

## CITY OF MALDEN, MASSACHUSETTS



Rick Rogers, Interim Principal  
Monique Boudreau, Program Manager

## EARLY LEARNING CENTER

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### ELC School Council Meeting Thursday, April 8, 2021

#### MINUTES

**Members Present:** Nicole Chelman, Heather Cochran, Rebecca Martin, Gregory Marton, Danielle Reilly, Rick Rogers, Imene Bouziane Saidi, Elizabeth Paulsen Tonogbanua'

#### Public Comment

None

#### Approval of [ELC School Council Minutes 03 11 2021](#)

On a motion by Nicole Chelman and seconded by Danielle Reilly, the minutes were approved.

#### Principal's Report

##### Staffing Update

- ILP Teacher Long-term Substitute: We have been seeking to fill this position since December to cover a maternity leave. As a result, we have not been able to open a needed new ILP classroom so class sizes are over the preferred 6 per class.
- Paraprofessionals: We have seen more applications recently and were able to hire a paraprofessional for the ILP class that switched from remote to in-person in March. We have two staff members from an agency helping provide coverage. We are in the process of completing hiring for another paraprofessional and lunch aide to help with coverage.

##### Principal Hiring

The position was posted March 31 as an Early Childhood Administrator. The hope is to find someone with a strong early childhood background and dual licensure as a principal and special education administrator. We have 5 applicants so far. The timeline and process for interviews should be announced soon.

##### In-Person Update

We had our first in-person Wednesday this week. ILP classes have been in-person 4 days a week since October so this just adds a day to their schedule. For integrated preschool classes, starting with Wednesdays gives teachers the opportunity to assess how a larger group (15 maximum instead of 10) does – especially with snack/lunch in the classroom

and make adjustments. On Monday, April 26, we will add any new in-person students and PreK students will be able to come 2, 3 or 5 days as they originally registered.

Enrollment Breakdown:

ILP:	71 students in-person (10 classes) 19 students remote (2 classes)
Full-Day:	In-Person: 2 classes (Danielle and Cal) – 5 days a week Remote: 1 class to be taught by Visnavy (new hire)
Half-Day	61 students will be in person 54 students will remain remote (PM classes only) Jodi will now teach in-person in the AM

ELC Configuration Next Year

- Rick & Monique have recommended a configuration based on a maximum of 22 classrooms. The School Committee Budget Subcommittee will discuss this proposal and made the final decision. In addition to providing the mandated special education services, the number of seats for general education students should be determined and maximized. We have had 30 people on a wait list for this year since February. We need to get registration materials available as soon as possible. We have received well over 50 inquiries from parents about next year.
- The status of Before/After school Programming at ELC will be decided at the district level.
- Melmark Program Review Report (just received) makes a strong recommendation to continue full-day programming for our ILP. Monique and Rick need to review this report with faculty and will then share highlights with the School Council.

Council members asked questions about tuition costs (not decided yet) and clarification on the number of rooms. A member also stated a desire for a five-year plan for ELC.

**Anti-Racist Education – Continue Discussion from March**

Rick described the professional development provided on March 12. District-wide, all staff were introduced to a protocol for examining curriculum materials for 7 forms of bias. At the ELC, staff also engaged in reading and discussing [Diversity Strategies: Nine Ways to Get it Right](#). Following the discussion, staff were asked to identify an intention for themselves moving forward. We compiled and categorized these intentions into 3 main areas:

- Critically examine and expand culturally diverse representation in classroom libraries/read alouds/materials
- Families – building connections to better understand and incorporate different cultures
- Increasing personal knowledge and doing more “inner work” (Become more aware of and understand unconscious biases).

In addition, 6 staff members have a joined a new voluntary Anti-Racist Education and Equity Team that will continue reading and learning together and help identify plans for next year. This month, the team is reading [What is White Privilege Really?](#) from the Learning for Justice.

Discussion followed. One teacher commented on her desire to diversify the books she uses in the classroom and her questions about what is the best way to approach this work with preschool children. One parent spoke about the need for teachers to be supported in their work. Another

parent talked about the need for more consistency in how things are approached and the importance of planning (and using tools like the 7 Forms of Bias. A parent also talked about Autism Acceptance Month and including a focus more on “neurodiversity.” A teacher spoke about how district PD does not take the preschool level into account.

We will develop a School Improvement Plan goal and action steps in this area for next year that will include some choices for where and how people enter this work. Rick welcomes ideas for action steps prior to our May meeting.

**Upcoming Meeting Schedule – THURSDAYS 2:15-3:15 PM**

May 13

June 10