

MARCH 2024

Ready. Set. Grow!

CAMBRIDGE OFFICE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD NEWSLETTER



CAMBRIDGE Office of Early Childhood

The mission of the Cambridge Office of Early Childhood is to **connect** the city's early childhood ecosystem, **align** early childhood services and information, and **advocate** for and **advance** the needs of all young children, their families, and the early childhood workforce.

The Cambridge Office of Early Childhood is a collaboration supported by the City of Cambridge and Cambridge Public Schools.

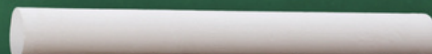
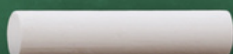


CAMBRIDGE
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

www.earlychildhoodcambridge.org

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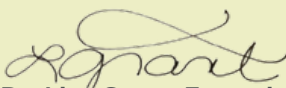
A LETTER FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Cambridge Early Childhood Community,

At the end of February we had the privilege of hosting Dr. Iheoma Iruka, Research Professor in the Department of Public Policy, a Fellow at the Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute (FPG) and the Founding Director of the Equity Research Action Coalition at FPG (the Coalition), as she facilitated an early childhood policy session through the lens of diversity, equity, and inclusion. I know many of us left hopeful and inspired (and if you didn't have a chance to join us, the recording and resources from the session will be available soon); asking ourselves "What do we do now?" or "How do I apply this information into the context of my own work?"

With that, using the community assessment framework designed by Dr. Iruka and her colleagues, we will be launching an Equity Working Group as an extension of our Early Childhood Council. The goal will be to utilize the framework to better understand what areas of equity in early childhood Cambridge is excelling in, and where there might be opportunities to improve and be better. We'd love for you to join us in this work. Please look out for more information as the Equity Working Group unfolds or you can email us at earlychildhood@cpsd.us to express your interest in being a part of this really exciting new work. Stay tuned!

In partnership,

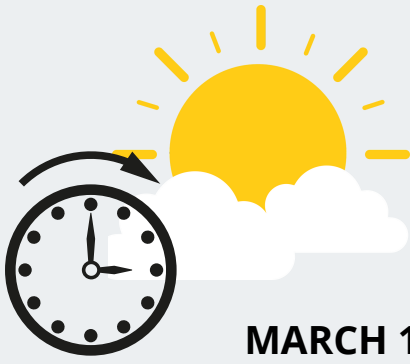


Dr. Lisa Grant, Executive Director



DR. LISA GRANT

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,
CAMBRIDGE OFFICE OF
EARLY CHILDHOOD**



**MARCH 10
DAYLIGHT
SAVINGS (STARTS)**

**MARCH 8
INTERNATIONAL
WOMEN'S DAY
&
WOMEN'S
HISTORY MONTH**



**MARCH 10
RAMADAN**



**MARCH 15
NATIONAL PRESCHOOL
TEACHERS APPRECIATION
DAY**



**MARCH 17
ST. PATRICK'S DAY**



**MARCH 21
WORLD DOWN SYNDROME
DAY**



**MARCH 31
EASTER**



WHAT WE'RE CELEBRATING THIS MONTH!

CREATIVE EXPLORATIONS WITH LIGHT AND SHADOW

Hello amazing Educators,

It has been so wonderful to share our in-person PLCs with so many of you. In our January and December Creative Explorations we used **Light and Shadow** to playfully engage in process art and sensory experiences. We would like to thank the Radcliffe Community Children's Center for generously welcoming us!

What Happened

What stood out to us the most during these PLCs was how dynamic this experience was. Educators jumped into play and explored the materials offered in such varied and unique ways. There was excitement and wonder as everyone experimented, collaborated and shared their process with one another. Our intention in these PLCs is to ignite your own curiosity and creativity and hopefully inspire you to bring this into your own spaces.

Why It Matters

When exploring light and shadow in a learning environment, children are offered an interesting way to explore concepts such as:

- Perspective
- Depth
- Change
- Movement
- Shifts in the tone and brightness of colors

We look forward to hearing how you use light and shadow in your spaces and the many ways in which children bring their own curiosity and creativity into this wondrous element.

**"The eye is always caught by light but shadows have more to say."
– Gregory Maguire**



COACH'S

Cambridge Office of Early Childhood
Coach's Corner

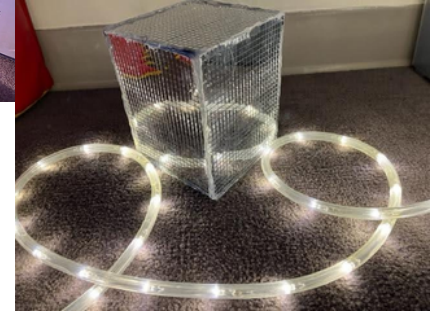
ORNER

What It Looked Like

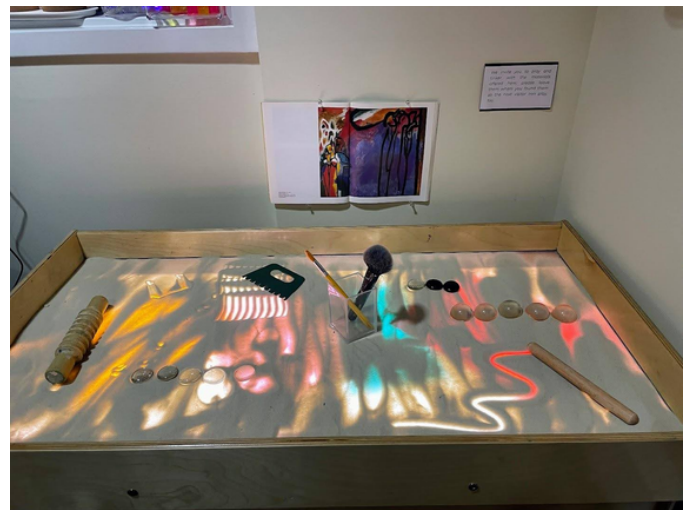
Here are the play invitations we offered. How might you try some version of these in your classroom?



Painting with fluorescent tempera on a mylar blanket under black lights (blacklight bulbs with a hanging light cord).



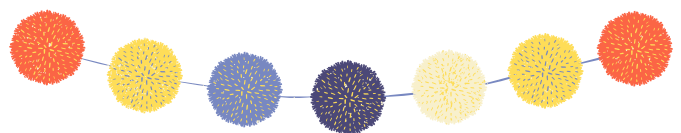
Playing with an array of reflective and opaque materials with a light projector and rope string lights.



Exploring sand on the light table with an array of texture tools. The colors were made by adding recycled binder dividers under a clear acrylic tray.



Building with translucent plastic cups and a projector. One time the screen had a video projection of a lava lamp and one time it was projecting blue.



CREATIVE EXPLORATIONS WITH LIGHT AND SHADOW

Get Ready! March is National Nutrition Month!®



It's time to celebrate National Nutrition Month®! Each March, the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics sponsors a nutrition education campaign to raise awareness of the importance of healthful eating and physical activity habits.

My Plate provides us with an easy-to-understand breakdown of how much fruit and vegetable to include in meals (half of the plate). Students and teachers alike will benefit from trying fruits and vegetables from every color of the rainbow! Look for whole grains whenever possible, and teachers looking for a fun musical activity for their classrooms can check out the Whole Grain Train song and lesson!

- Cambridge in Motion provides healthy snack ideas in English, Amharic, Bengali, Haitian Creole, Portuguese, and Spanish!
- Print your own MyPlate poster for the classroom.
- You can share these Healthy Eating Tips handouts with teacher and families:
 - Pregnancy (English) (Spanish)
 - Infants (English) (Spanish)
 - Toddlers (English) (Spanish)
 - Preschool (English) (Spanish)
 - Early Elementary School (English) (Spanish)

More tips for nutrition and staying active are available on the resources page at the Cambridge Public Health Department website. Snack and meal ideas are shared on the Cambridge in Motion Instagram account as well.

Contact Brigitte DeVeau, Manager of Public Health Nutrition, at **bdeveau@cambridgepublichealth.org** with questions or interest in this or other healthy eating active living projects.

H.E.A.L.

Healthy Eating, Active Living

naeyc[®]

Week of the Young Child[®]

REGISTRATION IS NOW OPEN!



PLEASE JOIN US FOR THE
4TH ANNUAL
CAMBRIDGE
WEEK OF THE YOUNG CHILD!
APRIL 6-12TH 2024

REGISTRATION LINKS BELOW

- Making Learning Visible
- Designing Play Spaces with Contemporary Art
- Play-based Math
- Outside Learning Throughout the Year
- Tools and Strategies for Regulating Stress
- Empowering Early Learning through Descriptive Feedback

We are looking forward to welcoming you to the Cambridge Office of Early Childhood's yearly celebration of young children and early childhood professionals! Aligned with NAEYC's Week of the Young Child events, we are pleased to invite you to join us for both in-person and virtual professional development opportunities.

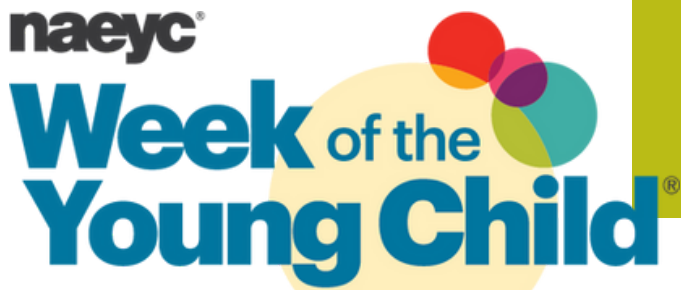


“LEARNING FOR ALL” MINI-CONFERENCE
SATURDAY, APRIL 6TH, 2024 | 9:00-12:15pm
Harvard School of Graduate Education

Breakfast | Panel | Networking | Workshops

Please contact esarpard@cpsd.us with any questions.
We look forward to seeing you in April!

CAMBRIDGE
Office of Early Childhood



PLEASE REGISTER BELOW FOR THE
CAMBRIDGE WEEK OF THE YOUNG CHILD
WORKSHOPS! APRIL 6-12TH, 2024

"LEARNING FOR ALL" MINI-CONFERENCE
SATURDAY, APRIL 6TH, 2024 | 9:00-12:15pm

LOCATION: Gutman Conference Center
Harvard School of Graduate Education
13 Appian Way
Cambridge, MA 02138



[LEARN MORE & REGISTER](#)

Outside Learning Throughout The Year

MONDAY, APRIL 8TH | 6:30-8:30 PM

Virtual Presenter: Linda Schumacher

[LEARN MORE & REGISTER](#)

Do You See What I See? Making Learning Visible

TUESDAY, APRIL 9TH, 2024 | 6:30-8:30 PM

Virtual Presenters: Two Pushy Dames | LeeAnn Soucy and
Kathy Gallo

[LEARN MORE & REGISTER](#)

Potenciando el aprendizaje en la temprana edad: Comentarios

positivos y descriptivos *Workshop in Spanish

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 10TH, 2024 | 6:30-8:00 PM

Virtual Presenter: Marcela Simpson

[LEARN MORE & REGISTER](#)

Shifting from "Reacting to Stress" to "Responding to Stress"

THURSDAY, APRIL 11TH, 2024 | 6:30-8:30 PM

Virtual Presenter: Kaori Hattori de Panepinto

[LEARN MORE & REGISTER](#)



Registration QR Code



SPRING

MINI CONFERENCE

EXPLORING THE WORLD OF STEAM
APRIL 13 FROM 9AM - 3PM
BOSTON NATURE CENTER IN MATTAPAN, MA

Where: Boston Nature Center, 500 Walk Hill St. Mattapan

Keynote Presenter: Sara Levine

Sara Levine is an educator, veterinarian, and award-winning author of STEAM books for children. She will speak about her experiences in writing science and math picture books. Topics will include how she chooses her subject matter; her writing process; and ingredients she uses to make books educational, engaging and funny. She will discuss how her books and others can be used by educators to teach STEAM topics to children in fun and interactive ways.

Learn more and register [HERE!](#)

UPDATES

FOR THE FIELD



CAMBRIDGE Preschool Program

UPDATE



The application period for the **Cambridge Preschool Program (CPP)** is now closed for the 2024-2025 school year. Families in need of application assistance should contact cpp@cpsd.us.

If you have submitted a completed CPP application, please see the enrollment timeline below for what's next in the process:

- Notification of preschool matches sent in **March 2024**.
- Families have 2 weeks from notification receipt to accept or decline their placement.

For additional information, including updated FAQs, please [visit our website](#).



CITY OF
CAMBRIDGE



The Center for Families
Newsletter is now available!

Inside you'll find information about a wide variety of resources and programs such as:

- Cambridge Dads + Activities
- Mindfulness Mondays
- Free resource bags for families in need
- Resources & Supports for families
- and more!

To read the latest CFF Newsletter
[click HERE!](#)



UPDATES

FOR THE FIELD



MASSACHUSETTS
Department of
Early Education and Care

Department of Early Education & Care News



The Board of Early Education and
Care meets monthly from
September to June.

For meeting locations, or any
additional information please call:
EEC Main Office at (617) 988-6600

You can watch the meeting live on
the Department's YouTube
Channel [here](#).

[To view archived meetings click
here.](#)

LIKE & FOLLOW US ON FACEBOOK!



Did you know we're now on Facebook?

Like & Follow the Cambridge Office
of Early Childhood Facebook page
so you can see early childhood
updates, new resources, and
helpful content we share on your
favorite social media platform!

[You Can Find Us Here!](#)

or save the url below:

www.facebook.com/cambridgeoec

*Thank you for supporting our
office!*

MARCH 2024

UPCOMING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES



MARCH 2024



Center on the Developing Child | A Place to Play: Working Towards Fairness of Place for All Children

Tuesday, March 5, 2024
12:00 PM ET

Play and access to safe green spaces – like parks and playgrounds – support a child’s healthy growth and development. Yet access to safe, stimulating, and joyful play space is not equally distributed. Structural forces, such as zoning regulations and funding gaps, have led to inequitable access to quality play spaces in communities across the US.

Join our panel of experts for a one-hour discussion to learn more about the importance of having quality places to play. Panelists will share examples of community-led solutions to address gaps in play space equity, as well as discuss what still needs to be done to ensure our built environments support child development and lifelong health.

[REGISTER HERE](#)



Early Childhood Investigations | Nature-Based Learning: Inspiring & Supporting Staff to Help Children Learn With Nature, by Dr. Rachel A. Larimore

Wednesday, March 6, 2024
2:00-3:30 PM ET

Presenter: Rachel Larimore
Sponsored by Samara Early Learning

This webinar is designed to support program leaders and administrators, and will briefly share the core principles of a nature-based approach and a Trail Map for Leading Change toward that approach. With that common language established, Rachel will focus on the steps to support your team to make the shift to a nature-based approach—and keep them happy and inspired along the way.

Certificates of attendance are free. As of January 1st, 2024, the option for CEUs has been suspended.

[REGISTER HERE](#)

Need information on all things Early Childhood in Cambridge? Visit the Cambridge Office of Early Childhood website!

www.earlychildhoodcambridge.org



Our Mission

The mission of the Cambridge Office of Early Childhood is to connect the city's early childhood ecosystem, align early childhood services and information, and advocate for and advance the needs of all young children, their families, and the early childhood workforce.

Our Vision

Every child and family in Cambridge has access to high quality early care and education experiences. As a result, all children enter school ready to thrive academically, physically, socially, and emotionally, and continue to do so through third grade and beyond.

[Learn More](#)



What Information Can I Learn From The Website?

www.earlychildhoodcambridge.org is a one-stop-shop for the Cambridge community to access information and resources related to early childhood education and programs. The new website culminates a rebranding process for the Office of Early Childhood, formerly known as the Cambridge Birth to 3rd Grade Partnership. The website includes but is not limited to:

- Cambridge Preschool Program
- Child Care Resources
- Paying For Childcare
- Preschool Scholarships
- Early Learning & School Readiness
- CPS Programs
- Program Quality Improvement
- Educator Resources
- Professional Development
- Workshops & Trainings
- Career Pathways
- Announcements & Events
- Collaborating Organizations
- Publications
- Research & Evaluation
- Who We Are
- COEC Contact Information

Need additional assistance? Please email us at earlychildhood@cpsd.us

MEET THE CAMBRIDGE OFFICE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD TEAM!



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Your Name Here
Credentiaing Specialist
COMING SOON!