

W I N T E R 2 0 1 7

the **M**oore News

News from the Shirley G. Moore Laboratory School at the University of Minnesota

Gym Jam

Saturday, February 11th from 4-6pm at Bierman indoor field. Detailed directions and parking information will be sent out next week to Lab School families and alumni as well as on our Facebook page. Our goal for Gym Jam this year is to raise \$3,000 for outdoor and large motor equipment.

We need parent volunteers to help out at the event! Easy 30-minute shifts are available at the snack table and to help clean up after the event. Sign up for a volunteer shift here:

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1CfZeOtU6Nfi-eLOY142bBh6jMWVGo43FBh4pZQgNjk0/edit?usp=sharing> -

Little Free Library

If you haven't had a chance to check out the Little Free Library just at the bottom of the stairs, we encourage you to take a peek, grab a book, or leave a book next time you are at school. If there is a green fabric cover over the books, it is just to help when there are small groups that may become distracted. Feel free to lift the cover and enjoy!

Winter Greetings!

Hello Lab School families, we are so happy to have you all as a part of the community. Please know that we are unified in believing that all families are welcome, respected, and valued. Our University students as well as the children that attend the Lab School and their families are supported and important in our community regardless of their nation of origin, religion, and immigration status. We believe that we can best prepare the teachers of tomorrow by having a richly diverse environment that engages all children and families in the learning process and that diversity of language, culture, history, background and so much more benefit our children, our University students, and our lives as educators.

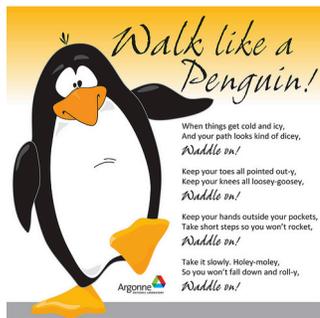
This winter we have been able to enjoy many beautiful moments outside and we truly appreciate all of the laundry, packing of extra clothing, and probably cleaning your car that has to happen when children so thoroughly explore their world. Thank you for all that you do in support of this level of engagement with learning and exploration.

Over half of our families participated in our annual survey and I have shared some of the results and offered responses to some of the areas that were highlighted in the survey. Please see the section on Program Assessment and contact me with any questions. Thank you for your participation in the survey and in the Lab School community.

~ Sheila

Health & Safety

Winter in Minnesota can be a blast when you get out to enjoy some outdoor activity. Sledding and skating can be wonderful family excursions but safety can be a big concern for families with young children. Even walking on an icy sidewalk can be intimidating! Just remember....walk like a penguin and take it slow!



Sledding safety depends a lot on the snow conditions and the steepness of the hill. At school we teach the children how to use their feet as brakes so they can learn to control the speed of their sled and stop themselves.

Here is a link to more sledding safety tips:

<http://kidshealth.org/en/parents/safety-sledding.html>

Check out these sledding spots around town:

<http://minneapolis.happeningmag.com/sledding-city/>

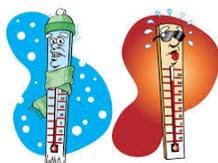
<http://www.startribune.com/best-sledding-hills-in-the-twin-cities-they-re-everywhere/367688441/>

We are fortunate to have so many lakes for skating. This winter has been warm so many lakes aren't safe for skating.

Ice thickness guidelines are here:

<http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/safety/ice/thickness.html>

Contributed by Amy Vavricka



Parent Ed

What is Big-Body/Rough-and-Tumble Play? **Tuesday, March 7 from 6-7.30p**

Often when we hear those words connected to young children, many of us think of wrestling, play-fighting, and/or aggressive play that often leads to injury. And while getting hurt can be one result of this kind of play, there are a myriad of other benefits that include a variety of physical skills. However (and more importantly), these benefits stretch into all other developmental domains. There are great emotional and social benefits that come from this kind of play – one of biggest being the ability to learn how to regulate oneself when feeling excited. These kinds of activities also help set up children's brains for later cognitive development – truly, letting your children wrestle can help them with math problems down the road. And the amount of creativity and imagination that often takes place during these games only supports later creative development.

Come to the parent info-night session to further this discussion, as well as learn about ways to incorporate and support this kind of play at home. And remember when I said this kind of play often makes of think of wrestling and more aggressive play, well there a *number* of other ways to have this happen at home: such as dance, yoga, obstacle courses, penguin slides (down the icy part of the hill on the playground), and many more...and probably some things you're already doing! While big-body/rough-and-tumble play is a *kind* of play, I'm a believer that it's also a mindset.

Find out more on Tuesday night, March 7th from 6-7.30p. Hope to see you there!

Contributed by Ross Thompson



Cooking: Oyako-Don

It has been so cold this winter season and all I have been thinking about is cooking something that is comforting, but easy and healthy. In Japanese cooking, Oyako-Don fits that satisfaction. It is a chicken and egg rice bowl that is an all time favorite of children and grown ups. The direct translation might sound "awkward," for the lack of a better word, as it means parent and child bowl. Do you get it? Yeah, a little strange. However, this mixture with the flavorful soy based soup really helps on those days when you want to make something that's quick and easy.

Oyako don (taken from <http://www.justonecookbook.com/oyakodon/>)

Prep time

5 mins

Cook time

15 mins

Total time

20 mins

Serves: 2

Author: Namiko chen

Ingredients

2 chicken thighs, rinsed and pat dry

3 Tbsp. **mirin**

1 Tbsp. **sake**

1 cup **dashi** (japanese soup base)

2 Tbsp. **soy sauce**

1 Tbsp. sugar

1/2 large onion, thinly sliced

2 large eggs, gently beaten

1 **mitsuba** (Japanese wild parsley) or green onion/scallion, finely sliced for garnish

3 cups cooked Japanese rice

Instructions

1. Slice the chicken and cut into 1" (2.5 cm) pieces
2. In a large frying pan, add mirin and sake and bring to a boil over medium high heat.
3. Add dashi, soy sauce and sugar, and bring to a boil again.
4. Add the onion in a single layer and place the chicken on top. Cover and bring to a boil.
5. **Skim off the scum and fat**, and cook over medium heat for about 10 minutes.
6. Slowly and evenly drizzle the beaten egg over the chicken and onion. Cook covered until the egg is done. Shake the pan occasionally so the egg and chicken don't stick to the pan.
7. Add the mitsuba (or green onion) right before removing from the heat. Pour the chicken and egg on top of steamed rice and pour desired amount of sauce.

That's it! If you want to see the pictures, just click on the website up top or [here](#). Enjoy!

Contributed by Ayuko Boomer



Parking Update

A new parking permit card will be implemented this month. Sheila will be distributing them on the curb during pick up times the week of February 13th and University Parking will be ticketing cars without the permit beginning February 27th. Please also remember that this parking permit is good for this school year, up to 20 minutes and in lot C47 only. Thank you.

Scholastic Book Orders

The due date for January orders was on January 27th and those books are on the way. However, using our school code: H7MHT, you can order books anytime at Scholastic.com. The books would still be delivered to the Lab School and our school would continue to earn points on your order. Thank you for your interest and support.

PALS- Parent Association of the Lab School

Hi families! The next PALS meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, February 15th from 6-7pm and we would love to have you join us! This is a great chance to learn more about your children's school as well as the activities that will take place during the remainder of the school year. It is also the best way to have a voice for this and future school years! We have already hosted a fall camping trip and a HELP give holiday event - both were a large success! Coming up this winter and spring we have the Gym Jam, Creativity Night, the Green Market & Earth Day Clean up event with the toy exchange, the spring camping trip. The Spring Soiree is coming up on Saturday, May 6th and planning is beginning now. There are many ways to get involved in these activities as well as ways you can volunteer at the school. One really fun way is joining your child's class to make a food item that is special to your family or culture! Thank you to all of you for making our fall semester such a successful one! We are really looking forward to a great second half of the year.

Samira and Katie
PALS co-chairs

An excerpt from a letter from the Student Parent Help Center about the HELP event

Dear Adopt a Family Donors,

Another holiday season has come and gone and thanks to all our many supporters it was yet another successful Adopt a Family season as well. We can never thank any of you enough for your support of our students and our program. The Student Parent HELP Center has been able to provide a brighter and less stressful holiday season for hundreds of students over the last thirty years, due to the generosity of people like you. Beyond the gifts, the bright wrappings and ribbons and bows, our students say time, and time again, what means the most to them is that people who do not even know

them want to contribute to their success. That is what each of you is doing. In addition to creating smiles on the faces of our "little gophers" and greatly reducing the financial burden for an entire family, each student also sees AAF as an indication that anonymous friends in the community care about them, their children and their academic dreams.

We are hoping to evolve AAF in several areas next year. One much needed change is we will soon be working on establishing an updated web presence for the program, and one that will be linked to our soon to be updated SPHC website. This should eliminate the website glitches, the crashes, the difficulty with and delays in getting, wish list verifications. We will also be re-naming AAF next year in some way that ties it more directly to the U of M and the SPHC. We will send notices well in advance of the holiday season so the site can still be easily be identified by on-going donors. We are thinking of something like Little Gopher Wishes, or Gifts for Little Gophers, if anyone has any naming ideas they want to share please send to my email address, warfi002@umn.edu with "AAF Name" in the subject line. We are also hoping to offer at least one day where we can have a more festive, open house style gift drop, where students and donors who wanted to meet each other could do so over refreshments. This would not eliminate the scheduled drops and would not be mandatory, but is a request we have had from both student recipients and donors over the years. So look for updates next fall 2017 via email and on the website when the time comes.

With gratitude from the entire SPHC team,

Susan Warfield, Program Director

More information about the Student Parent Help Center can be found online:
<http://www.sphc.umn.edu>

KIDS CORNER

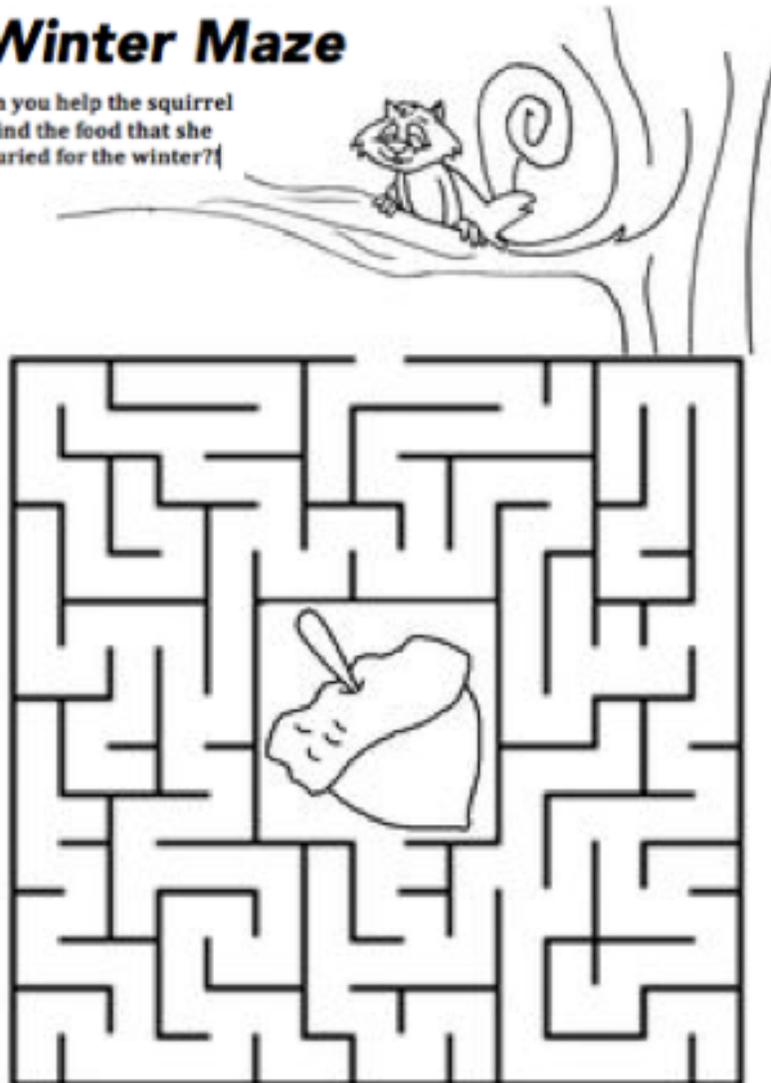
The long winters in Minnesota can drive us a little stir crazy. There are only so many snow forts you can build before you want to curl up on the couch and wait for spring. Or maybe that's just me. Here is a list of quick activities you can do to beat those wintertime, stuck-in-the-house blues!

- Fill up some spray bottles with water and a few drops of food coloring and let your children decorate your snowy yard!
- Make icy bird feeders by filling up uniquely shaped containers with water and birdseed. If you freeze a yarn loop into your creation you can hang your birdfeeders from trees in your yard.
- Find some clean snow and mix it with juice for a wintery treat
- Bring big bins of snow inside for a fun twist on snow play! Indoor snow play allows children to explore the melting process in a unique and hands-on way- it can also be a fun alternative for children who are very adverse to the cold!

Contributed by Marie Lister

Winter Maze

Can you help the squirrel
find the food that she
buried for the winter?!



Program Assessment

We work hard each day to provide a wonderful and engaging experience for your child and hope you feel like a partner in this endeavor. Our school has achieved a four-star rating through Parent Aware, the highest possible rating, and we will continue to strive for the best program offering. Our accreditation by NAEYC demonstrates that we meet the 10 Early Learning Program Standards and Criteria. A list of those criteria is posted in the hallway at the Lab School and can also be found [here](#). Together with state licensing, our parent aware rating, and your survey responses, we hope to meet all of the needs for your child's preschool education experience.

As we continue to assess and grow, we are incredibly thankful for all of your comments and survey answers during our mid-year online survey. We would like to thank you for the huge outpouring of support for the program noting that we had 58 families participate, over half of our community. We are most excited that 100% of the surveys rated your child's teacher as Very Good or Excellent with glowing comments to accompany those high honors for our teachers. Thank you.

We have also noted that although 95% of responses agreed or strongly agreed in the areas of a welcoming classroom and there were many glowing comments about the classroom spaces, we know the space is older and there were several comments about being hopeful about a new Institute of Child Development that is still in progress. The University is now taking bids for pre-design! We will share more information as it becomes available.

In the area of curriculum, nearly all families agreed or strongly agreed throughout the curriculum area questions, however there were some notable "not enough information" numbers that we would like to address. We aim to make our emergent curriculum clear through our lesson plans, documentation, and informal conversations, however we will continue to find new ways to share the school curriculum with families. Because our learning is play based, the learning is not always obvious without some dialogue. For example 12% of survey responses indicated that families didn't have enough information to know if the curriculum "fosters pre-academic concepts such as math, science, literacy, and social studies." These are areas that are deeply infused into the learning environment in every classroom and we want to help make them clear throughout the learning process for visitors and parents. In the comments about curriculum one family noted that fewer student teacher changes could help keep the learning momentum going with fewer transitions. I am happy to report that is something we are going to change for next year. We will only have one change of student teachers next year at the winter break, so we are decreasing the team changes from 3 trimester sessions to 2 semester sessions. This will also give more time with seasoned student teachers allowing them 15 weeks instead of 10 to learn, interact, and facilitate the learning at school.

In the area of communication, 100% of survey responses said the communication is valuable to understanding your child's adjustment in school. There were many positive remarks including "the communication is the best I've ever experienced with a teacher," and another exclaimed "I feel very engaged in my child's first experience away from home and I feel it also helps parents to find more topics to discuss about their child's day." There were some remarks about wanting more personalized email updates about individual children and more face-to-face time to talk to teachers directly. We know both family and teacher schedules are busy, but we hope to be able to find the time for a little bit of a conversation with each family at either drop off or pick up and of course we offer the home visit, fall check-in conference, winter conference, and an optional spring conference. We also want to highlight the website with classroom documentation and photos of the children experiences that we hope will highlight the learning and experiences your child is having at school. We know those are not always specific to your child, but we hope the look into the classroom community will help you have deeper conversations with your child about their experience and also enhance the dialogue at conference times. Although it would be great to be able to have more in-depth conversations, we realize our part-day schedule (and part-time staff) and drop-off and pick-up arrangements make that more difficult. We continue to strive to

make the communication efficient as well as meaningful, so please continue to let us know what works for you and we will do our best to make the learning at school visible.

The Lab School in general also received high marks in offering a welcoming environment. There were a few areas of either neutral or not enough information that we would like to address. In the area of safety, our number one concern is that children are physically and emotionally safe at school. We know that sometimes there are injuries and we hope if all can't be avoided that we take as many precautions as necessary to continue to keep children safe. We also have all of our student teachers, substitutes, lead teachers and director receive background checks, now including finger printing, as well as all receiving training in pediatric CPR and First Aid. We know that leaving your children in our care is our highest honor and we take that very seriously. For example, next year we will be switching where the toddler and preschool classrooms are in front of the building so the toddlers will have direct access to their playground. This will eliminate our youngest children walking near the street during transition to outdoor play. We complete a Risk Reduction Plan annually and document all injuries to be sure we are continuing to make school a safe place for children and families.

In the area of nutrition, we offer a varied and balanced menu, but continue to look for new options for the large variety of children's taste, allergies, sensitivities, and experiences. We purchase as much organically grown grain and produce as we can and have added additional dollars into next year's budget to expand the organic offerings.

In presenting our policies in a clear manner- we have moved to have our handbooks and safety manual available online as well as in printed copy at the beginning of the year. If there is anyway we can make any policies more clear, please don't hesitate to ask- we strive to make them as clear as possible, noting that some come directly from licensing or accreditation standards.

About 25% of families stated they didn't have enough information in the area of research. We apologize that the research portion of our program has not been as clear. Currently there is only one study in one classroom and it is observation only, so most families, outside of signing the consent forms, haven't had any research information this year. Please know that if research begins or is planned for your classroom we will keep every family informed with the forms detailing the research information and protocol, as well as an opportunity to opt out of any proposed research in your child's classroom. All research is followed up with a note letting you know any time your child participates in a study. We will also highlight any findings in our next newsletter.

The general comments from the survey were again glowing with 100% of responses noting that their child is benefitting from their preschool experience. A few did note that more parking would be good and the breaks are a little long, but overall children are having a wonderful experience learning and growing along with the University of Minnesota student teachers and the Lab School staff. We truly appreciate your feedback through the anonymous survey, but please know you are also welcome to share you feedback anytime by contacting your child's teacher directly or the director at any time. Thank you for your trust, your confidence, and your support.



The Lab School is participating in the FundingFactory® Recycling Program!

This fundraiser is FREE and simple because there's nothing to sell, no paperwork to fill out and no deadline. The program runs year-round, accumulating constant income for our efforts. But we won't get very far without your support. Please donate your empty printer cartridges, cell phones, small electronics, and laptops to our school and we'll take it from there! We will recycle the cartridges, cell phones, small electronics, and laptops through FundingFactory to earn new technology and/or recreational equipment.

Last year alone, more than 300 million cartridges were thrown away, while 30,000,000 cell phones were tossed or replaced. We're alleviating the volume of waste that goes into landfills. Your help is vital to our fundraising success. Cartridges, cell phones, small electronics, and laptops can be dropped off at the school office in room 10.

Thank you for your support



Winter Family Calendar

- **February 11:** Gym Jam at Bierman Indoor Field (4-6pm)
- **February 15:** Parent Association of the Lab School (PALS) Meeting- 6pm in room 105
- **March 13-24:** School Closed for Spring Break
- **March 20-24:** Parent-Teacher Conferences

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