

# Dr. Eric Jackman Institute of Child Study Laboratory School Connections

*2024-2025 Year in Review*

## LEADERSHIP ROLES IN EDUCATIONAL COMMITTEES

- June 2024-June 2025 – Chriss Bogert serves as the President of the International Association of Laboratory Schools.
- 2024-2025 – Krista Spence is an adjudicator for the 2025 Natural Curiosity Suzuki Fellowship Award.

## RESEARCH IN THE LAB SCHOOL FOR 2024-2025

At the Lab School, we are dedicated to advancing education through research that investigates how children learn best and explores innovative educational practices. We foster a collaborative community of researchers and teachers, working together to enhance our understanding of developmentally appropriate practices for children aged 3 to 12. Our research program often involves projects where teachers take on roles as collaborators and co-investigators. Every year, we receive numerous applications from researchers at the University of Toronto and esteemed institutions worldwide. For those interested in conducting research at the Lab School, information about the application process can be found on our website:

[www.oise.utoronto.ca/jics/research/researchers](http://www.oise.utoronto.ca/jics/research/researchers). All research projects undergo an ethical review process either through the University of Toronto or their respective institutions, followed by vetting and approval from the JICS Lab School Child Research Committee. The Lab School's unique reputation attracts researchers looking for an ideal educational setting, often piloting their study in our laboratory school before scaling up and taking it out into public schools. We prioritize research proposals that align with our mission of providing exemplary education for elementary school children, enhancing teacher education, and contributing to educational research. We especially value projects that reflect our three core principles: security, child development, and inquiry. Through our research program, the JICS Lab School significantly contributes to the fields of education, human development, and applied psychology, both within the university and within the broader educational community in Canada and internationally.

The JICS Lab School has supported the following research studies this year:

- *Nurturing Mathematical Minds through Multimedia Storytelling: Towards Accessible and Equitable Mathematics Instruction* (Lab School Teachers, SK to Grade 6)
- *Math Minds* (Lab School Teachers, Nursery to Grade 6)
- *Understanding what is not said: How children acquire the typology of linguistic inferences* (JK to Grade 2)
- *Early Metaphor Comprehension in Preschoolers* (Nursery and JK)
- *BALANCE AI: Blended Assessment of Literacy and Numeracy in Computerized Environments with Artificial Intelligence* (Grades 3 to 6)
- *Digitally-Mediated Group Knowledge Processes to Enhance Individual Achievement in Literacy and Numeracy* (Across the Lab School)
  - *Knowledge building: Cross-community Sustainability Collaboration* (Grade 1)
  - *Infusing Data Literacy with Inquiry on Lunar Phenomenon* (Grade 4/5Z)
- *Assessing the Financial, Governance, and Parental Feedback Effects of School Choice in Canada*

The Lab School is very grateful for the valuable contributions of all members of the JICS Lab School Child Research Committee. A special thank you to Elaine Lam (parent of children in Grade 4 and Grade 6) for her continuing role as the parent representative on this committee since 2018.

For more information about Research in the Lab School:

<https://www.oise.utoronto.ca/jics/research/lab-school>

Contact Chriss Bogert, Vice Principal and Chair of Child Research Committee

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## SUMMER 2024

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### PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT:

- June 19, 2024 – Feasting of the Bundle and presentation by Doug Anderson about Indigenous education to JICS staff.

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### DISSEMINATION:

- Summer 2024 – Marcia Bumbury teaches the Kindergarten Part 1 Additional Qualification Course at Trent University, where she guides teachers through an in-depth exploration of early childhood education. Drawing on her extensive experience in early years education, Marcia provides valuable insights into the latest theories, research, and resources from the Ministry of Education. The course emphasizes the importance of play-based, inquiry-driven learning, encouraging educators to adopt these approaches in their Kindergarten classrooms.
- June 2024 – Russell Leon Hersen receives a grant from the Toronto Musicians Union to tour the Ottawa Valley and gives music workshops to 5 rural schools that do not have music programs. He aims to inspire the students through music by playing rhythmic games, listening to a diverse range of music from around the world, and exploring their singing voices with a vocal warm-up. Each school sang an original Russell Sprout song that explores kindness, and community. Go to [www.russellsproutmusic.com](http://www.russellsproutmusic.com) for a great variety of music and videos by Russell Sprout.
- August 2024 – A video is published of Krista Spence speaking about the spiral model of documenting land-based learning. The recording is live on a teacher tool created by Megan Zeni, a BC educator, and designed for elementary school teachers to use to provide insights and hands-on resources to begin locating play and learning outdoors. [“What is Emergent Learning” resource](#)
- August 2024 – In 2023-2024, Nick Song collaborated with Paul Deitz and the Computer Science Department at the University of Toronto on an innovative pilot project aimed at enhancing STEM engagement. Together with JICS students, they explored the fascinating world of animatronics—a technology that combines motors, controls, and voice recordings to bring puppets to life. By merging technological skills with literacy, the students crafted their own unique creations, using storytelling to animate them. This pilot project focused on making animatronics accessible and affordable for classrooms across Canada. The goal, as Deitz explains, is to teach students to use technology as a storytelling tool, challenging the traditional divide between the arts and sciences. Building on the success of the JICS pilot, Deitz aims to expand the program to schools nationwide, nurturing the next generation of creative innovators. An article is published in August about the project in [UofT News](#).
- August 2024 – Tara Rousseau attends the Indigenous Resurgence Conference, held at the Native Canadian Centre of Toronto and the Humber River Lodge. Many esteemed scholars present, including Dr. Sandra Styres, Dr. Huia Jahnke, Mervi Salo, Tanya Senk, Dr. Taima Moeke-Pickering, Dr. Brent Debassige, and Dr. Jan Hare. Their presentations and

panel discussions provide an important window into their deep and thoughtful work within community and academia.

## SEPTEMBER 2024

### DISSEMINATION:

- September 2024 – Carol Stephenson and Michael Martins present to the MA CSE students about setting up your classroom.
- Fall 2024 – Jessica Haber co-authors a paper entitled Education for Sustainable Development: A Cross-Community Knowledge Building Approach with Dr. Lydia Cao and Dr. Marlene Scardamalia.

### PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT:

- September 4-November 27, 2024 – Krista Spence takes a course through continuing studies at University of Victoria, BC, entitled "Inhale: Recovering Family Medicines Through Storytelling" taught by Dene author Richard Van Camp.
- September 2024-April 2025 – Russell Leon takes a course in Dalcroze Eurythmics (music and movement) by the Dalcroze Society of Canada.

## OCTOBER 2024

### DISSEMINATION:

- October 1-2, 2024 – Natural Curiosity presents two workshops and a keynote at the [Sahtu Regional Teachers' Conference](#) in Yellowknife, NWT
- October 6-December 4, 2024 – Natural Curiosity helps facilitate a [Nêhiyawêwin \(Cree Language\) Course](#).
- October 21, 2024 – Natural Curiosity facilitates a workshop for Take Me Outside week titled "[Natural Curiosity Throughout the Seasons](#)".
- October 22, 2024 – Natural Curiosity facilitates a workshop for Intermediate/Senior Teacher candidates at Lakehead University.
- October 24, 2024 – Norah L'Esperance is a guest speaker at Encuentro de Reconocimiento y Cierre de los Proyectos de Innovación Pedagógica (Gathering to Recognize the Completion of Educators' Projects on Innovative Pedagogy) organized by JUNJI (Junta Nacional de Jardines). Her talk about imagining what nursery spaces might look like reaches 70+ Chilean educators.

- October 30, 2024 – Natural Curiosity facilitates a workshop at the TDSB EcoSchools Conference titled - Rooting for Climate Action: Nurturing Natural Curiosity through Relationships with Plants.

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#### PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT:

- October 2024 – Tara Rousseau represents the Ontario Art Education Association by attending a meeting of ARTSECO, the Arts Education Consultants of Ontario, comprised of system-level arts consultants and co-ordinators across the province. Its mission is to support and encourage the arts in education and to liaise with the Ministry of Education and well as existing agencies and arts organizations. Among the topics discussed are issues of appropriation in teaching and learning about Indigenous art, and the diversity within how the arts are taught in elementary schools throughout the province.
- October 1, 2024 – Krista Spence attends a webinar titled, “How to Teach Nature Journaling” with renowned educator and author, John (Jack) Muir Laws, a leader and innovator of the worldwide nature journaling movement.

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#### PARENT EDUCATION:

- October 17, 2024 – JICS Social Worker, Ellie Lathrop hosts the first Lunch & Learn of the year on the topic of Home School Collaboration. Richard Messina and Chriss Bogert share about JICS's approach to supporting children's behaviour at school and respond to parent questions.

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#### VISITORS

- October 1, 2024 – Eight senior members of the Saudi Arabian Ministry of Education, including Dr. Abdulrahman Alruwaili, CEO of the Saudi National Curriculum Centre, visit the JICS Lab School and OISE. After conducting research on university lab schools worldwide earlier this year, they were particularly impressed by our exemplary education, research, and teacher education program, leading them to select the JICS Lab School and OISE as formal collaborators to support the development of lab schools in Saudi Arabia.
- October 4, 2024 - Lisa Siegmann, Director of Hunter College School, a prestigious K-12 school for intellectually gifted students in Manhattan, along with Dr. Leanne Foster, Principal of the University of Toronto Schools (UTS), visit and tour the JICS Lab School. Their goal is to learn more about our unique approach to inquiry-based learning that helps to produce students who are not only critical thinkers but also adept problem

solvers, equipped with the skills and mindset needed to thrive in an ever-changing global landscape.

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#### RESEARCH:

- October 29, 2024 – Chris Bingley, Assistant Headteacher at Thornleigh Salesian College in the UK, visited the JICS Lab School in May of 2024 as part of his Churchill Fellowship research in Toronto and New York. In October, Chris publishes his insightful report titled, [\*“Good at Learning and Good at Life: How Can Schools Better Prepare Learners to Flourish?”\*](#). His reflections on the JICS Lab School approach are both thought-provoking and inspiring, and I believe you’ll find his observations highly relevant to our community.

### NOVEMBER 2024

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#### DISSEMINATION:

- November 21, 2024 – Luke Van Ryn presents to the MA CSE students about resume and cover letter writing.

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#### PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT:

- November 14, 2024 – Richard Messina, Chriss Bogert, Ellie Lathrop, Nadia Dharsee, Christel Durand, and Jenny Jenkins attend the Growing Minds Conference along with 4 Lab School parent guests. This conference offers a unique chance to learn from leading psychologists and experts in the field. Attendees will gain evidence-based insights and strategies to help children build resilience, foster well-being, and thrive.

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#### PARENT EDUCATION:

- November 26, 2024 – Dr. Zia Lakdawalla presents to JICS parents on Building Emotion Regulation Skills in Your School-Age Child: Navigating Big Feelings in a Digital Age. Dr. Zia asks, “How do we help our children manage overwhelming emotions in today's fast-paced world?” and conducts an enlightening session that bridges the latest research with practical, everyday solutions.
- November 28, 2024 – JICS Social Worker, Ellie Lathrop conducts a Lunch & Learn for parents on the topic of How Sleep Fuels Your Child.

### DECEMBER 2024

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**DISSEMINATION:**

- December 3, 2024 – Charlotte Henderson participates in a Grad Panel for the MACSE program discussing the experience after graduating from the program.

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**PARENT EDUCATION:**

- December 5, 2026 – Ellie Lathrop and Chriss Bogert host a Coffee & Conversation for Early Years Parents on the topic of Finding the Holiday Harmony: Balancing Play and Plans for Young Children. She discusses how to balance the needs of children for structured and unstructured time over the holidays.

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**JANUARY 2025**

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**DISSEMINATION:**

- January 15-March 5, 2025 – Natural Curiosity has begun registration for a [Kanien'kéha \(Mohawk\) Language Course](#)

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**PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT:**

- January 2025-March 2025 – Erika Stein takes an additional qualification course, Special Education Part 1, through Wilfred Laurier University.

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**PARENT EDUCATION:**

- January 13, 2025 – Kai Cheng Thom facilitates beautifully designed exercises to offer participants a chance to share diverse perspectives and often unseen experiences. This evening honours diversity, through uplifting these stories in a way that both celebrates them for their beauty, and also recognizes challenges.
- January 23, 2025 – Ellie Lathrop and Chriss Bogert host a Coffee & Conversation for Early Years Parents on the topic of Promoting Secure Attachment with your child.
- January 30, 2025 – Ellie Lathrop hosts part one of a two-part Lunch & Learn on the topic of Neurodiversity, Understanding and Supporting your Child with ADHD and/or Giftedness.

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**VISITORS:**

- January 22, 2025 – Two visiting scholars (teacher ed specialists) from Universidad de Chile: Dr. Alicia Zamorano, math educator, Dr. Gabriel Villalón, social sciences/civics/history educator, and their 8 year old son Ernesto.

- January 23, 2025 – Dr. Jérôme Proulx, Professeur Didactique des mathématiques, Université du Québec à Montréal.

## FEBRUARY 2025

### DISSEMINATION:

- February 6, 2025 – Marcia Bumbury presents to the MA CSE students about teaching in public v. private schools.
- February 7, 2025 – Chriss Bogert and Richard Messina present to the MA CSE students about inquiry.
- February 25, 2025 – Krista Spence presents to visitors from Japan about the Lan-Based learning LEAF program that she has been developing at JICS.
- February 28, 2025 – Natural Curiosity presents to the MA CSE first year students.

### PARENT EDUCATION:

- February 6, 2025 – Ellie Lathrop hosts part two of a two-part Lunch & Learn on the topic of Neurodiversity, Understanding and Supporting your Child with ADHD and/or Giftedness.
- February 27, 2025 – Ellie Lathrop and Chriss Bogert host a Coffee & Conversation for JICS Lab School Parents on the topic of The Value of Child-led Play.

## MARCH 2025

### DISSEMINATION:

- March 3, 2025 – During Research Night 2025, Nick Song, Walker Kitchens, Nadia Dharsee, and Jessica Haber present alongside University of Toronto researchers on their participation in two research studies in the Lab School: 1) Storytelling with Paper Animatronics with Dr. Paul Dietz and 2) Knowledge Building: Cross-Community Sustainability, Collaboration with Tarragona, Spain.
- March 7, 2025 – Raadiyah Nazeem presents to MA CSE students about Social and Emotional Learning (SEL). She discusses current research, explores the CASEL program guide, and helps generate a list of examples the class has witnessed of high quality SEL in practice.

- March 24, 2025 – Walker Kitchens co-facilitates a MS CSE class with Ellen Fessenha. The purpose of the session is to share resources that are useful to new teachers and to explore ways to incorporate play-based learning.
- March 25, 2025 – Robin Shaw presents to educators from Edith Bown Laboratory School in Utah on the OLOGY project.
- March 28-31, 2025 – Nick Song and Judith Kimel are guest speakers at UTCEF (University of Toronto China Education Forum) 2025, speaking about special education.
- March 31 & April 1, 2025 – Carol Stephenson presents to the first year MA CSE students about her work with rockets and scientific drawing. This presentation is connected to the monograph Artist-Scientist/Scientist Artist and how Carol uses art to support the development of critical observation and thinking skills.

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#### PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT:

- March 18-23, 2025 – Tara Rousseau attends the NAEA Conference in Louisville, Kentucky.

#### APRIL 2025

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#### DISSEMINATION:

- April 9, 2025 – Walker Kitchens and Marcia Bumbury join the Robertson Program for Inquiry in Math and Science to watch and give feedback to members of the team as they present games they've been developing to target fraction arithmetic.
- April 29, 2025 – Krista Spence, Teacher-Librarian and Land-Based Educator, and Raadiyah Nazeem, Classroom Teacher, lead a workshop titled "Inside Out & Outside In: Centering Land Through Stories and Actions" for librarians responsible for family and children's programming, as part of the Professional Learning Day at North York Central Public Library. They highlight the use of Indigenous texts in libraries, suggest related themes, and share classroom-tested outdoor activities to engage communities with local environments.

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#### PARENT EDUCATION:

- April 3, 2025 – Ellie Lathrop and Chriss Bogert hosts a Coffee & Conversation for JICS Lab School Parents on the topic of Helping Kids Connect: Practical Tips for Supporting Peer Relationships.
- April 10, 2025 – Ellie Lathrop hosts a Lunch & Learn on the topic of Supporting Social Growth: How Parents Can Help Kids Build Positive Relationships.

## MAY 2025

### DISSEMINATION:

- May 8-10, 2025 – Krista Spence attends and presents at the 2025 Outdoor Learning Conference in Banff. The conference theme is "Place and Pedagogy: Where Learning Happens" and the focus is on Indigenous Ways of Knowing, Health & Wellbeing, and Environmental & Climate Change Education. Krista's workshop, alongside Natural Curiosity's Alyson McMullen, is titled "Beyond the Child: Exploring Land-Led Pedagogies in K-6 Outdoor Education" and invites educators to explore the shift from traditional child-centered pedagogies to land-led pedagogies in outdoor education.
- May 21, 2025 – Tara Rousseau represents OAEA at the spring meeting of ARTSECO in Stratford.

## JUNE 2025

### DISSEMINATION:

- June 5, 2025 – Chriss Bogert and Principal Emerita Elizabeth Morley present alongside Nicolás Ramos from IALS to the European Network of Laboratory Schools on Relevance Research and Risk: The Laboratory School and the Future of Education. The seminar is sponsored by the Paris École Des Hautes Études de Sciences Sociales (EHESS), who are part of the European Network of Laboratory Schools. Research and analyst Nóra Révai from the OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development) presents on Bridging Education Research and Practice: The International Landscape. Richard Messina participates in this discussion as part of an ongoing partnership with the OECD this year.
- June 10, 2025 – Chriss Bogert chairs the IALS (International Association of Laboratory Schools) Research Collaboration meeting and meets with 20 colleagues from Lab Schools across four continents to discuss how to engage effectively in collaborative research and to generate ideas and possibilities for a new shared research focus across Lab Schools.
- June 10-13, 2025 – Jessica Haber presents virtually at the International Society of Learning Sciences (ISLS) Annual Meeting in Helsinki, Finland. This year the ISLS conference is intended to recognize global, environmental and social crises, but also emphasize an optimistic view for envisioning new solutions. The selected papers aim to honour teachers, students, citizens, and researchers as active transformative agents or world-makers of the future. Jessica presents alongside Dr. Lydia Cao, an associate

professor at OISE and Pere Boluda, a secondary school teacher in Tarragona, Spain. They share their research on Cross-community Knowledge Building as an approach to Education for Sustainable Development (ESD).

- June 20-21, 2025 – Chriss Bogert attends the Summer Board of Directors Meeting for IALS. Chriss is completing her year as President of IALS and will stay on the Board as Past President.
- June 2025 – Russell Leon receives a grant from the TMA to go on a small tour throughout rural Ontario to teach music to schools without a music program, with a JICS parent donating keyboards to all the schools.

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#### PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT:

- June 9-12, 2025 – Jessica Haber attends virtual sessions of the Knowledge Building Summer Institute (KBSI) entitled Building for Sustainable Futures in the Age of Generative AI held in Helsinki, Finland.