

ALUMNI ECHO NEWS

LABORATORY SCHOOL
ST. GEORGE'S SCHOOL
WINDY RIDGE

Dr. Eric Jackman Institute of Child Study



Principal's Letter

Dear Alumni and Friends,

There is a saying "crisis doesn't create character, it reveals it." Since the Ministerial announcement of school closures in early March due to COVID-19, the JICS teachers have been designing and providing distance-learning experiences based on our teaching philosophy and supported by research. During this challenging time, we uphold our deep commitment to child-security and child-development. We know that there is no lesson or activity that is more valuable than ensuring that the children feel known, respected, and supported as active participants.

The coming weeks will no doubt bring further challenges, calling on all of us to be adaptable and understanding. But I am confident that JICS will

emerge a stronger, kinder, and more resilient community.

From its earliest days in 1925, the JICS Lab School has fulfilled its mission to provide exemplary elementary education, teacher education, and research to the University of Toronto's Faculty of Education, now the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education.

The Lab School has never been more diverse.

Here's what we have been up to lately:

Award Winning

Today, the school serves to support a MA CSE graduate degree program, and is a hub for international and local educational research. Educators from far and wide come through our doors to learn about best practices for young children. Since 2016, JICS Lab School has held the title of "Outstanding Laboratory School Award", presented by the International Association of Laboratory Schools in recognition of our accomplishments in "educational

research, professional development, curriculum development, teacher training and educational experimentation".

Diverse

- 50% girls and 50% boys
- 54% of parents self-identify as members of a visible minority
- \$116,000 awarded in financial support
- 19% of students receive special education support.

Countless Research Contributions

Research conducted at the Lab School has shaped public education at a global and a local level.

Dr. Blatz, the founding director of the Lab School, and his colleagues helped write and develop the Day Nurseries Act, the

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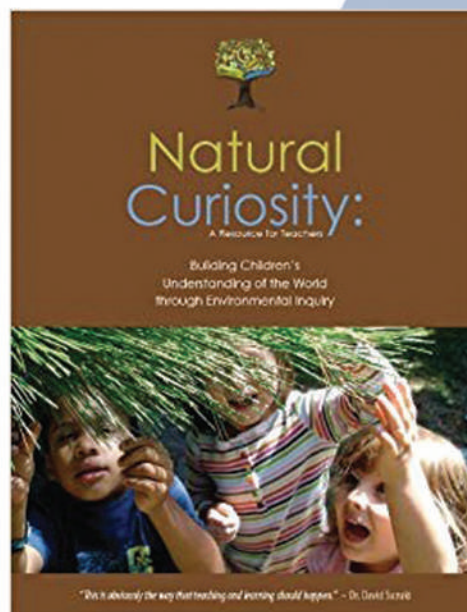
regulations that govern how Early Childhood Education is delivered in the province at a time when nurseries were considered unorthodox for families. More recently, our research into Full Day Kindergarten helped provide the impetus for mandating the FDK model throughout Ontario.

Many JICS teachers and professors contribute to the canon of educational literature that informs practice through the publishing of their work. The Lab School's innovative curriculum and programs have inspired curriculum development in the Ontario Ministry of Education, especially in environmental education, inquiry-based learning, mathematics (rational numbers, proportional reasoning, introduction to algebra, spatial reasoning), literacy (critical literacy, literacy development, picture book learning, vocabulary acquisition), and technology (collaborative knowledge networks such as Knowledge Forum). JICS teachers are frequent expert participants in public debates about childhood, parenting, and innovative learning models.

Valuable Publications for Teachers

In 2011, JICS Lab School wrote and published the book *Natural Curiosity: A Resource for Teachers*, responding to the 2011 Ministry of Education's environmental education policy. The Ministry of Education funded the translation of the resource into French and through the support of donors, every school in Ontario received a complimentary copy. In total, 20,000 copies were sold or distributed, qualifying this book as a "best seller" in Canada.

The second edition of *Natural Curiosity*, created in response to the Truth and Reconciliation Call-to-



Action, was released in 2018 and thus far, over 4,500 copies have been sold.

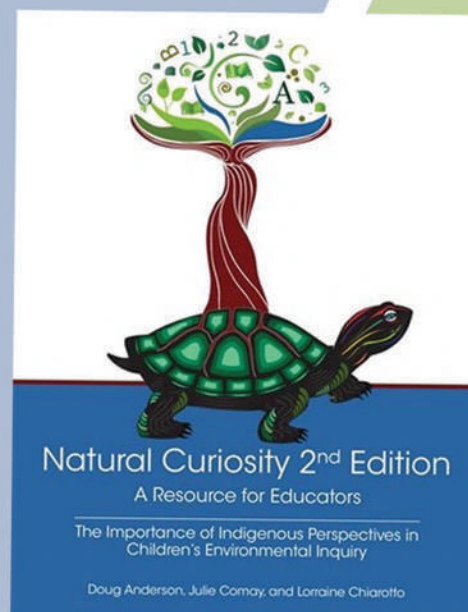
This edition is the result of a collaboration with a 13-member Indigenous Advisory Board and included an Indigenous co-author. Once again, the Ministry of Education funded the translation into French.

In total, 20,000 copies were sold or distributed, qualifying this book as a "best seller" in Canada.

The Lab School offers professional development programs to educators on the "Natural Curiosity Approach".

Here is some of Natural Curiosity's impact:

- The book is used in 14 North American colleges/universities as a required course reading
- 30 school boards have purchased copies of the book for teachers
- Workshops have been offered at 14



Indigenous centres, 24 environmental conferences, 12 faculties of education

- Twitter account @NaturalCuriosity has 7800 followers

Involvement in Educational Conferences

Each year, 14,000 researchers meet for the American Educational Research Association (AERA) Conference. This is the largest gathering of scholars in the field of education research. AERA is a showcase for ground-breaking, innovative studies in an array of areas – from early education through higher education, from digital learning to second language literacy. It is where to encounter ideas and data that will shape tomorrow's education practices and policies, and where to connect with leading thinkers from around the world. In April 2019, for the first time in AERA history, the conference was held in Toronto and the Lab School took full advantage to showcase our work!

Although thousands of research paper applications are submitted, only a fraction are accepted to the conference. I am proud to share the following record number of AERA sessions by the

Lab School:

- Off-site visit - The Lab School was selected by the President of AERA to be the first off-site visit offered during the conference.

We [will] host the International Association of Laboratory School (IALS) Conference

- Off-site visit: Knowledge Building and Knowledge-Building Technology: Natural and Not-So-Natural Curiosity in Action at The Jackman Institute for Child Study
- Off-site visit: Japanese Lesson Study Demonstration with students at JICS
- Paper: Designing Interdisciplinary Knowledge-Building in a Grade 5 Community presented co-authored by Tanya Demjanenko, JICS Grade 5 Teacher 2017-2018
- Paper: Dialogic Literacy Enabled by Cross-Community Interactions in Scientific Knowledge-Building. The data for this study was collected in JICS Lab School classrooms
- Paper: Decolonizing Teaching Practice and Creating a Space for the Spirit by Thelma Akyea, JICS Grade 3 teacher.
- Poster: Emotional and Cognitive Engagement in Knowledge-Building: A Case Study of Grade 1 co-authored by Zoe Donohue, JICS Grade 1 teacher.

We are honoured to have been selected to host the International Association of Laboratory School (IALS) Conference in April 2021 with George Brown School of Early Childhood entitled "Engagement and Well-Being: Exploring What Children Need and How Children Learn Best". Teachers, professors, administrators and researchers from lab schools around the world will visit JICS to share learnings and experiences.



Financial Support

The JICS Lab School has been a tuition-based educational opportunity for Toronto families since 1925. The school has long been designated as a self-funded unit within the university, enjoying the many benefits of its university setting and mandate, while supporting a designated portion of its own operating costs with fees.

In 2008, two changes occurred at Jackman ICS. The first was to articulate and implement an intentional and unwavering commitment to all forms of diversity. This has been addressed through policy and practice that brings all learners together (students and faculty), respecting the race or ethnicity, socioeconomic situations, religion, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, family composition, learning approaches, and physical/health differences. The second change was the university expectation that the school will provide its operating costs more fully. With these two commitments in view,

The first [change] was to articulate and implement an intentional and unwavering commitment to all forms of diversity.

the school began to raise and earmark funds for diversity, making possible tuition assistance and enabling economic diversity.

Since 2008, Jackman ICS began the Diana Rankin/Muncaster Family (DRMF) Tuition Support Fund. Much thanks is due to the Muncaster family and other visionary donors, as well as current and alumni Jackman ICS families, for providing this support.

As the impact from COVID-19 deepens, we anticipate an increase in requests for financial support. If you

have the means to help, we strongly encourage donations at <https://donate.utoronto.ca/give/show/183>. Our goal is to retain every child by providing support for any current family whose changed financial circumstances due to COVID-19 may jeopardize, in the short term, their ability to keep their children enrolled at Jackman ICS. We can do this with your help!

The Endowment Fund of the Jackman ICS Lab School

The newly established JICS Endowment Fund further increases the school's economic diversity by allowing us to provide financial assistance to students in the early years (Nursery/Kindergarten) through to graduation. It will also support our work in response to the Truth and Reconciliation Report, our research and understanding of student mental health, and environmental education. The endowment would ensure that our research and expertise is disseminated to support the public school system. There are many more books and documentaries we are ready to produce!

Our goal is \$5,000,000. If you are interested, donate here: <https://donate.utoronto.ca/give/show/40>

With your help, the Lab School will continue to make a difference to the education of young children around the world and to those who teach them.

All the best,
Richard Messina
Principal

Learn more about the Lab School

OISE Website
School Website for Current Families
Follow the Lab School:



Learn more about The Natural Curiosity Program:



Learn more about The Robertson Program Inquiry-Based Teaching in Mathematics and Science:



Outdoor Learning Space at JICS

The Courtyard – North of The Margaret and Wallace McCain Pavilion

We have begun to construct a state-of-the-art student sensory outdoor space in the courtyard north of the school, using native plants, top ecological methods, elements of forest therapy design, and structural features to attract wildlife (birds, toads), that will engage students in deep outdoor learning and multi-sensory experiences. We are thankful to the JICS Parents' Association for generously donating toward the landscaping of our courtyard.

than 5% of their time outdoors. Outdoor spaces that children have access to are often void of natural elements. The goal of the courtyard redevelopment is to create an outdoor space that a teacher can bring her/his class "to be with nature", to learn about nature, or simply to read a book in a natural setting.

As with most projects, the redevelopment began as a student-inquiry project. During the 2018-2019 school year, each student cohort worked with their teacher to study the courtyard and collect data (light and shade/wildlife/soil) and they shared design ideas. The information they gathered and the work they did contributed to the plan for the courtyard.

Our plan is to fuse elements of wilderness with play, education, ecological recovery

We are working with native plant expert and ecologist, Ben Porchuk. Our plan is to fuse elements of wilderness with play, education, ecological recovery, and both passive and active healing features inherent within the 'more than human world' inspired by Indigenous perspectives. Ben Porchuk is a unique find! He was the first to construct artificial snake hibernation sites in Ontario and remains one of only a handful of people with this experience. He was also the first certified Forest Therapy Guide in Canada, the first Forest Therapy Trainer, and he is currently the only person with the qualifications to designate trails for Forest Therapy in Canada. Ben is also recognized as one of the top native plant landscapers, recommended by Carolinian Canada. Additional unique experiences include working as Head of Conservation at Royal Botanical Gardens.



The JICS children were very excited during the landscaping work and helped Ben with some of the planting. We hope you have the opportunity to experience our new oasis soon!

Alumni families will remember the courtyard as it was often used for graduation receptions. With the addition in January 2018 of The Margaret and Wallace McCain Pavilion, expanding the school from Walmer Road to Spadina Road, we now have a much larger enclosed outdoor space.

Specific unique features that are offered in this landscape design include a condensed forest therapy trail, a Carolinian woodland, a tallgrass prairie, a wet meadow, and a conifer forest. This summer, we hope to add a three-stage vertical-flow native plant wetland.

Research indicates that children are suffering from a "nature deficit". They have very limited access to natural play spaces. While outdoor play in natural environments was once common, people spend less



The Front Yard of 45 Walmer Road

Many will remember the hosta garden and Peace Poles in front our entrance. The Peace Poles remain, reminding us of the importance of peace in our world but the hostas are gone. In 2018, the landscape was transformed into to an Indigenous plant teaching garden. In consultation with Indigenous landscaping expert Paul Richard of Feastfire Gardens, along with the guidance of JICS parent and co-author of *Natural Curiosity 2nd Edition* Doug Anderson, specific plants with medicinal and spiritual properties were planted and labelled. This space is used to educate JICS children and makes a clear statement about our commitment to increasing our respect and knowledge of Indigenous knowledge to all visitors to the Institute. Read more about this transformation in the article Beyond Earth Day by Rosa Na on page 7 of this issue.

The School Yard of 45 Walmer Road

Our school yard continues to be used for all outdoor play (recess) and is the gathering place for children and families before and after school. We have been working with OPAL (Outdoor Play and Learning) - Earth Day Canada to engage children in self-directed all-weather play with "loose parts" (tools, boxes, spare tires, milk crates, etc.), boosting their sense of agency and creating a more inclusive and reciprocal social environment. It is our hope to soon renovate the playground to be accessible and more developmentally challenging. Details coming soon!



The Entrance at 56 Spadina Road

The newly created and landscaped area at 56 Spadina Road is our public face. This entrance is for evening entry by adults to Parent Education Events in the J. Fraser Mustard Assembly Hall. Last year, we hosted OISE's panel discussion on "The Future of Education" with leading experts in the field. Panellists including Lab School Principal, Richard Messina, discussed the future of Indigenous education, social and emotional learning, mental health, and artificial intelligence in an engaging and interactive session. Author and researcher Dr. Greg Wells and internationally recognized child psychologist Dr. Ross Greene have given lectures here, organized by the JICS Parents' Association for the public at large.



South of 56 Spadina



The JICS Parents' Association provided standing wooden gardens. These are planted with vegetables and herbs and are located in the lane south of 56 Spadina Rd. Cohorts of children use these gardens to learn about planting food and healthy eating.



Beyond Earth Day

This article was previously published in 2018 and is being generously shared by "The Child and Nature Network".

by Rosa Na,
Program Coordinator, Natural Curiosity

Students and educators of the Laboratory School at the Dr. Eric Jackman Institute of Child Study have decided to shun Earth Day this year. Three generations of learners housed under one roof, the ever-expanding historic mansion bustles with 200 children from Nursery to Grade 6, teachers, teacher candidates, researchers and staff, united around a shared commitment to exploring what is possible in education. Since 1925, the Laboratory School has spearheaded a child-centered and inquiry-based approach to learning, which ripple into the public education system that they are mandated to serve.

How an institute at the forefront of exemplary education has decided to move beyond Earth Day has little to

do with apathy; rather, it is intimately tied to the direction taken by the environmental education initiative housed at the Lab School, Natural Curiosity. In their ninth year, Natural Curiosity launched their second resource for educators, *Natural Curiosity 2nd Edition: The Importance of Indigenous Perspectives in Children's Inquiry*. Following the widespread popularity of the first edition launched in 2011 (Building Children's Understanding of the World through Environmental Inquiry), the 2nd Edition reflects the school's commitment to lifelong learning by elevating the conversation about

"This book was created to challenge us"

environmental education to include Indigenous perspectives that in turn support learning on and from the land, while also renewing the pedagogical framework proposed in the first edition with updated research and perspectives that have since evolved.

Written in extensive collaboration between Indigenous and non-Indigenous knowledge-keepers and scholars, *Natural Curiosity 2nd Edition* celebrates learning in Mother Earth as an entry point for Truth and Reconciliation.*

For many years, the children at the JICS Lab School celebrated Earth Day with activities such as planting pansies along the front garden with their "special friends," a schoolwide program that connects the older and younger students around shared learning experiences. No one thought to challenge what seemed to be an agreeable and picturesque yard beautification and community building project. Deeper implications around what it means to celebrate the Earth began to unravel over the last three years; mirroring the depth of reflection and dialogue it took to develop the second edition of *Natural Curiosity*.

"Selfishly," says Richard Messina, the Principal of the JICS Laboratory School, "this book was created to challenge us."



"The driving motivation for a second edition was the burning need, in the wake of strong and unequivocal recommendations by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, to bring Indigenous perspectives into the heart of Canadian educational settings and curricula, most notably in connection with environmental issues. Momentum gathered as points of convergence (as well as discontinuities) between Natural Curiosity's approach and certain Indigenous perspectives were identified.

Doug Anderson, who has thought long and deeply about such matters, agreed to articulate these perspectives in this edition; other experts offered their insights, and a project was launched. Looking back at the first edition, Lab School educators realized that it was not enough to simply layer an Indigenous perspective on our own fixed way of doing things. We began to see our values and practices through other eyes, and this triggered a process of rethinking or refining what was most important about our philosophy and practice.

We had never intended to freeze our approach; our beliefs and practices remain living, breathing, dynamic processes that are inevitably and repeatedly revised, as our school, like all schools builds relationships with changing communities in changing times."

— Natural Curiosity 2nd Edition: The Importance of Indigenous Perspectives in Children's Environmental Inquiry

This April, the Lab School invited Doug Anderson, the author of the Indigenous lens in *Natural Curiosity*, and Paul Richard of Feastfire Gardens, an Indigenous gardener, to spark a conversation with the staff about meaningful ways to reclaim the outdoor spaces around the school. Regular summer landscaping was foregone, and the project to rejuvenate the school's local land slowed down significantly to include diverse cultural and ecological perspectives, as well as to reflect the collective vision of our children, educators, and parents. There was talk about what animals the children would like to see and hear at the school. There was wonder around what kind of stories and whose stories come from this place. The 2nd Edition challenged the community to ask: How do we help children reclaim the local world as their own family?

The kindergarteners were first to roll up their sleeves. The final week of school buzzed with their questions and laughter as they yanked out the ornamental hostas in the front garden, which were then

taken home by various community members. The soil beds were cleared for new plants the community decided to invite - plants that are native to the land, are ecologically distinct or significant, have medicinal properties, convey important cultural stories, songs and teachings, or simply, delicious.

Summer staff and parents who live in the neighbourhood volunteered to water the seedlings over the summer. "Place-based Education" themed the summer professional development, and educators were asked to re-read the second branch of *Natural Curiosity 2nd Edition* (Experiential Learning) in preparation to build group knowledge around the following questions: What does place-based education mean to us? What more do we need to know and what relationships should we further develop? How can we as a community research and design, and deepen our connection with our outdoor spaces? How will we celebrate the Earth differently this year?

The start of the new school year converged with many new beginnings. If you are in a rush, you might walk right past the smell of sweetgrass that carry the Indigenous histories of this land, bearberries that can help relieve a tough winter cold, kale that

meaningful relationships that led us to this point in our learning. Most importantly, it is a celebration we must share and cherish with our children, every day beyond Earth Day, as we move towards Reconciliation in a good way. This is our inquiry.

"...It is a celebration we must share and cherish with our children"

can save an evening trip to the grocery store, and new pollinators chit-chatting in the blossoms. If you walk slowly enough, you will surely notice a small metal sign beside every single plant, on it their English name, scientific name, and a blank space. This blank space is a testament of our community to acknowledge what we yet do not know. It is an invitation for difficult and truthful conversations about this land with each other and our children. It is a promise to continue the

Stay connected with updates and read about more stories by visiting <http://www.naturalcuriosity.ca/> or following us on Twitter: @NaturlCuriosity and Instagram: @naturalcuriosiyed

End Notes

* Saskatchewan Cree and Dene Elders believe the common expression "on Mother Earth" continues the subtle colonization - they experience from Anglophones. The expression "in Mother Earth" is closer to their Indigenous meaning. Similarly, the phrase "on the land" becomes "in the land." (Natural Curiosity 2nd Edition, p.6)

Truth and Reconciliation Commission is a component of the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement. Its mandate is to inform all Canadians about what happened in Indian Residential Schools. The Commission documented the truth of survivors, families, communities and anyone personally affected by the residential school experience. Reconciliation is an overall objective of the Commission, hoped to be achieved through activities such as public education and engagement, commemoration and recommendations to the parties. (Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2018)



One Family's Act of Generosity – Philanthropy at JICS

By Tara Rouseau,
JICS Art Teacher and Alumni
Echo Editor

Jackman ICS is committed to needs-based financial support that will both enable increased diversity and retain current Laboratory School families. We rely on the generosity of donors like you to help us achieve our goals of economic diversity. Since 2008, donations to the JICS Diana Rankin/Muncaster Family Tuition Support Fund has provided the following 5 forms of financial support options:

- Support to Retain Current Families with children entering Grades 3 to 6 who could not otherwise consider staying at Jackman ICS
- Indigenous Peoples Support for current JICS children of First Nations and Indigenous heritage (anonymous donor)
- Support for Changed Financial Circumstances offering one-time support for current families whose changed financial circumstances may jeopardize, in the short term, their ability to keep their children enrolled at Jackman ICS
- Additional Financial Support to provide needs-based financial assistance for school trips and extra expenses, educational assessments, tutoring, and unforeseen costs

- Support for Economic Diversity to new families to enrol at Jackman ICS in Grades 4 to 6

Each year, the JICS Tuition Support Committee awards approximately \$100,000 in financial support. The available funds limit the Committee's ability to respond to requests in

Recently, Suresh created the Singh Family Scholarship which provides the yearly full tuition costs of one student at JICS beginning in Junior Kindergarten.

grades below Grade 3. It is the mandate of the Committee to be able to support any successful applicant through to graduation if necessary.

Current JICS parent Suresh Singh and his family saw an opportunity to further bolster opportunity at the school. Recently, Suresh created the Singh Family Scholarship which provides the yearly full tuition costs of one student at JICS beginning in Junior Kindergarten. The Scholarship is committed to the child until graduation.

Suresh's journey to this decision has been a long and deeply personal

one. "Our family was allowed to come to Canada in the mid-60s because of political turmoil in South America." He experienced a violent and unstable childhood; literally, the odds were against him. Fortunate to have been raised by a loving and kind community that included the parents of his

friends, Suresh overcame his challenges and has achieved the personal and professional success that others in his situation were denied.

"I have a moral and ethical obligation under the gifts from God for me to share what I've been given," states Suresh. "It's not mine, so I can't hoard it for myself. It's that simple."

For Suresh, it was very important that the family who received the support of the Singh Family Scholarship meet his specific criteria of socio-economic need. Wanting to offer a child the

life-changing opportunities he received, Suresh was clear about who would qualify – it needed to be a family who would be assessed to require 100% support. The Tuition Support Committee was able to identify an applicant that met the criteria while maintaining full confidentiality.

To us at the Dr. Eric Jackman Institute of Child Study Lab School, growing and learning among individuals who share widely divergent life stories and appreciating their respective cultures is an invaluable aspect of a true education. We are an intentionally diverse community and deeply thank Suresh for his vision and generosity.

We have been fortunate in the past to have received similar multi-year commitments. The difference is that previous donors have requested anonymity. Suresh believes in another approach. By speaking publicly about his family's decision to take this important step, and agreeing to this article, he hopes to inspire other current JICS families and alumni families to do the same. The need is high and Suresh challenges

any family who has the means to make a difference in the lives of others by donating. For some, it can be at a level of multiple years of tuition; for others it might be a single year's tuition (approximately \$25,000) or a portion. Every donation will help a current JICS family who qualifies and/or support a new family to enter our community. Families who apply for financial support work with Apple

Suresh challenges any family who has the means to make a difference in the lives of others by donating.

Financial Services (AFS). AFS provides an arm's length evaluation of financial aid applications and provides an unbiased evaluation of the applicant's financial resources and ability to fund their private education.

"I want people to know what my life was, why I share what I've been given," states Suresh. "Hopefully that will inspire other people to do the same thing."



Please contact Richard Messina
416-934-4509 if you are interested in
making a difference by donating!

PHILANTHROPY

Engagement at JICS: A Longitudinal Study

The Dr. Eric Jackman Institute of Child Study Lab School has been involved in a longitudinal research study exploring engagement and achievement during the past two years. This project represents efforts by school staff and collaborative investigators, including JICS Director

(based on emotional security and inquiry learning) and the school staff's interest in contributing to the literature about how to effectively



show growth over time. While both reading and mathematics data from children was collected, there was a stronger focus on math correlates and predictors in this study given that this subject is currently an important one for policy and practice and the focus of numerous initiatives in the province. The second goal was to study individual difference factors (e.g., gender, math anxiety, attentional and emotional difficulties, executive

quality and security, a central philosophy at JICS.

Thus far, Master and PhD level students in Dr. Martinussen's lab have analyzed some of the data for their theses and dissertations and found some noteworthy results. For example, the result showed that male students from grades 1-6



positive attitudes towards math have children with less math anxiety and greater math achievement, consistent with the general literature in this area. Another project analyzed Grades 4 to 6 students' responses to sets of questions on ways of coping and focuses on students' reports about their level of rumination (i.e.



math computation tasks than peers with strong executive skills when they also reported high levels of rumination. This finding underpins the need to address how students approach challenges in

Caregiver attitudes towards math have been found to be strongly correlated with math anxiety and math achievement.

Dr. Rhonda Martinussen and her research team. It was funded by an anonymous donor to JICS to support research at the Lab School on policy and practice related to children and teaching. The focus of the study has been on three key constructs: 1) student engagement and well-being; 2) student motivation and coping, and 3) classroom contexts that support engagement, motivation, and positive coping strategies. These constructs were selected in collaboration with the staff of the JICS School due to their relevance to their overall teaching philosophy

foster student engagement, well-being, and academic proficiency.

The study has three specific goals. The first goal is to examine the extent to which: a) children at each grade level are emotionally and behaviorally engaged in learning; b) are academically motivated; c) use more adaptive coping than maladaptive coping strategies to address challenges that arise; and d) children acquire grade level appropriate reading and mathematics skills and

functions; grit) that may influence children's current levels of engagement in the classroom, motivation for learning, and coping approaches with stressors (e.g., a disagreement with a peer). The final aim was to capture aspects of the learning environment that support students' engagement, motivation for learning, coping strategies, and well-being, with a particular focus on teacher-student relationship

report higher levels of math performance anxiety (e.g., explaining their answers) compared to their female peers, and students in older grades report higher math error anxiety (i.e., making a mistake) than the younger grades. In addition, caregiver attitudes towards math have been found to be strongly correlated with math anxiety and math achievement, where caregivers who report stronger

dwelling on one's mistakes or negative feelings at school). Students also were asked to complete a math computation task. The students' caregivers also were asked to report on their child's executive functions, including items assessing EF skills such as planning, managing time, monitoring behaviour, and regulating emotions. It was found that students with strong executive skills performed less well on the

math, given that rumination may hinder students' ability to perform well on math tests.

Dr. Martinussen's team is in the process of analyzing all data related to this project. More answers to the research questions can be found in student dissertations on the U of T portal within the next year, as well as future conferences and presentations. To follow the project, please visit <https://learningengagementattention.weebly.com/> for updates.



"I'm very happy being me, although sometimes I'd love to be a bird so that I could fly."

- Joy Fielding

Cindy Halewood Memorial

By Richard Messina
Principal
October 2019

On November 8, 2018 the Lab School lost an important member of the JICS family with the passing of beloved teacher, Cindy Halewood. Cindy taught Grade 2 and previously was the Junior Kindergarten teacher. Her work at the Institute began in 1995 as an Early Childhood Education specialist in the licensed daycare. After receiving her B. Ed. Degree at OISE in 2000, Cindy immediately returned to the Lab School to become a classroom teacher.

Cindy will be remembered for many things including her loving rapport with children and her innovative curriculum, e.g. the study of birds, salmon restoration at Duffins Creek, the "cardboard arcade", her wonder wall (years before this became popular on Pinterest), her "20-Minute Field Trips" and her innovative approach to introducing Shakespearean comedies to 7-year

old children. Cindy was fiercely committed to creating an inclusive learning environment, environmental education, and she worked hard to make connections with Indigenous educators and teachers locally and from Aroland First Nation to incorporate Indigenous knowledge and perspectives into her work. Her

Cindy knew what the research shows: teachers—not books, not technology, not buildings, and not even class size—are the single most powerful driver of student performance.

professional development experiences were included in both editions of *Natural Curiosity: A resource for Educators* and serve as an inspiration for public school teachers.

When I first became principal, I foolishly suggested to Cindy that she explore curriculum choices beyond "birds" and "salmon". Cindy "helped

me to understand" what I deeply know now, that passionate teachers breed innovative learning. In *The Passionate Teacher: A Practical Guide*, Robert Fried explains that "to be a passionate teacher is to be someone in love with a field of knowledge, deeply stirred by issues and ideas that challenge our world,

drawn to the dilemmas and potentials of the young people who come into class each day — or captivated by all of these." Cindy knew what the research shows: teachers—not books, not technology, not buildings, and not even class size—are the single most powerful drivers of student performance. Better teachers = better students and Cindy was

amongst the best! In JICS's publication *Natural Curiosity 2nd Edition*, Cindy wrote "In approaching the study of birds with Grade 2 students, I find that it's easier to 'hook' their interest. This is because I am a dedicated birder myself and my passion for birding is contagious... I feel bound to honour the children's natural desires to know about what affects growth and change in the environment."

Cindy understood the mission of the Lab School and was dedicated to mentoring teacher-candidates from the MA CSE program and passionately presenting in their academic classes. She was deeply involved in research – Cindy was an early collaborator in the Knowledge Building / Knowledge Forum

Her incredible laugh, warm smile, and razor-sharp wit will be missed by all at Jackman ICS.

research of Dr. Marlene Scardamalia and Dr. Carl Bereiter (OISE) and this work with very young children has been published and presented at numerous conferences. Cindy welcomed local and international professional visitors into her class on a weekly basis.

In 2007-2008, Cindy was seconded to Mills College Children's School, the lab school of the renowned teacher education program at Mills College, Oakland, California. Cindy was invited due to her reputation for deep knowledge in child-centered education. Upon her return to JICS, Cindy enthusiastically shared what she had learned to our benefit.

Unfortunately, due to a brain tumor, Cindy needed to end her work at the Lab School in August 2016 but her surprise visits to JICS community

The Laboratory School
Dr. Eric Jackman Institute of Child Study
UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

events were a highlight for the children, teachers, and parents.

Her incredible laugh, warm smile, and razor-sharp wit will be missed by all at Jackman ICS.

Our goal is to add an entrance threshold from the school to the courtyard, featuring a red and white cedar memorial arbour in memory of Cindy. In forest therapy terms, this threshold represents the 'threshold of connection' offering students, teachers, and visitors a place to 'step forward' into a deeper connection in nature. It will be decorated with clay

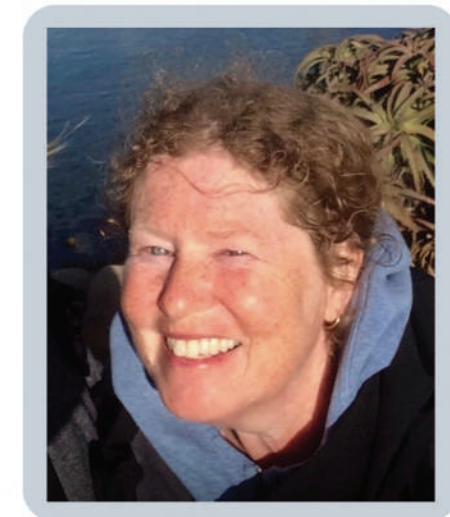
birds made by the JICS faculty. If you are interested in donating to the Cindy memorial arbour and JICS courtyard, please mail us a cheque payable to The University of Toronto, subject line: Cindy Halewood Memorial Arbour.

The newly landscaped courtyard will allow teachers to bring groups of children outside for what Cindy coined the "20-Minute Field Trip". Perhaps with sketchbooks in hand, the courtyard will allow the children to notice with all of their senses and connect with nature, just as Cindy would have wanted.

Memorial for Cindy Halewood

Date details coming soon

Dr. Eric Jackman Institute of Child Study
45 Walmer Road, Toronto, ON M5R 2X2, Canada



Please join us for an honouring of Cindy's life and teaching.

Students, colleagues and friends will share thoughts, memories and song to remember Cindy.

Light refreshments and snacks will be provided.

Looking in on the Dr. R.G.N. Laidlaw Research Centre

This article has been compiled with excerpts from the Dr. R.G.N. Laidlaw Research Centre OISE Edu-C Self Study Report, 2018

Established in 1992 thanks to a generous endowment from the estate of child study trailblazer Dr. R. G. N. Laidlaw, the Laidlaw Research Centre (LRC) ensures the continued presence of applied multidisciplinary research and outreach at Jackman Institute of Child Study. It has become integral in providing leadership and academic expertise through a critical mass of scholars, research infrastructure, facilities, administrative assistance, and a collaborative interdisciplinary network to support its members. As a vital part of the Institute's tripartite mission, the Centre advances collaborations among faculty and the graduate students pursuing combined research and professional education, the Laboratory School teacher-researchers, academic colleagues at OISE and across the university, and many community partners and sponsoring organizations. The current director of the LRC is Dr. Patricia Ganea. Dr. Ganea is also the Director of the Language and Learning Lab, and an Associate Professor in OISE's department of Applied Psychology and Human Development. Her research interests include early cognitive development with a focus on the social, linguistic, and

representational aspects that influence the experiences of children learning about the world.

While research at the LRC is not limited to these topics, there are four main themes explored in the Centre:

CULTURE, PARTICIPATION, AND COMPETENCE

How children are enculturated influences how they learn and experience the world. And the world is filled with humans who are defined by their participation and relationships with others. Competence, or success in learning is in part socially determined. Issues of equity and social justice are paramount in the shaping of life opportunities.

IMAGINATION

An active imagination is viewed as an essential ability for children's learning and thinking and serves to be a worthy area of study and investment.

CURIOSITY

Despite general consensus among educators on the value of curiosity, studies have shown rapid diminishment of children's expressions of curiosity once they enter school, and research is just beginning to examine variability in children's active learning as a function of the interaction between individual characteristics such as curiosity and the ways in which the learning environment is structured.

WELLNESS AND WELLBEING

Studying the promotion of wellness and wellbeing across development as well as the interaction between individual community characteristics that may support or hinder wellness is important to creating healthy societies.

Research at the LRC explores the psychological, cultural, and relational experiences of children that include their family and school life, social cognition, and understanding of self and others. Here is a link to the Dr. R.G.N. Laidlaw Centre website, which provides detail on our faculty and –the important research they are conducting: <https://www.oise.utoronto.ca/laidlaw/faculty-2/>