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Department of Human
Development and Family Science

Ben and Maxine Miller Child Development Laboratory School

Parent Handbook
2026-2027



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Dear Families:

We are very pleased to welcome you and your family to the Ben and Maxine Miller Child Development Laboratory School (MCDLS) at Purdue University!

Our program philosophy affirms our belief in the uniqueness and inherent value of each child, parent, university student, teacher, and staff member. We value the ethnic and cultural diversity which all our families bring to the program. It enriches the lives of both children and adults when individuals of diverse backgrounds respect one another as they work and play together. All staff members strive to provide a nurturing, accepting, and comfortable atmosphere for your child, in addition to planning developmentally appropriate activities that will help them develop physically, socially, cognitively, and emotionally.

It is important to facilitate children's learning, in a supportive, safe, and nurturing environment. We strive to meet the needs of each individual child and support their family throughout their time with us in the lab school.

We encourage you to become involved in our program in a variety of ways, realizing that you may have limited time to spend. You are welcome to visit your child's classroom to share a story, observe, go on a field trip, and/or serve on the Parent Advisory Committee (PAC).

We look forward to working and talking with you. Please feel free to contact your child's teachers or the director with comments, questions, and/or concerns.

The Ben and Maxine Miller Child Development Laboratory School

Staff and Teaching Team

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MISSION STATEMENT

The Ben and Maxine Miller Child Development Laboratory School at Purdue University is a place where young children and families learn and grow. Actively engaging the world around them, each day children, teachers, parents, researchers, and university students play and work together, creating a safe, loving community of discovery.

PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY AND GOALS

The foundation of our program is a belief in the uniqueness and intrinsic value of each child, parent, legal guardian, student, and staff member. Our day-to-day programming is informed by theory, which states that children actively construct their own knowledge by experimenting with and reasoning about things and events around them. We also believe that children learn best when they have high self-esteem, are confident and comfortable with themselves, and are challenged at a level appropriate to their development. We believe that while there are predictable stages of growth, there is also a uniqueness in the development of each child based on their personality, learning style, family background, and experiences. Each child's physical, social, emotional, cognitive, and language development may differ substantially from other children of the same age and even from their own growth in a different area. Therefore, we provide a variety of activities designed to engage and challenge the diverse developmental levels and interests reflected in each group of children. We strive to maintain an atmosphere of acceptance, allowing children to develop a strong sense of self-worth.

CURRICULUM AT MCDLS

Parents, as well as visitors from other programs, often ask us about our curriculum. The curriculum in our classes is based on research in the way in which young children grow and learn when they are in groups with their peers. The word curriculum is derived from Latin and means a running course. Teachers plan classroom experiences to help children achieve goals that are important to “run toward.”

Appropriate curriculum for young children

The curriculum for young children is about discovering new ideas, not about memorizing facts. Classroom activities and routines are intentionally designed to help children establish the confidence to try new activities, explore fresh ways of doing things, and solve problems independently. At the same time, children learn to respect others and appreciate different perspectives. Our curriculum is never static; it is a living framework that changes constantly to reflect the evolving needs, strengths, and interests of individual children as well as the group as a whole.

How We Put This into Practice: Learning Through Play

Play is important as it is the avenue in which young children learn. When children play, they are actively experimenting, testing hypotheses, and developing critical cognitive, social, and emotional skills. We purposefully weave play into every learning experience throughout the day; classroom schedules reflect planned opportunities for play which are included in both children's choice time and outside play. Additionally, the curriculum reflects play in areas such as: **Math & Engineering:** Building blocks to explore weight, balance, and spatial relationships. **Language & Empathy:** Engaging in dramatic dress-up play to practice storytelling, emotional regulation, and perspective-taking. **Science & Inquiry:** Splashing and pouring at the sensory table to learn about volume, gravity, and cause-and-effect.

By transforming academic concepts into hands-on, playful discoveries, we ensure that learning remains deeply meaningful, adaptable to your child's interests, and, above all, joyful.

Early Learning Matters (ELM) is the curriculum tool we use in the classroom to guide day to day instruction for all the children from six weeks to age five. The curriculum is a balance between child-initiated play and engagement, and intentional teacher guided activities. The curriculum is accessible to parents at [ELM Curriculum](#) for both the infant/toddler and preschool resources. Decisions about planning are made by teachers who are responsive to input from children. The ELM curriculum is the framework of implementation for instruction in the classrooms with a combination of teachers' knowledge and the interest and abilities of children. You will see that the curriculum in our program is also blended with several different models that have existed in our field. These different approaches include providing children with activity-based, hands-on learning experiences, projects that may last for a period of days (or weeks), opportunities to closely observe and document what they see and feel and encourage learning by working closely with peers.

The role of the child in an early childhood curriculum

The experience and abilities of individual children are the starting point for curriculum. Children's learning is influenced by their previous experiences, as well as by planned classroom activities. Children help us to understand that the way in which they learn best is likely to reflect differences in their physical and cognitive abilities, their interests, and their previous experiences. Children's actions and reactions in the classroom provide a guide for teachers in understanding the child's interests, ideas, and which concept or activities are challenging, and which are not.

The role of the teacher

Teachers must have a substantial knowledge base in child development and understand the ways in which theory and research inform classroom practices. Teachers are keen observers of children. The teaching team takes notes and meets to discuss what they have seen, the meaning of their observations (of children's interests), and make decisions about activities, field trips, and resource people, that help children construct further understanding and skills. This is responsive planning. Teachers facilitate children's learning by asking questions, responding to children's ideas, encouraging experimentation, helping children to figure out new strategies to solve problems, and stimulating children's interest in new areas of learning. Teachers are skilled in setting up 'invitations' to learn, supporting children in their learning, and celebrating each child's achievements, large or small, with the child.

Teachers also collaborate with other professionals and the child's family to better understand each child's interests and experiences to help each child reach their potential.

The Role of the Family & Partnership

We view families as our most important partners. In addition to providing important experiences for your children every day, you support their learning at school by sharing information about their interests, background, and experiences at home. We deeply value open communication between families and teachers: it helps us truly understand the unique children in our classrooms and promotes positive feelings about school. We believe that, as parents, families, and legal guardians, you are the primary educators of your children. It is our function as teachers to support and facilitate the development and education of your child. We need your input and suggestions to do this well and we value your suggestions and observations. Because you are the expert when it comes to your child, we function best when we are able to take advantage of your perceptions, feelings, and observations about your child. We, therefore, encourage you to become actively involved in your preschool child's education.

Each Teacher will use a number of ways of promoting family involvement in their child's program. These might include individual conferences, meetings, visits to the classroom, and informal daily contact.

Each classroom will individually schedule their parent/family involvement activities.

How We Incorporate Your Family's Culture

We believe a child's learning environment should reflect their home life. To achieve this, we intentionally incorporate family language preferences into the classroom through books and stories, poems and rhymes, environmental print and labels, songs and music.

Ways to Get Involved

We warmly invite families to be active participants in our learning community. Depending on your schedule and interests, here is how you can get involved:

In the Classroom

- **Share Your Home Life:** Keep your child's Head Teacher or associate teacher updated on new interests, milestones, or big changes at home so we can connect their two worlds.
- **Volunteer:** We welcome families to share a special talent, read a book in your home language, or participate in classroom celebrations. *(Note: Please coordinate with your child's Head or Associate Teacher in advance).*

At the Program Level

- **Join the Parent Advisory Committee (PAC):** We invite families to serve on the PAC for MCDLS. This committee plays a vital role in advising leadership, planning community events, and helping shape the future of our program.
- **Attend Center Events:** Join us for our scheduled family nights, workshops, and seasonal celebrations throughout the year to connect with other families and staff.

A Note on Collaboration: Your insights are invaluable to us. By working together, sharing feedback through our established lines of communication, and participating in program life, we create the strongest possible foundation for your child.

Accreditation

MCDLS is accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) because we value a professional community that ensures high quality early childhood programs and provides an advocacy of support for children, families, teachers and staff.

In addition to accreditation from NAEYC, the center also participates in the voluntary Paths to QUALITY™ a quality-rating program funded by the State of Indiana. The system validates childcare programs for ongoing efforts to achieve higher standards of quality and provides incentives and awards for success. The four levels address:

- Level One: Health and safety needs of children met.
- Level Two: Environment supports children's learning.
- Level Three: Planned curriculum guides child development and school readiness.
- Level Four: National accreditation (the highest indicator of quality) is achieved.

The Ben and Maxine Miller Development Laboratory School holds a Level Four rating from Paths to QUALITY™.

The Child Development Laboratory Preschool at Purdue University has been accredited since 1985. The Laboratory school was established in 1926 at Purdue University. The Ben and Maxine Miller Child Learning Center was established in 1983 and was accredited with NAEYC in 1998. In 2011, the Laboratory Preschool and the Child Learning Center merged to form the Ben and Maxine Miller Child Development Laboratory School. The merged programs maintain the NAEYC accreditation and the Level Four, Paths to QUALITY™.

Documenting and knowing what children are learning (Assessments and Observations)

The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) defines appropriate early childhood assessment as an ongoing process of observing, recording, and otherwise documenting the work young children do in their natural learning environments. This is the approach we use to understand (and document) what children are learning. The ELM Curriculum also includes embedded assessments and observations.

1. Authentic, Observation-Based Assessment

To capture a true picture of your child's growth, teachers gather information about each child by observing and taking notes on children's activities, keeping samples of children's work (through photographs as well as actual products such as drawing or writing), and consulting with other team members. The teaching team in each classroom reviews information about each child on a regular basis to document the children's development, ensure they are progressing toward our program's learning goals, and know when a child needs more experience in certain areas.

As a teaching facility, our curriculum plans will be prominently displayed for educational purposes. You will also see examples of children's work and photographs of learning in action displayed throughout the center.

2. Using Assessment Data for Continuous Program Improvement

Assessment data doesn't just stay in an individual child's portfolio it directly informs how we improve MCDLS. Our leadership and teaching teams regularly review aggregate, anonymous assessment data to evaluate our own program effectiveness. We use these reflections to drive continuous quality improvements by:

- **Refining Curriculum:** We analyze trends across the classrooms to adjust our overall curriculum planning, ensuring our activities remain responsive to the changing needs and interests of the children.
- **Enhancing Environments:** We evaluate whether our physical classroom spaces, learning materials, and playground environments are successfully supporting children's developmental milestones.
- **Targeting Professional Development:** We use assessment trends to identify specific areas where our teaching staff would benefit from additional specialized training, mentoring, or professional research.

3. How Families Partner in the Assessment Process

You are your child's first and most important teacher, and we view assessment as a collaborative partnership. We explicitly invite and encourage families to contribute to the assessment of their child's development and learning in the following ways:

- **Sharing Insights at Enrollment:** We ask you to share initial reflections about your child's strengths, routines, comforts, and milestones as they transition into our program. This includes completing the Ages and Stages questionnaire and the family intake form.
- **Ongoing Daily Dialogue:** We invite you to talk with our teaching teams and share updates about major milestones, changes, or new interests your child displays at home. This can happen informally through telephone calls, e-mails, and/or brief conversations when you drop off or pick up your child.
- **Formal Family Teacher Conferences:** We formally share developmental information with you at scheduled conferences in the Fall and Spring, where written reports will be provided. During these meetings, we encourage you to share your own observations, goals, and perspectives so we can co-create the best learning plan for your child.

Parent-teacher conferences

All the teachers hope they will be able to chat informally with parents and legal guardians for a few minutes each day. In addition, Head Teachers may schedule individual conferences with parents and legal guardians to discuss the child's progress and any special accomplishments or concerns. Parents and legal guardians are encouraged to request additional individual conferences when they deem them necessary. Teachers may also invite parents and legal guardians to discuss special concerns about individual children.

- We will offer parent/teacher conferences 2 times per year; once in the fall and once in the spring, or in special cases, as requested by the teacher or parent.
- We will provide written information to each family about your child's progress at least twice per year.
- We will provide written OR verbal information to each family at least 4 times per year, in formal or informal ways.

General Educational Goals for Children at MCDLS

All our observations and curriculum planning are designed to support children as they work toward these core developmental goals:

- **Communication:** To become increasingly more able to express ideas, thoughts, needs, and feelings effectively.
- **Community:** To learn to respect the rights and feelings of others as they work together with children and adults.
- **Resilience:** To develop effective strategies for dealing with challenges and problem-solving.
- **Inquiry:** To have an interest in and curiosity about things in the world, along with a spirit of experimentation.
- **Independence:** To use initiative in pursuing curiosity, and to have confidence in one's own ability to figure things out for oneself.
- **Holistic Growth:** To support optimal social, emotional, cognitive, language, and physical development.

RELATIONSHIP WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN DEVELOPMENT AND FAMILY SCIENCE

The Ben & Maxine Miller Child Development Laboratory School (MCDLS) is operated by the Department of Human Development and Family Science as a laboratory setting for the use of faculty and students in the department and from around the university. It serves missions for the department in three general areas: community service/model programming, undergraduate teaching, and research. These three functions are discussed in more detail below.

Community service/model programming

MCDLS is dedicated to providing an exemplary early childhood education and childcare program for children and families in the greater Lafayette community, and to serve as a model of the best in early childhood practices for individuals, educators, and other institutions in the region and the larger community. We achieve this objective by cultivating experimentation and innovation in various aspects of early childhood programming based on recent research and theory about child and family development and early education. Another aspect of this effort is our ongoing evaluation and improvement of many features of our programs.

Undergraduate teaching

MCDLS provides opportunities for undergraduate and graduate students to observe and participate with children between the ages of 6 weeks and 6 years in various ways. Students majoring in Early Intervention and Early Childhood Education observe and participate in order to develop a frame of reference concerning the growth, development, and behavior of young children. These experiences allow students to participate in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of activities; to observe children's reactions to the routines of the day; to study their progress through the program; and to develop skills in interacting positively with both individual children and groups.

MCDLS serves as a student teaching site for Early Childhood Education and Exceptional Needs majors. The student teaching semester represents the culmination of the Department of Human Development and Family Science four-year undergraduate program, resulting in certification in Preschool Education and Exceptional Educational Needs by the State of Indiana. Each classroom may have one student teacher candidate each semester. MCDLS is also used as an observation site by students from other departments at the university.

Confidentiality

- All staff, practicum students, and volunteers sign confidentiality statements; class lists will be issued with only the information that parents have given permission to be listed.
- You have the right to view information about your child that we are keeping by requesting the information from your child's teacher and/or Director.
- Your child's registration information, family information you provide, medical releases, and authorized pickup information are maintained in a confidential locked file in the main school office.
- Teachers maintain a locked file for each child in the classrooms. These individual files contain copies of material in the main office, plus individual children's assessment information collected by the teacher.

Research

MCDLS is actively involved with faculty members and students on campus in generating knowledge and developing innovative educational practices. It provides an excellent resource for the study of the child in the context of the family and community. Research projects have involved the development of research instruments, masters' and doctoral theses, pilot efforts leading to outside funding, and full-

scale studies. Investigations have focused on a range of topics related to the development of social and cognitive abilities; the creation and management of early education environments; and relationships between teachers, children, and families. The research component is coordinated so that interference or disruptions of the educational program are minimized. However, since the research project represents one of the major commitments of the MCDLS, we work to create an environment in which research efforts are supported.

Research procedures

From time to time, you may be asked to give permission for your child to participate in research projects and/or be invited to participate yourself. To control both the quality and quantity of research projects that are conducted in the program, a five-step procedure for project approval has been established. Below are brief descriptions of the process through which a project goes before any child participates.

University committee on the use of human subjects

Research proposals are not considered by the MCDLS staff until the project director has received written approval from the University Committee on the use of Human Subjects. This university-wide committee, directed by the Associate Provost and Dean for Academic Services, is responsible for assuring that the intent, design, and methods of the research project do not represent unusual and unnecessary risk to the participants and are not unethical in nature.

Ben & Maxine Miller Child Development Laboratory School

Once the project has received approval from the University Committee on the use of Human Subjects, the proposal is submitted to the Director of MCDLS. They review each proposal from several perspectives: (1) the consistency of the research with the goals and objectives of the Program, and (2) the relationship of the proposal to other commitments of the Program. The MCDLS Director then coordinates the scheduling of the project through the Head and/or Associate Teachers. A schedule is developed which conforms to the requirements of the research, but which causes minimal disruption to the functions and activities of the classroom.

Parental and legal guardian informed consent

Upon approval and scheduling of each project that actively involves the children, a letter is forwarded to the parents and legal guardians which describes the purpose of that project, the actual procedures which will be used, the manner in which the data collected will be reported, and the phone numbers of project personnel who are available to answer additional questions. The letter also contains an informed consent that **should be signed and returned, even if the parents or legal guardians do not want their child to participate.**

Head teacher approval

Even after parental permission is received and the research project has begun, the Head Teacher and/or Associate Teacher always gives approval for an individual child's participation on a particular day.

Your child

Much of the research conducted is observational in nature. These observations may be conducted within the classroom. However, some research projects involve individual sessions with children, either in a quiet corner of the classroom or in a nearby research room in the Center. It is natural, occasionally, for children to be reluctant to leave their group, even for a short period, in order to participate in an individual research session. The research staff is sensitive to this; we recognize that the final arbiter of participation in a research project is the child. Despite parental or legal guardian permission, no child who is reluctant to participate in a research project will be pressured to do so.

Researchers are instructed to return the child immediately to their teacher if any reluctance or anxiety is apparent.

These procedures have been created to protect the integrity of MCDLS, to assure participation in quality research, and ultimately, to assure that participation represents no risk to the children and families.

Confidentiality

- All staff, practicum students, and volunteers sign confidentiality statements; class lists will be issued with only the information that parents have given permission to be listed.
- You have the right to view information about your child that we are keeping by requesting the information from your child's teacher and/or Director.
- Your child's registration information, family information you provide, medical releases, and authorized pickup information are maintained in a confidential locked file in the main school office.
- Teachers maintain a locked file for each child in the classrooms. These individual files contain copies of material in the main office, plus individual children's assessment information collected by the teacher.

CHILDREN'S PROGRAM

Ratios

MCDLS meets or exceeds the guidelines for staff-to-child ratios and group size set by the state and NAEYC. Children are placed in groups depending on their birthdates.

Age of the Youngest Child in Group	Maximum Number of Children Supervised by One Caregiver	Maximum Number of Children in One Group
Infant (6 weeks –12 months)	4	8
Toddler (12 months – 24 months)	5	10
2 years	*5	*10
30–36 months	7	14
3 years	10	20
4 years	12	24
5 years and older	15	30

*MCDLS holds a waiver for the 2 year old room to have a group size of 14 with 3 adults

Safety and Active Supervision Policy

At our center, the safety and well-being of your children are our highest priorities. We practice active supervision, which means our teaching teams are intentionally positioned, alert, and always engaged to anticipate children's needs and ensure a safe learning environment. Because different stages of development require different levels of care, our supervision practices are strictly defined by the age of the children we serve.

Supervise Standards by Age Group

To maintain a secure and responsive environment, our teachers adhere to the following strict guidelines indoors, outdoors, and during transitions which include maintaining required adult to child ratios:

Age Category	Supervision Requirement	What this means in the Classroom
Children Under the age of 3	Sight and sound	Teachers always supervise children within sight and sound. A teacher must be able to visually check on and hear each child instantly, without exception, ensuring immediate physical proximity for our youngest learners.
Children Age 3 and Older	Sound	Teachers always supervise children within sound. An educator must be able to hear a child clearly at any given moment so that if a child were to call for help, a teacher could respond immediately.

Active Supervision into Practice

No matter the age group, our teachers use a combination of strategies to ensure these standards are met continuously throughout the day:

- Strategic Positioning: Teachers position themselves to minimize "blind spots" in the classroom and on the playground.
- Scanning and Counting: Teaching teams continuously scan the environment and count the children face-to-the-name in their care during all transitions.
- Focused Engagement: While interacting with a small group or an individual child, teachers remain acutely aware of the broader environment to maintain the required sight or sound connection with all children.

Tadpole Communication Tool

- Tadpole is a free app for families to download as a communication tool to be used primarily with teachers and staff in the classroom. Administration also uses Tadpole to share relevant information such as upcoming center wide events, and exposure to illnesses. Information about the tool can be found at: www.tadpoles.com

Attendance using Tadpole:

- Tadpole is used for daily attendance; parents are asked to communicate any attendance items through the app; this includes information such as changes in the pickup or drop off schedule, notes about illness, quick questions, or comments for the teaching staff. Please use email for in-depth questions/ comments or communications.

Photos and Videos using Tadpole:

- The expectation for the use of Tadpole includes sending a minimum of two pictures a week of your individual child. These do not include posed group pictures (think about school group pictures); although we encourage these to be shared with families as often as possible. Teachers and staff are encouraged to check the photo before they are sent for appropriate background items such as making sure another child in the background isn't picking their nose; or using the bathroom. Keep in mind what's going on around the photo. A minimum of two pictures a week will include a short description with details. Such as "Hope is working on cutting with scissors."

Documentation for food using Tadpole:

- We serve a daily breakfast, morning snack/ afternoon snack and lunch; breakfast is provided when needed. Infants will have more robust documentation based on their individual feeding plan; any time an infant is given a bottle these will be recorded with both the time and the amount consumed. Each classroom will record a child's intake for all snacks and meals. Tadpole notes the food intake as: All, some, none. If you are seeking specific information about your child's intake of food, please communicate this with the head teacher.

Medication and Illness using Tadpole:

- Medication is also recorded on the Tadpole app when administered to your child; documentation is also recorded on a hard copy in the classrooms to ensure medication is administered at the right time, the right amount, and with the correct d. Please note any medication given to children while attending the lab school must include a completed medication form. Please see either the front office or your head teacher for this form.
- Illness will be communicated first to families through a phone call, if a family member does not answer the phone a message will be left, and then a message through tadpole will be sent

requesting your child be picked up due to illness. The illness will be described such as temperature, etc. Tadpole will be used to notify families if a child is being monitored because they have symptoms that could lead to illness. Any communication about illness will be clear to identify if a child needs to be picked up from the center.

Lesson plans using Tadpole:

- Weekly lesson plans are disseminated through either classroom distribution lists and/or shared through the app for each classroom. Lesson plans are expected to be shared by Monday mornings by 9:30am. (Unless the center is closed the lesson plan will be shared no later than Tuesday morning by 9:30am). Monthly newsletters are also disseminated either through the Tadpole app or through email. The Center wide monthly newsletter is also shared either through email or the Tadpole app. Parent Advisory Committee information is also included in emails through the Tadpole app.
 - Lesson plans are also posted in the classroom on the Parent Bulletin board, and in the observation booths.

Newsletters:

Each classroom publishes a monthly newsletter with news about class activities and upcoming events. The newsletters are sent electronically and posted on the Parent Bulletin Boards for each classroom. The center wide newsletter is shared on Tadpole for all the families.

Bathroom/Diapering/Potty Training using Tadpole:

- Bathroom/Diapering/Potty training are also captured differently in classrooms depending on the age of your child. Purple, Red, and Blue document all diaper changes noting wet, BM, or dry, this includes the time the diaper was changed, and any notes needed. If diaper cream is needed this will also be noted for when the teachers and/or staff apply diaper cream. If potty training with a child the classrooms will document by noting attempted, wet, dry, or BM, or pee. For example, Wet, Tried means the diaper was wet, but the child tried on the toilet. Dry, Pee means the diaper was dry and the child went pee on the toilet. After each recording of a diaper change or potty training attempt the teacher and/or staff initials will appear to include which teacher worked with your child while bath rooming.

Napping/Sleeping using Tadpole:

- Napping/sleeping documentation on Tadpole are noted for all children in the program. The duration of the nap is captured by the beginning of the sleep time and end of the sleep time. Children who rested on their cots are also noted in Tadpole or if they went to the awake room.

General Communication using Tadpole:

- Tadpole has a section noted Activities; in the activities the purple room provides a daily summary for each child, in the red and blue rooms the activities section is used to align the classroom engagement with pictures of a child within a specific area of growth.
- Notes are sent with the daily report when there are reminders about specific classroom events, such as “PJ day” is tomorrow or “we are need of more wipes”. These are sent as needed throughout the week by all the classrooms.

It is important to check Tadpole communications DAILY

What children will need

The following items should be labeled:

- Clothing that is comfortable, washable, and easy for children to handle during changing or toileting.
- Sweaters and jackets for cool spring and fall days.
- A swimsuit, water shoes and a towel during the hot weather months **may** be needed. Teachers will inform you as the warm weather approaches.
- A snowsuit or jacket and snow pants, boots, scarf, or hat, and **two sets of waterproof mittens** for the cold weather months.
- Two extra sets of clothing for the current session, including socks, underwear, and shoes.
- Parents and legal guardians must provide diapers and wipes for those children who need them in unopened containers.
- Since the cleanliness of baby bottles and pacifiers is difficult to maintain in a multi-need group such as ours, **we ask that you not bring them**, unless your child is in the Purple room.
- A blanket, crib sheet and/or **small (not full size)** pillow for nap. A **soft noiseless** “nap toy” is optional for children resting and/or sleeping on a cot.

(Your child’s Head Teacher will provide enrolling families with a more specific list for their classrooms.)

Extra items needed for infant & toddlers

- Bottles need to be pre-made. We will send home any unused bottles.
- Crib sheets are provided for infants younger than 12 months.
- Baby food needs to be brought in from home.

Infant & toddler classroom

Before entering the Infant & Toddler classroom, we request all adults and children remove, replace, or cover with clean foot coverings, any shoes they have worn outside that play area. If children or adults are barefoot in such areas, their feet are visibly clean.

Breast feeding

MCDLS provides rocking chairs and quiet corners for mothers who breast feed their children. If sending breast milk for your child, please label the container with the infant's full name and date milk was expressed. MCDLS staff will store the breast milk in the refrigerator for no longer than 48 hours (or no more than 24 hours if the breast milk was previously frozen) or in a freezer at 0 degrees Fahrenheit or below for no longer than three months. The staff will gently mix, not shake, the milk before feeding to preserve special infection-fighting and nutritional components in human milk.

Infant and toddlers’ feeding

Infants unable to sit are held for bottle-feeding. All others sit or are held to be fed. Infants and toddlers/twos do not have bottles while in a crib or bed and do not eat from propped bottles at any time. Toddlers/twos do not carry bottles, Sippy cups, or regular cups with them while crawling or walking. Teaching staff offer children fluids from a cup as soon as the families and teachers decide together that a child is developmentally ready to use a cup.

Except for breast milk, staff serve only formula and infant food that comes to the facility in factory-sealed containers (e.g., ready-to-feed powder or concentrate formulas and baby food jars) prepared according to the manufacturer's instructions.

Bottle feedings do not contain solid foods unless the child's health care provider supplies written instructions and a medical reason for this practice. Staff discard after one hour any formula or breast milk that is served but not completely consumed or is not refrigerated.

If staff warm formula or breast milk, the milk is warmed in water at no more than 120 degrees Fahrenheit for no more than five minutes. No milk, including breast milk and no other infant foods, are warmed in a microwave oven.

Teaching staff do not offer solid foods and fruit juices to infants younger than 6 months of age, unless that practice is recommended by the child's health care provider and approved by families. Sweetened beverages are avoided. If juice (only 100% fruit juice is recommended) is served, the amount is limited to no more than four ounces per child daily.

Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS)

In compliance with NAEYC standard 5.A.12: infants, unless otherwise ordered by a physician with a medical reason, are placed on their backs to sleep on a firm surface manufactured for sale as infant sleeping equipment that meets the standards of the United States Consumer Product Safety Commission. Pillows, quilts, comforters, sheepskins, stuffed toys, and other soft items are not allowed in cribs or rest equipment for infants younger than eight months. Blankets are prohibited to use as per licensing. An infant sleep sack which has Velcro, or a zipper can be used to cover a child. The infant's head remains uncovered during sleep. After being placed down for sleep on their backs, infants may then be allowed to assume any comfortable sleep position when they can easily turn themselves from the back position.

Diapering and toilet training

Complete toilet training is not required for enrollment at MCDLS. Teachers will coordinate toilet learning with parents and guardians of children who may require diapers for part or all of the day. All children who have special needs and an ***Individual Education Plan*** that specify the need for diapering will receive appropriate care and assistance with diapering and/or toileting. Underwear and clothing that are soiled by urine or feces are immediately placed in a plastic bag (without rinsing or avoidable handling) and sent home that day for laundering.

Parents of children who have reached their third birthday are strongly encouraged to help their children attain a developmentally appropriate level of self-help skills. Parents whose children enter the program between the ages of 3-5 in diapers will be required to pay a **weekly diapering fee**. This fee is to cover extra staff needed until independent skills are attained and meet the teacher's satisfaction. Please refer to the enrollment contract for specific fees. Diapering fees are not charged for children who need a pull-up or diaper during nap.

If your child wears pull-ups, please provide the style with re-fasten able/easy-open sides This allows for quick changes without needing to remove shoes and pants.

Cloth diapers

For children who require cloth diapers, the diaper has an absorbent inner lining completely contained within an outer covering made of waterproof material that prevents the escape of feces and urine. Both the diaper and the outer covering are changed as a unit. Cloth diapers and clothing that are soiled by urine or feces are immediately placed in a plastic bag (without rinsing or avoidable handling) and sent

home that day for laundering. Each child who uses cloth diapers will have their own collection bin in the bathroom for soiled diapers. Please talk with your Head Teacher to coordinate the use of cloth diapers.

Toys from home

Policies on home toys are set by the **Head Teacher and their teaching team** for each class. Some classes allow home toys on sharing days; others allow children to play with home toys during one portion of the day. Please talk with the teachers before bringing in toys from home.

Siblings of enrolled children

Arrival times are not only important times for teachers and enrolled children, but also a very busy time. Because teachers are focused on every child's positive transition from home to school, we ask that you always remain with your un-enrolled children. The large motor room and the playgrounds are not open for general use by visitors. Parents are encouraged to join their child in the large motor room and playground if their child's class is scheduled for play in these areas.

Additionally, all activities are set up in advance with particular age groups in mind and ample activities for children enrolled. Siblings interacting with the activities may prevent enrolled children access.

Pets

We believe in the educational experience of caring for pets. Some classrooms provide this opportunity by including a pet in the classroom. All other animals or pets are not allowed in or on the MCDLS premises for any reason unless **prior approval** is given by the MCDLS Director.

Smoke Policy

Due to the health risks related to smoking and secondhand smoke, Purdue had adopted a smoke free campus. If a staff member or volunteer is smoking during a break, it needs to be in designated smoking locations, or in your vehicle. Designated smoking areas can be found on the Purdue website.

Additional information for Purdue policy on smoking can be found at: [Purdue Smoke-Free Campus](#)

Any staff member or volunteer who smokes before work or during a break must fully change their clothing prior to entering the classroom.

Third Hand Exposure to Smoking: Young children are particularly susceptible to the dangers of third hand exposure, as are adults with allergies, asthma, or respiratory problems or those who are susceptible to migraines. Thus, all staff (full and part time teachers and administrative staff), volunteers, student teachers and practicum students must be free from smells of cigarette smoke, wood smoke, or perfumes on their persons. If needed, the center does have a supply of extra shirts available for individuals to change into.

Please keep in mind that the center has the children's wellbeing in mind if we need to ask you to change your clothing.

Additionally, NO air fresheners shall be used to mask odors in the center, including in the adult and child restrooms.

Birthdays and special holidays

Birthdays and special holidays are celebrated in many different ways throughout the world. While we would like to have flexibility for you to share in the customs of your culture, we have some restrictions that we must abide by. Teachers encourage families to share holidays that they observe. We believe

that these celebrations represent unique opportunities for young children to experience and understand various cultural heritages. **Please speak with your child's teaching staff if you would like to share special holidays.**

You may send **purchased** treats in original, unopened packages for your child on birthdays and/or other special days if you wish. Unfortunately, we cannot serve homemade treats to the children. We suggest more nutritious snacks or non-food gifts for these special days. Listed below are snacks and non-edible treats that could be chosen to offset or replace the high-sugar birthday snacks. Talk to your child's teacher to discuss birthday treat suggestions for children with food allergies.

In lieu of food treats or goodie bags, you might choose to donate a book or toy in honor of your child's birthday. A label with their name and birth date will be put on the donated item. Your child would have the honor of opening/presenting this gift in front their classmates.

Suggested snacks

- cheese and crackers
- raisins (ages 3 +)
- pizza
- mini-muffins or mini-cupcakes
- bagels
- Fruit Roll-Ups
- fruit trays
- Goldfish Crackers

Non-Food Suggested Treats

- bubbles
- Play-Doh
- chalk
- crayons or markers
- stickers
- small plastic animals
- small toys, i.e. Hot Wheels
- coloring books

***IMPORTANT NOTE:** MCDLS is a nut-free environment. Please be sure that chosen items DO NOT contain nuts or peanut oil.

Snacks and meals

Snacks and meals are provided by MCDLS. Eating is a social activity that we enjoy. Good eating habits are acquired through imitation, practice, encouragement, and guidance. It is important that children enjoy the foods they eat. Menus can be accessed on the website [MCDLS Menus](#) as well as noted daily in Tadpoles for all the children. Some guidelines we use that help children develop healthy eating habits include:

- Food served in a relaxed atmosphere, which allows for social interactions with peers and adults.
- Snacks and mealtime provide a time to be together and for setting good examples. Children are marvelous imitators.
- Cooking experiences give children a sense of accomplishment. Children will have opportunities to help prepare snack.

Milk

MCDLS does not feed cow's milk to infants younger than 12 months, and it serves only whole milk to children of ages 12 months to 24 months. Children 2 years and older are served 1% milk; children with allergies can be served a milk substitute with a doctor's note. Families may choose to have their child served Organic milk for an additional monthly fee reflected on the contract. Please contact your Head teacher, Secretary or the Director for specific questions or requests. Questions can be sent to mcdls@purdue.edu

Safe food guidelines

Centers shall not offer foods that present a choking hazard to children younger than three (3) years of age, including, but not limited to, the following:

Whole grapes, hot dog rounds, hard candy, nuts, seeds, raw peas, dried fruit, pretzel nuggets, chips, popcorn, marshmallows, spoonful of peanut butter, and chunks of meat, carrots, cauliflower, and cucumbers larger than children can swallow whole. (Intent: To clarify that raisins are a dried fruit and cannot be served to children under three years of age.)

Staff cut foods into pieces no larger than ¼-inch square for infants and ½-inch square for toddler/ twos, according to each child’s chewing and swallowing capability.

Infants and toddlers often swallow pieces of food without chewing. Chicken tenders, fish sticks and other foods should be cut to the age group requirements. If this cannot be done, these foods should not be served regardless if the program provides the food or if it is brought from home. Staff should err on the side of safety regardless of whether a child has had problems chewing or swallowing.

Staff does not offer children younger than four years these foods: hot dogs, whole or sliced into rounds; whole grapes; nuts; popcorn; raw peas and hard pretzels; spoonful of peanut butter; or chunks of raw carrots or meat larger than can be swallowed whole.

Hard pretzel sticks and hard, small, traditionally shaped pretzels are high- risk foods for choking incidents.

Tooth brushing

At MCDLS each classroom offers tooth brushing after lunch. Oral health is discussed formally many times throughout the year. Daily the process of cleaning your teeth and gums is reiterated during the tooth brushing time. The procedure for tooth brushing is as follows:

- The sink is cleaned and sanitized.
- A child is given their toothbrush and asked to clean their teeth. (Some classrooms use toothpaste and other classrooms do not use toothpaste.)
- The child then rinses their toothbrush and returns the toothbrush to the teacher. This process is repeated until all children have had an opportunity to brush their teeth and gums.
- The toothbrush holder is then cleaned and covered.

Outdoor play policy

Regular outdoor play is a very important part of a child’s growth, exploration and learning about their environment. We plan to follow the guidelines and criteria for outdoor play set by the Indiana State Licensing regulations and National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). All age groups must play outdoors daily, if conditions permit, for children’s health and safety.

In cold weather, children must go outdoors if the wind chill is 25° F or above if conditions permit with teacher discretion. The length of time outside will be limited and gauged by the comfort of the children and their ability to communicate this. All children should come with appropriate outerwear (coats, hats, snow pants, boots, and mittens/gloves) to protect them in these conditions. Snow pants and boots should be supplied by the parents on days when there is snow on the ground. If a child wears boots to class, please be sure to bring shoes to change into while in the classroom.

In warm/sunny/hot weather, sunscreen application is mandatory. During the late spring and summer months, we will apply sunscreen for all children, unless the parent/guardian signs a release form asking

that we do not apply the sunscreen. Children will remain inside when the heat index (air temperature and humidity) is 100° F or above. While outdoors in warmer temperatures the children will be encouraged to get drinks of water often, to rest or lower their activity level as needed, and to play in the shade. Children should wear footwear that allows them to run, climb and take walks with ease. Protection from injuries and occasional bee stings is best provided by closed toe shoes; we suggest athletic type shoes. We also recommend children wear hats to protect them from the sun in summer and the cold in winter.

Water play is available during warm/hot weather; this includes “water days”. The teachers will notify the parents of these days. Sprinklers and the water table are available on the playground. During water days, please provide swimsuits, water shoes, towels, and hats.

Air Quality Procedures for outdoor play

The Indiana Family and Social Services Administration notes for programs receiving the Childcare Development Fund (CCDF) voucher:

“Air quality conditions that pose a significant health risk shall be identified by announcements from local health authorities or through ozone (smog) alerts. Children with respiratory health problems such as asthma shall not play outdoors when local health authorities announce that the air quality is approaching unhealthy levels.”

The Indiana Department of Environmental Management categories air quality within levels of health concern:

ppb = parts per billion

µg/m³ = micrograms per cubic meter

Ozone AQI is based on an 8-hour average

PM_{2.5} AQI is based on a 24-hour average

Health impacts associated with these AQI categories are:

Levels of Health Concern for AQAD	AQI Value	Ozone (ppb)	PM _{2.5} (µg/m ³)
High Moderate	90-100	67 – 70	30.6 – 35.4
Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups	101-150	71 – 85	35.5 – 55.4
Unhealthy	151-200	86 – 105	55.5 – 150.4
Very Unhealthy	201-300	106 – 200	150.5 – 250.4
Hazardous	301-500	> 200	250.5 – 500.4

- **High Moderate:** Occasionally, an action day is declared when the AQI is in the high Moderate range, or Code Yellow, if the levels are expected to approach Code Orange levels. Health alerts issued under these conditions are intended to inform the general public that there may be a moderate health concern for individuals who are unusually sensitive.
- **Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups (USG):** This triggers a health alert to inform the general public about potential impacts to sensitive groups, including people with lung disease, older adults, and children who are more vulnerable to ozone and people with heart and lung disease, older adults and children who are more vulnerable to PM_{2.5}.
- **Unhealthy:** This triggers a health alert to inform the general public that everyone may begin to experience some adverse health effects and members of sensitive groups may experience more serious effects.

- **Very Unhealthy:** This triggers a health alert to inform the general public that everyone may experience more serious health effects.
- **Hazardous:** This triggers a health warning of emergency conditions that are more likely to affect the entire population.

The administrative team will monitor the air quality through EPA AirNOW for local air quality information. In the event the air quality is noted as Hazardous, Very Unhealthy, and/or Unhealthy; outdoor play will be suspended for the period the health impacts are present. Air Quality that is categorized as “Unhealthy for sensitive groups” then, teacher descension will be implemented to reflect the needs of the classroom groups. Teacher discretion could include remaining inside, and/or outdoor play for a shorter period.

On-Campus Walking Field Trips

On nice days, classes frequently take walks around the Purdue campus to explore and learn (e.g., the local fire station, the Stone Hall fountain, or "Squirrel Park").

- **Consent:** To save paper, a single permission slip at enrollment covers all general campus walks while the child is enrolled at the lab school. These include stroller walks for the younger children, and walking field trips on campus.
- **Safety Protocols:** Staff always log their departure and return with the front office, and teachers carry cell phones and emergency contact information at all times.
- **Parent Participation:** Parents and legal guardians are always welcome and invited to participate in our field trips.

Off-Campus Field Trips

Some excursions require traveling off-campus, which may involve public transportation.

- **Consent & Notice:** You will receive prior notice for these specific trips via newsletters or memos. Separate, individual permission slips are required for every off-campus trip.
- **Parent Participation:** Parents and legal guardians are always welcome and invited to chaperone our group trips.

Participation Note: If permission is not granted for a campus walk or an off-campus trip, those specific dates will be shared with you well in advance so you can either opt to join the class with your child or arrange to keep your child home for the day.

Nap time/rest time

We believe that all children at the center need a rest period during the day from 12:30-2:00; rest or nap time varies from classroom to classroom. State licensing (470 IAC 3-4.7-53 Rest periods) pg. 66 “after thirty minutes, caregivers shall provide supervised alternative activities for nonsleeping children.” Children who do not sleep lie on their cots to relax until 1:00.

From 1:00 – 2:00, we have an “Awake Room” in the Fowler Activity Room for children ages 3 or older who do not sleep. The children participate in supervised quiet play. Due to staffing ratio, only 20 children can go to the Awake Room per day. Children who remain in their classrooms who are still awake will be given activities to do while in the classroom.

Licensing page 68 outlines “caregivers shall permit sleeping children to awaken naturally at their own pace.”

Visiting the program

Parents and legal guardians are welcome to visit MCDLS at all times. With our observation booths, you have the option of watching your child without them seeing you. You may also go into the room if you prefer. We encourage visits in both the morning and afternoon so that you can see your child involved in a variety of activities. We also encourage you to join your child for lunch from time to time but be sure to let the Head teacher or the Secretary at mcdls@purdue.edu know you are coming ahead of time so we can order sufficient food.

Purdue Mobile ID: Staff and families can download the Purdue Mobile ID, all mobile devices use the Transact eAccounts Mobile App available at the Apple App Store or on Google Play. Note that you may also use the Mobile Purdue ID on your own personal devices; visit [Purdue Mobile ID](#) for more information and instructions.

Physical Key Cards:

Physical Key Cards also known as Purdue Identification Cards; all Cards are the property of the University, can also be checked out to staff or families in need of a physical card.

Any misuse, defacement, modification, alteration, tampering, or deliberate damage to a Card and any falsification, forgery, fraudulent or illegal use of the door access card may be subject to appropriate disciplinary action. The University will refer suspected violations of the law to appropriate law enforcement authorities. A cardholder may only possess one Card at a time

Access is valid only while your family is enrolled in the Miller Lab School, cards are non-transferable.

Only the individual to whom the Card is issued is eligible to use the Card for authorized purposes.

Cardholders may be subject to a fee for the replacement of a lost or stolen card at the cost of \$25.00.

The University assumes no responsibility for the misuse of a Card. The Card is subject to confiscation if found in the possession of another person. If found, please return the Card to the Purdue ID Card Office.

Failure to act in accordance with the provisions listed herein or with any other policy or procedure outlined by the MCDLS will result in disciplinary action.

Arrival Information:

- Walk your child into your child's classroom, **do not leave your child in an unattended classroom**, if the classroom is outside on the playground, please walk your child to the teacher.
- Please wait for a teacher to acknowledge you (say "hello", "good-morning" or wave) before leaving to ensure the teacher or staff know your child has arrived.
- Please check your child's cubbies and mailboxes each day for any mail, soiled clothes, or bedding that needs to be taken home.
- Nap-time blankets and pillows are sent home weekly for cleaning, typically on Fridays.
- Read items in the parent information area in your child's room each day. This area is usually located just inside the door near the cubbies.

- For the safety and security of all children, please walk with them as you exit the building.

Discipline Policy at MCDLS

Discipline or guidance in the lab school is viewed as opportunities to guide children's growth and development. The goal is to help each child strengthen their own inner control of impulses and feelings. Experiences with family, teachers and peers help children develop the ability to regulate their emotions and to control actions. Teachers at MCDLS will use developmentally appropriate teaching methods to meet the needs of all enrolled children. Expectations for procedures and methods for supporting guidance will be appropriate to the age, development, and special needs of the children in each classroom. Teachers will provide a regular routine with a predictable class schedule and teach all children strategies for behaving in an expected manner. Teachers will use positive guidance, such as verbal redirection, problem solving, and focused discussion to resolve problems with children.

At MCDLS, we view discipline and guidance as opportunities to support your child's emotional regulation, impulse control, and personal growth. We know that all children misbehave at times or struggle to follow rules. Because a strong connection between home and school is vital to your child's success, we are committed to addressing any concerns families raise regarding their child's care and education.

If your child experiences ongoing difficulties with behavior that exceeds age-appropriate expectations, or if a family wishes to negotiate a challenge arising in the classroom, MCDLS utilizes a progressive process involving two levels of increasing formality to collaboratively find a solution.

Level 1: Informal Collaboration & Goal Setting (Initial Intervention)

When a classroom teacher documents a pattern of behavior that requires sustained intervention—such as actions that threaten the safety, well-being, or learning environment of your child or others—the school will initiate immediate collaborative steps:

- **Notification & Conference:** Parents or legal guardians will be notified, and a conference will be scheduled within three working days to discuss the behaviors and set positive goals for change. *(Please note: Parental participation is required; failure to attend will result in the child's temporary suspension until the conference occurs).*
- **Behavior Program Plan:** During this meeting, teachers, the Program Director, and the family will co-create an official **Behavior Program Plan** to be implemented immediately. For children receiving services through Greater Lafayette Area Special Services (GLASS) with an IEP, goals will be decided in partnership with GLASS specialists.
- **Weekly Check-ins:** Parents/guardians will meet with the classroom teacher each week to review documented progress, evaluate the plan, and maintain open communication.

Level 2: Formal Resources, Assessment, & Enrollment Review (Escalated Formalities)

If the behavior challenges persist despite the initial plan, the process moves into a more formal stage involving outside resources and potential enrollment review:

- **Mandatory Professional Resources:** Families may be formally asked to observe the classroom and/or seek outside professional testing and resources. To maintain enrollment, families are obligated to actively pursue this professional assistance.
- **Four-Week Progress Review:** If the behavior does not improve after four weeks, or if the family does not comply with the agreed-upon Behavior Program Plan, the Director reserves the right to revoke the child's contract and discontinue enrollment.

- **Immediate Dismissal Safety Clause:** In rare instances where the Teacher and Director determine that a child's behavior is unmanageable or seriously threatens the safety and quality of experience for other children, immediate dismissal from the program may occur during the four-week period.

Our Commitment to Safe Guidance: No matter the difficulty, MCDLS strictly prohibits corporal punishment or any guidance methods that are frightening, demeaning, or humiliating. Food and basic needs will never be used as a punishment or reward. Our priority is always to provide firm, fair, and positive guidance (such as verbal redirection and natural consequences) to help your child regain inner control in a safe, nurturing environment.

Community Resources for Families

We believe that supporting a child means supporting the whole family. We know that navigating the early childhood years can be both deeply rewarding and incredibly challenging, and no family is meant to do it entirely alone. Our community is rich with wonderful organizations dedicated to helping families thrive whether you are looking for guidance on a developmental milestone, seeking parent connection groups, exploring nutrition resources, or navigating a challenging life transition. The resources listed below are partners in our shared mission to help your child grow. We encourage all our families to explore and utilize these services whenever they might be helpful. Monthly newsletters are another resource with additional community resources and/or the parent bulletin board that includes seasonal activities.

As always, if you have questions or need assistance connecting with a specific type of support, please feel free to reach out to your child's Head Teacher, associate teacher and/or the Director. We are always here to help connect the dots for you. We recognize that a child thrives when their entire family is supported. Below is a curated list of community, health, and developmental resources available to help our families navigate the early childhood years.

1. Early Intervention & Developmental Supports: If you ever have questions or concerns regarding your child's physical, speech, social-emotional, or cognitive development, these specialized programs offer free guidance and early intervention.

- **First Steps:** Indiana's early intervention program provides completely free evaluations and services (like speech, physical, or occupational therapy) for infants and toddlers under age 3 who may experience developmental delays.
 - *Contact: (765) 420-1404*
- **Local Public School Districts:** For children ages 3 and older, developmental screenings and preschool special education services are provided through your local school corporation (e.g., Tippecanoe School Corporation, Lafayette School Corporation, or West Lafayette Community School Corporation).

2. Family Education, Counseling, & Well-Being: Parenting is a journey that shouldn't be done in isolation. These local resources provide counseling, parent education groups, and connection points for families.

- **Grace's House Family Resource Center (Bauer Family Resources):** A wonderful, stigma-free community hub designed to strengthen families. They offer social connections, diaper/household supply assistance, lactation counseling, and monthly "Family Fun Events."

- *Contact: frc@bauerfamilyresources.org*

- **Willowstone Family Services:** Provides community-based counseling, youth mentoring, and parent preservation programs designed to help families navigate life's stressors and strengthen parent-child relationships.

- *Contact: (765) 742-8272*

3. Nutrition, Health, & Wellness: Healthy nutrition and food security are foundational to a child's ability to learn and play.

- **WIC (Women, Infants, and Children):** Provides federal grants for supplemental nutritious foods, nutrition education, breastfeeding support, and healthcare referrals for pregnant or postpartum women, infants, and children up to age 5.

- *Lafayette Office: 1322 Tippecanoe Street | (765) 420-9999*

- **Purdue Extension Nutrition Education Program (NEP):** Offers free, hands-on, highly interactive program resources and newsletters (*Eat Gather Go*) to help families plan nutritious meals, practice food safety, and maximize grocery budgets.

- *Website: eatgathergo.org*

Observation booth

The classrooms are equipped with an observation booth that is open when classes are in session. The observation booth is designed for use by students, faculty, parents and the MCDLS staff to observe children, to study teaching techniques and strategies, and to observe program planning and classroom arrangement. Information gathered by students is for class use only, and the names of all children are kept confidential. The observation booth is also used for collecting data for various research projects. Parents are encouraged to use the booth during the time classes are in session. Children are not permitted in the observation booth.

Observers in the observation booth are asked not to engage in conversation with other observers. There may be other observers in the booth who are distracted by your conversation.

Videos and Technology

Videos and technology will be chosen carefully and used judiciously by teachers. All classroom activities, including electronic media, will be used only if they are developmentally appropriate and add value to the planned curriculum. Children under the age of 2 years will not participate in watching videos or using iPads. Smart Boards are in preschool age classrooms to enhance learning and development; they are not intended for passive TV watching. iPads are available in the classrooms and are open during center or choice time for preschool age children. Each child has a designated day of the week so they can access an iPad if they choose; for a limit of 30 minutes per week. iPad during choice or center time are for interactive learning and engagement. If you do not want your child to have iPad time during the week please let your classroom teaching team know.

Lines of communication

At the Miller Lab School, we believe that open, respectful, and ongoing communication between families and staff is essential for your child's growth and success. We welcome your questions, feedback, and insights, and we are committed to addressing your concerns promptly. In addition to the Tadpole app we want to also include information about lines of communication.

To ensure your inquiries are handled efficiently by the team members closest to your child, we ask that families follow our established communication pathway.

1. The Communication Pathway

When you have a question, updates about your child, or a specific classroom concern, please use the following steps:

- **Step 1: The Head Teacher (Your Primary Contact)** Your child's Head Teacher is always your first line of communication. They know your child's daily routines, progress, and classroom environment best.
- **Step 2: The Associate Teacher (Alternative Classroom Contact)** In the event that the Head Teacher is temporarily unavailable (e.g., out sick or assisting another child), the Associate Teacher is fully equipped to assist you with your immediate questions and/or concerns.
- **Step 3: The Director (Escalation)** In the event that communication has occurred with the Head Teacher and your question and/or concern has not been satisfactorily addressed, please contact the Director. (Contact the Director either by emailing esdevlin@purdue.edu or mcdls@purdue.edu)

2. How to Provide Ongoing Feedback, Ask Questions, or Raise Concerns

We want to hear from you! To make ongoing communication seamless, families can connect with us through the following channels:

- **For Quick Daily Updates:** Brief face-to-face check-ins during drop-off or pick-up are great for logistical notes (e.g., "They didn't sleep well last night"). However, please keep these brief so teachers can maintain supervision of the classroom.
- **For Detailed Questions or Concerns:** If you need to discuss your child's development, behavior, or a specific incident, please request a scheduled meeting or phone call with the Head Teachers have office hours from 2-3:30 pm daily when they can return a phone call or reply to e-mail. Associate Teachers have office hours daily from 10:30-11:30 am. Parents and legal guardians may schedule time to talk during office hours.
- **For Ongoing Policy or Program Feedback:** We welcome general feedback about our program at any time. You can submit suggestions by emailing the Director, dropping off a comment in our "Drop Box" located in the Hanley Hallway or in the waiting room in Fowler. We also encourage you to provide feedback in the annual family surveys shared in the fall and spring semester.

Our Commitment to You: We strive to respond to all non-emergency emails and messages within forty-eight hours, for urgent matters regarding your child's immediate safety or schedule change during the school day, please call the main office directly at **765-494-0240**.

Mailboxes

Each child has their own mailbox, cubby and/or pocket. Materials are distributed by the MCDLS staff and administration. If you would like to utilize the mailboxes to distribute materials or information of any kind, you must first request permission from the Head Teacher of your classroom, and the Director.

Translations, interpreters, and translators

MCDLS can provide the Ages and Stages questionnaires in Korean, Spanish or English. The School of Languages and Cultures may be able to assist us with interpretations or help us find a translator. Please contact them directly for further information. School of Languages and Cultures, Purdue University, 640 Oval Drive, West Lafayette, IN 47907-2039, Phone: (765) 494-3828, Fax: (765) 496-1700

Parent Advisory Committee

The Parent Advisory Committee (PAC) consists of parents and staff representatives. In their role as parental representatives, assume the responsibility of listening to parental concerns, observations, and suggestions and may plan fund raising events, family activities, and parent education programs.

The purpose of the PAC is: to promote friendly relations and mutual understanding between parents and teachers to cooperate with school authorities in order to advance educational, artistic, and other interests, social development and well-being of the students including fundraisers, and special events to act as a forum for parents views and attitudes toward topics of mutual interest to parents and the school to provide reciprocal opportunities for school administration to disseminate information to the parents regarding school policies and curriculum

Members of the committee are parents/guardians of the Center:

Purple: 2 reps and 2 alternates, Aqua and Yellow: 3 reps and 3 alternates, Green and Blue: 2 reps and 2 alternates, Orange and Red: 2 reps and 2 alternates

The representatives and alternates could rotate meetings when the class representative is unable to attend

One Head teacher, One Associate Teacher, and the Director

The responsibilities as a classroom representative:

1. Attend monthly PAC meeting representing your classroom.
2. Communicate monthly with the parents in your classroom to solicit
 - a. Questions/Concerns
 - b. Agenda items
 - c. Monthly communications are in the form of an email message sent to the Head teacher of the classroom (if unable to reach the Head teacher either the Associate teacher or Director can help with this).
 - i. The classroom teacher will forward the message to families in the classroom using the Blind Carbon Copy (BCC) and/or through Tadpoles
3. Minimally hosting a semester opportunity to talk with classroom families without staff attendance.
 - a. Semesters are defined as:
 - i. Fall August – December
 - ii. Spring January - May
 - b. Examples of events:
 - i. Attending the Parent meeting in September and introducing yourself as the classroom Representative

- ii. Hosting a “coffee hour” at the lab school during operating hours, something like come drop by between 7:30-8:30am in the Hanley atrium and meet the classroom PAC rep
 - iii. Hosting a virtual meeting
 - iv. Hosting an in person gathering at the lab school using the large motor room, and/or playgrounds,
 - 1. If childcare is needed contact the Director at least two weeks in advance to coordinate care
 - 2. Coordinating with the director; a staff representative to be present in the building; not attending the gathering (this is for liability issues; as well as general building needs)
 - 3. Refrain from planning over a weekend if childcare through the lab school is needed.
- 4. Share your contact information with the families in your classroom to enable communication for them to share any concerns, comments, thoughts.
 - a. As a classroom representative, encourage procedures such as determining if an comment or concern is related to the program as a whole; or would be better addressed in advocating for a meeting between the parent and teacher.
 - i. Some topics are appropriate for the PAC meetings and other topics are better handled by communicating directly with the classroom teaching team and/or directly with the Director or Assistant Director

PAC Co-Chair Description

The role of the PAC Co-Chair is to be the primary representative of the parents on the PAC. In practice, this means that you will be responsible for assisting with leading PAC meetings (especially the parents-only section), bringing forward issues that other PAC members/parents would prefer to be brought by another person, and occasionally meeting with the other Co-Chair (the school director) to ensure the smooth functioning of the PAC. Specifically, responsibilities include (in addition to PAC member duties):

- Soliciting PAC Members/Parents for agenda items for PAC Meetings
- Helping appropriately direct concerns to either the PAC agenda or to a classroom representative, based on who is best equipped to address the concern
- Raising and representing concerns when the originating parent would prefer to remain anonymous
- Leading PAC meetings with the other Co-Chair – keeping the discussion productive and on time, leading “parents-only” sections of the meeting

PAC Secretary Description

The secretary or note taker is responsible for capturing comments, or discussions during the PAC meetings. These can be a summary of specific information shared in the meetings and/or detailed questions or dialogue during the meetings.

The intent of the notes are to share with the MCDLS community information regarding agenda items; and encourage their input.

Once the meeting is concluded send the notes to the Director and/or Co-Chair for review. Once the Director and/or Co-Chair have reviewed the notes they share the notes with the committee members

for any revisions. Once the committee members have reviewed the notes, they will be shared with the MCDLS community with the monthly newsletter.

If in the event the secretary cannot attend the meeting, there is a sub secretary who will step in to ensure notes are captured during a PAC meeting. Substitute secretaries can either be someone who has volunteered to hold this position and/or someone in a meeting who is willing to take notes during the meeting time.

If you are interested in volunteering to be the PAC representative for your room, please let your Head teacher know, or email the director.

Enrollment

The MCDLS is open to all families regardless of race, creed, ethnicity, or cultural background. We are an equal opportunity provider and employer and comply with federal and state rights laws.

- The MCDLS serves children from 6 weeks to 5 years of age.
- Children who are 5 years old by August 1 are encouraged to enroll in kindergarten unless their developmental needs suggest another year of preschool will assist in the child's success in public school.
- Each classroom at the MCDLS enrolls children in accordance with the program, undergraduate teaching and research needs of Purdue University.
- Classroom structure may be changed from year to year to meet these teaching or research needs.
- Vacancies in the program are filled on the basis of date of application as well as the age and gender of the child.
- Previous enrollment in the MCDLS does give a child high priority.
- Placements are not reserved if a child is away for an extended period of time unless the family pays for that placement during the absence.

The Center may terminate your child's enrollment under the following circumstances:

1. Non-payment for childcare services and/or lack of adherence to tuition payment policies.
2. Parents falsify information on enrollment forms or otherwise knowingly falsify information.
3. Parents do not agree or do not follow and comply with the policies set forth in this Handbook.
4. Lack of parental cooperation with the Center's efforts to resolve differences and/or to meet the child's needs through parent/staff meetings or conferences.
 - a. It is the last resort to terminate a child's enrollment at the lab school due to behavior
5. Inappropriate or abusive behavior and/or verbal abuse or threats by parents, relatives, guardians or other parties toward the Center staff, other parents, or children.
6. Inability of parents to deal in a professional manner with Center personnel or other parents and children at the center.
7. The continued enrollment of the child poses a risk to the health and/or safety of other children, parents or center staff members or continued enrollment of the child constitutes an undue burden on the Center's resources.

PROCEDURES FOR TERMINATION OF ENROLLMENT

Step 1: If appropriate given the circumstances, the Center Director will provide the Parents a written warning notifying them of the circumstance above that warrants termination and providing them an opportunity to correct the situation.

Step 2: If the parent fails to correct the situation in a timely manner or the circumstances warrant immediate termination, the Center Director will notify the Parents in writing, as well as provide the opportunity for a face-to-face meeting, that the child's enrollment will be terminated.

If exclusionary measures must be taken, alternative assistance for care can be provided with the assistance of the Child Care Resource and Referral at 800-932-3302 or [The Child Care Resource Network Indiana](#)

Under most circumstances, the Center will provide four weeks written notice of enrollment termination. However, where the particular circumstances warrant, the Center reserves the right to terminate enrollment immediately or less than four weeks' notice.

Waitlist Procedure

Please note that the Ben and Maxine Miller Child Development Laboratory School (MCDLS) is unaffiliated with other Purdue childcare centers. The following information is specific to the procedures solely of the MCDLS waitlist.

- Creating an application for the waitlist first occurs by creating an account at [Purdue Childcare Waiting List](#) Information can also be searched through the main website at Purdue www.purdue.edu with the keyword "childcare".
- There is a non-refundable waitlist fee of \$20.00 per child. The child's "**application date**" is determined by the date payment is received. The fee can be paid online using a major credit card or by check. Checks should be made payable to **Purdue University**. A child will not be placed on the waitlist until this fee has been paid.
- Children may be placed on the waitlist at **any time**, this includes parents expecting a birth or adoption, the child(ren) will be kept on the waitlist as long as they are age eligible.
- **If a family prefers to defer enrollment until their child has reached a certain age, this should be noted on the enrollment application form in the comment section.** Such children will be carried on the waitlist until the noted target age is reached. Thereafter, they will be eligible for enrollment according to the enrollment priorities.
- Any family that declines an offer of enrollment but also wishes to remain on the waitlist will be placed at the end of the waitlist. The application date will be changed to the date the spot was declined. Any family that is offered a spot and does not respond within three days will be placed at the end of the waitlist, with the application date changed to the date the offer of enrollment expired. After three offers of enrollment have been declined or have no response the child will be removed from the waitlist. If the family wishes to return to the waitlist, they must begin the process again (i.e. submit a new application and pay the fee again).
- Purdue's Human Resources (HR) office maintains the waitlist. HR periodically communicates updates via email. Families wishing to remain active on the waitlist must log on to their account every six months. If a family does not log onto their account every six months, the

account will become inactive, and the child's name will be removed from the waitlist. It is the family's responsibility to make sure their waitlist account always lists their current mailing address, phone number, and email address.

- Families whose children are removed from the waitlist can log back into their account to re-activate their child. The original application date will remain unchanged unless an offer of enrollment was made and declined.
- If a child is enrolled at another program on campus and the family wishes to remain on the waitlist for MCDLS, the family must contact the MCDLS Secretary or Director to remain on the waitlist (mcdls@purdue.edu).
- Children enrolled in the program are automatically removed from the waitlist. Once a child is enrolled in the program, if a family wishes to request a particular room, a formal request in writing must be made to the MCDLS Secretary or Director. The formal request must include the order of preference, if requesting more than one room.
- While we strive to welcome every family into our community, MCDLS reserves the right to deny enrollment or remove an applicant from the waiting list at the discretion of the administration. This decision is rare and is only made under specific circumstances, including but not limited to:
 - **Program Capacity & Scope:** If the developmental, medical, or educational needs of the child require resources, staffing, or specialized accommodations that fall outside the scope of our program's licensing standards or current operational capacity.
 - **Incomplete Documentation:** Failure to provide required enrollment paperwork, health records, or transparent developmental histories necessary to safely support the child within our classroom environment.
 - **Falsification of Records:** Providing inaccurate or withheld information regarding a child's medical, behavioral, or developmental needs during the application process.
 - **Expectations for Family Conduct & Behavior Toward Staff,** a strong partnership between families and educators is the foundation of a thriving learning environment. We are committed to fostering a culture of camaraderie, mutual respect, and positive communication among children, staff, and parents.
 - To maintain a safe and supportive environment for everyone, **MCDLS maintains a zero-tolerance policy for inappropriate, disrespectful, or aggressive behavior directed toward our teaching team, student teachers, or administrative staff.**
 - The program reserves the right to immediately deny enrollment or terminate a family's contract if a parent or guardian engages in any of the following behaviors:
 - **Verbal Abuse:** Swearing, shouting, using condescending or humiliating language, or making threats against staff members in person, over the phone, or via email.
 - **Intimidation or Harassment:** Pushing past professional boundaries, aggressive body language, or any behavior that compromises the physical or emotional safety of our educators.

- **Disparagement:** Defamatory or targeted campaigns against individual staff members, whether in common campus spaces or on social media platforms.

We understand that discussions regarding a child's development or behavior can sometimes feel stressful or emotional. We promise to always approach these conversations with empathy, transparency, and a focus on your child's growth. In return, we expect families to approach our educators with the same professionalism and respect.

Priority of enrollment at MCDLS

- Children on the waitlist are offered enrollment based on:
 - application date
 - child's age
 - gender
 - affiliation with MCDLS, in the following order:
 - Faculty and/or Staff of the Human Development and Family Science Department
 - Currently enrolled children requesting specific rooms.
 - Siblings of currently enrolled children
 - Siblings of graduates of MCDLS. Priority is set according to the most recent graduates (Example: the sibling of a child who graduated in 2018 would come before the sibling of a child who graduated in 2015)
 - Purdue Faculty, Staff and Students
 - General Public

Room Requests once enrolled in MCDLS

- Parents can make a room request by sending an email to either the MCDLS Director or Secretary (mcdls@purdue.edu) at any time.
- Room requests are maintained in order of submission.
- Intent to renew forms is sent out in the spring semester. Parents are asked at that time to specify any room preference.
- Room preferences are not guaranteed but taken into consideration.

Transitions

Transition from one classroom to another is based on the availability of an enrollment spot. Enrollment meetings between the Director and the teaching teams are held in the spring semester to plan for appropriate transitions for children in the program.

When planning for classroom enrollment, the Director and teaching teams take multiple factors into consideration, such as the number of open spots, present group dynamics of the classroom, balance of ages and genders. Additionally, we consider children's development needs, peer relationships, as well as family preference.

Before a child transitions to a new classroom, a meeting is scheduled between the parents and the teachers to discuss classroom environment, expectations, and an opportunity to meet and greet. A transition plan is created for the child to visit the new classroom. Here are the typical guidelines for creating a transition plan:

- Classroom visits are coordinated between the classroom teachers and the parents.
 - A schedule of the visits will be sent to the parents and each classroom team.
 - The schedule will be made by the head teacher in the new classroom.
- Ideally, a child's visits to the new classroom are pre-scheduled vs "drop in."
 - Due to licensing, a classroom's maximum child/teacher ratio must be maintained if the child is visiting without a parent or staff member from their current room.
- Initial visit - child sees new classroom while it is empty. The current teacher takes the child to the new classroom while the future classroom group is outside. (A staff floater would cover the current classroom as needed.)
 - This allows the child a chance to see the new classroom without being overwhelmed.
- Second visit—child joins the new classroom during a morning free play time. Typically, two days after the initial visit.
 - This allows the child a chance to interact with the classroom community and yet not be overwhelmed by sitting during a longer group time.
- Third visit—child joins the new classroom during an afternoon free play time. Typically, two days after the second visit.
 - This allows the child to see the teachers and get to know them better before having to attend during a group time.
- Fourth visit—child joins the new classroom for a longer visit that would include outside as well as a group time.
 - This allows the child to see multiple aspects of the day and feel included in the classroom community.
- Fifth visit—parent drops the child off in the future classroom. This allows the child, parents, and teachers to understand the drop off procedures before starting in the new classroom.

Adjustments to the transition plan will be made according to an individual child's needs, some children will need fewer visits and others may need more visits as outlined above.

Required forms

The following forms must be completed each year before the fall semester or when a new child begins the program. The forms should be given to the school secretary. All forms must be returned prior to the first day of school. Your child will not be permitted to attend classes until all these forms have been received. These forms include Contract, General Information Packet (Physical, Shot Records, and Copy of Birth Certificate), Schedule, Sunscreen Form, On-campus or walking field trip form, Picture/Video Consent, Emergency Information, Ages and Stages, and Medication Form (if on ongoing medication).

MCDLS Tuition Policies and Procedures

The following specific policies apply to the payment of fees to the Ben & Maxine Miller Child Development Laboratory School:

- Parents or legal guardians enrolling a child in the program are required to sign a contract.
- A non-refundable \$75 per child registration fee is to be paid when the contract is signed.
- A yearly materials fee is noted on the contract, per child will be assessed to help cover the cost of equipment and supplies for full day enrollment. This fee will be included with the first billing of each new contract.

- A weekly diapering fee is noted on the contract and will be charged for children who are between 3-5 years of age in diapers to cover extra staffing needs. The diapering fee is only charged when a head teacher communicates with the family that a child is not progressing independently in using the bathroom. The charge is to support additional staff coverage to assist the child during this phase of development. This charge will continue until independent skills are attained to the teacher's satisfaction. The exception to this policy will be for children who have identified exceptional needs.
- *Returning* families who had a child enrolled prior to July 31, 2025; Fees for Purdue University students, staff, and faculty are based on a tiered fee scale. Returning families are defined by having a child attend the lab school in consecutive years.
- All new families enrolling children after July 31, 2025, are charged the same rate regardless of their income status, the rate will be equal to the Tier 3 rate.
- The tier fee schedule pertains only to Purdue affiliated families who also have priority on vacant slots. Non-Purdue families will be eligible to fill slots based on availability and will pay maximum fees.
- For Returning Purdue affiliated families to be eligible for the tier fee schedule, parents, or legal guardians responsible for the child's tuition must complete the appropriate form on which they indicate their gross family income. When slots become available, children will be enrolled according to priorities outlined in the enrollment brochure.
- The MCDLS program will be closed for one week in August and one week in December, as well as 7 in-service training days. Tuition is charged over fifty weeks and divided into 12 monthly payments.
- Tuition charges will be billed in the first week of every month for services provided in the previous month. Billing for the program year will be spread equally over the contract period on a monthly basis. **Payment is due upon receipt of the bill.** Tuition is payable regardless of whether the child is present, including days missed due to illness, center closures, vacation, university holidays and seven staff days during the contract year. All billing and payment of fees is handled by the Purdue University Collections Office (Accounts Receivable).
- Families may set up automatic tuition payments by completing a *Payroll deduction form*, the POST TAX tuition amount would be withdrawn monthly. Individuals on a nine-month appointment could either set up payments over 9 months for the 12 month contract, or can make manual payments for the summer months.
- Dependent Care Reimbursement Claim forms for FSA can be found at www.FSAFEDS.com or HSA/PayFlex can be found at https://www.purdue.edu/hr/Benefits/HSA_FSA/dependent_care_FSA.php. Dependent Care accounts pay for dependent day care expenses out of pocket, and then submit the expense through your insurance for reimbursement using the forms; You'll be reimbursed for eligible expenses using the pre-tax dollars contribution to your Flexible Spending Account.
- If your payment is not received for a period of 60 days or more, your child may be dismissed from the program at your expense until a replacement child is found.
- A 5% discount will be given to families for each additional child enrolled at MCDLS. The 5% discount will be allocated to the oldest child(ren) while the full tuition will be charged to the youngest child.

- Any questions about a specific billing should be directed to the HDFS Business office at hdfsbo@purdue.edu

Early Release Requests

- At times families need to end their contract for enrollment, an early release request form can begin the process to facilitate the termination of your contract.
- The form is available online at the MCDLS website; can also be requested by sending an email to mcdls@purdue.edu
- The request needs to include your child's name, request termination date; and forwarding address if necessary.

Please remember that you are responsible for your child's tuition until a replacement has been found for your child's spot. Please keep in mind:

- 1.) Notification in writing must be submitted at least six weeks prior to leaving,
- 2.) a forwarding address must be provided to MCDLS Secretary, and
- 3.) you are only released from this contract and its financial obligation only when the MCDLS staff finds a replacement for your child's position, and
- 4) you understand that families choosing to withdraw for the summer will not be guaranteed a spot in the fall.

Exclusion Policy of Ill Children/Staff

General guidelines

Certain symptoms suggest the presence of illness. Child and staff who have the symptoms noted below should be excluded from the early childhood program setting until:

- A health care provider has determined the symptoms are not associated with an infectious agent.
- There is no longer a threat to the health of children and/or staff in the program **AND**
- The child is well enough to fully participate in all normal daily activities.

*During a Pandemic such as COVID-19 additional procedures and requirements will be followed and communicated with everyone as they arise

Specific recommendations

Exclude children or adults with one or more of the following illnesses or symptoms:

- An illness, which **prevents participation** in normal daily program activities.
- **Fever**—accompanied by another symptom such as a sore throat, rash, vomiting, diarrhea, earache, change in behavior, irritability, or confusion. Children must be fever free for 24 hours without a fever reducing medication.
 - Fever without any signs or symptoms of illness in children who are older than 4 months. For this purpose, fever is defined as temperature above 100.4°F orally, above 102°F rectally, or 100°F or higher taken auxiliary (armpit) or measured by

any equivalent method. *Fever is an indication of the body's response to something but is neither a disease nor a serious problem by itself.

- **Diarrhea** that is not contained by diapers or toilet use, and/or causing excessive handling (as defined as two or more abnormally loose stools during previous 24 hours), or until diarrhea is gone if it is determined to be from an infectious agent. Children must have a period of 24 hours without having excessive diarrhea.
- **Vomiting**—one or more times in a 24-hour period. Children must have a period of 24 hours without vomiting to return to the center.
- **Mouth sores** associated with inability to control saliva unless health care provider states child is noninfectious.
- **Rash** with fever or behavior change, until a medical exam indicates it is not associated with an infectious agent.
- **Bacterial infection** such as **Impetigo** or **Streptococcal pharyngitis** until 24 hours after treatment has been initiated.
- **Eye drainage**—until a medical exam approves readmission, with or without treatment.
- **Respiratory distress:** fast, difficult, or different breathing, uncontrolled coughing, and or wheezing.
- **Unusual color of skin, eyes, stool, or urine** until a medical exam approves readmission.
- **Lice, ringworm, or scabies** that is untreated and contagious to others.
- **Chicken Pox** until all the lesions are crusted and dried.
- An illness which results in **more care** than the program can provide without compromising the health and safety of others.
- A **reportable condition** that the commissioner of health determines to be contagious, and a physician determines has not had sufficient treatment to reduce the risk to others. Examples are Mumps, Measles, Strep Throat, Hand-Foot-and-Mouth disease, Pink Eye (Conjunctivitis), etc.
 - Lice, exclusion from the center, must be treated for lice and may return when the individual is completely lice free, this includes eggs, and live lice.
 - Hand-Mouth-Foot, exclude till fever free, for 24 hours without the use of a fever reducer and no open sores or fluid filled blisters.
 - Pink Eye (Conjunctivitis), exclusion until drainage/secretion of eye are gone and an antibiotic for full 24 hours.
 - COVID, Vaccinations are strongly encouraged for eligible individuals. COVID Vaccinations are not required by Indiana Childcare Licensing or Purdue University. MCDLS will follow CDC recommendations if someone in the center tests positive for the virus. We will notify everyone of any contagious illnesses via email. We will follow CDC and Purdue recommendations and requirements.
 - Medical Inquiries. Federal law typically limits the type of medical inquiries that can be made, but given the nature of the pandemic, more leeway has been given in this circumstance to make additional medical inquiries of staff, children, and students than would otherwise be allowed.

- Face Covering Procedures: would require masks (only) if the CDC, or Purdue or the State of Indiana requires them for childcare center. The administration will continue to monitor the updates for recommendations for masks based on CDC guidelines, Purdue, or the State of Indiana.
 - If masks are mandated MCDLS would provide face masks including N95 masks for adults and disposable masks for both children and adults. If anyone prefers to wear a reusable face, covering they must provide them, and launder them daily.

Attendance Due to Illness

In the event a child and/or staff member are out for three consecutive days due to illness and/or signs of illness; on the third day a doctor's note is required to return to the center. Consecutive days include if an individual has been sick over the weekend, for example if an individual is showing signs of illness on Friday and does not return to the lab school on Monday; they will require a doctor's note to return to the center.

If in doubt, CALL THE CENTER!

If a child is judged ill while at Miller Child Development Laboratory School (MCDLS), the family will be contacted and requested to come for the child within one hour of notification. The child will be separated from other children until picked up. Adult supervision of separated children will be maintained.

Please help us maintain current contact information. Families are expected to call the MCDLS office (765-494-0240) and leave a message for the Head Teacher when a child will be absent due to illness or families can send a message through their Tadpole App. We are committed to safeguarding the health of all children attending MCDLS by requesting families to follow the guidelines when deciding if a child is well enough to attend.

If your child has a contagious condition of any kind, please notify the MCDLS Director, and/or your child's Head Teacher. We will notify families and staff in your child's classroom by posting a sign outside the classroom door, about symptoms, treatment, and probable length of illness.

Children who become ill at MCDLS will be removed from the classroom and isolated in the front office until they are picked up.

- Staff supervising a sick child will wear a N95 or equivalent mask and gloves.
- The area will be cleaned and disinfected after the child is picked up.

Communicable diseases

A note from a physician will be required in order for the child to return to school.

If your child has any symptoms (listed in preceding table) which require that a physician examine them, **please bring a written recommendation for return** signed by your child's physician on the day your child returns to school. Your child's teachers have been asked to collect these before your child may return.

Medication

State regulations prevent Child Care staff from dispensing any medication unless it is prescribed by a physician **and** is in its **original container**. If a child must receive medication while at MCDLS, parents/ legal guardians must complete a medication form, (medical forms are available in the school

office) have the physician's office write out a detailed step-by-step dispensing instructions (how to, when to, and what reactions to look for when dispensing the medication). Regulations also require this information and a doctor's written order for us to give over-the-counter-medicine to any child.

All medication with a beyond-use date or expiration date that has passed must be discarded and not held for future use, it is the responsibility of the families to ensure any medication stored at the lab school is within the designated use dates. In the event a child has an emergency rescue medication at the lab school, and it has expired; the child may not remain in care until a replacement is provided.

If parents or legal guardians wish their child's teachers to apply sunscreen or insect repellent, they will need to fill out a medication form for these also.

Hearing and Vision Screenings

Hearing and vision screens are provided for children three and older once a semester by the Speech, Language, and Hearing Sciences Department.

Immunizations

All children should be properly immunized before attending school. Appropriate immunizations for preschool children include DTP, polio, HIB, and Measles/Mumps/Rubella. Contact your child's physician if you have any questions.

Accidents

- MCDLS maintains accident insurance for each child while at school or on a field trip.
- If a child attending MCDLS sustains a serious injury or other condition that calls for immediate professional medical attention, parents or legal guardians are notified immediately as is the ambulance administered by the Purdue Fire Department.
- Any transportation of a child to a medical facility will be conducted by a licensed Emergency Medical Technician. A permanent staff member would accompany the child to the medical facility until a parent and/or guardian arrived. MCDLS staff and/or teachers will not transport an injured or ill child to a medical facility.
- If an injury requires non-emergency professional medical attention, parents or legal guardians are asked to check on their child at MCDLS and make their own determination as to the need for further treatment (i.e. wound which may need stitches).
- If a child received a minor injury (minor bruises, scrapes, etc.) which can be dealt with by classroom staff, parents or legal guardians will receive a written accident report that is signed by the Head/Associate Teacher, staff member who provided care/was present when the injury occurred. Parents and legal guardians are asked to read and sign these forms.
- A staff member will always report any injury (however minor) sustained at MCDLS to parents or legal guardians.

Incidents

- MCDLS uses incident reports for documenting reoccurring abnormal behaviors.
- These are also used for parental information on their child's abnormal classroom behavior.
- Incident reports will only be used for the purpose of the discipline policy stated in this handbook.

Hand washing

Everyone must wash their hands upon daily arrival in their classrooms. We encourage parents to wash their hands as well. Children and staff will wash their hands after the use of the bathroom, before eating snacks or meals, and after hands-on activities such as painting.

Arrival and Departure Procedures

Each child must be escorted into and out of the building to their classroom by a parent, legal guardian, or authorized adult each day.

Authorized Pick-Up Policy: Children will only be released to their parent or legal guardian unless prior authorization is provided.

- Initial Setup: Parents complete the *MCDLS Pick-Up Permission Form* as part of their initial enrollment paperwork, listing all approved adults.
- Updating the List: Parents and guardians can update this approved list at any time during the school year. To add a name, you may update the hard copy form, email the front office, or email your child’s Head Teacher. (mcdls@purdue.edu)

Parents and legal guardians are encouraged to bring their children to class on time. Children who arrive late find it difficult to become involved in on-going activities. Also, the early portion of the day involves group planning, theme-related activities, and provides an introduction to the whole day of related activities.

MCDLS program closes at 5:30 p.m. each day. Families picking up children after that time will be assessed a late fee. The policy is in effect even if the family notifies MCDLS that they expect to be late. The late fees are as follows:

First 1-15 minutes	\$30.00
Each additional 5 minutes (or fraction of 5 minutes)	\$15.00
After 3 Late Pickups	
First 1-15 minutes	\$45.00
Each additional 5 minutes (or fraction of 5 minutes)	\$15.00

Unattended children

To maximize safety and minimize administrative interruptions, please remain with your enrolled children and siblings at all times in the parking lot and surrounding areas, in the hallways, and in the administrative office.

Emergency procedures

In cases of fire, the MCDLS facility is connected to the central University alarm system. The children will be evacuated through the North, South and West playground gates and will assemble on the south side of the playground, or across the street if necessary. In the event of a tornado warning, the children in Fowler House will gather in the basement at the front of Fowler Memorial House. The children in Hanley Hall will gather in the first-floor hallway as it has been reinforced; the Hanley stairwell can also be used to seek shelter, if time permits, children will be evacuated to the Fowler House basement.

Drills for both fire and severe weather will be conducted monthly so that all staff and children are familiar with the procedures. **Teachers/Staff will not accept any children during either a drill or a full evacuation of the center.** Once the teachers/staff are back in their classrooms, drop offs may continue as normal.

If it becomes necessary to evacuate the building, the children will be escorted to First Street Towers (our emergency evacuation site). You will be expected to pick up your child at First Street Towers as soon as you are called. You should enter the building through the loading dock door on the north side of the building. We will have staff members there instructing individuals on directions to pick up your child.

Lockdown procedures

Once a semester, the center will practice a lockdown. In the event there was a danger outside of the building, the Director and/or Police would initiate a lockdown. The staff will follow the lockdown procedures. Children and adults would remain in the classrooms until the Director or Police officers unlock the doors indicating the danger has passed or the drill was complete.

Closure procedures

The Miller Child Development Laboratory School (MCDLS) on the campus of Purdue University recognizes the important service they provide to Purdue students, staff, and faculty. The center will make every effort to remain open during adverse weather. The following criteria will be used in deciding to close the childcare center in case of emergency. The center will be closed if:

1. The Purdue University, West Lafayette campus is closed.
2. A weather emergency is in effect for Tippecanoe County.
3. If Purdue University or the local public health authority recommends schools or childcare centers close in response to an infectious disease outbreak or pandemic.

MCDLS may also close due to unforeseen circumstances. The Director, in consultation with the Department Head, will decide when it is in the best interest of the children to close the center. The center staff would remain until all the children were picked up. Staff would be released as attendance numbers allow.

If an emergency closing of the center is necessitated by a problem with the physical facilities, weather, or any unforeseen circumstances, parents and legal guardians would be notified individually by telephone during the day, email or through Tadpole App.

Payment policy for closings

When childcare is closed due to any unforeseen circumstances, parents will continue to pay the normal monthly fee for services.

Insurance coverage for children

Purdue University maintains insurance for children attending the Ben & Maxine Miller Child Development Laboratory School. This limited medical insurance coverage is “primary” and has no deductible but does have a \$15,000 limit. Medical expenses related to an injury that exceed the \$15,000 limit are the responsibility of the parents and/or their primary medical insurance carrier. Pre-existing injuries are not covered. The parents will need copies of the bill(s) relating to this injury turned into MCDLS within two weeks of the injury so that these bills can be forwarded to Purdue University’s insurance office.

Parking rules

A parent parking permit may be used only during the enrolment period for which it is issued and is valid only during the dates listed on the permit. These permits are issued for use only by families who are transporting children to and from the MCDLS. Two parent parking permits are given to each family.

1. A parent parking permit authorizes parking in the MCDLS parking lot in the spaces marked “MCD Lab School – Parent Parking only” To park in the area reserved for “A, B, or C” parking requires an A, B, or C permit. Additionally, several of the curbs in the MCDLS parking lot have been painted yellow. These areas are designated as a fire lane as well as a bus loading/unloading zone and must remain open. Parking along these sections of sidewalk may result in a vehicle being towed.
2. Be sure your current parking permit is clearly displayed in your front windshield at all times while parked in one of the MCDLS parking spaces. If a parking permit is not displayed and a ticket is received, the owner of the vehicle is responsible for payment of the parking fine.
3. If all MCDLS parent parking spaces are occupied when you arrive, pull your car to the curb, and wait until an MCDLS parent parking space opens. When entering and leaving the parking lot, always stay to the right, traveling in a counterclockwise direction around the parking lot.
4. Please refrain from idling in your vehicle while you drop off or pick up your child, except if vehicles need to idle in extreme heat or cold to maintain interior or engine temperatures
5. Drive slowly and carefully. Children are present.
6. If circumstances require parking for more than 30 minutes (i.e. field trips, special family weeks, parent parties), first park your car in one of the MCDLS parent parking spaces, then request an extended parking pass from the school secretary. The extended parking pass should be displayed with the parent parking permit on the dashboard of the car to prevent being ticketed.

Child abuse and neglect

All staff members are mandated reporters of child abuse and neglect. Purdue University and MCDLS require child abuse training for staff. As a childcare facility on a university campus, the MCDLS staff and program are also accountable to university policy.

1. In the event that a staff member observes marks or injuries on a child, a second staff member will confirm the report.
2. A written report is placed in the child’s file and dated.
3. The teacher or director asks the child and family about the injury.
4. If the children report child abuse or neglect, the staff of MCDLS believes the child and makes an appropriate report.
5. If a teacher or director suspects child abuse or neglect, a report will be made to Child Protective Services, Lafayette –765- 429-5100

The Purdue University Police Department encourages anyone who is the victim or witness to any crime to report the incident promptly to the department at 765-494-8221.

West Lafayette Police Department: 765-775-5200

Lafayette Police Department: 765-807-1200

Tippecanoe County Police Department: 765-423-9388

Staff Roles and Responsibilities

All staff members interact with the children and share responsibility for their care, learning, and development. As a staff, everyone undergoes criminal background screenings and drug testing. Additionally, full time staff are required to maintain current CPR, first aid, and universal precautions certification. Specific responsibilities of various staff members are as follows:

Director

The director is responsible for the administrative leadership of MCDLS and overall program and staff development, including best practices in early education care for children, including children with

special needs and families from diverse cultures. The director serves as a liaison between MCDLS, the HDFS department faculty, and Purdue University.

Assistant Director

The assistant director is a member of the administrative team, they are responsible for supporting the daily operation of the program, including supervising student workers, scheduling coverage, and assisting in serving as a liaison between MCDLS, the HDFS department faculty, and Purdue University.

Head teacher

The Head Teacher designs and implements an appropriate early childhood program for his/her classroom; facilitates effective staff communication with parents and legal guardians; supervises teacher assistants, student workers, practicum students, volunteers, facilitates research; and supervises the classroom activities of the undergraduate students.

Associate teacher

The Associate Teacher, in cooperation with the Head Teacher, designs and implements the afternoon portion of the curriculum; communicates with parents and legal guardians; supervises a teacher assistant, student workers, practicum students, volunteers, facilitates research; and supervises the classroom activities of the undergraduate students. The Associate Teacher oversees the classroom after the Head Teacher leaves in the afternoon.

Teacher Assistant

The Teacher Assistant works under the guidance of the Head Teacher or the Associate Teacher to set up and clean-up activities and snacks; assists with caregiving routines; and participates with the children in their daily activities. The teacher assistant may also help to plan and implement activities as their education and/or experience allows.

Interactions

At times interactions with families may cause conflict or unforeseen challenges. In the event this occurs, some strategies to keep in mind. Pause and listen to the individual, ask clarifying questions to help gain a better understanding of the concern or issue. Seek assistance from the director when communication between a staff member and a family member was either left unresolved or uncomfortable.

Program calendar

Aug 3 & 4 th	Professional Development – Center closed to children
Aug. 5 th	Children’s First Day of School
Sept. 3rd	Parent Meeting 6pm Everyone All Center
Sept. 7	Closed – Observance of Labor Day
Nov. 6 th	100 th Celebration 6-8pm *Center closes at 3:30pm
Nov. 26 & 27	<i>All School Closed – Thanksgiving Vacation</i>
Dec. 21, 22 and 23	Closed-Professional Development
Dec. 24, 2026 – Jan. 1, 2027	All School Closed
Jan. 4 th	Center Open – children and staff return
Jan. 18	<i>ALL School Closed- Martin Luther King Jr. Day</i>
April 1 & 2	Conference Professional Development – Center closed to children
May 31	<i>All School Closed – Memorial Day</i>
July 5 th	All School Closed – Independence Day
July 23	Last Day of School End of the year picnic 4-5:30pm
July 26-July 30 th	Center Closed to Children/Families
Aug 2 & 3	Professional Development – Center closed to children
Aug. 4, 2027	Children’s First Day of School

Contact Information

Please call the main office 765-494-0240 or email at MCDLS@PURDUE.EDU