A Day at the CDES Lab School

“The Flow of the Day”

**Morning Arrival at 7:30 – 8:45:** Welcoming families and children. This is the time for informal conversations with parents about previous and ongoing experiences, as well as any planned follow-ups. First the children are welcomed into the classrooms to settle in; using the bathroom, taking care of the pets, watering plants, setting up the areas for the day, and setting up the tables for breakfast. At 8:00 the outdoor upper yard will be open; children will have a choice to remain inside or go outside. At 8:45 children will assist in the cleaning up processes indoor as well as outdoor.

**Breakfast Time 9:00 – 9:30:** Children gather together to enjoy a family style breakfast in the classroom. Teachers will encourage children to have conversations with others around the breakfast table.

**Morning Meeting 9:30 – 10:00:** Singing songs and acknowledging the children, parents, and teachers who are present. This is when teachers invite children to talk about the planned upcoming experiences. The experiences are planned in advance and are based on previous small group focus work. (see previous weeks work time schedule) One teacher will discuss which small groups will be meeting and what opportunities will be a part of focused work time for other children.

**Small group focus time: 10:00 – 11:30:** This is the time when children are involved in small group work according to their plans and chosen/scheduled area of the school. (Teachers schedule small groups and location during their scheduled weekly meeting, Friday) An example of a small group might be following the Monarch Caterpillar that was found on the Milk Weed plant in the Lab School garden. Typically small groups have up to five children. No more than 2 to 3 small groups are running across the school at one time. As a small group ends, another will emerge. When the small group daily processes are complete for the session the children and teacher return to join the group inside or outside. Preferably outside in the natural environment. (Teachers need to talk about this in their meeting and write who, what and where on the Work Time Schedule. A copy of the weekly Work Time Schedule will be kept in each classroom, studio and in the outdoor environment for easy access.

**Flow of a small group:** to have explorations based on interest of children such as the Monarch Caterpillar and the viewing of the eggs laid on the Milk Weed by the Monarch Butterfly. The children may explore, converse, work with materials as a language to demonstrate their ideas or have an experience/discussion. A student teacher can support the teacher by capturing the experience on video, audio or by taking notes. If a teacher is on their own, set up audio or
video camera and a little spiral note pad for taking notes. Do not let the note taking take away from active engagement with the children.

Teachers not in small groups will be having focused work times with children during the 10:00 – 11:30 time block.

**Focused work time:** 10:00 – 11:30 this focus work time may offer experiences in the indoor or outdoor classroom such as cooking, studio work which might include construction (with natural and/or recyclable materials), blocks or printing processes with the thinking with a line program, light and shadow exploration, dramatic/imaginative play, music, math and science investigations, and or art experiences using clay, paint, recycled and or natural materials.

The outdoor experiences could exist out of sand play and investigations, the streambed, the outdoor art studio, dramatic play, music (theatre), and gardening. After work time, time is reserved for children to clean up the areas they have been working in. All of these areas offer opportunities for expressing their ideas and developing a deeper level of thinking.

 Teachers observe, write notes and later in the classroom daily half hour scheduled meeting complete the observation notes form based on their observational notes and plan for next steps. (Possibly arrange lunch schedules so that there is half hour time when each classroom team can meet)

**Reflection Meeting 11:30 – 12:00:** Children gather together to reflect upon their experiences during focus work time, which includes small groups. This is the moment in which they share ideas, build knowledge through listening to other children’s ideas, create a sense of community, and demonstrate the valuing of each other’s thoughts. This is also a moment to plan for ongoing and new and upcoming experiences. Children will be able to decide to remain in their group or choose to join a different one. (Teachers take notes and also talk to children about the next time the group will be meeting.) (Teachers bring the planning time calendar to the reflection meeting...for example the butterfly group will be meeting next week on Wed.)

Reflection meeting example: There is a butterfly group and they have been meeting and observing a large caterpillar, they notice that the caterpillar eats the milk weed and they are worried that there is not enough of the plant to support the caterpillars growth process. In the large group (the whole classroom) they share their concern that there are not enough leaves to eat because the plant is small. (See reflection meeting goals)
Reflection meeting three goals:

**Goal one** of the reflection meeting is to share knowledge and learn through others experience and is based on community discussion and reflection as a whole classroom group. (Teacher documents process)

**Goal two** of the reflection meeting is to support the teaching and learning process in a way that allows children to construct their own knowledge. The teacher needs to be prepared to pose a question to stimulate thinking, to find out what the children are thinking about but not to answer a child’s question. (Once the teacher answers the question there is no need for further investigation. The teacher needs to be very intentional in this process)

**Goal three** of the reflection meeting is for teachers to take notes during the conversation and then revisit those notes in order to document and bring the group to the next step. (This classroom group teacher meeting is during the scheduled half hour daily meeting time pre arranged based on teacher lunch schedule. Teachers take scheduled lunches and support the process across the Lab School. )

**Lunch 12:00 – 12:45:** Children help clean the tables and set them for a family style luncheon. This is a moment of conversation and teachers will support and encourage children to join in this process. After lunch children clean up their dishes, help wash the tables, and get their mats for rest time. Children will settle in by reading books and/or singing songs.

**Rest Time 12:45- 2:45:** Children rest during this time. Opportunities are given for children that don’t nap.

**Snack 2:45 – 3:15:** Children will set up tables for snack. This time conversations will arise about the day.

**Gathering Meeting 3:15 – 3:30:** During this time children will sing songs and/or listen to stories.

**Outdoor Time 3:30 – 5:00:** Children can play using all the different areas outside. Before moving inside, they can help with cleaning up.

**Dismissal Time 5:00 – 6:00:** Children will move indoors to play and experience the indoor environment, help with the setup for the following day and also help take care of the animals.