Welcome to the Children's School Family 2017-2018

- Carnegie Mellon University, Department of Psychology
- Dietrich College of Humanities & Social Studies
- Licensed as a PA Private Academic School
- Nationally Accredited by NAECY since 2003

Welcome to Lilah Buchanan, our full-time educational intern.

Welcome to two student teachers, both Pitt Seniors training in early childhood and special education (Danielle Sallmen in the Green Room and Andrew Lehmberg in the Kindergarten).

Finalizing our NAECY Accreditation Renewal Materials, then waiting for our site visit between October 2017 and March 2018

Exploring the ways to foster “Executive Functions” by reading Mind in the Making (focus & self-control, perspective taking, communication, making connections, taking on challenges, critical thinking, and self-directed, engaged learning)

Strengthening our approach to Anti-Bias Education

Pittsburgh Alliance of University Schools (PAUS)
- 1st Mini-Conference with a National Speaker in Feb 2018
- Co-Hosting of the International Association of Laboratory Schools with our PAUS Partners in May 2018

Professional Development

- Self-Esteem & Independence - encouraging each child's growing self-concept and confidence, as well as increasing self-regulation and voice
- Interaction & Cooperation - promoting children's social skills for effective adjustment to school, group participation, classroom citizenship, and peer interactions
- Communication - facilitating comprehension and expression skills, beginning with oral language (listening & speaking) and progressing to written language (reading, writing, and comprehension)
- Discovery & Exploration - fostering a positive attitude toward learning through scientific and mathematical inquiry with various materials to build strong concepts related to diverse thematic
- Physical Capabilities / Health & Safety - giving children opportunities to develop gross and fine motor skills, promote physical health, and essential safety practices
- Artistic Expression & Appreciation - cultivating each child's ability to express ideas and emotions through art, dance, and movement, as well as to appreciate the artistic expressions of others.

Child Assessment

- Goals - monitor each child's progress, adapt curriculum for the group and individuals, determine the need for extra support, and communicate with colleagues and parents.
- Initial observations in the classroom, plus input from parents through the "Ages & Stages" questionnaires that will be sent in September & October.
- Professional Development time to review and improve assessment approaches. The last year included experimenting with a new conference report format, focused more on each unique child's progress, plus educator and family strategies for supporting development.

Animals in the Wild

- Whole School Unit with primary focus in February 2018
- Partner: Animal Rescue League Wildlife Center
- United Nations World Wildlife Day, March 3, 2018
- National Wildlife Week, March 14-18, 2018

Aligned with Developmental Objectives
Family Input via May Survey

- 69 of 83 Families Responded – all extremely positive, so parents want continued excellence, especially with more use of the Make Shop, outdoor opportunities, engagements in the university center, campus connections, research results, etc.
- Some immediate improvements:
  - More direct family contact about individual children, starting with some brief questions to get to know your child and your goals for this year, then progressing to using “Message from Me” at all age levels.
  - More reminders about involvement opportunities in the classroom and Make Shop.
  - Handwashing instruction for home too (see handbook).
  - Also, words used when talking about emergency procedures (watch daily blogs for initial fire drills, etc.).
- Emails will come from cmuchsch@andrew.cmu.edu.

Family Involvement

- Plan now to participate in Parent/Teacher Conferences and Family Events – Open House, Family Festival, and Celebration Picnic (see whole school calendar for dates and times / interactive calendar on the website).
- Attend an Open Question & Answer Session:
  - Thursday, October 5th at 8:30am or 12:30pm
  - Wednesday, February 28th at 8:30am or 12:30pm
- Join an Educator/Parent Discussion:
  - Wednesday, October 5th at 8:30pm re: School Choice
  - Friday, October 27th at 9:30am re: School Choice
  - Friday, February 2nd at 9:30am re: Whole School Theme
- Share a talent (especially related to a theme).
- Volunteer your time and / or join a committee.

Make Shop Overview

- Space between the office and the kindergarten for children to tinker, create, design with varied materials and developmentally appropriate tools.
- Rotate Materials Monthly:
  - September – Fine Motor / Fingers as Tools
  - October – Paper / Basic Art Tools
  - November – Wood / Woodworking Tools
  - December – Light & Color
  - January – Grocery Store
  - February – Textiles
  - March / April – Simple Machines
  - April / May – Ramp & Runs.

Family Social Organization

- FSO Co-Chairs:
  - Sarah Hummel (Cecilia, AM 4’s)
  - Jocelyn Mayr (Lucy Jo, PM 3’s)
- Join the committee to help plan Adult Only Events and Whole Family Events.
- We had some requests for dads & children events on the family survey, so maybe there are some dads who want to plan those.
- Also, several families requested help with transportation to family events, so please offer if you can help with that.

NIRS Research Progress

- Near Infrared Spectroscopy (NIRS) is used to explore the functional connectivity of the brain.
- Resting State Networks (RSN) are brain region interactions when subjects are not performing an explicit task. Current estimates are that the number of RSNs increase from ~5 in infants to 10-20 in adults, but the developmental course is difficult to study in the early childhood ages because the typical “resting state” situations, like watching a movie, don’t work well with children.
- The Fisher lab researchers developed a “Freeplay” paradigm as a task that could potentially be used across ages, so they are now testing it across the developmental span to see if the task is effective, and comparing the results to the movie watching results for older subjects to see if they are consistent.
- The next step is then to do research across ages to test the strength of connections and pattern of networks.

CMU & The Children’s School

- In 1968, the Children’s School was founded as a laboratory school within the Margaret Morrison Carnegie College at CMU.
- Join the 50th Anniversary Committee!
- Help identify event sponsors to keep costs manageable for 50th Anniversary Events & IALS Conference!
CMU’s New Care Link

- Website: [https://carelink.cmu.edu/](https://carelink.cmu.edu/)
- Child care, pet care, lawn care, tutoring, odd jobs, and more!
- IN BETA TEST – including the Children’s School
- Members of the Carnegie Mellon community in Pittsburgh can use CareLink to find care givers or find a job. If you need a caregiver, you can post your request on the CareLink website. If you want to provide services, you can post your resume and search available jobs. Community members also can use CareLink to share or exchange services.

Important Reminders

- **Attention**
  - Family Handbook & Class Information
  - Forms (esp. Health Assessment & Allergy Forms)
  - Survey to help educators get to know children better
- **Timeliness**
  - Be on time for greeting so children don’t feel left out of classroom community.
  - Be on time for dismissal so children don’t feel left behind when others go home.
- **Questions??**
  - Call Miss Drash & she’ll direct you.
  - See Mrs. Rosenblum re: phasing in and health assessment questions.

Security Code

- **ADULTS ONLY!!**
- Code Clue ...
  - Press each number clearly and firmly, then *
  - Ignore colored lights.
  - You have only 30 seconds to enter / exit and then close the door.
  - Do not let an unaccompanied child exit with you.

Children’s School Family

- Feel free to ask questions, raise concerns, or share your ideas.
- Together we can create and support an exceptional learning opportunity for everyone!

Have a Wonderful Year!