

**LESLEY ELLIS SCHOOL**  
**CURRICULUM GUIDELINES: KINDERGARTEN**  
**2017-2018**

**LANGUAGE ARTS**

Language arts generate enthusiasm for self-expression. Language is viewed as a complex process that includes reading, writing, speaking, and listening. Through the use of language, children can extend their abilities as critical and creative thinkers, essential skills for academic achievement and interpersonal relationships. As children share stories, poems, and original pieces of work, and engage in debate, idea sharing, and other forms of group discussion, they come to view themselves as competent readers, authors, and communicators.

The goal of the language arts program is to progressively and sequentially build upon students' foundations in reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Students are supported and challenged within their zone of literacy development as they gain an understanding of phonological processing, phonics, grammar, context, and content. Children learn to use language in all its varied forms and gain an understanding of the importance and pleasure that all kinds of expression can provide. Overall, students are given a multitude of experiences that increase their confidence as readers, writers, and communicators.

Students are involved in numerous reading and writing activities throughout the day. Some of these activities are connected to ongoing classroom themes, and others are designed to help develop proficiency in specific skill areas. Writing workshops, journaling, small reading groups, and language arts stations provide times during the day that support the children's continued literacy growth. Literacy is also integrated into many aspects of the school day including meetings, art, science, math, and social studies activities.

Students engage in and respond to literature through whole class picture and chapter books, poetry studies, individual and buddy reading, and reading groups. During reading groups, the children explore a wide variety of literature through direct instruction via books that are appropriate for the age and skill level of the reader. Vocabulary development is enhanced during these times through book chats, word analysis, contextual investigation and, in the upper grades, specific vocabulary assignments. In conjunction with the classroom program, weekly library visits and extensive collections of classroom texts extend the students' opportunities for diversifying their literature experiences.

The writing program includes both direct instruction and daily writing times with an emphasis on writing as a process. Students learn to edit their own writing, conference with peers and teachers, and publish their work. Using their foundational knowledge, students expand their abilities as authors and develop greater insight into the stories shared in both fiction and non-fiction texts. In grades 3 and 4, students work on more focused writing assignments that include, but are not limited to, persuasive, descriptive, and informational essays. Teachers in Kindergarten – Grade 2 use the *Wisnia-Kapp Reading Program* to provide direct, explicit instruction in phonological awareness,

sound/symbol retrieval, segmentation skills, and syllable pattern types that support reading and writing development. Students transition from invented spelling to emergent spelling to conventional spelling as they enhance reading fluency, and develop the recognition of sight words, word patterns, and phonetic rules. Spelling skills are reinforced in mini lessons, games, story editing, writing assignments, and reading groups.

*Zaner-Bloser* manuscript and cursive handwriting is taught and reinforced with the understanding that ease, skill, and confidence in this area promote written communication. Children also have the opportunity to publish written work on computers, using technological tools as modes of communication.

Listening and speaking skills also play a major role in the language arts program. As children communicate with each other, they work towards a greater awareness of themselves and the effect and impact their words and tone can have on those around them. Ways to communicate and listen effectively are explored through group work, dramatizations, and class meetings.

Above all, through the language arts program, we hope to instill in every child a love for reading, writing, and communicating, the foundations to accomplish these successfully, and an understanding of how vital they are in everyday life.

## **Kindergarten Language Arts Objectives**

### **Reading**

- Identify uppercase and lowercase letters
- Continue to develop the ability to identify the sounds that comprise individual words
- Begin to develop strategies for decoding simple words
- Make letter-sound connections and begin to decode simple words
- Begin to recognize some *sight words* (commonly used words)
- Understand conventions of print (i.e., parts of a book, left-to-right progression)
- Begin to read developmentally appropriate books
- Make connections between text and self
- Begin to understand story structure (main idea, details, sequence, characters)
- Respond to literature through discussion, music, art, drama and writing

### **Writing**

- Write many lowercase and most uppercase manuscript letters with developmentally- appropriate formation
- Use phonemic awareness and letter knowledge to spell independently (invented spelling)
- Begin to use classroom resources (word wall, sound cards) and include sight words in written work
- Begin to recognize that sentences start with capital letters and end with punctuation marks
- Express a complete written thought, in fragment or sentence form

### **Speaking/Listening**

- Use listening skills for increasing lengths of time
- Expand vocabulary
- Clearly express thoughts, ideas, and feelings to both peers and adults, in both large and small settings
- Ask questions to aid comprehension in all curriculum areas
- Follow directions independently

### **Learning Looks Like This**

The teachers have been reading Leo Lionni books to their class for several weeks. The children have really picked up on the similarities in his characters, messages, and illustrations. Towards the end of this author study, the class breaks into three smaller “working” groups. Each group picks its favorite Lionni story and begins to plan for a dramatic retelling of the book. After creating storyboards that include the setting, plot, and characters from their chosen story, they spend several days working on sets, backdrops, and costumes. Each group approaches its performance differently, and the teachers allow group members to individualize their participation, planning, and final production.

The first group wants its play to be an exact representation of the book. They ask a teacher to narrate and, as the book is read, they act out what they have seen in the illustrations. A couple of characters have some lines in the play, and these are written out on large cards, which are read with teacher support until they have memorized the words. The second group is so excited about the acting and dramatics of the activity that it uses the book only as a starting point, from which an original dialogue is created. Each time they rehearse the play, new twists and turns are added. The third group has a beginning reader whom the teachers have noticed is looking for more of a challenge. She and her partners are excited about her being the narrator. The story is condensed using pictures and sight words, and the whole group helps her practice. One of her friends, who has not yet demonstrated much interest in letters and words, gets so excited he asks the teachers to write out his lines so that he can “read” his part as well. No one performance is quite like the next. The class has already put on plays for other classrooms this year, so this time the students decide to digitally record their performances. The DVDs are offered, along with the three books, to the other classrooms as a great rainy-day activity.

### **MATHEMATICS**

The Go Math! curriculum is the basis of mathematics teaching in the elementary program. The curriculum has numerous features which center around the idea that each child learns differently. Much like other aspects of Lesley Ellis’ curriculum, it incorporates techniques that target and address students’ diverse needs. Teachers focus on concepts and skills in great depth, while simultaneously building a foundation for the next grade level. In general, lessons begin with problem-based situations and then build to more abstract problems. Students and teachers move through a carefully sequenced program to develop deep conceptual understanding and then practice, apply, and discuss these newly acquired skills. Problem solving and application to real-life situations are

emphasized and provide students with the opportunity to truly understand why they are learning these mathematical concepts.

GoMath! is aligned with the Common Core Standards (CCS), with an emphasis on its standards for mathematical practices, which are relevant at every grade level with increasing complexity. As laid out by the Common Core, students will:

- Make sense of problems and persevere in solving them
- Reason abstractly and quantitatively
- Construct viable arguments and critique the reasoning of others
- Model with mathematics
- Use appropriate tools strategically
- Attend to precision
- Look for and make use of structure
- Look for and express regularity in repeated reasoning

**In Kindergarten mathematics, students will work toward mastery of the following learning objectives:**

- Represent, count and write numbers to 20 and beyond
- Compare numbers using counting strategies and making models
- Use expressions to represent addition and subtraction
- Use objects and drawings to solve problems and record equations
- Decompose numbers into pairs in more than one way
- Understand addition as putting together or adding to, and subtraction as taking apart or taking from
- Use objects to begin to decompose the numbers 11-19 into ten ones and further ones
- Know the count sequence when counting to 50 and to 100 by ones, twos, fives, and tens
- Begin to make reasonable estimations
- Recognize, extend and create patterns
- Identify, name, describe, and compare two-dimensional shapes including square, circle, triangle, rectangle, and hexagon
- Identify, name, describe, and compare three-dimensional shapes including cube, cone, cylinder, and sphere
- Describe the measurable attributes of an object
- Compare the length, height and weight of two objects
- Classify objects by color, shape, and size
- Make and read a graph to count objects that have been classified into categories.
- Become familiar with the calendar, days of the week, and months of the year
- Understand that clocks indicate time, and that hours and minutes are used to tell time

### **Learning Looks Like This**

When the children come to school, the “Question of the Day” is “How many children go to Lesley Ellis?” Each child enters the room and writes an answer. They have learned

that it is okay to guess when they do not know the exact answer – the more times they make guesses, the closer their answers seem to come. Later, at morning meeting, the class looks at the answers, which range from seven to infinity (a favorite idea at this age). Children begin to comment on the answers. “Well, it has to be more than 20, because there’s 20 of us.” “I think 1000 is way too much. We would not fit into the Wing at assembly.” With continued conversation, the class gets to a more realistic number, although it still doesn’t have an exact count. One child suddenly says, “Why don’t we go count them?” Everyone is enthusiastic until another child says, “But my sister is in preschool and she’s sick today; don’t forget to count her.” From here they talk about the other problems that might be encountered (one class is at the museum, what if the little kids won’t stand still and let us count them...). The teachers write down these ideas, and the group generates a long list of ways to figure out the answer.

Later on, they break into several groups, and each group chooses one method of solving the problem (counting all the chairs in the school, counting the lockers in the hallway, asking each classroom teacher and adding them together...). Each group heads out to work on their solution, drawing pictures of what they are doing as they go. When each group is finished, the answers are compared and a discussion about how they got there ensues. “What unexpected things happened? Was it easier or harder than you originally expected? How did you represent the numbers as you went from room to room?”

There are four or five answers that are relatively close to each other. The teachers explain that the group can now say, “We have about 150 children at Lesley Ellis.” This, of course, is not good enough for the children – “We want to know exactly!” they demand. A letter is written to the Director of Admission explaining the original problem and all of the solutions. They invite her to visit the room and tell exactly how many kids are in the school. Her visit happens quickly and the children find out that the number of enrolled students is right in the middle of all of their solutions. They’re very excited by their success and feel a great sense of accomplishment.

## **SCIENCE**

Science is both a highly creative endeavor, representing an important aspect of our culture, and one that provides clear benefits to humankind. Science involves a wide range of processes including posing questions, developing models, making and testing predictions, and collecting and interpreting data. It is through engaging in these processes that students strive to make sense out of the world around them. Children who are actively engaged in the practices of science begin to view it as much more than just the simple acquisition of facts. When they learn about science using many different approaches, they gain a deeper understanding of, and respect for, their world.

The goal of the science program is to connect with children’s natural curiosity and enable them to learn ‘by doing’. Focused, guided investigations, as well as time for open-ended exploration, lead to the development of age-appropriate skills and engagement in thoughtful reflection. This approach requires them to work collaboratively, think independently, experiment, and problem-solve.

Our science curriculum is developed from a wide range of sources. The curriculum is broadly aligned with the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks, and reflects recommendations of the American Academy for the Advancement of Science (AAAS), the National Research Council (NRC) and the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS). We use and supplement stand alone units, such as *Science and Technology Concepts* (STC) and *Building Blocks of Science* units. In addition, curriculum materials are sourced from a diverse spectrum including The American Chemical Society, The Harvard Museum of Natural History, WGBH Teachers' Domain, and elsewhere. The curriculum is designed to cover four areas of inquiry: life sciences, physical sciences, earth & space sciences, and engineering & technology.

In Kindergarten, students investigate the **Five Senses, Organisms & Habitats, Balls & Ramps, and Our Bodies**. In the multi-grade classrooms, topics are taught in a two-year looping cycle. Students in their first and second grade years study **Weather & Water Cycle, Animal Classification, Rocks & Minerals, Nutrition, Plant Growth & Development, and Space**. During the third and fourth grade years scientific study centers around **Electric Circuits, Human Bodyworks, Microscopes, Sound, An introduction to Chemistry, and Motion & Design**.

In an effort to encourage deeper understanding of what students are learning, teachers often integrate science into other curriculum areas. Students keep science journals, make detailed drawings of what they observe, tabulate and graph data they collect, and generate questions that can lead to further investigations. In these ways, students develop an understanding that science both bridges many subjects and is highly relevant to their lives.

## **KINDERGARTEN SCIENCE OBJECTIVES**

### **Five Senses**

- Identify the five senses and explore the world using them
- Use the senses to make observations and predictions
- Gain a basic understanding of the scientific method by using the senses as observational tools

### **Organisms & Habitats**

- Observe, describe, and compare the characteristics of seeds and plants using simple tools, such as rulers and magnifiers, which enhance initial observations made by using the senses
- Identify the basic needs of living things and the conditions (including light, moisture, and heat) which influence an organism's ability to flourish or its need to adapt to a given habitat
- Communicate scientific ideas and discoveries through writing, drawing, and discussion

### **Balls & Ramps**

- Explore the physical properties and characteristics of balls and their motion
- Begin to understand, through exploration, the terms: *inertia, momentum, velocity, and acceleration*

- Describe the effect of the size and weight of a ball and the steepness of a ramp on the ball's movement on an inclined plane

### **Our Bodies**

- Gain a basic understanding of parts of the body, their function and purpose
- Explore body systems: muscular/skeletal, circulatory, digestive
- Learn about good nutrition and ways to take care of one's body

### **Learning Looks Like This:**

Animated groups of students circle around various kinds of balls: a table tennis ball, a golf ball, and a small, bouncy rubber ball. Each student holds a straw. In one group, two students are lying on the floor, blowing through the straws at the rubber ball. One boy, red in the face, says, "I can't make it go! Help me!" Another girl joins in the effort. A shout goes up across the room. "We did it! We rolled the table tennis ball. It only took a little breath!" As other groups join in observing, the teacher asks why they think it only took a little breath to move the table tennis ball. "Because it's little." The teacher asks if it is the smallest ball in the experiment. They shake their heads. "The rubber ball is the smallest but we can't get it moving with three people blowing big breaths through the straws!" "But the table tennis ball is really airy...it's full of air, not hard stuff."

After a few more minutes of exploration, students get settled in with drawing materials and their journals. They are asked to show the results of their group's experiment. One group decides to make a picture showing in order the easiest, second easiest, and hardest ball to get moving. Another group draws each ball and then the number of straws it took to get that particular ball in motion. At the end of the session, the students present their group's findings and are excited to bring their straws to recess to try out other balls on the playground.

## **TECHNOLOGY**

Technology education at Lesley Ellis School begins in Prekindergarten with the introduction of exploratory concepts and skills. These learning experiences are built upon and developed more fully at each grade level throughout the elementary and middle school programs. Our technology curriculum guidelines ensure that there will be consistency in skill development across classrooms and that all Lesley Ellis students will attain a proficient level of technology competency by graduation.

Lesley Ellis elementary students incorporate technology into their learning experiences through SMARTboard activities, digital cameras, Lego Robotics, laptops, and classroom computers. Curriculum objectives for technology are primarily designed for integration with other subject areas such as math, reading, and social studies. Students will receive direct computer instruction of basic operations, such as keyboarding, word processing, and printing documents.

Upon graduation from LES, students have had the opportunity to become familiar and competent with a wide range of technology tools which will help develop a positive view

of using technology as a tool for learning and also form an understanding of the legal, ethical, and safety issues involved in using the Internet and online tools.

## **KINDERGARTEN TECHNOLOGY OBJECTIVES**

### **Basic Operations**

- Identify parts of a computer (monitor, mouse, etc.)
- Demonstrate beginning use of hardware to interact with applications (start and shutdown computer, launch and quit a program, use a keyboard and mouse for input)
- Understand basic computer vocabulary, focusing on hardware (laptop, CD, DVD) through teacher-guided use of these materials
- Start and quit computer programs such as Microsoft Word from dock
- Use special keys (shift, caps lock, delete, arrow keys, and return)
- Identify and type letters and numbers on keyboard
- Leave computer workspace ready for next student

### **Ethics, Society, and Safety**

- Apply code of conduct while using technological devices
- Follow classroom rules for responsible use of resources

### **Research, Problem Solving, Curriculum, and Communication**

- Integrate Smart Board and other technology tools to enhance curriculum
- Create graphics using simple editors (e.g., KidPix)
- Expose students to presentation software through single slide PowerPoint project

### **Learning Looks Like This**

Kindergarten students have been learning about the five senses. Small groups of children are divided among the tables around the classroom making lists of favorite smells, sights, sounds, tastes, and things to touch. “My favorite smell is when my grandmother bakes cookies with me,” says one child. “Okay, let’s put that on the favorite smell list!” suggests another child at that table.

When the lists are all compiled, the students take them to the computers where they begin to work on creating individual sensory profiles in the form of single-slide PowerPoint presentations. After learning how to recognize and open the PowerPoint application, students begin by typing their names on a blank slide, along with a list of things that excite their senses. Visual and sound effects are then introduced to complete the presentations. Students are then able to go from computer to computer, viewing the individual sensory profiles. “Hey, I picked rain as a favorite sound but your rain sounds louder than mine,” notices one child.

Handouts of each slideshow are printed out to create a classroom display to reinforce what the students know about the five senses, as well as the effectiveness of PowerPoint as a tool to present ideas and information. Parents are invited to view the PowerPoint presentation at the upcoming Family Breakfast.

## **SOCIAL STUDIES**

Social studies is seen as a process in which students learn to understand themselves, their families, their neighborhoods, communities, and the greater world, both in current and historical perspective, while appreciating the interconnectedness between each. It is a way to investigate past, present, and future human relationships. It allows us to explore, and subsequently face, the responsibilities we have to each other and the world.

The goal of the social studies curriculum at Lesley Ellis School is to develop an understanding of the social, economic, and political institutions that foster our current day way of life. Students learn about the past and present from a variety of perspectives: anthropology, economics, geography, history, political science, psychology, and sociology.

The social studies curriculum builds upon itself year by year, in a spiraling manner, meant to reinforce core skills, while also increasing prior knowledge, as it repeatedly looks deeper into history and culture. In Kindergarten, students study **Families, Community, and Strong People**. First and Second Grade students explore the idea of **Citizenship, the United States, Goods and Services, Cultural Awareness**, a study of **Boston**, and focus on **Mapping**. During the Third and Fourth grade years, students study **Slavery and the Civil War Period, the Early United States, and Colonial America and the Revolutionary Period**. Mapping skills and geographical knowledge are connected to all themes and play an important role in furthering the students' understanding of the world. Because the content of social history is always changing current events are also used to help students relate the past to the present, recognize change, and hypothesize about the future.

It is our hope that the students will learn positive attitudes and the fundamental values of our society as they investigate the meanings of justice, human dignity, equal opportunity, and pluralism. It is our belief that this learning leads to a better understanding of the similarities and differences among diverse cultural, ethnic, religious, and racial groups in the world.

## **KINDERGARTEN SOCIAL STUDIES UNITS AND OBJECTIVES**

### **Our Families**

- Gain an understanding of family heritage and culture represented in the classroom
- Explore what makes a family
- Be exposed to family types that are not represented in the classroom
- Experience a sense of belonging through sharing and community

### **Community**

- Explore the question: What makes a community?
- Study local businesses, government offices, and other places and learn how each helps to create a working community
- Be exposed to community workers and community jobs
- Participate in a local community based project
- Learn community stories and lore from the past

- Practice basic mapping skills of and between relevant places
- Learn basic geography
- Locate and label natural and human-made landmarks

### **Strong People**

- Explore the idea of a hero/strong person
- Discover ways to act as a hero in our daily lives
- Learn about peace advocates, artists, sports players, musicians, and politicians from around the world and diverse backgrounds

### **Learning Looks Like This**

Within the unit on Strong People, the students have learned about various people, many who are not famous but who have exhibited qualities that make them “strong” in some sense. On this particular day, the children are gathered at the meeting circle ready to begin the morning meeting. The teacher asks the students to think about what they have learned about the people they have studied so far, about what makes them strong. He shows the children the large piece of chart paper where he will record all of their ideas, saying, “Let’s see if we can fill this up with all of the things that might make someone “strong.”

Children begin to raise their hands to share ideas. One boy says, “You are strong if you do something hard, like read a long book all by yourself.” Another little girl says, “Somebody who does a big job.” “Can you tell me more about that?” the teacher asks. “Hmmm...like if you are in charge of the whole world, like the president.” The ideas are written on the chart paper. Another child adds, “Strong means you did something that other people didn’t like.” “Do you mean like if you grabbed a toy from someone who was playing with it, then you are strong?” asks the teacher. “No! I mean like if you wanted to sit on the bus and they said you couldn’t.” “You are talking about Rosa Parks!” calls out a girl on the other side of the circle. The conversation develops as the teacher helps the students tease out why Rosa Parks was strong. The chart paper fills up with words, including “brave,” “muscley,” “smart,” and “alone.”

As the discussion wraps up, the teacher sends the children to the tables with blank paper and crayons and the task of drawing a picture of someone they know who is strong. Later the students will share their drawings, evaluate what the strengths of each individual are, and sort and display the drawings on the bulletin board.

### **ANTI-BIAS**

Children are aware of and affected by human differences from an early age, and our community is based on respecting and appreciating the similarities and differences found within our school and neighborhoods and throughout the world. The strong emphasis on anti-bias education promotes a sense of belonging for all students and builds a sense of connection between people.

The goal of the anti-bias program is to challenge the impact of bias on the students' social and intellectual development by helping them acquire the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary for respectfully living in a diverse community.

Each year the anti-bias curriculum expands on the learning done in the earlier grades, revisiting topics of understanding to provide a spiraling learning experience for the students. The curriculum builds upon itself, encouraging the students to move along a continuum from knowledge to understanding to tolerance to acceptance to respect and inclusion. Throughout all of their learning, the students are encouraged to develop and actively participate in lessons to end the cycle of bias. The anti-bias curriculum focuses on, but is not limited to, eight major areas of bias. These include **racism, sexism, heterosexism, ableism, classism, ageism, religious intolerance, and body size/shape bias**. Through direct, pro-active instruction, as well as using everyday events within the classroom and the larger world, the curriculum is integrated into all aspects of the students' school experience.

Above all, we are working to instill in the students a respect for themselves, their classmates, and their community, while providing each child with strategies for actively improving the social conditions of all of those around them.

### **Kindergarten Anti-Bias Objectives**

- Care about and take steps to respect and understand all people of the world by learning about their culture, religion, core beliefs, and history
- Help create an environment where students and teachers feel safe to share their opinions and feelings
- Practice and develop conflict resolution skills and strategies to work towards resolving issues of bias on personal, peer, community, and global levels
- Learn about people and events in literature, history, and real life connected to anti-bias issues
- Develop anti-bias language to empower children to articulate their ideas on fairness
- Be introduced to anti-bias terms including ally, bully vs. bullying behavior, equality, inclusion, exclusion, put-up, put-down
- Begin to understand the definition of bias
- Begin to recognize bias in literature, media, and real life events
- Begin to understand that biases exist today and that children have the power to change them
- Identify differences in skin tone and look for examples of people of color in literature
- Empower students to do activities based on interest, not gender
- Understand the value of what we have and recognize that not everyone has access to the same resources
- Participate in community service projects benefiting local organizations
- Make connections with and develop understanding of older and younger people
- Recognize and respect various family structures

- Begin to define and use vocabulary including gay, lesbian, and straight

### **Learning Looks Like This:**

On a cold day in November, the children enter the classroom and notice that a polling station has been set up. It's Election Day and the children are voting on what to have for snack that day. Campaign signs have been made and a mock debate has helped make up some minds the day before. Later in the day, after the vote has been tallied and the children have felt the joy of victory or the satisfaction of a good campaign, the teacher compares the total number of votes to the number of children in the class that day. The children notice they are the same. The teacher then reads The Day Gogo Went To Vote, by Eleanor Batezat Sisulu, about the day that Gogo, grandmother of the story's narrator, was first allowed to vote in South Africa. A history lesson follows and many children are outraged to learn that this is a true story. The class talks about who can and cannot vote in South Africa and are just as shocked to learn the history of voting in the United States.

The next day the class reads The Ballot Box Battle, by Emily McCully. This is a fictionalized history of the story of Cordelia, a young girl whose relationship with the great suffragist, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, inspires her to a remarkable act of courage. The children then try to come up with unfair practices that go on today. A list is made and they share ways they might battle injustice. Independently in their journals, they draw a picture of how they would feel if they were Gogo or Cordelia.

### **SPANISH**

The Lesley Ellis Spanish Program creatively immerses children into another language and culture. Spanish instruction starts in Preschool and continues through Grade 8 with students building on the knowledge previously learned each year.

Communication is the main focus of the Spanish program at Lesley Ellis. The methods that are used incorporate a combination of total physical response (TPR) and a multi-sensory approach, which accommodates a wide range of learning styles. As a result, visuals, manipulatives, and all kinds of props are used during lessons to stimulate and facilitate language learning. Spanish language is taught in a natural, stress-free setting where students progress from a receptive period, internalizing and reacting to the spoken language, to a productive phase, where they are ready to utter words and phrases in Spanish. Music, songs, games and active classroom experiences are integrated into the Spanish program regularly.

The Spanish Program also creates an appreciation for the Spanish language and the Hispanic culture. Throughout the year, students learn about Hispanic holidays, such as "El Dia de los Muertos" and "Cinco de Mayo." Cooking projects and dancing to a variety of Latin rhythms are other ways that children are exposed to the rich Hispanic culture.

### **Kindergarten Spanish Objectives**

- Exposure to and practice with the sounds and basic linguistic themes of Spanish

- Learn to sing and produce a variety of vocabulary words in Spanish
- Gain an understanding of basic commands
- Be able to ask and respond to simple questions
- Be introduced to cultural concepts

### **Learning Looks Like This:**

Kindergarten students are sitting in a circle, introducing themselves with a simple chant they are familiar with, “A a-e-i-o-u-, ¿Cómo te llamas tú?” This chant has the children sharing their names with one another and also gets them familiar with the sounds of the vowels in Spanish. The teacher then brings over a basket with a variety of real fruit inside. One by one she takes a fruit from the basket and says its name in Spanish. Some fruits are familiar and some are new. The teacher tells them about the new fruits and some of the countries where those fruits may grow. Once all of the fruits are introduced, the teacher places the basket in the middle of the circle and asks the children to stand up and get ready to play a game, “Párense!” They begin to play a freeze-dance game where they move to the rhythm of Latin American music. When she stops the music, she asks one of the students to give her “la manzana.” The child searches in the basket and gives the apple to the teacher. After all the fruits have been picked, the class ends with children lining up when they hear a fruit they like being called out. “Si te gusta la manzana, haz una fila,” (If you like apples, start making a line.) When all the students are lined up, the teacher says “Adios! Nos vemos pronto!”

### **MUSIC**

Music education at Lesley Ellis School stems from a belief that music is for everybody and that it is a rich aspect of daily life across the spectrum of cultures. As such, the music curriculum strives to give students the basic knowledge they need to both create their own music and understand music that they hear, including music from many cultures beyond New England and the United States. Classes are also rooted in a vision of music as essentially cooperative. Classes heighten skills of cooperation and teamwork through activities that require children to work together in small or large groups, and reinforce healthy leadership in games in which a child directs the rest of the class, including the teacher.

Kindergarten music classes use joyous full-body movement games to help children explore musical concepts. A visitor to the classroom will see children expressing the music they hear (improvised by the teacher on various instruments) by jogging, walking, jumping into hoops or making shapes with brilliantly colored scarves. Often the games take the form of a musical adventure, in which characters and actions are directed by the music. The Lesley Ellis School music program is firmly grounded in the Dalcroze Eurhythmics approach to music education.

### **Kindergarten Music Objectives**

#### **Singing Goals**

- Sing songs in different meters, keys, genres and languages, from a variety of cultural backgrounds

- Use voices expressively in songs, chants and speech
- Learn good singing posture
- Develop ability to match pitches with voice

### **Reading/Notation Goals**

- Read simple pitch notation: quarter, eighth and half notes

### **Instrument Goals**

- Perform simple patterns accurately on rhythm and melody instruments
- Use these concepts in playing percussion instruments and singing

### **Improvisation/Composition Goals**

- Improvise instrumental accompaniments to songs, recordings, poems and stories
- Improvise on percussion instruments using basic durations

### **Rhythmics Goals**

- Through singing, listening and improvisatory movement games explore and develop kinesthetic experience of the following musical concepts: dynamics, register, staccato/legato, beat, walking music (quarter notes), jogging music (eighth notes), galloping music (dotted quarter notes), slow walk (half note), melodic motion, tempo, ability to differentiate beat from melodic rhythm, remember and be able to echo simple patterns
- Develop the ability to listen for these concepts in the teacher's live, improvised music or in recorded examples and to respond with appropriate movement choices

### **Solfège Goals**

- Through singing, listening and improvisatory movement games explore and develop kinesthetic experience of the following musical concepts: register- be able to recognize home note, recognize, and be able to show, physically, scalar motion (1-5)

### **Critical Response Goals**

- Perceive, describe and respond to basic elements of music including beat, duration, tempo, register, pitch and dynamics
- Listen to and describe music from various styles and cultures, identifying expressive qualities, instrumentation and cultural/geographic context
- Identify sounds of a variety of instruments, from a variety of cultures
- Demonstrate good attentive listening, rehearsal, and performance skills

### **Social Skills Goals**

- Develop effective listening skills
- Develop turn taking skills
- Develop leadership skills through opportunities to lead the entire class and small groups

### **Learning Looks Like This**

As children enter the music classroom, the teacher sits at the piano and plays a melody the children recognize as their “circle song.” Students join hands to form a circle and the music tells them to release their hands through a cadence. The music then tells them to slowly scrunch down to sitting with a slowly descending scale, or to stand up with an ascending scale. At times the music begins to rise but then goes back down. It is up to the students to listen carefully and use their bodies to show when the music is at the top, at the bottom, or in the middle. Without knowing it, the students are taking a melodic dictation!

Children sing an upbeat welcome song from Nigeria, in Uruba. Because it is spring, students discuss the migration of birds and learn a song about birds flying home. Students show a nest with one hand and a bird with the other. When the song resolves and the music “goes home,” the birds land in their nest. But if the music is away, the birds continue flying. The teacher leads the group by humming, and then by playing the piano. When he sees that the students can accurately follow the music, he knows that they are ready for the next step. Each child pretends to be a young bird, enrolled in flight school and learning how to fly. Each bird has a nest (a hoop positioned on the perimeter of the room), which is their home, and they start in the nest’s center, resting. Musical cues such as an ascending scale, a particular melody, or “flying music” tells them to wake up, stretch their wings, and take flight. If the music goes home, so do they. If it does not, they remain away. Because the music is improvised, it can also change at any time, requiring the children to listen well and show what they are hearing through their movements. The class ends with a jazzy goodbye song. In future classes, the children will learn names for the different types of cadences they have experienced.

### **ART**

At Lesley Ellis, we believe that the arts can play an essential role in the process of learning. Art projects help to stretch a child’s focus and attention, develop fine motor skills, and strengthen cognitive skills such as problem solving, matching form to function, decision making, and logical thinking. It provides students with a powerful means of self-expression, a way to share one’s imagination and observations, to convey a feeling and thought. Arts nurture a sense of belonging and foster a sense of individuality. They also provide students with an important means of self-assessment and a creative tool to communicate knowledge and learning. Through the arts, children internalize the value of persistence, believing in one-self and others, and that mistakes are not forever. Art is integrated into many subject areas during the school day, and students also work in the art studio with an art specialist during the week on a variety of visual arts media and techniques.

Art classes at Lesley Ellis School focus on the individual child as well as cooperative learning. Participating in a wide range of art experiences allows children to express themselves successfully while developing and utilizing higher level thinking skills involving both critical and creative thinking. We focus on developing imaginative and innovative art techniques through the skillful use of a variety of media and tools. We

work hard to create a continuous learning environment in which each student develops a positive self-image through a variety of learning experiences and artistic activities.

At Lesley Ellis, the art curriculum allows our students to analyze and evaluate their own individual artistic endeavors and the work of other artists, through integrating arts into other subject areas in the curriculum and to leisure time. We also help broaden an appreciation and understanding of arts that are relevant to students' lives, experiences, and cultures.

### **Kindergarten Art Objectives**

#### **Methods, Materials, and Techniques**

- Enjoy exploring and experimenting with a wide range of art materials and techniques
- Use a variety of materials and media and understand how to use them to produce different visual effects
- Create artwork in a variety of two-dimensional and three-dimensional media
- Learn to take care of materials and tools and to use them safely

#### **Elements and Principles of Design**

- Explore and experiment with the use of color in dry and wet media
- Identify primary and secondary colors and gradations of black, white, and gray in the environment and artwork
- Explore how color can convey mood and emotion
- Explore the use of line in 2D and 3D works
- Identify a wide variety of types of lines in the environment and in artwork
- Explore the use of textures in 2D and 3D artwork
- Identify a wide variety of types of textures in the environment and in artwork

#### **Observation, Abstraction, Invention, and Expression**

- Create 2D and 3D artwork from direct observation
- Create 2D and 3D artwork that explores abstraction
- Create 2D and 3D artwork from memory or imagination to tell a story or embody an idea or fantasy

#### **Drafting, Revising, and Exhibiting**

- Select a work or works created during the year and discuss them with a parent, classmate, or teacher
- Explain how a piece of work was made and why it was chosen for discussion

#### **Critical Response**

- In the course of making and viewing art, learn ways of discussing it, such as by making a list of all of the images seen in an artwork (visual inventory), and identifying kinds of color, line, texture, shapes, and forms in the work

- Classify artworks into general categories, such as painting, printmaking, collage, sculpture, pottery, textiles, architecture, photography, and film

### **Learning Looks Like This**

Kindergarten students have been learning about insects in their classroom. Today in art class, children are gathered around the tables, looking at a wide range of images of butterflies and dragonflies. “Does anyone see any patterns on the wings of the butterflies?” the teacher asks. “What do you notice about the structure of the dragonfly wings?” she wonders aloud. Lots of discussion ensues around the colors, lines, and shapes that the children notice. The teacher explains and demonstrates how patterns that the students notice can be created with colors, lines, and shapes. Large sheets of paper and oil pastels are placed around the tables and children eagerly begin drawing their own representations of butterflies and dragonflies. They use the images as a reference and the teacher visits with each student as they work, commenting on the patterns, lines, and symmetry she notices in their drawings.

When the class meets next, the form and shape of insects is presented in 3D and the various body parts of insects are discussed, ie. head, thorax, abdomen, antennae, and legs. Papier mache and paper forming techniques are introduced and demonstrated. Children enjoy molding long body parts with paper and securing them with masking tape, before covering the form in papier mache. After the bodies dry, they are then painted with an emphasis on layering and texturing the application of paint. Legs, antennae, and wings are attached to form a unique insect! The amazing butterflies and dragonflies are exhibited in the office for all to enjoy.

### **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

Physical Education at Lesley Ellis provides opportunities for all types of learners to be successful. Students acquire the knowledge and skills for movement that provide the foundation for enjoyment, continued social development through physical activity, and access to a physically active lifestyle. Physical Education develops the student’s motor skills and hand-eye coordination through a variety of skill concepts.

At Lesley Ellis developing the fundamental movement patterns is the primary focus in Kindergarten Physical Education. Students are introduced to basic locomotor and non-locomotor skills and concepts, as well as spatial awareness. Students are introduced to basic physical changes that occur as a result of physical activity.

In first and second grade, students demonstrate mastery of basic locomotor and non-locomotor skills while performing in changing conditions and expectations. Students progress towards mature form in complex manipulative skills, such as foot dribble and throwing. They are able to sustain physical activity for longer periods of time and have a deeper understanding of the benefits of physical activity. Students work independently and in small groups.

In third and fourth grade, students seek to improve their motor skills by applying movement concepts while performing motor skills. Students work on body management

skills in game-like settings, and specific sports skills are also emphasized. The four components of physical fitness are introduced. Students participate in physical activities successfully in a group and individually.

### **Kindergarten Physical Education Objectives**

- Travel forward and sideways, changing directions quickly in response to a signal
- Travel backward
- Travel with objects over, under, behind, alongside and through
- Walk, run, skip, hop, and gallop while changing speeds and directions and in response to a variety of rhythms
- Demonstrate clear contrasts between slow and fast movement when skipping, hopping, galloping, and sliding
- Toss a ball to a close stationary target
- Drop a ball and catch it at the peak of the bounce
- Throw a ball underhand and overhand
- Catch a gently thrown ball using properly positioned hands
- Dribble a ball using hand or feet
- Strike a ball with a bat from a tee or cone using correct grip and side orientation
- Kick a stationary ball using a smooth continuous running approach
- Kick a slowly rolling ball into the air along the ground using the inside of the foot
- Tap the ball from foot to foot, shifting weight and balancing the body on the non-dribbling foot
- Understand that warm-up exercises prepare the body for physical activity
- Participate in a variety of activities that involve manipulation of objects
- Demonstrate the elements of conflict resolution and good sportsmanship

### **Learning Looks Like This**

As the Kindergarten students enter the gym on Monday, we hear an echo of voices chanting, “We love P.E., we love P.E.” The students are greeted with an enthusiastic “good afternoon” from the teacher, and they begin to do warm ups. Specific warm ups are individual and unique to each student. Some students run up and down the gym, others hop, skip and gallop. Once the warm up time is complete, the students gather around the center circle and are introduced to the day’s lesson—dribbling and passing a ball.

After the teacher demonstrates the dribbling and passing activities, emphasizing the phrase “hand-eye coordination,” the students are split into four groups. Each group goes to one of the challenges set up around the gym. Shouts of “watch me” are heard as the students become more confident in the skills they are practicing. Every few minutes the whistle blows, students get their area ready for the next group, and then rotate to their next activity, excited to try the next challenge. At the end of the class students gather back around the circle and ask about the activities for Wednesday’s class. The teacher gives a brief preview and then high fives each student as the class heads back to their classroom.

## **HEALTH AND WELLNESS**

The health and wellness curriculum is designed to teach fundamental health concepts, promote healthy habits, and foster healthy individuals and relationships. We see health as a holistic subject, incorporating physical health, social and emotional health, safety and prevention, and ecological and community health. At Lesley Ellis, these areas of health overlap with and are integrated throughout our physical education program, our anti-bias curriculum, our science curriculum, and our social-emotional work within each classroom.

The objectives below, which grow in a developmentally-appropriate manner from Kindergarten through Grade 8, include those skills not specifically taught within other subject areas.

### **Kindergarten Health and Wellness Objectives**

- Differentiate between healthy and unhealthy foods, and understand the importance of eating breakfast
- Learn proper teeth-brushing and flossing techniques
- Practice proper hand washing techniques and how to cover coughs and sneezes
- Learn about safety rules in the classroom and school as well as on the playground
- Learn about fire safety and water/pool safety
- Be introduced to 911, stranger safety and self-protection
- Identify poisons and understand safety around medication
- Meet and/or learn about health care providers (doctors, nurses, dentists, chiropractors, etc.)
- Practice specific ways of protecting and caring for earth's natural resources.

### **Learning Looks Like This**

Kindergarten teachers have noticed that students in their class have been talking a lot about their visits to the doctor. In the dress-up area today, one of the boys has put on a long button down shirt and fashions a stethoscope out of a scarf, before telling another Kindergartener that he will need to have five shots, but that it won't hurt at all. Later that day during meeting time, a teacher asks the children what they know about their pediatricians. A long list of information is provided. The teacher then asks the children to think about questions they have about their doctor or things they might want to find out. They take out their journals and write or draw what they are wondering. Later in the week, students sit together at circle with their questions and write a shared letter, which is mailed to area pediatricians. While they await responses, the teacher arranges for a doctor to visit the class the next week.

## **SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING**

Through a variety of means such as proactive guided conversations and ongoing practice within a safe environment, elementary students at Lesley Ellis are encouraged and challenged to build their knowledge of and appreciation for themselves and each other. Students at Lesley Ellis are supported as they continue to construct a deep understanding

of themselves as individuals including likes and dislikes, preferred modes of learning and useful strategies, as well as personal challenges and inspirations.

By strengthening their knowledge of themselves, students are more able to interact in meaningful ways with their peers. Classrooms are carefully set up to encourage students to work and play as members of a community; students understand that at school disagreements are discussed and collaboration is valued. Each classroom has a weekly meeting in which students focus on intrapersonal and interpersonal skills in a flexible way that adjusts to fit their developmental needs. Classroom teachers are adept at not only tuning in to areas of difficulty for the group or individuals at a given time, but also in initiating critical discussions in a more proactive way. Students' social and emotional learning is bolstered by both the anti-bias curriculum and the health curriculum, allowing students to approach these relevant topics from various vantage points and sending them the message that this type of learning is significant as they approach many areas in life.

### **Intrapersonal Objectives**

- Understand and identify own feelings
- Manage and express feelings appropriately
- Understand the difference between thinking, feeling and acting
- Distinguish between a *want* and a *need*
- Develop a positive sense of identity
- Demonstrate a positive attitude toward work and play
- Suggest appropriate solutions to problems
- Seek adult support when appropriate
- Participate in classroom discussions
- Develop leadership skills
- Demonstrate a willingness to try new things
- Take risks in the process of learning
- Make independent choices
- Display perseverance
- Adjust to classroom routines; adapt to changes in routine
- Acknowledge redirection
- Demonstrate pride in accomplishments

### **Interpersonal Objectives**

- Listen attentively to others and demonstrate active listening
- Participate appropriately in class discussions
- Show a willingness to share and take turns
- Strive to view a situation from multiple perspectives
- Demonstrate respect and kindness toward classmates, teachers, and materials
- Strive to balance one's ability to initiate and support others in both social and academic endeavors
- Actively practice peaceful conflict negotiation skills