

Shirley G. Moore Laboratory School

Fall Newsletter - October/November 2020



Hello!

Fall is in full bloom and the Lab School children and teachers (and the turkeys) are immersed in this place we call home. We have had so many warm fall days, but cooler temperatures have arrived. There is some information below on outerwear for the season. We are also working on preparing our indoor spaces following best practices for COVID prevention as the cold weather approaches. We are planning on adding air filtration to the indoor spaces so that they can occasionally be used in case of inclement weather as we approach winter. As we are navigating through this semester, due to the cold weather, we will be making necessary changes to the check-in process that were discussed at the PALS meeting.

- 1) Instead of asking children to take their mittens off to wash hands outside, we'll be spraying children's mittens with our sanitizing spray when they arrive at school. We'll continue to have the sinks on the playground for times when mittens come off and hand washing makes sense.
- 2) Please check your child's temperature at home, before arriving at school. The outdoor thermometers don't work under 50 degrees. We'll include a question about your child's temp that day when we ask you about COVID symptoms at check-in. As a reminder, children should stay home if their temperature is 100 degrees or more.

The office phones are working, so please call us at 612-624-9543 if you have an emergency, will be late picking up, or if your child will be absent.

We are also working on some winter-friendly snacks. Please feel free to add your ideas [here](#).

School Calendar

The Lab School will continue operating this semester through Friday, December 18th. Classes will resume in January. See the [Lab School Calendar](#) for all the anticipated dates for this school year.

COVID Updates

Our FAQs continue to be updated as we stay on top of the newest guidance around safety. [Check it out here!](#)

This flow chart from the Minnesota Department of Health is a handy decision tool that can help you decide if your child is healthy enough to attend school. You can [find it here](#) as well as in our FAQs.

Gearing Up for Cooler Weather

Winter is coming! Please continue sending your child with a few extra layers of clothing, especially a windproof layer. Here is our recommended list of outerwear for the days between 20-40 degrees, additional recommendations for children that tend to be colder outdoors, snowy days, or for temperatures under 20 degrees are in *italics*:

- Warm hat that covers ears
- Fleece neck gaiter or balaclava
- 3 upper layers: for example: *thermal base layer*, t-shirt, sweater/sweatshirt, and waterproof *insulated* jacket
- *Waterproof insulated* mittens
- 2 lower layers: for example: *fleece insulated jeans and* rain pants, pants and snow pants or *thermal base layer*, leggings, and snowpants.
- Warmer socks (*wool* or synthetic- cotton is not recommended)
- *Winter boots* with insulation

If you have any questions about weather or gear, please contact Sheila at will0342@umn.edu. Thank you for all that you do in support of this level of engagement with learning and exploration!

Parent Education Event

Our annual **Transition to Kindergarten** meeting for parents will be held on **Thursday, November 5 from 8 - 9 p.m.** via Zoom. A guest panel will be there to discuss school choice, school readiness, and helping kids through the transition to Kindergarten, among other topics. This meeting is most relevant to parents who have children going to K next year, but all Lab School parents and caregivers are welcome. No RSVP required, login information will be emailed prior to the meeting.

Scholastic Book Club Time!

Every order gives you an opportunity to find great books for your child at an affordable price and allows the school to earn points towards school equipment and books for our school library. You can return your forms with a check or [order online](#) using the Class Activation Code H7MHT.

The PALS

Update from the 10/13/2020 Meeting:

All parents are encouraged to join the Parent Association of the Lab School (PALS). The purpose of PALS is to advise and assist in the functioning of programs and activities of the Shirley G. Moore Laboratory School.

PALS:

- serves as mutual support for staff and parents;
- stimulates communication between the parents and the staff;
- represents parent concerns from each classroom;
- advises on the establishment of priorities and the resource needs of the school; and
- supports the enriching social and educational experiences in the school to help all children develop their physical, mental, and social potentials.

Highlights from the meeting:

Updates on Integration Plan

Amy Simpson, ICD Chief of Staff, updated us on the status of the Lab School – Child Development Center (UMCDC) Unification.

We are in the unique situation of having a new Provost, Dean, Chief of Operations for CEHD, and a new Director of ICD, Kathleen Thomas, during this time of transitioning and planning.

More details are coming in November, they are currently trying to get all involved on the same page. Amy Simpson says that many ICD employees have expressed the sentiment that the “Lab School is the heart of the Institute.”

The unified program will be academically based (which means they will be teaching student teachers, which is what Lab School does, UMCDC provides the service of child care at this time), and Amy expects that all of the Lab School and CDC programming and experiences will be very similar to what we have now. **Enrollment at the Lab School for next year will proceed as normal for current families.** Construction on the new building has started and is on schedule for Lab School to move in the summer of 2021. They want parents and community to be involved in the new program.

More information on the Integration Plan can be found here:

[*Lab School - CDC Unification Parent Initiative Timeline*](#): history of everything that has happened during the unification process since Lab School parents got involved in the summer of 2019:

[*Unified Program Website*](#)- general info, but has not been updated since April:

[*Unification Building Project Website*](#) – info on building construction, is being updated regularly:

If you would like to be added to the Lab School Parent Google Group and get their Unification Newsletters, please contact Lab School parent Anna Salisbury at annasalisbury@comcast.net.

COVID Procedures Update

Present families expressed that they thought things were going well with the way Lab School was handling COVID procedures. The staff believes things are going well also.

The PALS (continued)

1. As cold weather approaches, some procedures will change. There are no thermometers that work outside below 50°, so the school will be asking parents to check temps at home and will be asked to share their results at check in.

Parents asked for it to be made clear how the temperature was expected to be taken (mouth/arm/rectal) and that it be taken the same way every time. For not attending school, the threshold is 100° degrees or more in the general Lab School guidelines (COVID guidelines say 100.4°). We discussed how to report the temps – via text or at drop off. The Lab School staff will discuss this at our next staff meeting and will communicate guidelines to families soon.

2. Hand washing procedures will also change- it makes no sense to make children take off their gloves, get their hands wet and then put their hands back in their unsanitized gloves. When it gets colder, staff will spray the children's gloves with sanitizer when they arrive.

3. Snack procedure will also change – in the spirit of MN, many snacks will be offered on a stick! This will prevent the children from having to remove their gloves/mittens while eating snack outside. Teachers will also offer warm drinks like cider and tea on cold days. Some snack ideas shared were sticky rice and ravioli.

If parents have suggestions for snacks on a stick, please contact Sheila (or see the link in the Welcome section above).

There will be campfires at school. Sheila just bought a wire mesh campfire set. They will cook some things over the fire like apples with cinnamon and other low sugar items that don't burn easily.

If we do go more indoors, can the school get air filters like HEPA 13?

Sheila has just talked to University construction about filters and they are trying to get something put in place in case we need to go inside. One parent is in construction and has access to three filters that would work for up to 1000 sq. ft. each. U of M should have many or we can rent something. The 1913 building currently does not have any built-in air filtration.

How have masks been going with the children?

Masks have mostly been a non-issue. 80% of the children are successfully wearing them all day. Often, the children remind each other about the masks!

The Oakiwear order has shipped and is expected to arrive Thursday 10-15-2020.

Calendar Updates

Lab School officially is planning on continuing with classes until December 18th!

Community-Building Ideas

PALS is asking for ideas for how we can connect as a community this year despite COVID-19 limitations. Contact Marie at list0019@umn.edu with any ideas.

Some of the ideas discussed at the meeting included class-specific activities like virtual field trips or sledding parties. The Lab School will put together a survey to send to parents to check in about comfort level and preferred options for community building activities and opportunities throughout the school year.

The agenda and more detailed notes from the first meeting can be found by [following this link](#).