Greetings to all EPH families, friends and supporters,

What an amazing start to the year! The Elizabeth Peabody House wants to welcome you to our first newsletter. We are excited to begin communicating all the new and exciting activities and events happening in our community. I first joined the Elizabeth Peabody House eight months ago and I received such an incredible welcome from staff, families, and the community at large.

As a team we have been working to improve communication with parents and offer teachers specialized training on topics related to intentional teaching, learning through playing, and early childhood literacy. The Somerville Public School District has also been instrumental in providing continued guidance and support through the coaching and mentoring program for our teachers. EPH continues to have strong partnerships with organizations like Jumpstart, The Beautiful Stuff Project, and Somerville Community Access TV to offer other learning and enrichment activities for both preschool and afterschool children.

Our building was recently designated as historically significant by the Somerville Historic Preservation Commission, an important milestone for our organization. We were awarded a grant from the city that will allow us to fully replace the roof this summer.

We have a busy spring coming up with preschool graduation and the start of Camp Everwood for our after school students. If you are interested in visiting us, please reach out to me; I am always happy to hear from you, our friends and supporters.

Kretcha M. Roldán, LMSW, LCSW
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The Perfect Mother’s Day Gift.

You know how special mothers are.  
Show them some extra love!

Dedicate a gift in honor of a Mother in your life, and we will mail her a card — handmade by our students — in time for Mother’s Day.

Donate securely online: www.teph.org/Mothers

Or, send a check to Elizabeth Peabody House:
275 Broadway, Somerville MA 02145

(Kindly donate by May 7 to allow for delivery time)
Preschool Gets a New Coat of Paint

The transformation happened over the course of a week. After nearly a decade of being bright orange and yellow, it was time for a change. While teachers were in professional development workshops, a team of contractors and volunteers got to work repainting the classrooms.

It was a collaborative effort. Parents weighed in on their favorite shades of purple and green for the classroom walls, and teachers stayed after hours to move furniture. Behr Paint generously donated all of the paint and primer for the project, and together with Home Depot, sent a team of 10 volunteers to complete the project.

Students and teachers alike are thrilled by their new classrooms, and amazed how a new paint color can do so much to change the mood of the classroom.

Sheri has been working to reimage the physical space of the classrooms, incorporating more organic elements like branches and indoor plants. She has been replacing plastic storage bins with baskets, using lamps with soft lighting instead of the overhead fluorescents.

Drawing from the Reggio Emilia approach, teachers have been thinking about how to create a classroom environment that encourages creative play and experiential learning.

As Sheri put it, “I have worked as the Preschool Director for the last seven years, throughout that time I have wanted to change the color of the classrooms. Through my course work at Lesley University I have learned how the environment itself is a ‘teacher’ in the classroom. The classrooms are exactly how I dreamed they would be, we are all so grateful for and excited by the changes.”

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-Sheri Rios, Preschool Director

A huge thank you to the volunteers from Behr Paint and Home Depot who made this project possible!

Afterschool Celebrates Black History Month

The after school celebrated Black History Month through conversations, films, art projects, and more. Students learned about “The Renaissance,” the first black basketball team formed in Harlem, and looked at photographs of influential leaders such as Nelson Mandela, Barack Obama, Madam C.J. Walker, and Mae Jemison. Students looked through magazines to identify current prominent figures, and were encouraged to think about contemporary black leaders.

On MLK Day, the students watched video footage of Martin Luther King’s famous “I have a Dream” speech. Using that as a launch point, students talked about their own dreams for a better future. They put on their best “thinking” faces for photos and one by one were asked, “If you could have one dream for the whole world what would it be?” Students responded with thoughtful answers like “I want everyone to stop bullying” and “for everyone to be helpful.”

We have an inspiring new generation of leaders, that is for sure!