Dear CDL Families,

Welcome to the summer semester at the CDL! Children will be spending time outdoors this summer doing a variety of activities, so please be sure to follow basic summer safety guidelines for your child. Be sure to supply your child with a sunscreen with a minimum SPF of 15 and a sun hat. Children will have drinking water available daily while playing outdoors and water play will be incorporated to keep children cool during the hot summer months. For more information on summer safety tips refer to: http://www.aap.org/advocacy/releases/summertips.cfm.

This summer we are also working towards meeting one of our program goals of providing more nature-related experiences to strengthen children’s positive dispositions towards learning. As a developmental program, the CDL focuses on providing children with experiences which encourage the development of lifelong skills. For example, exploration, curiosity and a sense of wonder about things in the environment. Bird feeders have been set up on both playgrounds, a dirt-digging area was made for ITT (refer to East newsletter for more information), and the preschoolers planted the garden last month. These experiences have provided multiple opportunities for math and science learning as well. The CDL staff members will also be planning a visit to a school in Elmhurst which has a “nature explore” certified playground (http://www.arborday.org/explore). We look forward to learning from other programs and incorporating improvements which work with our existing outdoor space. For more information on the importance of children having experiences with nature for healthy development of their overall physical and emotional health, check out the national bestseller, Last Child in the Woods: Saving Our Children From Nature-Deficit Disorder, by Richard Louv.

Finally, the CDL is anxiously awaiting our NAEYC site visit for accreditation. The visit will be occurring between June 6th and June 23rd. The teaching staff have completed classroom portfolios to supplement the assessors observations of the classroom routine and activities. These portfolios are a great promotional tool and demonstrate a typical day in the life of a CDL classroom. If you have not had a chance to look at the classroom portfolios, be sure to ask your teachers!

Have a great month!

Emily Reilly
Associate Director
Dear Preschool Families,

The summer semester has begun and with it have come our new interns: Katie Haft, Alyson Shelton, and Linh-Hahn Nguyen. We have already been busy with plans for the summer. We have begun our chick project for the semester, and have welcomed 24 new eggs to the classroom. As we count down the 21 days until the chicks hatch, the children are enjoying books all about the chick hatching process. We have provided a countdown meter in the classroom near the incubator so that the children can see how many days are left until the eggs will begin to hatch. In addition, we have also posted drawings that the children have done and their predictions on how many chicks will actually hatch.

As the weather has reluctantly turned warmer, we have also enjoyed planting our garden this past Saturday with some of our families. It was great fun to watch as families and children came together to help plant marigolds, peppers, tomatoes, cilantro, and other yummy vegetables. We look forward to watching as our seeds grow into plants, and our plants grow into vegetables and flowers for us to enjoy. The children have also taken an interest in drawing pictures of our garden. It will be interesting to see how their drawings develop and change as the plants grow bigger and begin to bloom.

As the days get hotter, we will begin providing water for the children during our time on the playground. Please remember to bring a water bottle, swimsuit, and towel for your child so they can be prepared to play outside in the hot weather. Thank you to those parents that have already brought in these items.

We look forward to a fun and busy summer with your children. Please let us know if you have any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,
Greetings Families!

Summer is finally here! We have been teased with summer weather in the past, but it looks as though the warmer temperatures are here to stay. With the change in season comes a change in wardrobe, so please be sure to check your child’s cubby for weather-appropriate clothing. Once the temperature rises high enough to use air conditioning, our room may become a bit chilly, so feel free to bring in a sweatshirt if you think your child will need it.

As you may have noticed, we now have a dirt-digging area out on the playground. This has been implemented as a way to meet one of this year’s program goals of incorporating more math and science learning opportunities for children into the program. The dirt-digging area provides learning experiences inspired by nature and promotes a sense of wonder in young children. The teachers bring out shovels, buckets, and scoops to allow the children to manipulate the dirt. This area has given the children an opportunity to ask questions such as “What is under the grass?” “Are there bugs in here?” and also allows the teachers to ask the children questions such as “What happens if we add water to the dirt?” As we all know, dirt can be messy. All of the children are given an opportunity to explore this area during our time outdoors. We invite you to bring in a pair of old play clothes or extra clothes if concerns about your child’s clothing arise.

We are excited to welcome some new staff members to our classroom this semester. Amy Paffenroth returned from her internship in the office to help in the classroom while Clarissa goes on maternity leave. Holly, a West intern from the spring 2011 semester, will be joining us as well. New interns Emilie, Corina, Ayesha, and Marion started with great enthusiasm and we are thrilled to have them in our classroom. Emilie will be lead teaching first, starting on June 13th.

Clarissa will be going on maternity leave soon. We will keep you posted. Sonia will be leaving us on June 16th to pursue a full-time employment opportunity. She has been an asset to the classroom. We wish her well on her journey!

We would also like to welcome several new children to the classroom. Na’imah and Zane are new to us this semester. Please take a moment to welcome them and their families to East! We would like to wish Zada luck as she makes her journey into preschool. Sarah and Layla are also leaving for the summer, but will return in the fall.

As always, feel free to contact any of the staff if you have questions or concerns. We hope that through open communication we can have a wonderful semester!
Dear ITT West Families,

Summertime is finally here! We are so excited to finally be spending some extra time outdoors! If you haven’t already done so please bring sunscreen and bug spray to help protect the children from the warmer weather. Feel free to bring in a sun hat if you would like your child to have some extra protection as well. We would also like to do some extra water play and pull out some wading pools. Please bring in proper swimming attire such as swimsuits, water diapers, and towels.

We are really excited to add more natural elements to our classroom. Sarah recently attended a workshop about the outdoor environment and bringing those elements indoors. Sarah has requested that families bring in things like pinecones, leaves, sticks or any other interesting materials you may find. We also planted some onions, carrots, and sunflowers outside, we are eager to watch them grow.

Rachel also attended a workshop in May about documentation and how to utilize more documentation of the classroom. Please take some time to read the documentation panel about worms outside the ITT classrooms.

Our accreditation visit will be sometime between June 6th and June 23rd. The teachers have been working very hard to prepare by making numerous changes in the classroom, researching best practices, and completing the classroom portfolio. The portfolio will be kept in our family area above the cubbies, please feel free to flip through.

We are very excited to welcome many new faces to our classroom. Sylas and Liam both started this summer and have been a wonderful addition to the classroom. We also have three new teachers joining us: Sarah N., Markeyia, and Lindsay. They are excited to be here and have been working hard to bond with the children.

Feel free to contact us if you have any questions!

Sylas

Liam

Markeyia

Sarah N.

Lindsay
The Child Development Lab is located at:

Northern Illinois University  
Gabel Hall 169 & 170  
DeKalb, IL 60115

Our mailing address is:

Child Development Lab  
Northern Illinois University  
School of Family, Consumer & Nutrition Sciences  
DeKalb, IL 60115

Facsimiles can be sent to:

(815) 752-0023

For more information on our program, please visit:

http://www.chhs.niu.edu/cdl/

If you have any questions that are not addressed on our website please give us a call at (815) 753-1150 or e-mail us at cdl@niu.edu.

Hours of Operation (June 6, 2011—August 12, 2011)

Monday—Thursday  
7:15 A.M.—5:45 P.M.

Friday  
CLOSED