

We're Learning Here!

By Amika Kemmler Ernst, Ed.D.



(Amika Kemmler Ernst is a retired BPS New Teacher Developer with extensive experience as a classroom teacher, curriculum developer, and graphic artist. Her "We're Learning Here" Project features images of everyday learning in our public schools, along with the words of the students pictured.)

Baldwin Early Learning Pilot Academy

The Baldwin Early Learning Pilot Academy is located in Brighton, at the city's Brookline border. Its stately brick building is 100 years old and serves approximately 150 students in K0 through first grade. At 80, I am grateful for the elevator installed not so long ago!

BPS Early Learning Centers provide "surround care" from 7:30 AM to 4:30 PM; unlike many, the Baldwin starts classroom instruction at 7:30. Almost all instruction is center based. By the time I arrive, most classes are engaged in literacy stations – with as many as four adults working with small groups of children.

They are playing with letters, sequencing the events in a story, reading books together, tapping out sounds, writing and illustrating their own stories, and much more! It's a joy to watch young children learning through play and engagement with language that encourages personal connections and curiosity.

In music class with **Stephen Richards**, K0/K1 students sing songs and use rhythm sticks and shakers to accompany the words. In **Adrienne Ho's** K2 class, children are learning about numbers, counting, and shapes.

Kindergarten classes are also learning about plants through hands-on, interdisciplinary activities – planting flower seeds, learning the parts of plants and what they need to grow. In one class, they have a "flower shop" where students make change on a small cash register. **Fallon Hawks'** first graders have been learning about light and sound, as well as Chinese words in a weekly class with their K2 friends!

Baldwin students tell me they are also learning to listen, to help each other, to be part of a group, and to take care of the earth. I hope this school year brings opportunities for **YOUR** students to engage in "real world" activities that support social/emotional as well as academic learning!

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In this picture, Tru is writing and drawing his "weekend news". He is learning how to listen and to follow the group plan. Our class is learning letters, numbers, shapes, and how to be stewards of the earth by recycling.

Adrienne Ho, K2 teacher

Ms. Marlin was helping us put what happened in The Ugly Vegetable story in order. We learned that some people plant flowers and others plant vegetables. They use different garden tools, too, like watering cans and hoses. The Chinese vegetables in the story looked ugly but made a soup that smelled so good that all the neighbors wanted some!

Marlin Cabreja's K0/K1 students



We were writing a story. We are learning to help each other. We are also learning how to count and read books. Every Friday we learn Chinese words with first graders.

Darielys & Gabriela, K2



In this picture, we are reading a book together with Ms. Fallon. We are learning to be better readers and writers. Tapping out sounds helps us learn new words. We've learned to use capital letters at the beginning of sentences and a period or question mark at the end. And we are learning a lot about light and sound!

Fallon Hawks' Grade 1 students



I was drawing a picture of a dragon to go with my writing. I am learning a lot of new words this year. In math we are learning about shapes.

Aiden Raditya, Grade 1

I was making a tower, counting the blocks, and then knocking it down. I made a tower with 15 blocks! Ms. Maritza was helping us. I've learned to count to 100 this year, and to add numbers.

Calli Tseliou, K1



We were in Music class with Mr. Richards. We were singing a song about making pizza and "making the dough" with rhythm sticks. We are learning songs, dancing, and how to use different instruments to make music, like rhythm sticks and shakers.

Stephen Richards' K0/K1 music class



We are watering the flower seeds we planted. We learned that all living things grow, and that plants need water and soil and sunshine to grow. We learned the parts of plants, too, like roots and stems and flowers.

Lucia Rostampur &
Raymond Bhanushali, K0