



ACC-CLS Parent News



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September 2010

Welcome to a new school year. The ACC Children's Lab School community consists of our teachers, support staff, faculty, child development students, children, parents and other family members, and the college.

We look forward to an exciting year of learning together. We know that we can learn more about your child from you and we hope you can learn more about children and their development from us.

There are many ways to be involved in

the center and **WE NEED YOU!** Attend a Parent Association meeting, participate in a fundraiser, go on a field trip or share a special skill or talent with your child's class.

The most important way to be involved is to communicate daily with your child's teacher. Knowing what is happening in your child's life helps us support growth and development, plan, and respond to his or her needs. Have there been any changes in your family? Has your child's routine changed?

Does your child have new skills or interests? Has your child developed a new fear or habit you are concerned about? Have there been changes in your child's mood? Information shared between teachers and parents is the backbone to building a partnership that will benefit your child.



Important Dates:

- ☉ Wednesday, 9/15, 4:45-5:45 p.m. Sunbeams and Moons; 5:15-6:15 p.m. Stars and Planet Earth—Come and enjoy activities with your children at Open House and see what a typical day looks like.
- ☉ Wednesday, 9/22, 5:30-6:30 p.m.—Parent Association Meeting

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Interested in contributing or seeing a particular topic in our newsletter? See Dawn.

OPEN HOUSE

Wednesday, September 15

4:45-5:45 p.m. Sunbeams & Moons

5:15-6:15 p.m. Stars & Planet Earth

- Visit and learn more about your child's classroom
- Learn about the Parent Association
- Older siblings who are not enrolled will attend Evening Care—Please let us know in advance so we can plan for staffing

Center Reminders—Parking, Security, and Safety



Enrollment has more than doubled at the Eastview campus since it was originally built. ACC has added additional parking behind the main campus, but finding a parking spot can still be tricky at certain times of the day or during special events at the center. There are five parking spots designated for parents to park while dropping off or picking up next to the center. We are trying to make sure that these are kept open, but be patient during these first few weeks of the semester. Staff, faculty and student parents should find other parking if they plan to remain on campus after dropping off their children. Following are some reminders about parking, security and safety:

- When you bring or pick-up your child each day, please use the parking spaces marked with blue signs "Child Care Pick-up/Drop off" in the parking lot north of the building. The drop-off and pick-up spots are located next to the building so that children will not have to cross the parking lot. Using

these spaces helps ensure the safety of your child as well as prevents you from being ticketed by ACC Police. Please do not use the spaces designated for "handicap parking" even for a few minutes as these spaces are reserved and used frequently by students, staff and faculty with disabilities. ***A reminder that parking is not allowed in the front of the building along the curb because this is a fire lane. ACC Police will ticket in this area.***

- If you arrive at the center and find the front entrance locked, push the "doorbell" on the right wall of the foyer. A phone in the classroom allows the staff to see and talk with you and unlock the door so that you can enter. The doors may occasionally be locked during the day when there is no one assigned to the front desk and after 5:45 p.m. for security reasons.
- For safety reasons, children need to be accompanied by an adult at all times. Please walk with your child from the car into the building and all the way to the classroom at arrival. If you have more than one child to drop off, please do not allow one child to go to their classroom alone while you drop the other child off. At pick up time, your child needs to stay with you while you are gathering

belongings, picking up siblings, or visiting with other parents. Make sure that you communicate with the teacher as you drop off or pick up each day. They may have important information to share with you.

- **It is never OK to leave children in the car unsupervised, even for a moment to run inside for a forgotten item.**
- Texas law now requires that children under 8 years of age or less than 4 feet 9 inches in height be transported in a car safety seat. It is important to us that your child is safe in our care, as well as on their way to and from the center. You are welcome to leave your child's car seat in the front foyer if someone different is picking up. We also have two car seats available for check out at the front desk in emergencies. If you borrow our car seat, please return it promptly so that it is available to others.

REMINDER:

You (or your designated person) are responsible for your



child(ren) until you hand them off to a classroom teacher at arrival, and again, once staff releases them to you at departure.

Parent Association Invites Your Participation

The Parent Association was formed by a group of parents interested in becoming partners with the Lab School staff and teachers to provide mutual support, communication, and fund-raising in order to maximize resources for the children served by the school.

The Association is self-governed and self-sustained. The goal of the Association is to function without the help of staff, while including them. The Association meets monthly. Child care and refreshments are provided. Reminders about the meeting are posted and sent out by e-mail prior to the meeting.

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 by assisting with the planning of parenting workshops.
3. Act as an avenue for communication between staff and parents by providing an opportunity to discuss questions, compliments and concerns as well as share ideas.

Some projects the Parent Association has sponsored over the past few years include planting the four beautiful trees next to the parking lot by Building 5000, helping to make the foyer area more family friendly, staff and volunteer appreciation events and gifts, extra funds for staff attending conferences, and parenting workshops and support groups. Fundraising events this year include a gift basket raffle, "Dinner Out" at a local restaurant,

and the sale of photo products.

Officers:

Chair—Paloma Falcon and Erin Romero

Secretary—Aoife Longmore

Treasurer—Rick Taylor

Room Representatives:

Chairmain Mackson and Kalie Nasworthy (Sunbeams)

Bethany and Brandon Bell (Moons)

Mollie Newcomb and Mison Zuniga (Stars)

Aoife Longmore (Planet Earth)

PA reps will be present at the Open House on Wednesday, Sept.

15 to tell you about activities and answer any questions.



Foster Grandparent Program

The Children's Lab School is a placement site for volunteers from the Foster Grandparent Program. Our grandparents provide extra one on one for children who need some lap-time or support working on a particular developmental task or skill. For example, a grandparent might be assigned to spend extra time with a new child who is still adjusting to our program or to work with a child who is learning how to walk or work puzzles. The classroom teachers set goals, assign tasks, and provide training and classroom supervision for the volunteers.



Sadie Lee Davis started as a volunteer in 2002. She has worked in the Stars, Sunbeams, and Moons classrooms. She will volunteer in the Stars classroom again

this year when she returns from medical leave.

Cleo Scott, started as a volunteer in 2007 with the Sunbeams. She moves up with the Moons this year for the second year of their loop.



NEW POLICIES HIGHLIGHTED

NUT FREE ZONE

Because nut allergies are of a greater concern than most food allergies, and because our classrooms are sometimes used by multiple groups of children, we became a nut-free environment this year. Prevention is the key to managing nut allergies when known, as well as for first time occurrences. We eliminated nut items on our snack menu last year. In deciding to extend this policy to families, we understood that this would create a hardship, especially for parents of picky eaters who have decided that peanut butter is the only food they will eat. Soy butter is the substitute we have used this past year and the children (and staff) seem unaware of any difference. It even comes in smooth and crunchy! It can be purchased at some HEB's, Central Market, Sun Harvest and

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

Birthdays are special days for children and hold special meaning for families. They are a time to recognize an important milestone and focus on the concept of "growing up". Families have special ways of celebrating birthdays and the teachers also have special ways of honoring the child that recognize and value birthdays in the classroom. After gathering input from families and staff, our new policy tries to balance respect for family tradition, the diversity of our family population, and keeping things sane in the classroom. Families may provide one birthday food treat in individual serving sizes to share during afternoon snack. Please ask your child's teacher for a Birthday Celebration Form to complete prior to that special day.

The form also includes some nutritious, but delicious treat ideas!



Welcome to Our New Families

Our ACC Children's Lab School community just grew larger. Please help us welcome:

Sunbeams

- Hiro—Kevin & Jenifer
- Izriel—Michelle
- Evelyn—Kaylie & Bryan
- Maheya—Meiling & Michael
- Rajata (Gudiya)—Uma & Prabakar
- Nathan—Misty & Raul
- Adam—Gloria & Fi
- Faith—Chairmain



Moons

- Alanna—Denise & Christopher
- Augustine—Angelica & Jeff
- Isabella—Frank & Mirosalva



Stars

- Evan—Mollie & Bryce

STAFF NEWS

ASSISTANT TEACHER CHANGES

We said a sad farewell to Diego Fishburn in August. Diego plans to pursue his art full-time. He currently has a show at the Cherrywood Coffee House on 38 1/2 Street through September.



We are excited to have Monica Bradford join our team as the Assistant Teacher Floater. Monica has worked as both an Assistant Teacher and Lead Teacher in college campus, Headstart and for-profit settings. She has a BA in Child Development from California State University. She is married to Stan and has two children, Lauren (15 months) and Sarah (2 1/2 years).

OTHER STAFF CHANGES

- ☺ Kathleen Hrcir and Kanisha Coruthers have moved into full-time positions with other programs. We will miss them, but understand this is the next step in their professional journey.
- ☺ We welcome Audrea Curtis who will cover staff lunches in the Sunbeams. Pam Henry will cover the afternoons in the Sunbeams.
- ☺ We have two new work study students: Leland Adams and Crystal Alexander. Leland will be helping in the Planet Earth classroom, conducting safety checks and setting up the playgrounds each morning. Crystal will be helping in the Sunbeams in the during early morning transitions.
- ☺ New subs include Maribel Sandoval who just graduated from UT with a degree in Education and Jenni Billingsley who returns to sub for us after graduating from TSU with a degree in Occupational Education.

OUR STAFF CONTINUES TO LEARN

Many of our staff continue to work and attend school. Gloria Perez (General Studies—ACC), Becky Olivarez (General Studies—ACC), Carmel Sweat (Child Development—ACC) Ashlee Harper (Pre-nursing—UT), and Sarah Jenkins (Plan II—UT). June Yeatman is teaching CDEC 1321 ITV, which is our Infant-Toddler Development course at ACC again this fall. Most of our Assistant Teachers will attend the Texas Association for the Education of Young Children conference in October in Austin. Many staff will also be participating in a round table session at TAEYC that focuses on working with adult students. Jennifer Thomas will be attending the National AEYC conference in Anaheim California in November. The NAEYC conference is being held in collaboration with the National Black Child Development Institute this year.

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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 field work 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).

2010-11 Calendar at a Glance

*Labor Day Holiday.....	September 6
Lab School Open House.....	September 15
*Thanksgiving Holidays.....	November 25-26
Last Day ACC Fall Semester.....	December 10
*Staff Development Day.....	December 20-21
*Winter Break.....	December 22-31
*Martin Luther King Holiday.....	January 17
ACC Spring Semester Begins.....	January 18
*Spring Break.....	March 14-18
Last Day ACC Spring Semester.....	May 14
*Memorial Day Holiday.....	May 30
ACC Summer Semester Begins.....	May 23
Independence Day Holiday.....	July 4
Last Day for Graduating Lab School Children....	August 12
ACC Summer Semester Ends.....	August 8
*Room Preparation and Staff Development Week...August TBA	
ACC 2009-2010 Academic Year Begins.....	August 29

*Lab School will be closed to children on these dates.

+Dates are tentative or to be announced

Parents—Please remember never to leave your child alone in the car, “even for a moment.” Many parents do not realize that this is not only dangerous, but it is also against the law. If you have forgotten something, ask yourself if it can wait, ask another parent to help or take the time to bring your child back inside with you. Thanks!

