How do YOU like to be communicated with? Communication is one of the hardest things we do. Because teachers are in the classroom with the children most of the day and because the limited amount of time they are out of the classroom is used for planning, assessment and preparation, it is sometimes difficult to find time for optimal communication between teachers and family members.

Some forms of communication in our program are more informal or indirect. For example, by looking at lesson plans you can get a picture of what your child did at school that day. Instead of asking your child at pick up time, “What did you do today?” which may illicit the classic response of “nothing” or “played”, you can ask “What was it like painting with feathers?” or “Tell me about the duck story you heard at circle time today.” Look around the classroom for recent art work, photos, dictation (adults write down something the children dictate to them), or other signs of special activities. Also, those brief exchanges in the morning and evening when dropping off or picking up your child can be very informative for both parents and teachers.

Some forms of communication are more direct and formal. Twice a year parent conferences (Continued on page 2)

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Interested in contributing or seeing a particular topic in our newsletter? See Dawn or Teri.
Word from the Director—Communication (continued)

(Continued from page 1)

ences are offered. Monthly classroom newsletters inform parents about events and upcoming changes, as well as give friendly reminders. “Document” boards may share information and photos about a special activity like a cooking project or field trip. Infant-Toddler activity sheets or notes home in the preschool classroom also give you a glimpse of your child’s day or alert you to things you may need to bring. Notes posted on the classroom door alert you to illnesses or inform you of staff changes for the day.

The calendar, monthly program newsletters, flyers sent home and posted on the front door or classroom doors, and e-mail reminders also inform about upcoming events.

The Parent Association is looking for parent representatives for each classroom who are willing to make occasional phone calls or send e-mail reminders to parents in their child’s classroom to remind them about upcoming events. We have also updated our e-mail list to send out reminders about upcoming center wide events. Please make sure that you update contact information when it changes.

FALL PARENT CONFERENCES

It is time for fall parent conferences!
Fall conferences are the first formal opportunity of the year for teachers and parents to share information about their child’s development and interests and discuss goals for the year. Teachers will have information and observations to share to help paint a picture of your child’s development and school life. Think about information you may want to share about your child. This might include new interests or skills that your child has acquired, growth or changes you have observed, or family information that can be helpful in understanding your child’s needs. During the conference you and the teacher will discuss your child’s strengths and needs and together set goals to support his or her continuing growth and development.

Classrooms will offer parent conferences as follows:
Moons—November 2-6
Sunbeams—November 30-December 4
Stars—November 17-26
Planet Earth—December 7-11
Make-up conferences—December 14-18

Conferences last 30 minutes. Watch for a sign up sheet on your child’s classroom door a week or two before the above dates. Please keep in mind that staffing has to be arranged for teachers to be out of the classroom for parent conferences. Be sure and sign up for a time that will be convenient for you to attend, make a note of the time and if you find that you will be unable to attend, please let us know as soon as possible. Because other classrooms will be offering conferences during this time too, any make-up conferences will be scheduled the during the week of December 14-18.

Today we...
The first Parent Association meeting will be held this month on Wednesday, October 14, 5:30 - 6:30 to plan for the year.

Officers:
Paloma Hernandez—Chair
Aoife Longmore—Secretary
Diane Bogard—Treasurer

Parent Room Representatives:
Planet Earth—Laurie Drucker
Stars—Amy and Richard Taylor
Moons—Mison and David Zuniga
Sunbeams—Erin Romero

Parent representatives give reminders to parents in their child’s classroom about fundraisers or special events.

The purpose of the Parent Association includes:
1. Choose, organize and implement fundraising projects to benefit the program.
2. Provide opportunities for parent education and support.
3. Act as an avenue for communication between staff and parents.

The October meeting will focus on:
- Final planning for fundraisers for the year
- Final planning for other special events (end of year party and staff recognition)
- Planning for meeting topics for the year

A light meal and child care are provided for meetings. We ask that you sign up at the front desk if you plan to attend so that we can plan for food and staff. Thanks!

Contact Paloma 223-5218 or phernand@austincc.edu or Dawn for more information or to volunteer.

Safety Reminders

Please help your children remember that they need to stay with an adult during morning arrival times and afternoon and evening departures. We’ve had some scary moments recently when a couple of children ran out the front door ahead of parents. Children also need to be kept close in the parking lot and while crossing the street. Students rushing to find a parking place are not always watching carefully, especially for young children. Reminding children that they need to walk with you or hold your hand in the hallways and outside the building is very important for your children’s safety. If staff observe children running down the hall, entering or exiting the building or other behaviors that are not safe, we will stop them and bring them back to the adult who is responsible for them at pick up or drop off. We will talk with them in a firm and serious tone about our concern for their safety. Thank you for working with us to help keep your children safe.
Open House was on Wednesday, September 16th and it was a great success!! Parents were able to learn from the teachers what goes on in the classroom on a daily basis. Also, the parent representative in each classroom discussed parent involvement. This was a great opportunity for parents to ask questions and get to know one another!
Outdoor Activities for the Family
- Go to a pumpkin patch or the Farmer’s Market and pick out pumpkins to either decorate or cook with at home
- Let the kids “help” with some of the fall yard work by raking the leaves into a pile and then jumping in them
- Take a walk or hike in a local park or in your neighborhood
  - Collect leaves, pinecones, and acorns while on your hike. See who can find the most orange leaves or who can find the biggest and smallest pinecones.

Fall Pumpkin Recipes

**Roasted pumpkin seeds**

**INGREDIENTS**
- 1 1/2 cups raw whole pumpkin seeds
- 2 teaspoons butter, melted
- 1 pinch salt

**DIRECTIONS**
Preheat oven to 300 degrees F (150 degrees C). Toss seeds in a bowl with the melted butter and salt. Spread the seeds in a single layer on a baking sheet bake for about 45 minutes or until golden brown; stir occasionally.

**Pumpkin Bread**

**INGREDIENTS**
- 1 (15 ounce) can pumpkin puree
- 4 eggs
- 1 cup vegetable oil
- 2/3 cup water
- 3 cups white sugar
- 3 1/2 cups all-purpose flour
- 2 teaspoons baking soda
- 1 1/2 teaspoons salt
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon ground nutmeg
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cloves
- 1/4 teaspoon ground ginger

**DIRECTIONS**
Preheat oven to 350 degrees F (175 degrees C). Grease and flour three 7x3 inch loaf pans.
In a large bowl, mix together pumpkin puree, eggs, oil, water and sugar until well blended. In a separate bowl, whisk together the flour, baking soda, salt, cinnamon, nutmeg, cloves and ginger. Stir the dry ingredients into the pumpkin mixture until just blended. Pour into the prepared pans. Bake for about 50 minutes in the preheated oven. Loaves are done when toothpick inserted in center comes out clean.

**Pumpkin seed trail mix**
- Pre-Heat oven to 375
- 1 cup raw pumpkin seeds, 1 TBS. of Olive Oil, Toss seeds in oil, season with coarse salt spread in a single layer on a baking sheet, toast until golden, about 8 minutes.
- Next, place toasted pumpkin seeds and a 1/2 cup large unsweetened Coconut Flakes, 1/2 cup whole Almonds (toasted) 1/2 cup dried Cranberries, and a 1/4 candied Ginger (cut into 1/4 inch pieces)
- Mix all ingredients and store at room temp for up to 2 weeks!

**Professional Development News:**
- In September Jennifer Thomas attended a workshop about using Sign Language in the Classroom.
- Shannon Saldana and Diego Fishburn attended the TAEYC Conference in Galveston in October.
- Tina Gamez and Dawn Leach will attend NAEYC Conference in Washington DC in November.
- June Yeatman will attend the Zero to Three Conference in Dallas in December.
Austin Community College Children's Lab School is a preschool program for children, six months through five years of age, that serves as a demonstration school for the ACC Child Development Department. The Children's Lab School offers an early childhood program designed to support the growth and development of young children in a warm and creative environment. Through fieldwork experiences in a lab setting, students observe the principles of child development and gain practical experience with young children under the supervision and guidance of qualified classroom teachers. The Children's Lab School is licensed by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services and is accredited by the National Academy of Early Childhood Programs (NAECP), a division of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).

2009-10 Calendar at a Glance

*Labor Day Holiday................................. September 7
Lab School Open House................................. September 16
*Thanksgiving Holidays............................. November 26-27
Last Day ACC Fall Semester........................ December 11
*Staff Development Day.......................... December 18 & 21
*Winter Break........................................ Dec. 22-Jan 1
*Martin Luther King Holiday..................... January 18
ACC Spring Semester Begins....................... January 19
*Spring Break........................................ March 15-19
Last Day ACC Spring Semester................... May 14
*Memorial Day Holiday............................ May 31
ACC Summer Semester Begins..................... June 1
Independence Day Holiday........................ July 4 (no closure)
Last Day for Graduating Lab School Children... August 13
ACC Summer Semester Ends........................ August 13
*Room Preparation and Staff Development Week...August 16-20
ACC 2009-2010 Academic Year Begins............. August 23

*Lab School will be closed to children on these dates.
+Dates are tentative or to be announced

Reminder:

Donate TODAY to the Parent Association’s FUNd Appeal

WHY?
Fewer fundraisers!
No item donations
No raffle ticket sales
The PA can spend its time and energy planning FUN events, rather than fundraising events!

Friends and family can donate too.
If you have misplaced your form, ask for another one at the front desk.