

The staff and families of University Primary School compile this evolving *Handbook for Families* to share policies and procedures at Uni Primary. Please read and keep this handbook as a reference. Please talk with the director and teachers should you have questions to clarify or suggestions for added information to be shared in a future revision.

Contact Information

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University Primary Web Page

<https://uniprimary.illinois.edu/>

University Primary Facebook Pages

Public Page:

www.facebook.com/universityprimaryschool

Private page:

www.facebook.com/groups/universityprimaryschoolfamilies

Mission

University Primary School's mission is to create an innovative research and teacher training site for Illinois faculty, graduate students, undergraduates, pre-service teachers, community colleagues, and visiting scholars interested in the ways children and teachers learn and develop. University Primary School demonstrates Reggio Emilia-inspiration and The Project Approach in action and fosters a professional environment where stakeholders develop and explore recommended practices in education while providing an exceptional school experience for children and families.

Research

University Primary School encourages and facilitates educational research on the part of faculty, visiting scholars, and University students. Researchers may wish to photograph or record students as they are working and learning. It is helpful to researchers if families sign and return permission and photo/video release forms if they are willing to participate in a research project. Families are always informed of research projects and are given the opportunity to have their child participate or decline participation. Children (who have permission to be involved in a study) are always asked by researchers whether they wish to participate or not participate, on a given day.

Uni Primary Philosophy

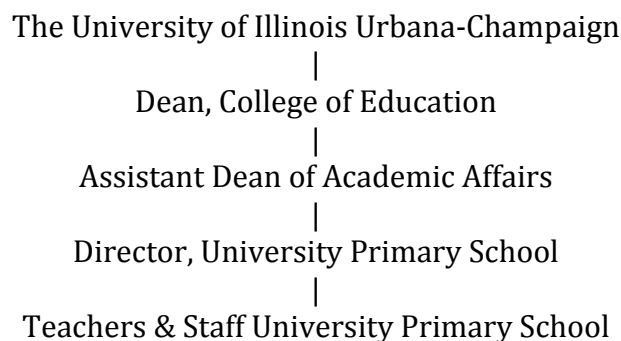
The philosophy of Uni Primary is that young children are best served by teaching and curriculum practices that strengthen and support their intellectual growth and development, initiate them into basic skills (often delineated by Common Core Standards), challenge them to increase their proficiency in academic tasks as well as intellectual processes, and, at the same time, foster the development of their social competence.

Best Practices

As a teacher training and research site, University Primary School aims to model recommended practices, based on research and accepted learning theories in early childhood, elementary, gifted, and special education. Recommended practices for children at this age include a child-sensitive, individually focused curriculum with many opportunities for students to choose and develop their own learning activities and learn with others. Children work individually or in small groups most of the time with teachers who often take the role of guides or facilitators of learning. Children also spend time in whole group community meetings and whole group instruction times. Teachers listen and document children's theories and strategies for learning and closely examine and plan for proximal next steps. Teachers assess and address the strengths of each child and build on these strengths for future learning experiences. Classrooms are inclusive of children with differing abilities; including but not limited to intellectual, physical, mental, and emotional abilities; a strong sense of democratic processes and community is fostered by staff, students, and families.

Governance Structure

University Primary School is a self-sustaining unit within the College of Education at The University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. The organizational relationship and governance for the school is:



Parent Teacher Alliance

The Parent Teacher Alliance meets at least twice, and up to nine times formally, during the academic year to consider policy decisions having an impact on school-family-community relationships, modifications needed for the Family Handbook (where many policies are communicated to families), and other needs at the school. Though the PTA is not a formal governing structure, it is a venue and voice for families, teachers, and community members to consider improvements in procedure and policy for the school community at large.

PTA typically meets once a month and in-action, plans for community building, promotion, and fundraising, studies topics of interest, and may consider proposals for campus/community collaborations. This alliance of parents, guardians, grandparents, and other grown-ups involved in the lives of Uni Primary students/school at large, often organize and make special things happen on behalf of the school. If you would like to join this Alliance, please look for the first meeting date in September, typically the first Tuesday of the month from 6:00-7:00 PM with free child care typically provided by a service organization of college students here on campus.

Policy Making at Uni Primary

Many aspects of school policy are directed and required by The Illinois State Board of Education and The University of Illinois in terms of daily attendance/calendar, healthy and safety, Common Core Standards, building use and space, hiring and evaluation for staff, staff professional development and training, etc. University Primary develops policy in consultation with the business and human resource personnel at The College of Education, The Illinois State Board of Education and Champaign Unit 4 Schools, as well as within the staff and administration at the school. Policies are also established and communicated to Uni Primary staff and families through this handbook and through various email communications throughout the school year more specifically (such as fall registration requirements, health forms, etc.).

Unique Features of University Primary School Curriculum

The University Primary School Curriculum represents an eclectic approach to education programming. As a Reggio Emilia inspired school, we have philosophical rather than methodological tenets that permeate the learning day such as: image of child, The Hundred Languages of Children, participation of families, teacher role and development (example: teacher as possessing an *attitude of research*), and classroom aesthetic and environment.

A blend of student-initiated, teacher-guided, and teacher-directed activities and experiences present students with opportunities to pursue their own interest areas and invite them into interest areas of others, present them with academic skill work and practice, and encourage and monitor progress at individual levels of instruction. Creativity, problem solving, a healthy relationship to learning, and democratic communities are common threads

woven through all areas of the curriculum. Students are active participants in the inquiry process through project studies that emphasize questioning, critical thinking and theory making, field experiences, imagination and representation, social justice, and metacognition.

Project-Play Studio/Project Studio

Project-Play Studio is an essential component of our curriculum and looks different in scope and even length in younger student classrooms compared to older student classrooms. This Studio time allows students to make choices about their own learning and provides important school time to work on inquiry based interest areas. The daily schedules reflect this time through exploration, play, and experimentation. Projects involve learning opportunities in real-life contexts and integrate the acquisition and application of basic skills alongside deep critical thinking and conversation. Project-Play Studio time strives to foster "the love of learning" and provides opportunities for teachers to engage in the learning process alongside students. Teachers listen and make theories about how children are learning to the contexts for further inquiry work. Activities are meaningful and concept-based.

Mathematics, Numeration, and Problem Solving Skills

In our younger classrooms, math is taught with an investigative approach, and a focus on relating math to real-life situations using manipulatives and other concrete materials. In our older classrooms, math has aspects of investigation through project work, but is taught more directly and practiced with relationship, skill development, and mastery in mind. Teachers facilitate mathematics not limited to the following areas: conceptual skills, numeration, computation and computational thinking, measurement, problem solving, logic and reasoning, and geometry. Many of the students' projects reflect applied use of these mathematical skills at or even above their specific grade level. University Primary uses Common Core Standards and Everyday Mathematics to support and enhance the mathematical development of students.

Literacy

Uni Primary emphasizes a holistic literacy approach where children learn to read by reading and to write by writing. Students are actively involved in both processes throughout the day. Importance is placed on the "making

sense" process and a *love for literacy*. Generally, learning is within a whole context rather than discreet parts. Early literacy involves three reading cue systems: contextual, grammatical, and phonetic. Teachers create a literacy rich environment and model meaningful listening, reading, speaking, dramatizing, and writing. In the elementary classrooms, students have opportunities to read in small book groups with peers, read with buddies, read to themselves, and read individually with teachers. Older students participate in book groups, taking on roles to lead discussions.

Science and Social Studies

Science and social studies concepts are developed throughout project work and explored during Studio time and as subject matter outside of project work in older grades. Older students experience historical perspectives in more recognizable ways—engaging in global and past-future connections as a part of projects and literacy lessons. Science experimentation and processes abound. Researchers and experts from the field visit our classrooms, creating opportunities for deep questions and discussion. Students venture on field studies in the community and especially on campus (using the MTD bus as often as possible). Non-fiction literature is meaningfully shared with students, and exploration and experimentation abound!

Children are immersed in a democratic environment with daily opportunities to strengthen their own voices and develop multiple perspectives around issues. Students question and dialogue about big ideas, gather historical or topical facts and details in the context of a project or question, and build consensus around open-ended questions. Students investigate global perspectives and issues of social justice and social studies through books, experts, and on-line resources.

Children and teachers are co-researchers and co-learners at Uni Primary. A solution or resolution to one question leads to another question, and learning is ongoing. We value scientific activities that build upon students' natural curiosity about the way the world works. We encourage trial and error in experimentation, debate and doubt, and an authentic openness to discovery.

Expressive Arts

Music is an intentional component of the daily rhythm in classrooms, where melodic development, rhythm and rhyme, collaborative song and instrument play, and global sounds and culture are explored. Dance and movement

experiences are part of music time, often in creative response to song. Music is a part of the school day, infused in subtle ways as background music or as part of a classroom routine during transition times (i.e., cleaning up activities and coming to the carpet for large group). Older students may study the recorder or other instruments including the voice, and learn to work as an ensemble. Dramatic play is encouraged in all classrooms, during outdoor play and Studio time, as inspired by books and stories, and as a specially guided time with a teacher or artist in residence.

Social and Emotional Growth

Teachers take a proactive role in creating a democratic classroom community that is open, honest, and accepting. To this end, discipline is designed around teachers structuring appropriate choices, students learning why and how to resolve problems, and students sharing in the responsibility of developing a caring classroom. Teachers encourage self-control and strive to develop both intellectual and emotional self-confidence.

Arts and Aesthetics

As a Reggio-Emilia inspired school, arts are integral to children's learning and assessment. Teachers guide students toward meaningful experiences in the arts with conversation, examples, materials, and cultural artifacts. At Uni Primary, student artwork is an expression of ideas, a form of experimentation, and a demonstration of developing understandings about the world. Teachers promote sensitivity to and an appreciation of the classroom environment, developing an awareness of a personal and community aesthetic. The arts are an essential part of the school day, every day.

Physical Development

Physical movement, team play, sportsmanship, and negotiation of rules and fair play are a part of outdoor play and physical education guided by teachers and University students. Outdoor play is highly valued at Uni Primary, and children go outside for non-structured and structured play experiences, even in the gentle rain and definitely in the snow when temperatures/conditions are safe. Our playground is designed as a space with movable parts and natural spaces. Gross motor development is assessed and guided in non-competitive ways, with emphasis on cooperation rather than competition. To be optimally available to learn, some children integrate

sensory activities into their class work or take sensory breaks to learn how to regulate their bodies as a part of their physical development.

Health and Safety

Health matters are addressed in classrooms in an age-appropriate way including: hygiene and disease prevention, personal health habits, and disaster survival. Students are taught about personal space and consent, and consent language is practiced by grown ups and children. Social Work interns are often available to our students, and able to address issues of mental and emotional health, often with elements for specific training and discussion. An awareness and care of the environment is promoted at Uni Primary, including health of the earth and nature.

School Hours

K-5th Grade classrooms hours are from 8:30 am to 3:00 pm, with an earliest arrival at 8:20 am. The preschool classroom hours are 5-days/week from 8:30 am to 12:00 pm, with an earliest arrival at 8:20 am, and preschool extended care option until 3:00 pm. Afterschool for preschool-5th grade hours are 3:00-5:30 pm.

Students may arrive between 8:20-8:40 am. Prior to 8:20, the staff will be setting up for the school day and children may wait with their adult in a car, school stairwell, or outside of the playground fence. Visitors or volunteers staying in the school for more than 10 minutes must sign in the visitor's log across from the school office. This is a state fire code regulation.

School Closings

University Primary School may close due to inclement weather such as snowstorm or an unforeseen event for which the learning day could be unsafe (electric outage, gas leak, major illnesses across student or staff population). University Primary School may not close for “cold days” when public schools close, however, if the University of Illinois closes, we are also closed. University Primary School closings will be emailed to families and posted on the News-Gazette sites and on WCIA News, check these places for up to date information.

Daily Attendance/Absences

Children are to attend school daily, following the Uni Primary academic calendar. Absences for illness, late arrivals/early pick-ups, or special family circumstances should be reported to the school office specialist: 217-333-3996 or by email: cwyant@illinois.edu. Please let your classroom teacher know if your child will be absent on a field trip day or special planned event day. Families arriving after 8:20 AM must sign in the attendance log for accurate daily attendance keeping.

Timeliness

Children arriving late and with frequent absences miss out on important academic, social learning, and continuity. Please take care of needs (including a need to be absent or tardy) for mental and physical health, and please be at school on time as part of a healthy learning environment. *Children receive the greatest benefit from a morning classroom routine if they arrive on time.* Families who are chronically tardy should meet with the Director and/or classroom teacher to develop supports for timeliness.

Please pick your children up promptly at 12:00 pm for preschool, 3:00 pm for extended preschool/K-5th dismissal, or 5:30 pm for afterschool. Families who are chronically late will be consulted to begin paying for a portion of extended preschool or afterschool care. Teachers must have meeting and planning time after dismissal.

Parking – at the Children’s Research Center

Please park in the Visitor Parking Loading Zone 30 minute spots in Lot E30 on the southeast side of the Children’s Research Center when coming into the school for a brief time. Park in the handicapped or motorcycle designated spaces only with appropriate licensure. Bike racks are on the southeast side of the school and securing bicycles is recommended. **University of Illinois employee parking permits for lots north of Kirby Avenue are accepted in our E30 lot—if you have a north of Kirby permit, please park in a non-visitor spot to allow room for other families who do not hold a permit.**

If you volunteer or need to park for more than 30 minutes, meters are available for your use in the parking lot or along Gerty Drive (if you do not have a University of Illinois permit). Parking tickets in Lot E30 are expensive (\$60), and we are not able to rescind the ticket after 30 minutes of

visitor parking have passed, nor rescind a ticket if you park in a non-designated spot.

Refrain from parking on the west side of the Children's Research Center for school related activities including drop off/pick up.

K-5th Arrival 8:20-8:40 am/Dismissal 3:00 pm

The short and sweet of all of these next paragraphs is: park on the east/stay in your vehicle on the west!

Park on the East: All Preschool Families and optional K-5

If you walk your child(ren) into school for drop off/pick up, park on the east side of the Children's Research Center in the designated visitor parking spots if there is space available. If no space is available, park anywhere close and parking will not ticket you *during our designated pick up/drop off time*. Enter into the building through any of the doors except the preschool playground door between 8:20-8:40 am and proceed to your classroom(s); pick up is at the playground fence at Noon or 3:00 pm.

Stay in your Vehicle on the West

Families of K-5th graders may drop off/pick up children in the west circle drive *beginning the second day of school*. Staff will facilitate drop off/pick up for K-5th students on the west circle drive between 8:20-8:40 am & 3:00-3:05 pm. Families must wait for a staff member to meet your vehicle and may never drop off/pick up a child without a staff member present except during inclement weather (see next section for details.)

For dismissal, form a car line along the right hand side of the west driveway and "hug" the inner side of the flagpole island leaving a space for the MTD bus to pass across the parking lot. This traffic pattern is in consideration of our neighbors.

Preschool Arrival 8:20-8:40 am & Dismissal 12:00 pm (Preschool extended care 3:00 pm)

Families of preschool students should park on the east side of the Children's Research Center in the designated 30-minute visitor parking spots and enter the building through any of the non-playground doors between 8:20-8:40 am. Proceed to the preschool classroom to help your children with the morning arrival routine. Preschool dismissal is on the east side of the building along

the playground fence, park on the east side and meet children by the fence. Children not picked up by 12:05 pm will be brought to the preschool classroom and supervised in preschool extended day until their grown up arrives; families will be charged a portion of the extended preschool fee for pick up after 12:05 pm if this is chronic issue.

Late Arrival After 8:40 am/Picking Up before Designated Dismissal Time

Families arriving/dismissing at times after 8:40 am/before the scheduled dismissal time should park on the east side of the Children's Research Center in the designated visitor parking spots and enter through the secured playground ramp secure door (intercom/camera). Children may not enter the school alone after the 8:40 am or before their pick up times—the adult must park and walk their child into the school. *This includes even our oldest elementary age children arriving after 8:40 am when the doors are locked.*

Children in PreK and Elementary Classrooms

If you have children in preschool and K-5th classrooms, we prefer you bring your children into the classrooms *or* drop off your older student(s) in the west circle drive and return to the east side parking lot to bring in your preschool student(s). Preschoolers may not be brought in by older siblings.

Inclement Weather

Children will not be dismissed during a severe weather alert (tornado watch/intense lightning storm). Families may come in and get their children or wait out the storm and then dismissal will proceed.

Preschool pick up during heavy rain or extreme cold: Please park in the east side designated spots and enter the building through the upper floor, southeast stairwell or use the accessible elevator on the upper floor northwest stairwell (let teachers know you need the elevator door). Go down the stairs/elevator and wait on by the locked doors. At dismissal time, the preschool teacher will open the stairwell or elevator hallway door for dismissal.

K-5th drop off during heavy rain or extreme cold: Families must wait for the staff member to greet the vehicle on the west circle drive and may never drop off a child without a staff member present except during inclement

weather when a staff member should not be outside at all or for a prolonged time. During inclement weather, teachers will greet your children at the classroom playground door between 8:20-8:40 am. (Children may walk in from the circle drive on their own at your discretion) or you can park on the east and walk your children inside. ***K-5th pick up during heavy rain or extreme cold:*** During inclement weather, wait in your car on the west circle drive and we will walk back and forth between the drive and the classrooms so children are not waiting in the elements! Or, you can east side park and pick up from the classroom.

Extended Care Preschool/Afterschool

Sign up for optional extended care preschool (12:00-3:00 pm) or optional afterschool for preschool-5th grade (3:00-5:30 pm) is handled through the school office. Teachers/Playworkers in these programs thoroughly enjoy this extra time with children and both groups have a lot of fun!

On school days where no students are here, neither of these programs are offered. **On most half days, we offer Afterschool for preschool-5th grade between 11:30 am-5:30 pm.** Exceptions include the first and last day of school and the half day before spring and winter break.

For extended care preschool, children should pack a lunch (see lunch guideline section), a blanket, and a lovey. They have lunch, a quiet time, activity time, and outdoor play.

During Afterschool, children preschool-5th grades are combined into one family group led by one or more afterschool playworkers and University student volunteers. A small snack is provided to this group by the school, but families should plan to pack “extra lunch” to be eaten during afterschool. Families can pick up children at or before 5:30 pm for afterschool.

Depending on the school year, some after school clubs are established by teachers, families, or community groups. If you have an idea for a club you would like to offer, please see the director! Some families choose to use local childcare buses to pick up their child(ren) or nanny share.

Childcare

Uni Primary staff members are not allowed to provide childcare for Uni Primary families during the school year. Asking staff for childcare places

the staff in a complicated position. We would, of course, wish to be called upon if an emergency arose, but not as an occasional or consistent situation.

Encouraging Independence and Confidence

Encourage your child to take on task involved in their routine of arriving and departing. For younger children, hanging up a coat, emptying a cubby, collecting a lunch box or carrying a book bag are tasks your child can master with your support. Your child's independence and confidence will grow if you can refrain from doing these tasks for your young child; preschool families should plan for ample time to support their child's morning routine at drop off. Inch by inch!

For all children, please support them to develop a predictable morning routine that allows them to get to school on time. A hearty lunch and drink should be packed for students who stay for lunch/afterschool and children should help to gather school-to-home-to-school materials.

Carpools

When your child is enrolled, you may sign a release authorizing the sharing of your name, address and phone number with other families of students in your child's class. A class list of those signing the release will then be made and distributed prior to the academic year and throughout the year as changes in address or phone occur. Should you wish, you can use this class list to arrange carpooling and childcare with one another.

First Day and Weeks of School

The first days of school are a transition as new places, faces, and routines are learned. Please be patient and allow for extra time and emotion--it's a big deal to be at school no matter what the grade! **Families off all students should come to the classroom(s) for drop-off the first day of school.**

Grown-ups wishing to stay in/near the classroom(s) at the start of the day are welcome to do so, but as the first group meeting is happening, we invite you to room 88 for a breakfast break. We welcome families of younger students to stay and observe from the observational booths (PreK and K/1 have booths) any or all of the first day of school and periodically thereafter. Please talk with your teacher or school director if you have questions about transition to school.

School Supplies/Toys

All students will be given a cloth bag (that fits our coat hooks) on the first day of school to transport belongings to and from school. Students should not purchase a backpack for school purposes *except for 4/5th graders who may purchase a non-wheeled backpack.*

We do not want your children to bring toys from home to school except a **small “lovey” which can be kept in a cubby** or book bag is welcome if needed. Cherished items often get lost or broken and are therefore an item of worry for a child/teacher; competition with toys/belongings from can occur or become a distraction. We do not have a “Show and Tell” time in our program; instead, during the large group meeting children demonstrate and talk about things they have created at school or a classroom may decide on items they do bring from home as a *share* and tell. Children may be invited by teachers to bring items to share as “experts,” depending on the class schedule. Your classroom teachers will further communicate this “expert” time as the school year is underway.

Your supply fee covers school supplies (pencils, markers, scissors, glue, etc.) and we select supplies for the classrooms. Occasionally, a teacher may have a special supply she may ask older student families to purchase, but this is not typical.

Clothing & Inside Shoes

These are “hands-on” classrooms! ***Please send children in clothes that are able to receive occasional paint spills, stains, mud, grass, etc.*** We discourage *younger children* from wearing jewelry or watches to school as these items can break or become misplaced in the classroom. Children will be going outside each day as long as it is not raining heavily, above 104 heat index, or below 20 degrees wind chill. For snowy days, children need water resistant snow pants, boots, hats, mittens, and a coat to participate in snow play. *Please clearly mark names in all outdoor clothing and indoor shoes, as many items look very similar or are exact replicas!* Please keep a **seasonal** set of extra clothes for your child at school for emergencies. Younger children hints: Try to buy clothing your child can manipulate (zip, button). Mark with your last name if items will be passed on to a younger sibling.

All children should bring a pair of inside shoes to be kept and worn inside at school. This keeps the room much cleaner and quieter throughout the day. Please purchase inside shoes that are easy for your children to slip

on and off—crocs, slippers with a no-slip sole, etc. If your child has a special type of footwear s/he needs to wear indoors or outdoors, please let your classroom teachers know.

Homework

Children are engaged all day long at University Primary School; they work hard and we hope their home time can be filled with natural learning experiences (cooking, shopping, outdoor time, etc.) and lots of reading and play time. Homework is not typically assigned PreK-3rd (although see below) but is assigned in the 4/5th grade classroom. Some homework assignments in younger classrooms that may occasionally occur include: project surveys, literacy logs, Junior Great Books, or journaling. **Children in 2/3rd grade are expected to practice all of their addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division basic facts 0-12 at home (flash cards, computer games, etc.) and have facts as mastered as possible before 4th grade.** Children K-3rd grade should be reading nightly for at least 20 minutes with a grown up as much as possible. (They may also read on their own of course; and 20 minutes is a suggested time!) Shared reading with a grown up, discussing stories for comprehension and perspective taking, vocabulary, and debate lays a foundation for more independent reading/comprehension during older years.

Lunches

Lunch is a favorite time of day, and we love all of the different foods children bring from their homes! Children in K-5 or in Preschool extended care should bring a hearty lunch, non-sugared drink (juice is okay, water is great too), and a large cloth napkin (to be used as a placemat) each full day of school. ***Due to severe food allergies, students are not permitted to include any peanut or tree nut products in their lunches. We are a nut free zone!*** Products that “may contain traces of nuts” are acceptable and will be contained to the cloth napkin placemat. Children are allowed to bring egg, dairy, and gluten lunch products to school, though we do have children with these allergies or sensitivities so we will not share any lunch items. We do not have facilities for either heating or cooling foods for student lunches so you may try an icepack or thermos. Helpful Hint: Test home and purchased containers/wraps for user-friendly openings. Try soy or sun butter as sandwich spread alternatives to nut spreads.

Snacks & Cooking Activities

Snacks are provided by Uni Primary, and are a part of the semester materials fee. Preparation for snack and cooking activities are welcome and necessary volunteer jobs! Efforts are made to make all snacks and cooking experiences allergen-free; however, we anticipate some times when not all children will be able to participate in a given snack or cooking activity (due to a dairy or gluten allergy, not nut) and we will have an alternative snack/cooking activity for them. Speak with your child's teacher to clarify for cooking activities.

Allergies

At Uni Primary we strive to create a safe learning environment for all students. Please be aware that there are children with life-threatening food allergies (peanuts, tree nuts, etc.) attending our school. If your child has a known food allergy, known allergy to insect venom or latex, please complete an Illinois Food Allergy Emergency Action Plan form provided by the school office. This form, including your child's photograph, medications (Epi-pen, single doses of liquid Benadryl or pills—no bottles) and special instructions should be brought to the school office on or before the first day of school. Uni Primary will keep a school Epi-pen, as allowed by the state of Illinois for unknown anaphylactic emergencies (such as venomous insect sting). Staff are bi-yearly trained in First Aid/CPR including Epi-pen use and will dispense Epi-pen should an emergency occur. Uni Primary does not ban any allergen except nuts, due to the difficulty of containing other allergens and the frequency these allergens are a part of other children's diets.

Illness/Wellness Policy

Children must be well (free of fever, vomiting, or diarrhea) for a full 24 hours before returning to school. If your child experiences fever, vomiting, or diarrhea the afternoon or night before a school day, they must stay home until the following school day. We will send your child home if they have a fever over 100.0 degrees as measured on our school thermometer. Parents should report contagious diseases (e.g., chicken pox, strep throat, pink eye, fifth's disease, or head lice) to the school office immediately so that a notice can be sent home to students in the same class as a precaution to alert other families for symptoms. A child's name is never shared in this note. We may conduct head checks if lice are reported in a classroom—this involves a staff member looking for lice or nits on a child's head.

Medications

Uni Primary does not employ a school nurse. Please talk with your physician about scheduling prescription medication to avoid school hours whenever possible. If this is not possible, you will need to fill out a **SCHOOL MEDICATION AUTHORIZATION FORM** (obtained from the school office) and have your physician sign and provide *legible details* on the form regarding that medication. You will need to provide a form for each medication to be given—this includes Epi-pens. The medication must be in an original container, labeled by a pharmacy. The label must show the name of the child, the dosage, the schedule of administration, what the prescription contains, the date of purchase, and the doctor's name. Without these components, medication may not be kept at the school. All prescription medicine to be administered by school staff should be taken to the school office at the beginning of each school day by an adult; under special circumstances the office or classroom may hold a child's prescribed medication.

Staff members are not expected nor allowed to administer over-the-counter medications "as needed." You may opt to come to school and give your child prescribed medication rather than completing the doctor signed and prescribed authorization form.

If your doctor signs and gives instructions for your child to self-administer and self-carry medication (specifically for asthma, epinephrine, and diabetes medication), this is allowable. Safety is a first priority for your child and for other children; therefore if staff do not feel qualified/properly trained to supervise child self-administered medication, we will talk with a family member to support us in training.

Emergency Forms

It is imperative that you provide us with a completed **INFORMATION and EMERGENCY MEDICAL RELEASE FORM** on or before the first day of school. We must know how to contact you or others in case of an emergency. We have called 911 before! The information form also authorizes others to pick up your child from school. Please add to the authorized list of names throughout the year as your child makes new friends. The Emergency Medical Release portion of the form authorizes emergency treatment at your preferred hospital if you cannot be reached. **PLEASE**

UPDATE THIS INFORMATION IF YOU MOVE OR CHANGE WORK/CELL NUMBERS.

Health Forms

Health forms must be updated and on file on or before the first day of school. Health forms that reflect a physical less than a year old are required the first year of: preschool and kindergarten. All students must have a health form on file. Kindergarten students must have their vision exam completed by “a physician licensed to practice medicine in all its branches or a licensed optometrist”. Dental exams are required for kindergarten and second grade students. Please submit the appropriate state form for these exams to the school office. In addition to the above, hearing screenings are mandated by the State of Illinois for all students in grades preschool – 5th grade and vision exams are mandated for preschool students. These screenings will be done at the school by a state licensed screener from the Champaign-Urbana Public Health Department. You will be informed if your child does not pass one of these screenings.

Birth Certificates

Prior to the start of school, or at least within 30 days from the start of school, each parent/guardian must submit a certified copy of the child’s birth certificate.

Accident Reports

Safety is paramount to learning, and despite watchfulness, unanticipated accidents happen at school. The Uni Primary staff member present at the time of an accident will complete an Accident Report and contact (or have another staff member contact) a parent/guardian within 20 minutes on all known student accidents where:

- the injury is above the shoulders--to the head, face, or neck
- the teacher is suspicious of a broken bone (swelling, discoloration of skin)
- bodily fluids are involved, such as spitting or biting
- a teacher is unsure about the extent of an injury
- a child hits or kicks another person/is hit or kicked by another child

A teacher is not asked to complete an accident form or contact a parent/guardian for minor scrapes, scratches, and bumps (unless above the neck). Please communicate with your child’s teacher if you have questions about a specific situation; some accidents remain unknown to us until a child reports at home.

Occasional toileting accidents occur. Children will change their clothes and soiled clothes will be bagged up and sent home for washing. Please return an extra set of clothes the following day! There is no form completed for a toileting accident.

Concussions and Head Injuries

Any student (or grown up!) who exhibits signs, symptoms, or behaviors consistent with a concussion (such as loss of consciousness, headache, dizziness, confusion, or balance problems) shall be immediately removed from the activity and a parent/guardian contacted. The student may not return to play or PE until cleared by a physician licensed to practice medicine in all its branches or a certified athletic trainer working in conjunction with a physician licensed to practice medicine in all its branches.

Emergency Procedures

WEATHER EMERGENCY: If there is a weather emergency (tornado warning, snow storm, or severe storm warning) at the time of dismissal, teachers will remain with their students until parents are able to arrive and take their children home or until it is safe to leave. Students will be secure in an inside hallway on the lower level for monthly tornado drill procedures the first Tuesday of the month in a duck and cover position or in the event of a tornado warning.

EARTH QUAKE: If the ground is shaking, we will Drop, Cover, and Hold On! Students occasionally practice for an earthquake by dropping to the ground, taking cover by getting under a sturdy desk or table, and holding on to it until the shaking stops.

FIRE: Children practice fire drill procedures throughout the school year. There are exits from the hall and to the outdoors from all classrooms.

LOCK DOWN: If teachers see suspicious strangers on/near school grounds or in the building, or if they feel threatened in any way by such a person or persons, they will take students to a designated place of safety and call 911. A lockdown on the University campus will follow campus protocol and students will be taken to a predetermined designated place of safety. The specifics for this procedure are not openly shared in this handbook or during parent meetings, but the staff has specific procedures and will practice lock downs with children.

BUS: Children practice bus safety and evacuation procedures led by the Mass Transit District staff.

Ineffective Behaviors and Anti-Bullying

The University Primary School community is committed to making our school a safe and caring environment for all people. We will treat each other with peace and kindness and find traits within our classmates that we appreciate. Our teachers model positive support from teacher to pupil and we recognize each others' abilities rather than inabilities. We address ineffective behaviors and bullying behavior or incidents individually and with small groups of involved students (and often families). Bullying can be defined as behavior that disrespects another student's right to safety, kindness, play, or learning to the point where it interferes with the child's ability to effectively participate in the community. Children are instructed to report and involve an adult if unsafe behaviors or situations arise around physical or emotional well-being. Teachers and students work on an agreement to address situations, and communication with parents and the director is often involved.

The teacher or director will call a parent/guardian during an incident of unsafety and/or if incidents continue. To the greatest extent possible, mutual decision making around programming and support will occur between the school and family (and child). If a mutual agreement for positive support cannot be reached, a family will be asked to pursue an alternative school placement at the discretion of the director of the school.

Cell Phone Policy for Children

Pending a specific child or family need, communicated and agreed upon by the family, teacher, and director of University Primary School, *children may not carry cell phones to or from school*. We can make a phone call home an option should a child feel unwell or have a concern to share with their grown up.

Financial Assistance

There is a limited set of funds available each year for applicants seeking financial assistance for our program. Interested families should complete a Tuition and Fee Waiver Form during the application process or when renewing a contract. If you are interested in *providing* financial assistance funds, please see the paragraph on giving!

Fundraising and Giving

There are intermittent fundraisers for Uni Primary depending on the parent-staff group's desires; however, students occasionally participate in community service projects such as "Eastern Illinois Food Bank" Food for Families or monetary collections for community causes.

If your family or extended family would like to make a monetary contribution to University Primary School for scholarships, special materials, and staff development, please connect to the College of Education Website and click on "Make a Gift" under the alumni/giving tab and then under "other" specify University Primary School.

Tuition & Materials Fees

Parents will be billed tuition monthly by the University of Illinois. After the due date specified on the bill a finance charge will be automatically assessed at the rate of 18% per year or 1.5% per month for an effective rate of 19.56% for late payments. Families who relocate mid-year should let the director know plans or pending plans as soon as possible so families on the waiting list can be contacted. **All families relocating mid-year will be billed: 1) their child(ren)'s last month of attendance, 2) the remaining semesters' tuition, 3) the May deposit will not be returned.** Material fees must be paid each semester as specified in the financial contract.

Celebrations

We celebrate our diverse classroom communities by encouraging children to share family traditions with the class. *Please speak to the classroom teachers about the celebrations or traditions that you would like to share—all are welcome.* Traditions may be cultural, holiday, religious, or a special family tradition or even tradition of routine nature! We also enjoy celebrating birthdays in the classrooms by asking families to share a special activity with all of the other students (not a food treat). This may include reading your child's favorite book, playing a special game that your family enjoys, or doing a special activity (craft or song). Some families donate a book or wish list item to the classroom in honor of their child's birthday. If your child is planning a birthday party and inviting some but not all children in the class, you may not distribute the invitations at school, but rather use email or US mail.

Non-Discrimination, Human Rights, & Love for Families

At University Primary School we welcome and love each of our families. We believe in human rights for all, and we advocate for the special protection and rights of children and families to the best of our abilities. We are beautified by each of you!

As the University's College of Education Lab School we remain deeply committed and also adopt our University's non-discrimination statement which says, "...we will not engage in discrimination or harassment against any person because of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, ancestry, age, order of protection status, genetic information, marital status, disability, sexual orientation including gender identity, unfavorable discharge from the military or status as a protected veteran and will comply with all federal and state non-discrimination, equal opportunity and affirmative action laws, orders, and regulations. This nondiscrimination policy applies to admissions, employment, access to and treatment in the University programs and activities."

Specifically, University Primary shall do our utmost to comply with applicable federal and State laws prohibiting discrimination, including, but not limited to, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (20 USC 1681 et seq.), the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (20 USC 1400 et seq.), the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967 (29 USC 621 et seq.), Titles VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 USC 2000d et seq., 2000e et seq.), the Americans With Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 USC 12101 et seq.), the Illinois School Code [105 ILCS 5], and relevant case law, including Plyler v. Doe for immigrant families, 457 U.S. 202, 102 S.Ct. 2382 (1982).

Families experiencing or concerned about issues of discrimination are encouraged to consider and follow the procedures as outlined in "communication with families," taking a matter of discrimination directly to the head teacher, then school director, and if needed, further with the Assistant Dean of Academic Affairs and the Dean of Education at the College of Education. Families may choose to directly address a matter of discrimination directly with any of these parties, in any order, at their discretion, as they feel most safe and appropriate.

Conferences & School Records

Parent/Teacher conferences are held in the fall and spring. During conferences, families are shown samples of their child's class work from their portfolio and the teacher/family discusses a child's progress. Uni Primary uses a growth model for assessment, evident through photo, video, student work, math and reading assessments, and anecdotal notes. Families should receive an end of semester summary report in the fall and a transition report in the spring, which serve as a record of growth from the semester/year. *If you have concerns about your child, at any time, please contact your child's teacher to arrange an appointment. Many concerns are handled best when addressed early.*

Families transferring from or transferring to Uni Primary will work with our school and the transfer school to transfer student records in a timely way. Certified copies of transfer students' records shall be requested within 14 days of enrollment, if not prior to enrollment, at Uni Primary. Uni Primary shall send unofficial records of transferring students to other schools within or before 10 days of the other school's request. Student files are kept for five years after a child's last enrollment year, at which time files are disposed of in a confidential manner.

In accordance with The Missing Children Records Act, Uni Primary shall flag a reported missing child's record for compliance with the Illinois State Police, should the police request the record. The record shall be flagged by manner of the school office specialist, and communicated to the school director.

Communication with Families

At University Primary School, we have many informal and formal means of communicating with parents. Newsletters and emails are sent home via email or hardcopy in each classroom. When questions or concerns arise, every attempt is made to address them in a timely manner. Families may have brief daily contacts with their child's teachers at drop off/pick up times; however, this is not a productive time to have a discussion of length. Families who have a concern that cannot be addressed through the informal means of communication should make an appointment with the head teacher. If the issue is not resolved, the head teacher and/or the family may request a meeting with the director. If the issue is still not resolved, then concerns may be taken to the Assistant Dean at the College of Education.

After these steps, issues that are still not resolved may be taken to the Dean of the College of Education. Issues may range from a developmental concern to a concern of safety and wellbeing.

Family Participation and Volunteer Opportunities

We LOVE to have parent/guardian volunteers at University Primary School. Early in the school year you will be asked to complete a survey to identify when and where you would like to help. Please let your child's teacher know about activities, hobbies, traditions or other areas where you can share or enhance the program. Teachers will schedule and coordinate volunteer times. Teachers may also ask for a "room parent", which is a contact person who assists with organizing field trip drivers, assisting with classroom celebrations, or helping with other events.

Pet Policy

Classrooms may have pets as a way for children to learn about animal habitats and caring for animals. The pets add a great deal to the nurturing environment of the classroom and make many children feel more "at home." The teachers are very careful to consider student allergies before taking in a pet, and are extremely conscious about the safety of having pets in the classroom. Please check with your child's teachers before bringing a pet from home to be near any of the children. Some students are afraid of dogs, cats, or even hamsters if they are unannounced strangers in the environment. **Also, for the safety of children, please refrain from bringing pets out of your vehicle when picking up your child. This is often a hectic time for the children and the teachers. Pets are not always predictable!**

Field Trips

The inquiry project work in our curriculum involves students doing their own field work, therefore field trips will be a part of each classroom curriculum. Teachers will send a permission home for trips and provide a week's notice of a field trip when possible. We ask your permission for a standing waiver form indicating your child(ren) may/may not use MTD campus and city buses with teacher chaperones. In addition to MTD, we depend on families to help transport students; ***please arrange your schedule to transport children on at least one field trip each year!***

Drivers need to complete an Insurance Information form with the school office before transporting children. It is difficult for teachers to make last minute arrangements, so when you volunteer to drive, please understand the importance of that commitment. Children under 80 lbs. must be placed in the back seat in a car seat/booster. Families need to provide a car seat for field trips, marked with a child's name.

Note:

A reminder that this Handbook is an evolving document, as informed by the school community, Campus, the State of Illinois, and the Nation. Please send recommendations and questions as needed to the School Director: alilewis@illinois.edu