and the parents in good standing. If no qualified member is willing to serve, the Board of Trustees may appoint from outside those sources.

**Section 10. Advisory Trustees**

The Board of Trustees, when it appears that the operation and management of the school would benefit by such action, may appoint individuals to serve as nonvoting advisors to the Board. Advisory Trustees serve at the discretion of the Board of Trustees.

**Section 11. Meetings of the Board of Trustees**

Meetings of the Board of Trustees shall be held no less than 5 times a year and are open to the church congregation and parents. The date, time and location of these meetings shall be noted in the school calendar and the First United Methodist Church September Messenger and weekly bulletins. Any changes in the schedule of meetings shall be posted at the school in a prominent area.

**Section 12. Quorum**

The presence of two-thirds of the Trustees shall be necessary to constitute a quorum for the transaction of business. When a quorum is present, decisions shall be based on a majority vote.

**Section 13. Special Meetings**

Special meetings of the Board of Trustees may be called at any time by the Chairperson or upon written request of three Trustees. Special meetings shall be held upon not less than three days notice. Notice is to be given personally or by telephone to Board members by either the Chairperson or the Recording Secretary and a log confirming contact with each member is to be kept and filed with the minutes of the meeting. Notice is to specify the date, time and place of the meeting as well as the purpose or purposes for which the meeting is called. Notice shall also be posted at the school in advance of the meeting in a prominent area.

**Section 14. Action without Meeting**

The Board of Trustees may, if necessary, act without a meeting if, prior or subsequent to the action, each Trustee shall consent in writing to the action. The written consents shall be filed in the minute book along with a memorandum by the Chairperson or Secretary regarding the action taken.

**Section 15. Work Sessions**

The Board of Trustees may hold informal closed work sessions. The Board of Trustees may not take final action on any matter at a work session. Board votes must be taken at scheduled meetings open to the membership.

**Section 16. Chairperson of the Board of Trustees**

Each year the Board of Trustees shall elect a Chairperson who shall:

- A. Preside at meetings of the Board of Trustees and prepare an agenda with the Director of the school in advance of scheduled meetings;
- B. Oversee the projects and committees of the Board of Trustees;
- C. Serve as chief liaison to the Director of the school;
- D. Fulfill any additional responsibilities assigned by these Bylaws.

- E. Call Executive Sessions of Officer Trustees as needed. Final action on any matter may not be taken at an Executive Session. Votes must be taken at scheduled Board of Trustee meetings open to the membership.

**Section 17. Officer Trustees**

The additional duties of Trustees serving as Officers are detailed in Article IV of these Bylaws.

**Section 18. Committees of the Board**

The Board of Trustees has the authority to appoint committees to assist in accomplishing the objectives of the school. When forming committees, the Board of Trustees must specify in writing the purpose for which the committee is being formed, define the authority being given to the committee and, with the exception of the finance committee, appoint a Trustee to serve as Chairperson. The Chairperson of the Board of Trustees shall seek volunteers from the church congregation and the parents to serve on established committees.

**A. Personnel Committee** – If a personnel need arises, the Personnel Committee made up of the Chairperson of the Board of Trustees, the Personnel Chairperson, the Director of the School and 2 Board members shall:

1. Recruit candidates for employment and make recommendations to the Board of Trustees following committee review of each candidate’s credentials, experience and references, personal interview and observation of a teacher candidate in a trial teaching exercise;
2. If needed, call special meetings of the Board of Trustees to address any problems, concerns, questions or other matters related to the employment process.
3. All personnel matters will be discussed in executive session.

**B. Finance Committee** – The Finance Committee made up of the Treasurer, the Finance Chairperson, the Financial Secretary, the Board Chairperson and the Director of the school shall:

1. Review the proposed annual budget prepared by the Finance Chairperson;
2. Present the proposed annual budget to the Board of Trustees;
3. Review finance policies and procedures and make recommendations to the Board of Trustees;
4. Advise the Board of Trustees regarding any other financial matters of the school.

**Section 19. Removal from the Board of Trustees**

Any Trustee may be removed from the Board of Trustees pending a membership vote.

**Section 20. Resignation**

Any Trustee may resign by filing a written notice with the Chairperson of the Board of Trustees.

**ARTICLE V  
Officer Trustees**

**Section 1. Officer Trustees**

In addition to eight Representative Trustees, one of which shall be the Chairperson of the Board of Trustees chosen by the members of the Board, the Board of Trustees shall consist of the following four Officer Trustees:

- A. Treasurer
- B. Finance Chairperson
- C. Recording Secretary
- D. Personnel Chairperson

If needed, two people may share in the responsibility of an office.

**Section 2. Duties and Authority of Officer Trustees**

The additional duties of the Officer Trustees shall be determined from time to time by the Board of Trustees. Subject to any such determination, the Officer Trustees shall have duties as follows:

- A. Treasurer** - The Treasurer, along with the Director of the school, shall oversee the funds of the school, including the timely payment of the financial obligations of the school, and shall attend to matters relating to taxes, insurance and other financial business. The Treasurer shall prepare a financial report to be presented at each meeting of the Board of Trustees. These reports shall be incorporated as part of the minutes of the meeting. Additionally, the Treasurer shall serve as a member of the Preschool Finance Committee. Quarterly financial reports will be given to the Church Council.
- B. Finance Chairperson** – The Finance Chairperson shall oversee the operation of the Finance Committee and work closely with the Treasurer, Board Chairperson and Director of the school to ensure that the finances of the school are managed effectively and efficiently. The Finance Chairperson, along with the Treasurer, the Director, the Board Chairperson and the Financial Secretary, shall prepare an annual budget to present to the Board of Trustees at the Spring meeting.
- C. Recording Secretary** – The Recording Secretary shall keep the minutes of all Board of Trustees meetings, submit typed copies of the prior meeting minutes to the members of the Board of Trustees for approval and perform other duties incident to the office of secretary as may be assigned by these Bylaws or by the Board of Trustees.
- D. Personnel Chairperson** – The Personnel Chairperson shall oversee the operation of the Personnel Committee and work closely with the Board Chairperson and the Director of the School to address any problems, concerns, questions or other matters related to the employment process.

**ARTICLE VI  
Compensation**

Neither Trustees nor officers shall receive any fee, salary, or remuneration of any kind for their services as Trustees and/or officers, provided however, that Trustees and officers may be reimbursed for reasonable expenses incurred with the prior approval of the Board of Trustees. Vouchers and receipts must be submitted to receive reimbursement.

**ARTICLE VII  
Paid Staff**

**Section 1. Qualifications**

**A. Director of the School:**

- 1. Must hold either: a Masters Degree in any field related to children or business or a Bachelors Degree and one year of managerial or supervisory experience.
- 2. Must meet all licensing requirements of the State of New Jersey to be employed.

**B. Teacher:**

- 1. Must hold a minimum of a Bachelor’s Degree and a teaching certificate.
- 2. At least 1 year recent preschool or elementary teaching experience preferred.

**C. Teacher’s Aide:**

- 1. High school degree required; college degree preferred.
- 2. Previous preschool teaching experience preferred.
- 3. Completion of at least one Early Childhood Education course preferred

**D. Financial Secretary/Registrar:**

1. Must hold at least a high school degree.
2. Must be familiar with Microsoft Word and Excel.

**ARTICLE VIII  
Distribution of Assets on Dissolution**

On dissolution, after payment of all debts, no part of the remaining assets may be distributed to any trustee or officer of the school. Any remaining assets shall be distributed to First United Methodist Church of Moorestown.

**ARTICLE IX  
Amendment of the Bylaws**

These Bylaws may be altered, amended or repealed by a vote of the Board of Trustees. Written notice of any Bylaw change to be voted on by the Board of Trustees shall be given not less than ten days prior to the meeting at which the change shall be proposed. Bylaw changes approved by the Board of Trustees become effective immediately.

As amended March 2008