

Early Education Curriculum

Happy January! Below, please find the curriculum planned for the month.

UPK/Preschool

Bruins and Patriots: Wrapping up Unit 2 - Building Our Working City

Unit 2 focuses on children learning to observe their city. When listening to its sounds and seeing its people, they may wonder about its functionality, organization, and the roles people play. This unit builds upon the community and systems introduced in Unit 1 to explore the structures, features, and people shaping the city.

Big Ideas:

- The city where we live is full of interesting people and things.
- People design and build what their community needs.
- Our community is interconnected.
- Our city depends on the resources we have in our environment.
- Specific tools and materials serve different purposes.
- Understanding materials helps us decide how to use them.



Maple, Celtics, and Red Sox: Wrapping up Unit 2 - World of Color

Beginning Unit 3 - Wind and Water

Here, children will explore the properties of wind and water and consider how essential water is for living things. Children will experiment with moving water through different means. They will also observe and record the wind and weather outdoors.

Big Ideas:

- Wind and water affect living and non-living things.
- Living things respond in different ways to different kinds of weather.
- Wind and water can inspire art, play, and other activities.
- Water is essential for living things.
- People use water for drinking, washing, cooking, gardening, travel, and play.
- Water can change from a liquid to a solid to a gas.

Toddlers

Exploration Unit - How Things Move

In this unit, kids will have fun discovering motion by using their bodies, objects, and the world around them as they explore and play.

Big Ideas:

How do different materials, people, and animals move in different ways?

How can I make things move?

How do rhythm and music inspire movement?



Infants

Infants six months and younger will continue their individualized curriculum. Please ask your child's teacher for a copy so you can try some of the activities at home!

For infants seven months and older, we are excited to continue piloting the Learning Through Exploration curriculum, developed in partnership with Neighborhood Villages. The first theme will be "This Is Me!" In this section, infants will develop a sense of identity through close relationships. They will express who they are through a growing awareness of their bodies, feelings, and ideas.

Big Ideas:

- Who am I?
- How do I feel?
- Who are the people around me?
- Who takes care of me?
- Who are my peers?

Infant Reminders:

- All children must have something on their feet at all times. Please make sure your baby has socks, booties, or shoes to wear in the classrooms.
- Please make sure your child has a daily, labeled supply of sippy cups or bottles for every feeding. These will be sent home every day for cleaning.

Social Emotional Development

Throughout the year, all Ellis children will learn to identify their emotions and express their feelings.

Classroom Requests

- Please send photos of your child's family and friends so we can display them in the classroom.
- Pack a few extra sets of clothing for your child to keep at school.
- When you drop off your child, please help them wash their hands as soon as you enter the classroom.
- Please plan to arrive by 9:15 AM so your child has time to adjust to the classroom routine.
- Please remember to fold your stroller and neatly place it in the buggy parking area.
- If you have not completed your ASQ or need assistance, please reach out to Cherish at ccasey@EllisEarlyLearning.org



Music Classes with the New England Conservatory

We are so pleased to continue our partnership with the NEC. Please see the schedule below.



New England Conservatory Early Childhood Music Pilot Program Ellis Early Learning Music Schedule 2025-2026

Music classes run from September 29, 2025 through June 5, 2026. June 8-19: Music Class Make-Up Weeks



Teaching Artist	Phil Berman				Carmen Carbonell (& Emma Krause)
Days	Tuesdays	Wednesdays	Thursdays		Thursdays
Location	Ellis South End 58 & 66 Berkeley	Ellis South End 66 Berkeley: morning 58 Berkeley: afternoon	Ellis Jamaica Plain 555 Amory St., JP		Ellis South End 58 Berkeley
9:30-10:00	Bumblebees Infants 58: 1 st floor	Breakers Toddlers fall / young preschool spring 66: 2 nd floor	Willow Infants	9:30-10:00	Cubs 1-year-olds, 1 st floor
10:05-10:35	Ladybugs Infants 58: 1 st floor	Red Sox Young preschool 66: 2 nd floor	Spruce Infants	10:05-10:35	Bears 2-year-olds, 1 st floor
10:50-11:20	Crickets Infants 66: 1 st floor	Caterpillars 1-year-olds 66: 1 st floor	Oak 1-year-olds	10:50-11:20	Pollywogs 1-year-olds, 1 st Floor
11:25-11:55	Grasshoppers Infants 66: 1 st floor	Butterflies 2-year-olds 66: 1 st floor	Cedar 2-year-olds Pinecone Play Space	11:25-11:55	Froggies 2-year-olds, 1 st Floor
12:00-3:30	Lunch/Nap	Lunch/Nap	Lunch/Nap		Lunch/Nap
3:30-4:00 pm	Dragonflies Infants 58: 1 st floor	Patriots 3's & 4's 58: 2 nd floor	Birch 1-year-olds Pinecone Play Space		<p>Schedule Note: When Emma Krause begins as lead teacher after Thanksgiving for Carmen's maternity leave, proposed adjusted schedule is: 9:30-9:55 am, 10:00-10:30, 10:35-11:00 am, 11:05-11:35 am (to be confirmed with Ellis)</p>
4:10-4:40 pm	Celtics 3-year-olds 58: 2 nd floor	Bruins 3's & 4's 58 Berkeley	Maple 3's & 4's		

Dates to Remember

1/1-1/4 Ellis Closed

1/5-2/7 BPS Priority Registration

1/12 - School Resource Fair at 66 Berkeley Street, 3rd Floor, 3:30-5 PM

1/14 - Boston PreK Preview Session at 66 Berkeley Street, 3rd Floor, 4-5 PM

1/16 - Ellis Closed at 3 PM for Professional Development

1/19 - Ellis Closed for Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day

Reminders

Boston Public Schools Tours:

BPS welcomes families to explore their schools, now through January 2026. Please use [this link](#) to view times for a virtual or in-person tour for the 2026-2027 School Year.

Please see important registration dates for the BPS 2026-2027 School Year on the table below.

BPS K0-K1 Registration Information

Important Dates for School Year 2026-2027

	Start of Priority Registration	End of Priority Registration	Assignment Notifications
Students entering K0, K1, K2, 6, 7*, or 9	January 5	February 6	March 31
Students entering all other grades	February 9	April 2	May 31

K2 is now part of the January Priority Registration Period.
You can register your child at: apply.avela.org/boston.

For Families wishing to continue at Ellis for K0, you must complete the BPS application linked below:
<https://boston.explore.avela.org/>.

Please note:

- Both Ellis South End and JP offer K0.
- To apply, select community program then select Ellis as your first choice.
- If you want to apply to both Ellis and BPS, **you need to do two applications**; one for each.
- **You will need to upload documents twice, as this is not linked.**

Important Dates:

- Registration opens for current Ellis families runs from December 13, 2025 through January 7, 2026.
- After January 7, registration opens to the general public.
- We encourage families to apply during this early window to take advantage of priority access.

What You'll Need to Apply:

One (1) Proof of Your Child's Age (choose one):

- Birth certificate
- Up-to-date immunization record
- I-94 form
- Passport

Two (2) Different Proofs of Address (choose two different items):

- Utility bill (not water or cell phone), dated within the past 60 days
- Mortgage statement or deed dated within the past 60 days, or a property tax bill dated within the last year
- Current lease, Section 8 agreement, or BPS Landlord Affidavit, dated within the past year
- W2 form (for current year) or a recent payroll stub dated within 60 days
- Bank or credit card statement dated within the past 60 days
- Letter from an approved government agency dated within the past 60 days
- Residency/Landlord Affidavit dated within the past year

If your family is experiencing housing insecurity, you may submit a shelter letter, a self-declaration from a provider, or a letter from DCF. In this case, the same document may be used for both proofs of address.

For Families wishing to Keep their Child at Ellis for K1-4 by Sept. 1

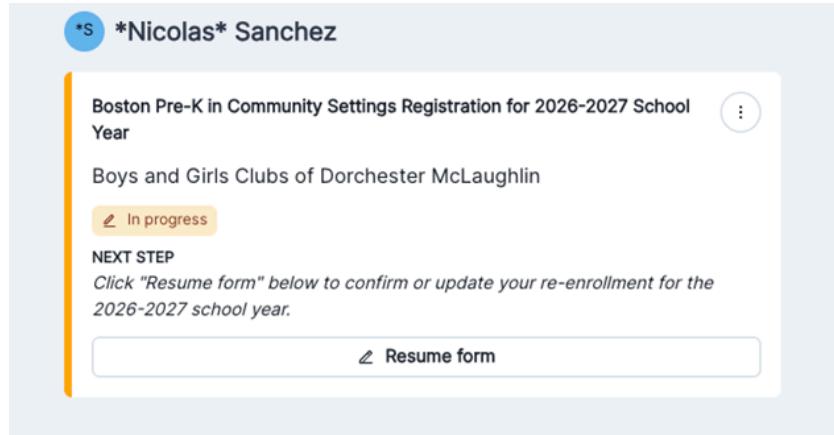
The Boston Pre-K team wants to make it as easy as possible for current families (3 year old/K0 students who registered via Great Starts for the 2025-26 School Year) to return for the 2026-27 School Year to the same provider. Returning students will also be considered priority in the lottery, with a guaranteed seat as long as capacity allows. A letter of intent has been sent. Once this step is completed, we will update the provider options in Great Starts. At that time, returning families will also be able to access the Returning Families Form.

Process: Behind the scenes

- Using 2025-26 data from Great Starts, we will import and pre-populate a 2026-27 application for all current 3 year old students with an accepted seat in Great Starts for the 2025-26 School Year
- Pre-populated data will be locked and families will have the ability to update their information in subsequent questions
- If neither the address nor guardian information for a child has changed, families will not need to re-submit documents and will be considered verified based on their 2025-26 application verification status

Process: For families

- Starting Saturday, 12/13, returning families should log into their Great Starts homepage to complete their application for 2026-27
- They will see the application on their homepage as an “In Progress” form



3. They should click “Resume form” to review and update their information as necessary.

4. If they wish to enter the lottery for additional providers, they may do so. They will only receive priority at their current provider if it is ranked as the #1 choice on their application.

5. If a family updates either their address or guardian information, they will need to upload new proof of address documents and be reverified. If they do not update their information, they will remain verified based on their 2025-26 application verification status.

Troubleshooting + Common Questions

- What if a family logs in and does not see an in progress application?
a. Most often, this occurs if the family’s contact information has changed and they have logged in using a phone number or email address different from the one they used in Great Starts previously. In these cases, please reach out to the Boston Pre-K/Great Starts team who can update the guardian’s account information and connect them to the imported application form.
- Do all returning families need to complete the 2026-27 application to return next year?
a. Any family with the intention of returning must submit the application and ensure all necessary steps are completed (updated address, updated guardian information, updated uploads, etc.) in order to be considered for a seat in the 2026-2027 school year.
- b. If a family indicates that they are not interested in a seat for the 2026-27 school year, they are not required to submit an application. Families may also choose to submit an application but not list their child’s current provider as an option. In this case, they have full autonomy to select other providers, understanding that doing so means they forfeit priority consideration for their current provider.
- c. If a family intends to register only for a BPS school, they can do so by clicking the BPS Registration Form, which is available in the drop-down menu on their Great Starts account homepage.
- d. If a student is enrolled in a program that is currently in the recontracting process, they will need to wait until the provider is confirmed to return for the 2026-2027 school

January Celebrations

Birthdays:

- 1/1 India
- 1/4 Callum
- 1/7 Zechariah
- 1/9 Isaiah
- 1/11 Mylen
- 1/11 Nolan
- 1/11 Rood-Nally
- 1/11 Sinclair
- 1/12 Junie
- 1/13 William
- 1/15 Dereck
- 1/17 Herziliane
- 1/18 Prince
- 1/19 Adeline
- 1/19 Afrina
- 1/19 Fatima
- 1/19 Saran

- 11/20 Kitson
- 1/21 Gracia
- 1/21 Muhammad
- 1/22 Aviel
- 1/25 King G.
- 1/25 Elias
- 1/27 Karter
- 1/27 Tommaso
- 1/30 Charlie L.

Birthdays at Ellis: Policy Reminder

With a focus on equity and accessibility, we do not permit outside food to be served at Ellis.

Birthdays will be celebrated with joy and merriment!

To celebrate your child's birthday, they will receive a canvas to paint or draw on, either at home or at school. Their artwork will then be displayed on the classroom birthday board.

Anniversaries:

- Ms. Yasmin 1/3
- Ms. Tasha 1/4
- Ms. Colleen 1/17
- Ms. Fartun 1/5
- Ms. Monica 1/19



January Menu

January Vegan/Vegetarian/Allergen Menu

Family Resources

Positive Behavior Support (PBS)

By Liz Muscolino, M.Ed., EdS, UPK Behavioral Health Services Liaison

What Is Positive Behavior Support (PBS) and Why Should I Care?

All behavior is communication—even tantrums! PBS is a way of interacting with children that helps us see what they’re trying to say, without judgment. By doing this, we can turn every challenging moment into an opportunity to help children learn, explore, trust, and love.

Parenting is joyful for most people (91% in a large, diverse sample!) but it also comes with many questions. PBS, Responsive Caregiving, and Positive Parenting offer practical guidance to help along the way. Each month, our family newsletter will highlight one of the nine key elements of Positive Parenting, with examples and tips you can use at home.

Learn More:

- Watch this 5-minute video from Zero to Three: <https://vimeo.com/136542836>
- Read the full original article: <https://www.zerotothree.org/resource/nine-elements-that-power-positive-parenting/>

Notice and celebrate your child’s strengths, abilities, and capacity to learn and develop.

Take a moment to notice who your child really is — and celebrate it! Maybe they love exploring, or maybe they stick close to familiar faces. Some qualities are easy to cheer for, such as curiosity or kindness. Others might feel trickier, but there’s always something positive to notice.

Quick Ideas:

- Bosses other kids? Celebrate their leadership.
- Cries a lot? Celebrate that they express their feelings.
- Touches everything? Celebrate their curiosity.



Learn More:

Check out this free, 30-minute webinar from Conscious Discipline:

<https://consciousdiscipline.com/e-learning/webinars/tools-for-your-parenting-toolbox/>