Early Childhood Laboratory School

A Reach Toward Excellence

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Mission & Purpose
As a university laboratory school, we aim to lead through excellence and innovation as we train undergraduate and graduate students in child development theory, research and its applications; while implementing national and state standards for quality toddler and preschool programs.

We provide resources and strategies for parents and community members to meet the needs of all children including special populations and dual language learners. We welcome all university majors to observe, participate and learn in a nurturing, diverse educational environment.

"Education is our passport to the future, for tomorrow belongs to the people who prepare for it today."
- Malcolm X
Philosophy
The Lab School believes in providing each individual child with appropriate tools, equipment and accommodations for enhancing their gross motor control, eye-hand coordination, speech/language development, socialization abilities, emotional development, and cognitive/intellectual skills.

We believe in teaching children how to make choices and decisions, find solutions, share, respect, and interact with others harmoniously, and understand who they are as vibrant caring human beings and future contributors to society.

At the Lab School, young children are offered meaningful experiences to help them understand the World around them. Children explore and discover their environment through touch, sight, sound, work, and play. Their learning experiences include classroom centers of interest, outdoor expression, and freedom of creativity while also participating in planned field trips to enhance their ability to process new information.
Curriculum & Learning Centers

The Lab School supports the development of the whole child. We provide a child-centered environment with learning areas reflecting the theme of the lesson plan to promote the social, emotional, physical and intellectual development of each child. Children have the opportunity to explore each learning center daily. Teachers extend learning by asking open-ended questions and incorporating new concepts and vocabulary into their play. Each classroom has a posted daily schedule.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Art &amp; Writing</th>
<th>Promotes creativity, fine motor skills, freedom of expression, color, texture</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Music &amp; Movement</td>
<td>Listening skills, fluency and flexibility with their mind and body. Tempo, tone and volume, rhyming</td>
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<tr>
<td>Blocks</td>
<td>Size, shape, sequence, length, spatial relationships, imagination, whole/part, position</td>
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<tr>
<td>Computer Center</td>
<td>Enhances cognitive and social abilities, problem solving, discovery learning, critical thinking</td>
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<tr>
<td>Science &amp; Sensory</td>
<td>Function, measure, volume, eye-hand coordination, predicting, comparing, classifying, quantity, texture</td>
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<tr>
<td>Math &amp; Manipulatives</td>
<td>Numerical comparison, shape, order &amp; sequence, patterns, measurement, charting</td>
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<tr>
<td>Literacy &amp; Language (Library)</td>
<td>Book familiarity, names, letters, comprehension, listening, oral language skills vocabulary, making choices</td>
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<tr>
<td>Outdoor Play (Physical Health)</td>
<td>Following directions, climbing, jumping, swinging, throwing, body control, large muscle development</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dramatic Play</td>
<td>Processes, functions, language skills, classification, role playing</td>
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Screen Time Activities
Screen time viewing shall not exceed one hour daily per child or group of children and is prohibited for children younger than two year of age. This includes television, digital video, DVD, video cassette, gaming devices, tablets and computers. Screen time must be supervised by staff and limited to programs/websites that are age appropriate and educational.

Classroom Management & Guidance Policy
The Lab School promotes positive behavior management techniques to prevent challenging behaviors. We arrange the classrooms for active exploration and individual decision making opportunities. Clear age appropriate class rules and expectations are posted and reviewed daily. We use redirection, active listening, modeling and positive reinforcement to encourage positive behavior.

The staff is encouraged to give attention to and reward appropriate behavior. Inappropriate behavior is ignored. However, if the behavior cannot be ignored, the child is verbally reminded of the classroom rules and expectations. If the verbal appeals are unsuccessful, the child will be asked to move to a quiet area in the classroom away from the learning centers until he/she can behave appropriately. If the challenging behavior persists, a behavior incident report is completed and kept on file. A parent-teacher conference will be scheduled to determine strategies to improve age appropriate behaviors and consequences for inappropriate behaviors.
In an effort to solve problems in a productive manner, children are guided through a series of lessons providing techniques and language specified in the Interpersonal Cognitive Problem-Solving Program by Dr. Myrna B. Shure (ICPS) also known as “I Can Problem Solve.”

The strategies and consequences for classroom management and guidance practices shall begin with the Behavior Incident Report which records the inappropriate behavior, location of incident, type of activity when the incident occurred, who was involved and progressive steps toward changing the child’s reaction to situations or stimuli. An individual behavior modification plan will be created with the assistance of the parent/guardian, Curriculum Coordinator and Mental Health Consultant, if necessary. If the plan is deemed ineffective, a meeting with the parent/guardian, teachers and mental health consultant will determine a timeframe for suspension while re-evaluating the child’s patterns of behavior. Expulsion is used as an option when the parent/guardian is unwilling to cooperate in the process of helping develop positive and appropriate behavior choices. Alternative placements and services will be explored prior to expulsion.

Disclaimer: School suspension and expulsion practices are discouraged and are often associated with negative educational and life outcomes. This practice shall not be administered in a discriminatory manner.
Enrollment Procedures

Classes are generally arranged by chronological age by August 31\textsuperscript{st} and developmental stage. The Lab School has a non-discriminatory admissions policy. Children are admitted in order of receipt of the “Request for Enrollment” form with payment of the non-refundable registration fee.

When enrollment space is available:

1) Parents are notified,

2) The Enrollment packet is completed with emergency contact form, medical/health information, permission form, CACFP income eligibility form, and “Parents Right to Know” acknowledgement, parental agreement for tuition and business office account set up.

3) Accommodation requests permitted based on identified disabilities, dual language learners, and/or food exemptions due to allergies or intolerances.

4) Child is enrolled and may begin attending the Lab School. An updated physical and immunization is required within the first 30 days of enrollment.
Tuition & Payment Policy

All accounts must be set up at the Cashier’s window in the Administration building. You will receive a CDL account number. The person responsible for the account must use their social security number on the Business Office Form. An annual non-refundable registration fee is required at the time of registration. The tuition for attendance in DSU’s Early Childhood Laboratory School is income-based from September-June. There is a $50 monthly discount for additional siblings enrolled in the Lab School.

Payment can be made by credit card, money order, cash or check in the Administration Building 1st floor Cashier’s Office 8:30 am-4:30 pm Monday-Friday or online through QuikPay NelNet Website.

The University accepts self-arranged Purchase of Care through the Division of Social Services- Delaware Health and Social Services. Parents/guardians are responsible for paying the University for services rendered and completing and returning all documentation before receiving a reimbursement from DSS.

In the unfortunate event that you choose to withdraw your child, you must provide a 2-week notice. If your CDL account has an outstanding balance, the account will go to collections after 90 days.
Operating Hours
The Lab School operates from late August/early September through June, Monday–Friday 7:30 am-5:30 pm. We recommend your child arrive by 9:00 am daily to maintain a consistent routine. All children must be signed in and out for emergency and meal planning. Late pick up fees will be assessed after 5:31 pm at $1.00 per minute. The school calendar reflects the holidays and events of Delaware State University. In addition, there will be no school on “Professional Development” days for the teaching staff to plan individual lessons, address educational outcomes for children, and engage in professional and staff development so teachers can remain current with best practices.

Release of Information
Information pertaining to a child's education, evaluations, observations and progress reports will only be released upon written request from the child's parent/guardian. Records are retained for (1) one year after the child has left the Lab School.

Dressing for School
We believe young children learn best when they are free to explore their environment and fully engaged with the materials. Children may get messy. We provide opportunities for outdoor play when the wind chill factor is 32 degrees or higher or heat index is 89 degrees or lower. Please dress for the weather. Safe and comfortable shoes are best for physical activity. No open toed shoes/sandals.
**Nutrition**

We provide nutritionally balanced snacks and meals daily. Menus are posted weekly on the front bulletin board. Meals are eaten family style with a relaxed atmosphere and conversation. If a special diet is required for religious or medical reasons, the Director must have a written statement regarding the exemption. All benefits of the Child and Adult Care Food program are available to Lab School participants without regard to race, color, national origin, sex, disability and/or age.

Breakfast 9:00-9:30 am  
Lunch 12:00 am - 12:30 pm  
Snack 3:00 pm

**Weather Alerts**

In the event of inclement weather the following radio stations (WDOV 1410 AM, WDSD 92.9 FM) and television station WBOC channel 47 will advise of delayed openings, closings and early dismissals for Delaware State University. You may also sign up for instant alerts through 911 Cellular or call 857-SNOW.
Parent Involvement
The Lab School believes that a partnership between home and school is essential in every child’s ability to reach their maximum growth and development. It is our goal to assist parents/guardians in becoming advocates and active participants in their children’s education. We use the Tadpoles mobile application for daily communication. Throughout the year we have scheduled parent events, beginning with a “meet and greet” and ending with an end of the year family trip. Parents are always welcome as observers and participants in the classroom.

Parent Committee
Parent volunteers and interested members of the university are invited to assist the director and staff in planning for program enhancement, parent activities, workshops and fund-raising. It is our goal to provide a model of excellence through collaboration with various local and statewide organizations and school districts in the pursuit of best practice for young children and their families. The Parent Committee will meet monthly at the discretion of the Parent Committee Board.
Parent/Teacher Conferences
Individualized instructional methods are utilized to raise the achievement levels of students after an assessment of their development. Atypical development/behavior will be referred for evaluation. Written progress reports are issued twice a year following formal observations of each child. Parent-Teacher conferences are scheduled to provide a time to discuss individual development and plan for the mastery of a child’s goal, as well as plan for transitions.

Grievance Procedure
Three steps provide the process to be followed to receive resolution to complaints.

Step 1: Email, or send a note to your child’s teacher outlining the concern. If the teacher does not provide a timely (within 48 hours), or satisfactory resolution, you may proceed to Step 2. If the complaint involves a situation in the classroom, parents should seek to resolve the issue with the classroom teacher or teacher assistant as is appropriate. If a resolution with the classroom faculty is not possible, or if the complaint is with a school-wide policy or procedure, the parent should seek to resolve the issue with the director.

Step 2: Email, or send a note to, the director outlining the concern and the results of the contact from Step 1. The Director will review the complaint and teacher response, and provide a response to the student and/or parent within 48 hours.

Step 3: If neither the teacher nor director is able to provide a satisfactory resolution, an email or note may be addressed to the Education Chair Education & Humanities room 100 or call 857-6720. Participants also have the right to contact the Office of Child Care Licensing to file a report 739-5487.
Safety & Welfare of Children
The Laboratory School will not share or discuss with external entities information regarding a child, his/her family without written permission from the child's parent/guardian. Addresses and telephone numbers are confidential. We will only release a child to those persons authorized by the parent/guardian. An adult with photo ID (18 years old and over) may drop off and pick up the child from the Lab School. Sign in/out sheets are maintained daily. Legal documentation excluding a birth parent from visiting or picking up their child must be on file.

Social Media Policy
Photography of other children using personal cameras or cell phones is not permitted. All staff and student cell phones must be left in the front office. The DSU Social Media Policy prohibits posting photos or university information on social media. Violation of the policy may result in disciplinary action including termination of employment or expulsion from the university.

Child Abuse & Neglect
Child abuse/neglect is a serious problem that requires the involvement of all citizens and professionals in the community for the purpose of prevention, identification, and treatment. The child abuse/neglect law requires anyone who suspects a child has been mistreated to report the matter to the Division of Social Services. The staff will inform the director of a report to the Division of Social Services. Report child abuse or neglect by calling 1-800-292-9582.
Illness

All contagious diseases must be reported to the child’s teacher or director. If the child has any of these symptoms, he/she should remain at home. If your child develops symptoms requiring exclusion during the day, you or an emergency contact person will be called to pick up your child.

Communicable diseases require written documentation from a health care provider stating the child has been diagnosed and he/she pose no serious health risk to the child or other children in order to return to school.

Symptoms include; sore throat, bad cough, an elevated temperature of 101 degrees, upset stomach, and/or diarrhea, a persistent runny nose characterized by green or yellow discharge, unidentified rash, bumps or blisters, and head lice.

When you need a certified staff member to administer prescription and non-prescription medication, we must have written authorization. Please complete the Lab School Medication Log found on the front shelf. The medication must be in the original container, and you must provide the dosage and times for the medication to be administered. Any medication with an expired date on the container will not be administered and returned to the parent/guardian. Please do not leave medication in backpacks. All medication shall be signed in and out and kept in the lockbox in the kitchen to be secured.
Emergencies & Injuries
When serious accidents or injuries occurs to a child during the hours of care, staff will take emergency action to protect the child from further harm, call emergency medical services and notify the parent/guardian. The university’s insurance plan will be used first, followed by the parent/guardian’s coverage. For minor injuries, the director or designee will inform the parent and record the incident on the Injury Report Form and place a copy of the report for the parent in the child’s cubby.

Emergency Situations
In the event of an emergency situation, the DSU Early Childhood Lab School has outlined the below response plan. Please know that we will attempt to notify you, so please keep your emergency contact information up to date.

Evacuation/Relocation
1. If the emergency is confined to the immediate area at the Education & Humanities Center, e.g. fire, and the children cannot stay on the premises, the children will be taken to The Price Building Auditorium. The children and staff will remain at this location while you or your emergency contact is notified of the situation.
2. If the emergency is more widespread, encompasses a larger area such as the neighborhood due to an environmental threat, e.g. flood, and the children cannot remain in the immediate area, they will be transported to The Living & Learning Commons (Sheraton).
children and staff will remain at this location while you or your emergency contact is notified of the situation.

3. Children will be transported by University Shuttle.

**Notification**

1. We will repeatedly try to call you as soon as the children and staff are safe. If we cannot reach you, we will call your emergency contact. During emergencies, children will only be released to you or your emergency contacts.

2. Information about the event can be found on the DSU Website [www.desu.edu](http://www.desu.edu), through the 911 Cellular emergency alert system or hotline 857-7669.

**Emergency Supplies/Shelter-in-Place**

1. You may want to leave in your child’s classroom a change of clothes, a few family photos, and a comfort item like a small teddy bear to help your child during a crisis.

2. If we need to shelter in place, we will remain in our classrooms. First aid supplies are located in each classroom, office and kitchen. Emergency food and water is located in the kitchen.

Please rest assured that the Lab School staff will remain with and care for the children at all times during an emergency to ensure the children’s safety. As always, please don’t hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or concerns.
Special Events

- Birthdays are very important events in the lives of children. We celebrate this milestone with cake and ice cream on the last Friday of each month.

- Little Miss/Little Mister DSU fundraiser competition. Prior to Homecoming, the PreK 4 year olds have the opportunity to raise funds for the titles.

- Holiday Luncheons- Thanksgiving or Christmas

- Scholastic Book fair- Spring fundraiser

- Teacher Appreciation week- 1st week in May we celebrate teachers.

- Role Model Day- between Mother’s Day and Father’s Day we have a BBQ to celebrate children’s role models.

- Professional school photos are taken each semester. The photographer determines the cost for photos packages.

- Campus excursions and field trips are considered an extension of the classroom. They are planned in conjunction with the curriculum and theme. Family members and guardians are welcome to join us. An end-of-the-year family trip is planned for a Saturday in June.

- Cultural awareness months are celebrated throughout the school year.

- The Annual Stepping Up Ceremony is held on the last day of school in June. All children are recognized for their accomplishments as they proceed to the next level.
DSU Lab School Participant Receipt

I, _______________________(print name) have received the DSU Early Childhood Lab School participant handbook and agree to review the policies and procedures to maximize my child’s educational experience and safety. I can review the Child Care Licensing regulations at any time in the Observation room.

_________________________   ________
Signature                         Date