

Lab Report

A Reggio Inspired/Project -Based Learning Community

*“My favorite part was where we mixed colors...
I like this school.”*

-Regan



Open House for Lab School Families

On March 10th the IPS/Butler University Laboratory School hosted an Open House for our students and parents. The children seemed to enjoy the many activities that were set up in the hallway where our school will be located next year. A thank you goes out to Butler University College of Education students Julia, Yael, Ronald, Sarah, Alexis and Diana who volunteered their time to oversee the activities and engage the children in conversations about what they were doing! A second thanks to our St. Mary's colleagues including Executive Director Connie Sherman and our own Lab School/St. Mary's Preschool Teacher Becky Fogler who volunteered their time to greet parents and answer questions about preschool and wraparound childcare. A third thanks goes to Butler University Master Practitioner Cathy Hargrove for the time she spent greeting parents and photographing the children as they interacted with materials, with Butler COE students and

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dear mr smith i liked the culrd bubl stick

-Written by Sophia



Do You Have a Preschooler?

Would you like to send him/her to preschool at the IPS/Butler University Laboratory School? We are pleased to announce that the Butler University College of Education and IPS have made arrangements to bring St. Mary's Child Center to the Lab School. St. Mary's has a long tradition of offering high quality preschool and wraparound childcare in a Reggio inspired, project-based learning context. St. Mary's is a founding member of the Indianapolis Reggio Collaborative and the program is nationally recognized for excellence! To enroll your child in our preschool, contact St. Mary's Executive Director Connie Sherman at (317)361-4868.



Do You Need Wraparound Childcare?

We are trying to anticipate your every need as a family and we are happy to announce that St. Mary's plans to offer childcare, before and after school, for your kindergarten or first grade child for the reasonable fee of \$65.00/week/child. The service would provide childcare before school beginning at 7:00 am and would provide after school care until 5:30 pm on days children attend school. If having all your school and childcare services at the Lab School sounds convenient to you, contact St. Mary's Executive Director Connie Sherman for more details at (317)361-4868. Space is limited, so please call quickly!



On the Cover

The photographs on the cover were taken at our Open House on March 10th as Lab School students interacted with a lighted bubble tube. Look closely at the pictures and notice that the color in the tube is easy to see in the photographs where the color is blue, but the color in the tube can only be seen on the boy's face and hands in the pictures where the bubble tube is green and red. Ask your child to think about what he/she sees in the pictures and develop a theory about why the color is easier to see in the pictures with blue light. Consider having him/her draw a picture to explain his/her theory about this phenomenon. This is the type of question a teacher at our school would ask because problem solving, critical thinking and theory-making are part of our teaching/learning culture.



Visit the Lab School Blog

A Wordpress blog for the IPS/Butler University Laboratory School is now online. You can visit the blog at: <http://blogs.butler.edu/school60/> for information about the school. The site is password protected because images and first names of children may appear on the blog. You will need to type: **creativechildren** on the password line to gain access to the site. When school begins in August, you can expect the teachers to use the site as a daily journal where you will find a few images and text describing what happened at school each day.

At Open House on March 10th, Ruth painted this picture of the flowers you see below.



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“The light thing that you put different colored shapes on, and when you stand on the wall the light shows purple Polk-a-dots on your face... hilarious!”

-Kate

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with each other. It was a joy to see our school community come together for the first time and to see the children enjoying their first experiences as Lab School students. Below are several photographs of the evening where children engaged with materials at light tables, at an overhead projector, and with drawing and painting materials.



Family Focus - Meet the Williams Family! By Heather Williams

Hello, we are the Williams family. Jermaine and I (Heather) are the proud parents of Heaven, age 5 and Faith Marie, age 3. We are ecstatic to be a part of this innovative school. As parents, we enjoy watching our girls learn in a creative environment. Heaven enjoys dancing and taking swim lessons. Faith is definitely the family comedian and loves to paint and draw. Both girls delight in reading stories and visiting the library on a regular basis.

As a family, we love to be outside as much as possible. Long bike rides on the Monon to Broad Ripple park and picnics are family pastimes. We have two dogs that also keep us busy.

Both Jermaine and I had the honor of having Dr. White as our superintendent, while we attended North Central High school. My mother, Ena Shelley, has worked closely with Dr. White on education projects for many years. Mr. Smith was a student of my mother's while he attended Butler University. When she was given the opportunity by Dr. White to create a Reggio inspired laboratory school, she knew she wanted Mr. Smith to be the principal. This school is a dream that she wanted for all children—how lucky we are to be a part of this dream!



Jermaine, Heather, Heaven and Faith Williams

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Children's Reflections About Open House

Ruthie said her favorite part of the open house was "...the squeezezy clear tubes that had the round thing at the top and when you squeeze the top it makes water go into it. When you squeeze it again the dyed water goes out. Because it's an experiment and also it's fun!".



-Ruth



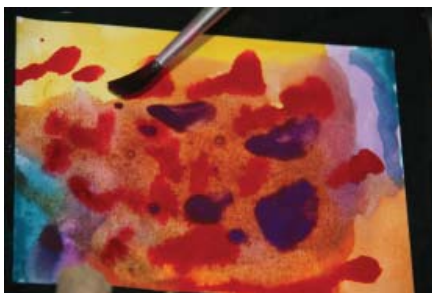
"I liked mixing colors."

-Emily

dear mr smith
i likt the ovrhed
thank you for leting me
viset
love Leah



-Written by Leah



"I had fun painting the red rose and all the colors of the rainbow."

-Kate

“By building relationships, trusting children to take an active role in their learning, and recognizing the children’s competencies, the Butler Lab School—like the schools in Reggio Emilia—will show the world how schools *should* be.” - Dr. Ryan Flessner

Reflections on Reggio Emilia and the Lab School By Dr. Ryan Flessner

The mission statement of Butler University’s College of Education states, “...we must prepare our students for schools as they should be, not simply perpetuating schools as they currently exist.” With the opening of the Butler Lab School, the faculty of the College of Education has an opportunity to join IPS and the greater Indianapolis community in creating one of those schools that should be.

Recently, I had the opportunity to visit the schools of Reggio Emilia, Italy. For decades, these schools have been recognized as the most outstanding early childhood centers in the world. What an amazing opportunity I was given to see, firsthand, the schools that have inspired educators around the world to rethink the education of young children. Because the Butler Lab School will be a Reggio-inspired school, I was incredibly grateful for the opportunity to see the schools of Reggio Emilia. While I was there, I learned several valuable lessons that will guide my work as a teacher educator as well as my interactions with the teachers, students, families, and the community of the Butler Lab School.

First, I was struck by the relationships formed in the schools. The teachers are knowledgeable, caring, and patient. More importantly, though, they are dedicated to knowing each child as an individual with knowledge and experiences that could guide her/his learning. In order to access this information, the teachers need to have meaningful relationships with the families of the children. Throughout my time in Italy, I heard teachers speak of a variety of ways that they communicated and interacted with families in order to improve the educational experiences of the children.

A second highlight from my time in Reggio Emilia was the deep sense of trust that educators place in children. Children are trusted to build relationships amongst themselves and the adults in the school environment. They are trusted to ask thoughtful questions that lead to deeper investigations. Children are trusted to make connections between their knowledge and their unanswered questions. They are trusted to interact with materials not typically seen in schools. This trust sends the message that children are respected as citizens of the school community, that their opinions matter, and that their experiences are valued.



Dr. Ryan Flessner, with Butler University College of Education students, in front of the Malaguzzi Center in Reggio Emilia, Italy. Loris Malaguzzi, the Center’s namesake, is considered the father of the Reggio Approach.



Dr. Ryan Flessner at the Piazza San Prospero in Reggio Emilia, Italy. The lion on which Dr. Flessner is leaning was a gift from Egypt to the Roman Empire. The Piazza San Prospero is often referred to as the peoples square by natives of Reggio Emilia.

One additional idea that captured my attention in Italy was the idea of competency. In the United States, we spend a lot of time thinking about children’s abilities. We constantly assess, grade, and test children in order to compare them to their peers, to children in other states or nations, and to a grade level standard. We have handbooks full of information that we feel children must know in order to be successful in school and in the world. The educators of Reggio Emilia, on the other hand, described students as competent *now*. The teachers—along with other school personnel—look for ways that students display their competence on a daily basis. They start with the assumption that children have a wealth of knowledge upon which they can build as they explore answers to questions or problems that are puzzling. In doing so, the teachers honor the children as competent individuals who have access to a wide range of experiences that can guide their learning.

My hope is that the Butler Lab School will be a place where teachers, parents, children, and community members (including the faculty and pre-service teachers of Butler University’s College of Education) can interact in order to create outstanding educational opportunities for all children. By building relationships, trusting children to take an active role in their learning, and recognizing the children’s competencies, the Butler Lab School—like the schools in Reggio Emilia—will show the world how schools should be.