How Lab communicates with parents and guardians

Lab uses a variety of tools to connect families to the Schools, and to the information parents need to be partners in their child’s education.

Our goal is to make it easy for you to connect with the people, documents, and information you need to learn about activities and life at Lab. Yes, passwords are needed for some of these tools because of the confidential or proprietary nature of the information. Here is a summary of the ways you may connect with Lab and access important information.

Direct communication is always encouraged
Families are welcome to contact teachers, counselors, or school administrators directly with comments, issues, or accolades. Lab’s Faculty/Staff Directory can be found at the bottom of every page of Lab’s website.

PowerSchool—for confidential, student-specific information and the online family directory
PowerSchool is Lab’s password-protected access point to confidential information—grade/progress reports, student schedules, and family emergency and other contact information. Use your PowerSchool credentials (username and password) to access this information. A link to the Parent PowerSchool page can be found at the bottom of every page of Lab’s website.

PowerSchool is also where you will also find Lab’s online, searchable family directory. This is a great resource and contains each family’s most up-to-date contact information and each child’s name and grade. Families also receive a printed family directory after the start of school.

New families received instructions on how to create a PowerSchool account from the Office of the Registrar in mid-July. If you did not receive these instructions, please email registrar@ucls.uchicago.edu.

Lab’s website
This month marks the introduction of Lab’s new website, designed in partnership with a company that has served independent schools across the United States. The new site is designed to work across platforms—computers, tablets, and phones.

At the top of the home page is the link to a password-protected “Parent Page.” Please bookmark this page, which has the information and forms parents use most, including:

- Order lunch or milk from Cafe Lab
- Sign up for Lab’s bus service
- Report an absence
Families received login credentials via an email from Lab, sent on August 8.

**Schoology**
This year marks the full roll-out of Schoology. Schoology is what is called a “learning management system” and beginning this year, it will be used by teachers across the Schools in different, age-appropriate ways:

**Schoology for grades N–2**
In these grades, Schoology is really for the adults. Part of Lab’s early childhood education program involves what is termed “documentation.” For parents this means hearing all about what has happened in the classroom via photos of student experiences and student work. N/K parents will see how our play-based approach fosters child-centered learning. Primary School parents will observe how teachers engage students in creative, differentiated curricula.

Teachers may also use Schoology to share information, dates, and schedules with parents. For each homeroom, room parents will connect with you through Schoology.

**Schoology for Lower School (grades 3–5)**
Every Lower School teacher will have a Schoology page which will allow parents a glimpse into their student’s school life. Teachers will use Schoology in a variety of different ways - some Schoology pages may include links to teacher blogs and newsletters, others may have pictures of classroom activities and general information. For each homeroom, room parents will connect with you through Schoology.

**Schoology for Middle (grades 6–8) and High School (grades 9–12)**
By the time a child enters Middle School, the role of Schoology becomes very much teacher-student focused. Teachers will use Schoology to share assignments, documents, and resources with their students, to post homework, or facilitate group projects. Teachers will use Schoology to support their curriculum. For each MS advisory, an “advisory parent” will be able to connect with you through Schoology.

For parents of High Schoolers, Schoology becomes a tool to help you keep abreast of your child’s assignments and activities.

Login credentials for Schoology are the same as those for the “Parent Portal” on the website. Families received login credentials via an email from Lab, sent on August 8.
Enews—an important source of time-sensitive info for parents
Important “need-to-know” information will come to you bi-weekly via Parent Enews; please read the sections related to your child’s division.

Sent almost every other Thursday, Enews includes important, time-sensitive, division-specific information from the Schools and the Parents’ Association, as well as information relevant to all schools. The current issue of enews can always be found on the website.

The All-schools online calendar and Planning/No School Days calendars
A link to Lab’s calendars can be found on the bottom of every page of the Lab website.

Middle and High School Daily Bulletins—specifically for teachers and students
Written specifically for a student/faculty audience, the HS bulletin is shared via Schoology and the MS bulletin can be found in PowerSchool (as a major convenience for the teachers, who rely on it most.)