What is Schoology and how does one use it?
Schoology is a “learning management system” 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 writing and/or 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 set up and connect with you through a Schoology “parent group.”

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 set up and connect with you through a Schoology “parent group.”

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

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.

Learn more
Schoology, PowerSchool, Enews: how Lab connects with families
Getting Started - Login and Look Around
Here are a few simple steps to help you login, find classroom information and toggle between student accounts/classes.

To access your parent Schoology account, use your Lab web credentials to login to the Lab Parent Page on http://www.ucls.uchicago.edu.

If you are unsure of your credentials, use the “forgot my username or password” link on the login page. If you still need help, please, email Director of Web Operations Joe Kallo: jkallo@ucls.uchicago.edu

Once you have logged in to the Parent Portal, click on the Schoology-Parents link under Resources & Information. There is also a Schoology link in the footer of every Lab web page.
Once you are in Schoology, find the small triangle in the upper right. This will take you to a drop down menu where you can switch accounts (parent or child) and change settings or notifications.

A second arrow/drop down menu to the left allows you to toggle between student accounts if you have more than one child enrolled at the Lab Schools.

To see all of your child’s classes, select “Courses” to access a drop down menu. This is especially helpful for Middle and High School students.

The “Summary” button will give you access to the most recent updates from your child’s teachers or you can go to individual course pages to find the same information & more.
Before you continue: A few additional pieces of information that will be of help:

- **Course pages** are where teachers post content -- documentation, photos, handouts, assignments, and other information that he/she wants to retain from year to year. Parents will visit as little or as much as they want to get a snapshot of the class.

- **Group pages** are where teachers will share information with that have a short “lifespan” i.e., short-term updates and/or communication. (Users should know that all content from these group pages will not be retained after the end of the school year.)

- **Room Parent Groups in grades N-5** will replace what were once known as Garbanzo emails lists will be used for parent-to-parent posts.

- **Messaging** the group is a good way to direct a message to everyone in the Group when you don’t want to post a public discussion. It works like messaging in Facebook, for those who are familiar. (See detailed info below.)

- **Notifications**. Again, for those who are familiar, Schoology works like Facebook. A parent must “turn on” the notification for “group update posted” so that they get pinged via email (or text if you so choose) when an update is posted. This is the default setup - but everyone should understand to leave it that way.

**A note on how PowerSchool differs from Schoology**

**PowerSchool is Lab’s password-protected access point to highly confidential student records and 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.

Should you need assistance with PowerSchool credentials, please email registrar@ucls.uchicago.edu.
Grades N-5 only: Schoology “Room Parent Groups”

This section is primarily for parents in grades N-5 who may participate in their Schoology homeroom parent group. The Schoology Parent Groups will be taking the place of the classroom email lists. A room parent will enroll you in this group.

Sample Welcome Email:

Every group update will send out an email notification. Unfortunately, the automatically generated links in these emails will not take you to Schoology directly. Instead, you need to log into Schoology from the Lab website. Once you login to the parent page, you are automatically able to access Schoology. A link to Schoology is also at the bottom of every Lab webpage, under the header, “Everyday.”

Schoology has a nice tour to get you started.
Your Schoology Home Page

When you first login, you’ll see the “Recent Activity” screen. Note in the upper right hand corner, it will tell you whether you are logged into your “Main Account” (it will say your name) or your children’s account (either your child’s name or “All Children”). You can set which view you want to start with under Account Settings.

To switch to your child’s account, you need to select your view in the upper right corner:

When you are in your Children’s accounts, you can see messages sent by their individual teachers to the students. In this view, you can only observe; you can’t post or comment.

For purposes of homeroom groups, always be in your Main Account.
For those of you with Facebook accounts, Schoology will be pretty similar from here. You should see all group posts in your recent activity feed as soon as you log in and you are in your Main Account.

To answer those posts, hit the “Comment” link at the end. When you get your Welcome email, it would be great if at least one parent in the household could comment to that post, so we know you are properly subscribed.

**Note:** Sometimes, you will not see your comment right away in the Recent Activity screen, so you may think your comment didn’t work. You may need to go to the Group page. Look for “Groups” in the top navigation bar, and select your Homeroom.
Now you will see all posts and comments relating to your Homeroom. Your teacher will also be subscribed to your parent group.

Commenting: While you may not always need to comment on posts, sometimes it's necessary. For example, if the teacher posts, “Can someone bring juice to class tomorrow for a celebration?” you could comment, “I can bring some lemonade.” This way everyone can see your response. Emailing the person who sent the post will make things harder to coordinate.
How can you tell if you are commenting or posting?

If you want initiate a post about something in the classroom, you can – you don’t have to be a room parent. Say you are going to a Maroons basketball game and you want to invite anyone in the class to join you – that would be a great way to bond as a class. Just be aware the school has laid out some very specific guidelines for posting:

**Schoology Usage Policy**

Schoology is designed to help Lab meet its mission and is only for school-related activities and communications. Use of Schoology must conform to Laboratory Schools and University of Chicago Acceptable Use Policies and other published school guidelines for appropriate conduct including all current Web Posting Guidelines.

Schoology is exclusively for the internal use of the University of Chicago Laboratory Schools community, including its faculty, staff, students, and their families. Any other use (whether commercial, charitable, or otherwise) or sharing outside the Laboratory Schools’ community is prohibited.

Some examples of Schoology usage that would not be appropriate include, but are by no means limited to:

- Promoting one’s non-Lab activities or business ventures
- Inviting individuals to private events
- Promoting a cause (unrelated to class activities), product, or political candidate

Users are reminded that in-person communication is often the most appropriate and that electronic communication should not

This means no birthday party invitations, no requests to donate to a worthy cause, etc. To send out those types of announcements, you need to look up email addresses.
But wait . . . are you ready for a little more about your Parent Group? Other items of note:

- When you post, you have the option to add files or url links to your posts. Just click on the icons at the bottom of your post for more options.

- Your room parents may from time to time post event dates, such as potlucks and class gift deadlines. You can find Events in the RIGHT hand sidebar. They might also post Resources, such as this guide or other helpful items. You can find them on the LEFT hand side bar.

- It’s probably a good idea to periodically check your Junk mail/Spam folder for Schoology notifications.

- You can also message individual parents on Schoology. Go to the envelope icon in the top menu bar and you will find your personal inbox. You can send a message that way and your recipient will get an email notification.

Still need help?

If you are have further questions or technical difficulties with Schoology, contact Joe Kallo at jkallo@ucls.uchicago.edu. Room parents are not tech support.

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