

THE LEARNING PROJECT

CURRICULUM GUIDE

The following provides a summary of some key academic programs for informational purposes. In truth, a Learning Project education is far deeper and richer than can possibly be described in a brochure, so we invite you to explore the school's website and, better yet, to see the school in action.

At the center of The Learning Project's instructional approach are three main ideas:

One, that our small class sizes and low student-to-teacher ratio allow for highly individualized and flexible teaching. Meeting the needs of all our students is accomplished through the "workshop model," a methodology that uses mini-lessons, independent practice, as well as partner and small group work.

The second underlying principle is incorporating as many hands-on and active learning opportunities as possible. We believe that tapping into children's higher level, critical thinking skills (application, analysis, evaluation, and creation) not only cements a child's understanding, but also makes learning increasingly interesting and relevant. While a seriousness of purpose is present in our classrooms, so too is the cultivation of the joy of learning, sparks of creativity, and pride in work well done.

Finally, in all that we do, the growth of the whole child, not just academic growth, is central. We actively teach children how to develop a growth mindset, a healthy response to challenges, how to constructively work as a group, and other personal and interpersonal skills needed for scholastic success and success in life.



THE
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ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

LANGUAGE ARTS

The Learning Project has adopted Really Great Reading in kindergarten through second grade as its phonics-based, early reading and spelling program. Lessons provide explicit and structured instruction in literacy, while also ensuring high engagement with multisensory design. Each unit includes balanced instruction in phonemic awareness, phonics and written expression. Students demonstrate their understanding of the material through regular teacher assessments, and by completing exercises in the program's digital platform.

In the upper grades, students learn in the Readers' Workshop format. Through direct instruction, they are introduced to a variety of reading and comprehension skills in brief mini-lessons, and then are provided with ample opportunity to practice those skills, as well as decoding and fluency skills, in small groups or through individualized work with teachers. Students spend time reading books at their own "just right" level, discussing books with teachers and peers, and formally responding to what they have read in writing.

Each of the school's classrooms has a robust library, and classes also visit the Boston Public Library on a regular basis. Additionally, students have access to texts through digital platforms, such as Sora, Raz-Kids, and Epic.

For vocabulary, The Learning Project uses the Text Talk curriculum to teach context-based vocabulary words in kindergarten through grade three. Through interactive lessons drawn from rich stories, students develop a love for words as they delve deeply into their meanings.

In the upper grades, students advance their study through the use of the Wordly Wise vocabulary program. Grades four through six are introduced to a new word list every two to three weeks and complete a variety of activities and exercises along the way in order to understand definitions, synonyms, origins, and more.

The Learning Project implements the Write Source curriculum across all grade levels in order to teach children foundations in the writing process: prewriting, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing. Children also learn to apply the 'six traits of writing' at developmentally appropriate levels: ideas, organization, voice, word choice, sentence fluency, and conventions. Students learn both narrative and expository writing, and ample opportunity is provided for creativity through storytelling, poetry, and more. Following instruction, students write independently and get feedback on their writing through peer and teacher conferences. In grades three through six, students also complete an Independent Research Study (IRS) where they develop and advance skills in researching, organizing, planning, writing and presenting as they craft a detailed essay and project on a topic of their choice.

MATHEMATICS

The Saxon Math program is the foundation for math instruction at The Learning Project.

Students are pre-assessed at the beginning of each year to determine their “just right” entrypoint, and are then regularly assessed throughout the year as they progress at their own pace in order to ensure an appropriate challenge level at all times.

New concepts are introduced daily, alongside opportunities to review and solidify what students had learned previously. Instruction includes a variety of components and strategies, including regular ‘math warm-ups’ of math games, mental math and facts practice; ‘Guided Practice,’ in which new concepts are introduced and explored; ‘Investigations’ that promote critical thinking, collaboration and conversation; and daily problem sets that allow ample practice of new and past concepts. Assessments occur every five lessons in order to monitor progress and adjust instruction as needed. Students also engage with technology, working on DreamBox in the lower grades and IXL in the upper grades, to solidify their understanding of mathematical concepts and to provide further differentiation and real-time feedback. Additionally, teachers regularly integrate “Mathemagic” blocks into their instruction, which are opportunities for students to apply their learning to new situations, to engage in deep thinking, to expand their understanding of underlying ideas, and to evoke wonder and passion in mathematics.



SOCIAL STUDIES

In kindergarten through fourth grade, The Learning Project uses the Inquiry Journeys social studies curriculum; an inquiry-based curriculum that challenges students to ask questions, investigate, and take action. While working through each unit, students are presented with complex questions, they research answers and think critically, and they demonstrate their learning by creating a meaningful product to share with an audience. Fifth and sixth graders use the Investigating History curriculum, developed by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE). Class time is used to introduce a concept and then deepen students' understanding of the topic through reading, conversation, as well as interactive and technological activities. Students learn to effectively interpret primary and secondary sources while practicing note-taking and summarizing skills in order to build their comprehension of world events through history. Students are assessed informally through class discussions and assignments, and formally through culminating assessments at the end of units.

Built into each grade level's social studies curriculum is the school's signature City Study program. City Study is designed to help students become active and engaged community members, build connections to the city and a sense of responsibility to the world around them, develop content knowledge through authentic, real-world learning opportunities, and enhance their understanding that their learning ecosystem extends beyond the classroom by engaging, using, and studying their surrounding environment.



SUBJECT CLASSES

Head Teachers in art, music, physical education, science, social-emotional learning (SEL), Spanish, and technology teach all grade levels in their area of expertise.

Art

Throughout their Learning Project career, students gain experience working with a wide variety of materials, including but not limited to tempera paint and watercolor, clay, oil pastels, graphite and charcoal pencils, fiber arts, collage, plaster, origami, and mixed media. Students learn about the elements of art – line, shape, color, texture, and form – and create projects based on techniques and concepts introduced each week. Additionally, students are exposed to art history, contemporary artists, big ideas (such as representation), and learn how to give and receive feedback on art with grace and a positive mindset. The year culminates with a student Art Show where students each exhibit at least two pieces of their choice, and the community is welcomed in to enjoy the creative beauty.



SUBJECT CLASSES

Music

The Learning Project's rich music curriculum consists of three components: performance, aural skills/theory, and culture. As part of a well-rounded music education, all three components are taught regularly, and often hand-in-hand. Students learn songs to sing at school concerts, which occur three times throughout the year. In addition to vocal instruction and teaching students foundational concepts and principles in music, movement and rhythm is emphasized in the younger grades, with upper graders engaging with instrumental music and music technology.

Physical Education (P.E.)

The school's physical education program develops students' skills in sports, recreation, fitness, leadership, and teamwork. Using a planned, sequential curriculum aligned with the Shape America National Fitness Standards, students develop fine and gross motor skills, knowledge and behaviors for active living, physical fitness, and sportsmanship. Each class has three P.E. classes per week, which take place outside at the Clarendon Street Playground or the Esplanade, or inside in the school's multipurpose space. In addition to triweekly classes, students also participate in Field Day each fall and Olympics Day in the spring.

Science

Science at The Learning Project is an inquiry and discovery-based program aligned with the national Next Generation Science Standards. As science evolves, so too does our curriculum. Each grade level has approximately three units of study, which include Earth Science, Physical Science, and Life Science. Throughout the program, students develop observational skills, an understanding of experimentation, measurement, classification skills, and more. The goal is to build upon students' inherent curiosity about why things exist the way they do and how they function. Through use of the scientific method and deductive reasoning, students solve challenges in and out of the lab. The program is also supported by Design Thinking modules in grades three and five where students are tasked with solving real-world problems and then present their ideas to the general public in Copley Square.

Social-Emotional Learning (SEL)

As a school focused on educating the 'whole child,' The Learning Project teaches social-emotional learning in a number of ways; some organically through the school's culture and values, and some more explicitly through its formal SEL program, which is rooted in the Random Acts of Kindness curriculum. Overall objectives of the program are to proactively develop skills that promote healthy self-concept, emotional growth and development. Through age-appropriate, interactive, and reflective lessons, students learn and practice self-awareness, self-management and regulation, social awareness and understanding others, relationship skills, and positive decision making.

SUBJECT CLASSES

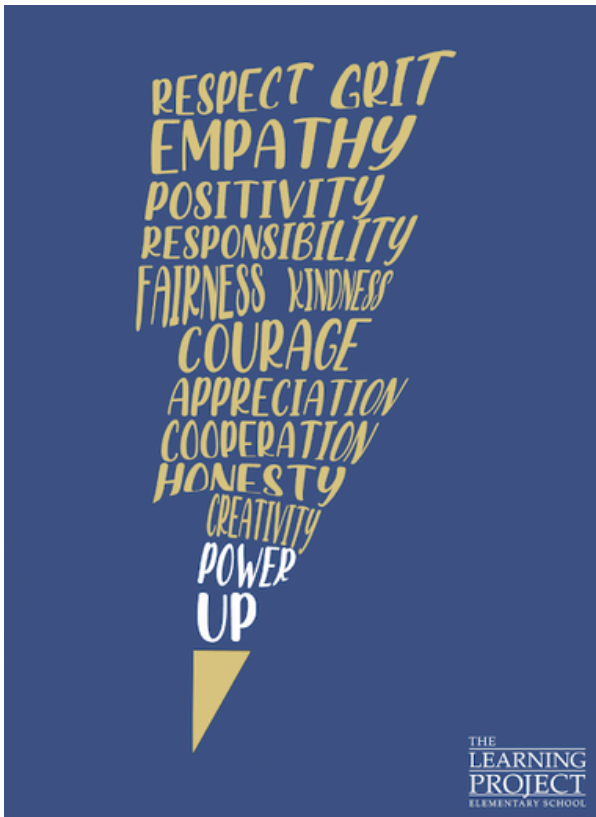
Spanish

Using the Sonrisas curriculum, Spanish lessons are divided into activities where students can learn and practice the language through conversation, singing and playing, reading, writing, and art. Classes are taught mainly in Spanish, but English is used as needed to introduce new activities, or to ensure understanding for children who need support. Key objectives of the class are for students to learn the language in an organic way, while also balancing it with explicit instruction in vocabulary and grammar, building foundational language that they can use in life beyond the classroom. Participation in class is very important, so The Learning Project fosters an atmosphere where students feel confident speaking in Spanish and practicing pronunciation.

Technology

While students engage with technology across all grade levels, they also have a structured Technology class once each week where they learn how to use software and hardware effectively, and also how to engage with it in a thoughtful and ethical manner. The school implements the Ellipsis Education curriculum in order to build foundational computer science skills and digital citizenship, while also integrating 'unplugged,' values-based lessons and exposing students to STEM careers with the goal of supporting a comprehensive view of computer science. Students in grades five and six end their year by applying lessons learned in both coding and engineering through an engaging, collaborative robotics unit.





"There couldn't be a better elementary school in design or execution. The LP has built strong and confident students who truly mature to take on the world outside The LP by 6th grade."

-Alum LP Parent

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