From the Administrator’s Desk

By Jen Van Ryswyk
Faculty Coordinator: Kere Hughes-Belding

As the academic year has wound down, I wanted to take an opportunity to highlight the continuous education and professional development that our teachers participate in each year. As you all know we are fortunate to have teachers with Bachelor’s degrees (and in several cases Master’s degrees) and who are licensed to teach early childhood by the state of Iowa. Less known are the hours that are put in outside of the regular work day to advance their degrees and professional knowledge in the early childhood field.

During the last academic year, the nine Lab School teachers participated in over 462 hours of continuing education and professional development including topics such as the Project Approach, Program for Infants and Toddlers, VIRT, and master’s level coursework in early childhood education. Each of these trainings and classes directly benefit the care and education that children receive and each teacher is a role model for practicum students and other early childhood education professionals in the community and in Iowa.

The next time you get a chance, ask your teachers what professional development they are working on and what their goals are for the upcoming academic year.

Parent to Parent

By Kim Venteicher
Parent Coordinator

Severe Weather Season!

With the warmer weather of spring, we also get thunderstorms. Do you know how the Lab School practices for severe weather? Do you know where the designated shelters are at the Lab School? Do you have a severe weather plan at home?

The Lab School conducts monthly tornado drills on the first Wednesday of each month at 10am, in conjunction with the City of Ames siren testing. Additional practice drills will be held during the summer months. When the sirens sound, teachers help the children quickly line up at the door and proceed to the designated shelter area for each classroom. The Lab School utilizes three weather radios and electronic media sources to monitor the weather during severe weather conditions.

Primary and Secondary emergency shelters are available. If there is not time to safely proceed to the Primary shelter, Secondary shelters will be used. Please look for the Emergency Shelter maps posted in the Lab School hallway, at the entrance to each classroom (above the light switches), and by the playground door to see where your child’s classroom would take shelter. ISU Department of Public Safety and
EH&S have access to Emergency Shelter maps.

Teachers will have an Emergency Backpack with them containing first aid supplies. Teachers also carry a list of parent contact information. Each shelter location has emergency supplies in the case that a real severe weather event would prevent relocation back to the classroom. Some examples of emergency supplies include: flashlights, drinking water, and diapers/buckets.

It is recommended that families discuss and practice emergency drills at home. Young children benefit from practicing emergency drills so they are familiar with where they will be and what is expected. As adults, it is important to maintain a calm demeanor as to not increase the anxiety a child may feel in an emergency situation. Reassuring your child that everything will be ok will help ease their fears. In addition to having basic supplies in a severe weather kit, be sure to include activities to entertain your child. Some books, a stuffed animal, a flashlight for them to hold are good examples.

Resources:
www.ready.gov/build-a-kit
www.sesamestreet.org/parents/topicsandactivities/toolkits/ready

Lab 1
Program for Infants & Toddlers

Head Teacher: Heather Bruno
Teacher: Kala Barre
Undergrad Assistants: Anne Tepper

Weather pending, water days will begin Wednesday, June 5th! Please refer to the email I sent out earlier with information of what all to bring. (Remember to label items that could get mixed up!) With the sunnier, warmer days, we are going to ask that if you arrive at 8:30 or after, that you will go ahead and put sunscreen on your child here at school. After 8:30, we will set it out on the bathroom counter for you to utilize. Remember to wash your hands after applying and playing with toys in the room as usual. Thanks for your help!

(Here’s a picture of Leo with his hair spiked from his sunscreen. 😊)

Thank you for attending our family event and veggie pizza making session. Our final family event will be on the last day of school, Aug. 14th. We will have an ice cream social with Lab 2 from 4:15
– 5:00. Mark your calendars and more details will come as the date gets closer.

With the end of the year, comes some big transitions. Kala has already sent an email out to her cohort’s parents about what changes are already occurring and what some of the upcoming changes will be. Some of those changes will be working on family service at lunch time (passing bowls and scooping rather than just being served a plate), sleeping on a cot, and finally in August, visiting the Lab 2 classroom at different times of the day. The younger toddler cohort will not experience much transition at first. We will notice the changes during meal time for the toddlers and when the cots come out. But our big change will be on the first day of the new school year when new babies are in the room and we now will be the bigger toddlers.

The children may show different emotions and/or behaviors as transitioning can be a stressful time (sometimes for parents as well😊). If you have any questions about the transitions or changes you are seeing, please ask.

We will be saying good-bye to Sibaa and her family. Her last day with us will be June 14th. We will miss Sibaa’s energy, smile, and infectious giggles! We wish them the best in their future endeavors!

Enjoy your summer and any vacations you may be taking!

Lab 2
Program for 2’s & 3’s

Head Teacher: Laurie Jeffries
Teacher: Taryn Busche
Undergrad Assistants: Katy Moen

Water days are coming! We hope the weather will cooperate! There are a few things we need to tell you to make our days successful. We will try to have a water day every Wednesday. Please bring your child in his/her suit. Bring a change of clothes, a towel, and a cloth bag. We will put the wet clothes into this bag. PLEASE, PLEASE mark everything with your child’s name/initials, down to socks and underwear. When we have all of those clothes scattered all over we can’t tell what belongs to each child. We don’t have a pool but have different containers with activities for the children to do. Well we do have pools but you can see what we use them for 😊
We have some big changes in our room at the end of June. Laurie is having knee replacement surgery. Taryn is leaving us to stay home with her daughter. We have two children leaving (Jasper and Anders) and a new child starting June 17th (Jacob). Whew! Some of our friends are going to be visiting relatives this summer so they will not be in class. We are in the hiring process to fill Taryn’s position. You may remember Erin who was in our room the first semester of this school year. I’m pleased to announce she will be covering for Laurie while she is on FMLA. We are very excited as this will help the children transition easier and we love Erin!

Speaking of transitions: The plans are in order for Erin and the other teacher to help the children transition to their new classrooms. They will do this the last 3 days of class. You will receive the transition plan from the teachers later this summer. Enjoy your summer!

Life is a journey, with problems to solve, lessons to learn, but most of all, experiences to enjoy. Ritu Ghatourey
We have also changed our communication sheets for the summer. Since we will not be doing the Teaching Strategies Gold assessment this summer, your child’s daily observations will be written on a piece of paper and when that paper is filled (front and back) you are welcomed to take it home.

Other changes include trying to incorporate more outdoor time into our day. Please remember to bring your child to school in appropriate clothing for outdoor play, such as shoes with backs and a jacket for the chilly mornings. When we play outside there is so much more physical activity that you’re likely to see an increase in the number of incident reports for your child. They are no longer protected by fluffy coats and snow pants, so unfortunately, those falls usually result in scrapes and scratches.

Sunscreen, sunglasses and hats are welcomed. We store children’s sunscreen in the bathroom, so if you would like to see if your child has some sunscreen please check in there. We put on sunscreen in the morning and afternoon.

The other change is the start of Water Day, which will be every Wednesday (weather permitting). Water day consists of setting a sprinkler up, a couple of water tables, and some other water-related toys for children to play with during our morning outdoor time. Please bring your child to school wearing their swimming suit and water shoes. We’ll also need you to bring a complete change of clothes, including a new set of shoes, in a reusable (not plastic) bag, and a towel.

*All the photos were taken by children as we go through our camera project. This day we were practicing portrait photography.

**Lab 4**

**Program for 3’s, 4’s & 5’s**

**Head Teacher: Amy Carlat**
**Teacher: Jamie Dyer**
**Undergrad Assistants: Andrea Bernard**

Lab 4 has been rocking, that is studying rocks! We have learned so much and when I say we, I mean the children and the teachers! Some of the information that we have learned, I probably learned back in seventh grade science class but that information had long ago been stored in a not so accessible place. The wonderful thing about the project approach to curriculum is how well the children learn the information because they learn it from hands-on activities. I knew we had a great project idea when I received so many e-mails from the parents saying how much they love rocks or how much their child loves rocks. Then, we started the study of rocks. We began with how they looked and how they felt and how heavy they were and then I was out of ideas!!!
Literally, I had no idea of what on earth we were going to do next. That is where our experts stepped in! I was so thankful to Launa’s grandpa who taught us so much and so many parents brought in rock samples as well. Once we had a little more background knowledge, our rock project began to take on much more shape. The children know the 3 types of rocks (sedimentary, metamorphic, and igneous). They know how volcanoes erupt and have had science experiments with crayons to show how sedimentary, metamorphic, and igneous rocks are made. They also have learned what main minerals are in rocks and if I say them out of the order that Launa’s grandpa taught us, they correct me. I am in my office alone right now but I think it is silica, magnesium, aluminum, iron, and nickel. You will have to read this article to your child and see if I got them right! 😊 I was visiting with my father-in-law shortly after our trip to Reiman Gardens and he was thrilled we had gone there. He asked, “Were the gardens in bloom?” I said, “I have no idea! We were focused on the rocks!” When we are focused on a project, our focus narrows substantially!

We did pause from our study to see the butterfly wing!

I would be remised though if I didn’t say that one of the best parts of going on a field trip is the bus ride though!

As summer slowly arrives to Ames, please remember that on Wednesdays, weather permitting, we will play in water on our playground in the months of June and July. You should have received an e-mail regarding weather days. If you are unsure of what to bring on water days, please talk to Teacher Amy or Teacher Jamie. With summer comes changes in the classroom enrollment. Brandon and Victoria will join us in June. Tanvee’s last day was May 31st. Claire’s last day will be June 7th. Ananya and Avyay’s last day will be June 18th. We look forward to hearing updates from our friends that are leaving as they enjoy new adventures.

Happy summer!

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