

FEBRUARY 2023

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.



A LETTER FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Cambridge Early Childhood Community,

I was recently in attendance at a meeting where I was asked to share a memory from my early childhood days. Although it was many decades ago, it was easy for me to pull up those memories and visualize myself as 4 year-old in my classroom at Great Neck Child Development Center in New York where I grew up.

I remember my teacher Ms. Hoffman and how she always seemed to have a smile on her face. I remember having ample space outside to climb and play open-ended games. I remember eating lunch and snack as I sat family-style with my classmates. I remember being an “extended day” student and needing to nap but not wanting to lay on my cot. “It’s rest time, Lisa,” they’d say. I remember friends from all different backgrounds (some of which I’m still in contact with today). Most of all, I remember being welcomed, safe, and secure in that environment. I believe that early experience instilled a lifelong love and pursuit of learning I would not have otherwise had. I also believe it’s what subconsciously motivated me to pursue a career in early childhood education; so that I could do my part to ensure that every child, regardless of their circumstances, would be provided with early experiences that allow them to meet their fullest potential and thrive!

As adults, it is so easy to allow the stresses of life and the frustrations that hinder us as a field to get in the way of being our whole selves at work. Sometimes we forget why we entered the field in the first place. But as Maya Angelou so eloquently stated “People will forget what you said. People will forget what you said. But people will never forget how you made them feel.” When I think about my strongest early childhood memories being tied to how I felt and recognizing that those feelings had a long-term impact on my life, it is quite powerful to think that as an educator, we each have that enormous amount of power. You are someone’s Ms. Hoffman. One day, many years from now, a child will be reflecting on their early childhood years and remembering the influence you had on them. What do you want them to remember? What do you want them to feel? Allow that to be a guide you in your everyday interactions with the children that you care for, as you do AMAZING work!

In partnership,



Dr. Lisa Grant, Executive Director



DR. LISA GRANT

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

The Cambridge Office of Early Childhood (COEC), formerly B3, has **New Preschool Scholarships* for Cambridge children from households with low-income.

Children must be 2 years and 9 months or older by August 25, 2023 to qualify for preschool.

If awarded a scholarship, children will start preschool between August 28 and September 18, 2023, as spaces at preschool programs become available. We partner with 17 independent, community-based early education and care programs in Cambridge.

Applications accepted February 15 to March 15, 2023.

(Scholarships are not awarded on a first come, first serve basis.)

Online application: bit.ly/b3application →

Paper applications are also accepted.

Not all families who apply will be awarded scholarships.



Indicators of low household income:

- Family's school-age children qualify for free or reduced lunch
- Family lives in Public or Section 8 Housing
- Family has SNAP Benefits (food stamps)
- Children enrolled with WIC
- Family receives TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families)

Priority for scholarships will be given to families who:

- Families with income below 50% of the HUD Area Median Income (below 63,000 for a family of 3, for example)
- Families who face challenges that may impact their child's learning and development.
- Children who have lacked opportunities to be with peers and receive support for learning and development

Parents/Caregivers do not need to be working or going to school to qualify for scholarships. To be eligible, the child should not be currently attending a preschool program or have a Childcare Voucher from the State.



Children who have already been accepted for preschool next year are not eligible in most cases. Please note: The DHSP Preschool Program has its own tuition assistance program; Cambridge Public Schools three-year-old programs and the Head Start program are free. None of these programs require our scholarships.

OEC staff will work with families to determine their eligibility and priority status for scholarships. Family fees for preschool are on a sliding fee scale based on household income.

For more information or for scholarship applications in languages other than English, please contact Allen Kesten, Scholarship Specialist | akesten@cpsd.us / (617) 599-9823. Families may also contact Allen directly.

February 2023: At-Home Activity Calendar

Designed for Cambridge children ages 0-4, but all are welcome!

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	
Parents, check out these ideas to try at home. The goal is to have fun! You can change these ideas to match your child's age or interests.			1 Talk What is your favorite breakfast food? Talk about what textures and flavors you like!	2 Read Read a story to your toys. Explain what's happening in the story so your toys don't get confused!	3 Sing Have a family sing along! Get silly and sing in different voices.	4 Tell Stories Pretend you are getting on an airplane. Where are you going? Why?	
5 Play Play a running game like tag or red light green light.	6 Talk Count the windows in your home together. What can you see out of each one?	7 Tell Stories Look up at the clouds. Do they look like animals, shapes or something else?	8 Read Read a book from the library.	9 Sing Listen to a brand new song!	10 Play Build a tower with as many different shapes as you can find.	11 Talk Cook together! Read the recipe out loud and talk about the ingredients.	
12 Read Read a story and count pictures of the sun or stars. https://bit.ly/CFFYouTube and talk about what you find? sounds you hear.	13 Play Mindfulness with Maeve! Do a household chore together, like dishes or laundry.	14 Talk	15 Sing Dance to a song that has no words. Can you make your dance match the music?	16 Play Sort your toys into groups. What different ways could you organize them?	17 Tell Stories Tell your child a story about when you were young.	18 Read Notice the colors in your favorite book.	
19 Talk Touch something bumpy and something smooth. How are they different?	20 Play Pretend you are your favorite animal. Be sure to make animal sounds!	21 Sing Sing together at bedtime.	22 Tell Stories Make up a new story using the pictures from your favorite book.	23 Read Take a walk and notice the street signs. What are they telling you?	24 Talk Talk about your day using the words "first," "second," and "third."	25 Sing Clap along to a song. Can you find the beat?	
26 Tell Stories Act out a silly story using toys or stuffed animals!	27 Read Read a nonfiction book or a book about the real world. What did you learn?	28 Play Play with the water at bath time. Can you pour it between cups? Splash? Blow bubbles?	For more activity ideas, check out our social media accounts!  @LetsTalkCambMA @LetsTalkCambMA @LetsTalkCambMA				 @cambridgecenterforfamilies @cntrforfamilies

Click here to view/download the activity calendar



At-Home Activity Calendar provided by **Let's Talk & Center For Families**

COACH'S CORNER

Cambridge Office of Early Childhood Coach's Corner

Cambridge Office of Early Childhood engages with teachers across the city to reflect on early childhood practice with the support of our Education Coaches.

Sensory Play

Sensory Play can ground children, stimulate thinking, and connect children to real materials. Coaches have been supporting teachers to more fully embrace sensory play.



For a sensory play resource, click here!

Making Smart Choices for a Healthy Smile



Smile! February is National Children's Dental Health Month!

What we eat affects our teeth— and our smile— and nutrition has a huge impact on tooth development in growing children. Avoiding foods and beverages with lots of added sugar and instead choosing fruits, vegetables, and water help the body fight inflammation and bacteria in the mouth that promote the plaque that leads to cavities. Fruits and vegetables contain a variety of vitamins that benefit oral health, such as Vitamin C for keeping the connective tissue in our gums strong.

Adult teeth are still developing throughout childhood, which means that it is extremely important for children to eat foods that provide them with nutrients to support this growth! Foods that are rich in or fortified with calcium and Vitamin D promote healthy teeth (and bones). Calcium is found in milk, cheese, yogurt, salmon, and shellfish, and plant sources include broccoli, kale, tofu, and black beans. Egg yolks contain a small amount of Vitamin D, while whole grain cereals and milks (dairy and plant based) are often fortified with it.

- [This tip sheet from Cambridge Healthy Smiles](#) can be shared with teachers and families!
- [H-2-Know: a fun graphic](#) to share to help promote water over sugar-sweetened drinks!

More tips for nutrition, staying active, and taking care of your smile are available on the [resources page](#) at the Cambridge Public Health Department website.

Healthy Eating, Active Living

Contact Brigitte DeVeau, Public Health Nutritionist, at bdeveau@challiance.org with questions or interest in this or other Healthy Eating Active Living projects.



LESLEY UNIVERSITY EARLY
CHILDHOOD INNOVATIONS SERIES
Tuesday, February 7, 2023 4:30-6:30 (virtual)



LAND AS PEDAGOGY:
Comparative Approaches to Stewardship of our
Environment

Speakers:

Veronica Bayiha ñwa Quillien, PhD, Assistant Professor in Early Childhood & Integrated Arts Program

Ardelle Bayiha ñwa O'Brien, MS-HIM - Director of Sustainable Development at Centre Agro-Ecologique Jean Makonn Bayiha

Elder Micheline Nyemeck ñwa Bayiha co- Founder of Centre Agro-Ecologique Jean Makonn Bayiha

Natacha Shillingford, Director of Epiphany School Early Learning Center, Dorchester, MA

REGISTER
NOW!

A relationship to land is critical for children if we are to live sustainably and solve problems that threaten the survival of our planet. In this workshop, we will look at efforts to both maintain and revive a connection with the land. We will travel to Cameroon to explore agricultural education at a farm school. We will also hear about a local program in Dorchester which seeks to help children re-establish a relationship to the land by providing access to greenspace and gardens.



Looking for activities and resources for you and your family?

Use Find It Cambridge to search for childcare, housing, health services, free events & more!

Visit www.finditcambridge.org ■ Call or text 617.686.2998 ■ Email info@finditcambridge.org

Need help searching?

Call, text, or email Andrew. He can help you find what you are looking for.

U P D A T E S

FOR THE FIELD



UPK UPDATES

The Cambridge Preschool Program (currently known as Universal Pre-K or UPK) is a mixed delivery system funded by the city of Cambridge that will provide access to high quality early education and care for all Cambridge four year-olds and many three-year olds as well!

As the timeline progresses, updates will be shared on the planning and implementation process.

Thank you to our community-based providers for completing the Program Capacity Survey.

The winner of the \$250 Target gift card will be selected and notified soon. It is not too late to be a partner! The survey will remain open so that potential Cambridge Preschool partners may submit their program's information and potentially become a CPP partner. To understand if your program is a fit, our team will ask in-depth questions on current programming, capacity, equity and access.

Our recent family survey has closed. The results from the survey gathered information about the needs, wants, and wishes for our future preschool system from families in the Cambridge community. Priorities highlighted in the results included, program cost, location of program, and program hours. This Spring we will continue to engage families and our educational community to provide additional input into the design and implementation of the Cambridge Preschool Program.



SAVE THE DATE!

And get ready for NAEYC's 2023 Week of the Young Child® celebration!

Join us April 1-7, 2023 for our annual event celebrating early learning, young children, their teachers, and families.



U P D A T E S

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. The next board meeting will be held on:

Tuesday, February 14, 2023

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.](#)



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 February Newsletter click [HERE!](#)



JANUARY-FEBRUARY 2023

UPCOMING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES



FEBRUARY 2023

Children's Trust Presents: Redefining Self-Care for 21st Century Families

Friday, February 3, 2023

10:00AM - 12:00PM

Presenters: Lydia Carbone, MSW, Massachusetts Program Director, Family Center, Inc. Parenting Journey and Cristina Pachano, LMHC, C.A.G.S., Clinical Director, Family Center, Inc. Parenting Journey

Self-care looks different to everyone, however, there are foundational qualities of self-care activities that help build resilience and strengthen the families we work with. This session will help participants embody and embrace a self-care mindset that is beneficial for all. Participants will learn about integrated mind-body practice as an investment process when navigating through the commercialized value system in our productivity-focused society. Join us and learn to customize your coping strategies to honor who you are and the rhythm of the reality of your life.

[**REGISTER HERE**](#)



Tuesday, February 7 @ 2 pm ET



early efforts

Promoting Equitable Birth Outcomes



Peggy Vander Meulen
Program Director
Strong Beginnings - Healthy Start



Stephanie Spencer
Executive Director
Urban Baby Beginnings



Megan Simmons, MPA/JD
Director, Policy & Advocacy
National Birth Equity Collaborative

The Hunt Institute - Early Efforts | Promoting Equitable Birth Outcomes

Tuesday, February 7, 2023

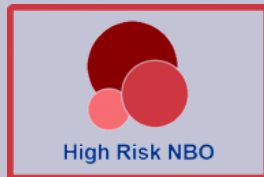
2:00PM

The perinatal period is one of the most critical times for both mothers' and infants' health and wellbeing. Yet, disparities in health care have consistently put women of color and their newborns at higher risk for negative outcomes. Join us as this expert panel discusses barriers to equitable prenatal and maternal health care and innovative solutions to promote healthy birth outcomes for all.

[**REGISTER HERE**](#)

UPCOMING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

(FEB. 2023 CONTINUED)



**Brazelton Institute → High Risk NBO Presents:
High-Risk Newborn Behavioral Observations
(NBO) Training Program (Workshop)
February 15-16, 2023
9:00AM - 5:00PM**

The Newborn Behavioral Observations system (NBO) is an infant-focused, family-centered relationship building tool designed to sensitize parents to their baby's competencies, challenges, and individuality with the goal of fostering the development of a positive parent-infant relationship from the very beginning.

NBO training for professionals working with high-risk infants shares the same basic curriculum, theoretical content, and certification process as standard NBO training. The faculty for the NBO training for high-risk infants are both pediatric physical therapists with particular expertise in infants in EI and NICU settings. These trainings are therefore especially suited to professionals working specifically with high-risk infants.

[REGISTER HERE](#)

**Sing & Sign: Supporting Emerging Language through Music, Sign Language, and Play
Thursday, February 16, 2023
2:00PM - 3:30PM**

Presenter: by Anne Meeker Watson, Ph.D., MT-BC, Music Therapist and Early Childhood Consultant

Teaching hearing children to sign is an extension of the types of nonverbal communication they already use to get your attention, including facial expression, gesturing, making noise, crawling, toddling toward an object of desire, and more. Focusing on communication has never been more important given lost opportunities during the pandemic to learn and practice language skills.

Learning Objectives:

1. Define joint attention and its importance for early language.
2. Explain the difference between ASL signs, invented signs, and sign approximations.
3. List the three steps children typically master to sign in order to communicate.
4. Describe the benefits of incorporating music and sign for child development.
5. List three ways to incorporate key signed vocabulary across the environments and routines of your day with young children.

You can earn .2 CEUs for each webinar. The cost is \$15 paid to University of Oklahoma online when you apply.

[REGISTER HERE](#)

UPCOMING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

(FEB. 2023 CONTINUED)



Strengths Based, Leadership, Mentorship and Coaching (Workshop)

Wednesday, February 22, 2023

12pm-3pm EST / 9am-12pm PT

Whether you are a leader, mentor, manager, or coach, you know that building relationships with the people you work with is key. And you know that the way you work with them shapes the way they work, and their own wellbeing too. Focusing on their strengths in your conversations with them can help build collaborative, trusting relationships that inspire confidence, nurture practice change, and unleash professional growth. This workshop series offers strategies you can use to further cultivate and sustain a strengths-based approach in your leadership, mentorship and coaching role.

[REGISTER HERE](#)

Magic Moments: Active Problem Solving with Young Children

Wednesday, February 22, 2023

2:00PM - 3:30PM

Presenter: Ann Gadzikowski, Early Childhood Author and Consultant

Every problem, large or small, is an opportunity for young children to learn and grow. From spilled glue to a conflict in the block corner, problems are an unlimited natural resource generated inside our own classrooms. This webinar will explore how early childhood educators can take the problems, mistakes, and accidents that inevitably occur in every early childhood program, and turn them into teachable moments.

Learning Objectives:

- Recognize the importance of mistakes, conflicts, accidents, and problems as opportunities for learning in an early childhood classroom. Discuss scenarios demonstrating common problems that happen during the daily routines of an early childhood classroom, such as snacks, naps, play, and transitions.
- Develop strategies for facilitating a problem-solving process with young children, such as asking open-ended questions and offering prompts ("Tell me what you think about that.")
- Explore how issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion influence how we, as educators, view, define, and facilitate problems with children.

You can earn .2 CEUs for each webinar. The cost is \$15 paid to University of Oklahoma online when you apply. Learn more here: Continuing Education Units (CEUs) from University of Oklahoma.

[REGISTER HERE](#)

UPCOMING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

(FEB-MAR. 2023)

Brazelton Touchpoints Center
Learning to Listen: Conversations for Change
(3-Part Sessions)

Episode 1: How to End Gun Violence and Homophobic Hate: Two Mothers' Journey through Loss to Love, with Jane Clementi and Scarlett Lewis

Wednesday, February 22, 2023
3:00PM-4:00 PM

These free conversations are for everyone who cares for and about babies and children, and the families, professionals, and the communities that protect, nurture, and enjoy them. All conversations are one hour and feature closed captioning and simultaneous Spanish translation. Certificates of attendance are available.

[REGISTER HERE](#) (For one or all sessions)

See below for information on future sessions:

Episode 2: Harm and Healing- The Mental Health of AAPI and LGBTQ Children, with Warren Ng, MD

Wednesday, March 15, 2023
3:00-4:00pm

Episode 3: Human-Centered Design for a World Without Racism, with Makeeba McCreary and Augusta Miell

Wednesday, April 12, 2023
3:00-4:00pm

MARCH 2023

Brazelton 
Touchpoints Center™

Strengths Based, Leadership, Mentorship and Coaching (Workshop)

Wednesday, March 1, 2023

12pm-3pm EST / 9am-12pm PT

Whether you are a leader, mentor, manager, or coach, you know that building relationships with the people you work with is key. And you know that the way you work with them shapes the way they work, and their own wellbeing too. Focusing on their strengths in your conversations with them can help build collaborative, trusting relationships that inspire confidence, nurture practice change, and unleash professional growth. This workshop series offers strategies you can use to further cultivate and sustain a strengths-based approach in your leadership, mentorship and coaching role.

[REGISTER HERE](#)

LOOK WHO'S HIRING!

The Cambridge Office of Early Childhood is committed to sharing current open positions in early childhood settings in the City of Cambridge as they become available.

Infant Program Assistant, Part Time Center For Families | Cambridge, MA

The Center for Families (CFF) is a Cambridge strengths-based universal family support program. We nurture and support the whole family through parent-child activities, family events, parent education, connection to resources, concrete support in times of need, advocacy, and home visiting.

Our Infant Program Assistant will:

- Provide support to infant
- Programming throughout the year
- Support infant coordinator in planning and prep
- Provide one-on-one support to parents

This position is for 19.5 hours per week.
Some evenings and weekends are required.

Rate: \$22/hr.

For more information, contact Jen Cabezas at 617-349-9169 or jcabezas@cambridgema.gov

APPLY NOW

Home Visitor, Part Time Center For Families | Cambridge, MA

We are looking for someone to partner with us as we grow this newly developed home visiting program. Our part-time home visitor will carry a small caseload of 6-8 families. Visits take place 1-2x per month for each family, with weekly phone or email check-ins. Our program has three tracks for families, dependent on their needs and goals: 10-week parent education track, case management track, and developmental consultation track.

Our Home Visitor will:

- Provide support to infant
- Programming throughout the year
- Support infant coordinator in planning and prep
- Provide one-on-one support to parents

This position is for 19.5 hours per week, in-person. Outside of required monthly meetings, schedule is flexible. Some evenings and weekends are required.

Rate: \$24/hr.

For more information, contact Jen Cabezas at 617-349-9169 or jcabezas@cambridgema.gov

APPLY NOW

LOOK WHO'S HIRING!



BABY UNIVERSITY IS HIRING: FATHERHOOD FACILITATOR



Who is Baby University?

Baby University (Baby U) is an intensive family support program of the Center for Families. Through a strength based, racial equity lens, Baby U supports families with young children by providing evidence-based parent education, access to local resources and supports, and opportunities to develop community. The Father Facilitator will work with Baby U Families and provide regular home visits, organize father events, and help connect fathers to local resources. They will facilitate fathers' groups, connect with fathers throughout the core and alumni program, and do outreach and recruitment for Baby U.

Joining our team!

We are looking for a team player with excellent communication, organization, and computer skills. You must have experience with families and a strong desire to work with fathers, have a history of working with diverse populations, and be skilled in group facilitation. We are looking for someone ready to join our team, learn about community resources and supports, and partner with fathers in our community.

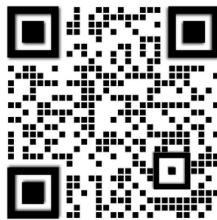
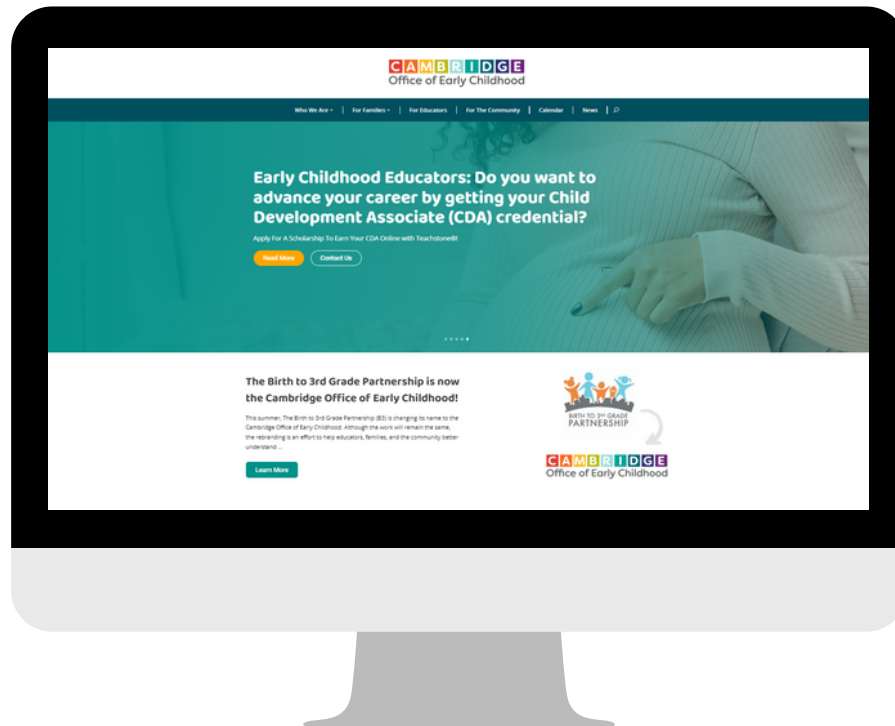
This is a full-time position with an opportunity to work one day remotely. Saturday mornings are required during core program (January-June).

For more information, contact Angela Conway at aconway@cambridgema.gov.

**To apply for this position, visit this link or scan the QR code:
bit.ly/3GTdidw**



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



www.earlychildhoodcambridge.org

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:

- Child Care Resources
- Paying For Childcare
- Preschool Scholarships
- Preschool Lottery
- 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

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**CAMBRIDGE
PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

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