



LINCOLN NURSERY SCHOOL
at deCordova Sculpture Park and Museum

News & Notes

MAY 2013



Please join us!

**Our first Annual Family
Homecoming Day!**

Date: May 19th

Time: 3:00-5:00

deCordova Sculpture Park
and Museum

51 Sandy Pond Road
Lincoln, MA



Dear Alumni,

This school year of 2012-2013 has been one of transition, happily a smooth one from the Parish House at 14 Bedford Road to deCordova Sculpture Park and Museum, 55 Sandy Pond Road. Lincoln Nursery School moved around the corner or through the woods depending on how you travel! As with any move, there's an opportunity to explore a new neighborhood and to develop new relationships and this is exactly what the children, teachers and parents have been doing.



Our growing partnership with deCordova has come a long way over the course of the year. It includes a continual dialogue with the staff of their Learning and Engagement Department, and LNS faculty to connect the children's interests to this expansive environment all while collaborating to offer so many more opportunities to further explore and engage. The possibilities range from getting to know the staff of the museum, learning what they do and seeing where they do their work, meeting the artists and reciprocally having the artist visit our studio/classrooms, developing an understanding of de-installations and installations in the park and museum and exploring materials.

This infusion of new growth trellises around our time held values of honoring children and their play, spending time in nature and trying to adopt the slower pace of nature in our work with children. I am noticing that slowing down seems to be a challenge for all generations these days! Hopefully, LNS continues to be an oasis offering children and adults time to investigate our curiosities, explore materials and build lifelong relationships,

It has been another incredible year of new beginnings and community. And, I am reminded that our rich past filled with so many of you helped to create and lay the path of our journey to deCordova. We are privileged to be in such an amazing setting and I encourage you to come see the fruits of our labor. Please come visit, you are always welcome and if you need a date to "make it happen," please put our **first annual LNS Family Homecoming, Sunday, May 19, from 3-5 on your calendar**—I look forward to seeing you!

Warm Regards,

Nancy Fincke
Director, LNS

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Staff News

Studio Purple and LNS Welcomes Lucinda and Abby

Lucinda Burk and **Abby Cohen** joined LNS, this year, as the new teaching team in Studio Purple.

Lucinda was a toddler teacher at LNS in 1985. She has returned to LNS with 31 years of experience in the field of early childhood education. Her experience includes work in child care settings, preschools, elementary and middle schools. She is able to “see children for their strengths and for what’s right and great about them.” And by noticing these strengths, she can be with children without overshadowing them, allowing them to feel competent and capable and realize that learning comes from within themselves, from their own questions and investigations.

Abby has 24 years of experience in the field, having taught Kindergarten in the Newton Public Schools and PreK at Charles River School and Newtowne School. She has also worked as a literacy aide and special needs aide in a variety of grades. Her interest and major is in anthropology. But over the years she has realized how anthropology and education are intertwined as she is inspired by the Reggio Emilia school and constructivist philosophy of creating learning opportunities that are informed from classroom observation and developing relationships with each individual child.

Studio Blue Update

Andrea Crowley will become the co-teacher in the blue class teaming up with **Mark Weltner**.

Andrea is in her third year at LNS. Prior to teaching, she was an art therapist at McLean Hospital for many years, working with diverse populations and mediums. Andrea’s experience is easily translated to the classroom, as art is a wonderful modality that allows for creativity, communication and expression. Her experience at LNS has given her the understanding that the classroom is a place where children should be free to explore, play, socialize, create, wonder, think, and imagine. And that through play, children learn; their unique ideas and thoughts fostered through this.



A Parent Perspective — Sisy Thomas, mom of Joshua in Studio Yellow

Having spent over a decade as an early childhood educator, it was both an exciting and nerve wracking day when I realized it was time to enroll my son in preschool. He was certainly ready for the experience. And I was eager to find a school that would match everything I had grown to know and cherish about the field, as well as, his personality. During our first visit to Lincoln Nursery School, I instantly got “that” feeling. The one where I knew that my child would be starting an amazing journey in this environment and I would be okay as he did. There was a genuine warmth that transcended throughout the space, filled with some incredible people who guided it. The transition was quick and effortless. And the experience, since, has been nothing short of wonderful.

This year, with the move to deCordova, a new dynamic has been added to our experience. Each day, we are continuously immersed in the rich environment. The children have been at the front row as a new installation takes place. They have asked their questions, lent their interpretations, and taken in their imaginations’ desires. It wasn’t until we were driving home one day, that I truly understood the impact this experience was having on my son ... “Look mama, look at that! There’s a new installation happening there and it’s green!!” What my son was referring to, was a new home under construction. But it was not just another home being built; it was an “installation”. The level of importance was that much more. These days, he is eager to remark on the various “sculptures” that he sees in the clouds, trees, or grass. He observes the world with a little more detail. He feels secure with and cared for by his teachers. He has made some incredible friendships that he carries with him past school hours. Simply put, he loves school. What more could a teacher mom want?

And I have been fortunate to meet some of the most dedicated professionals, I have known in the field. My family gets to enjoy the spirit of the Reggio Emilia schools as applied at LNS. A beautiful community of families greets us each day. We get to be directly involved in these exceptional classrooms. This journey of preschool has truly become our family’s experience. And we couldn’t have asked for better!

 —Sisy Thomas



Letter from LNS alumn— Nancy Wilcox

Nothing puts a smile on my face or a warm feeling in my heart as quickly as thoughts of Lincoln Nursery School. Thinking back 15 years to our days at LNS, the memories are rich and plentiful. Seeing the children running thru the playground or piling into the common area with mittens and snow suits spread all around. Planning the “perfect” snack for a morning of parent helping. Special events: May Day, the Holiday Sing, and Graduation. Those beautiful end-of-year books that we treasure to this day! The list goes on and on.

As a board member and school president for several years, I had the privilege of a bird’s eye view of the many issues involved in running a cooperative nursery school. What impressed me the most was the dedication and commitment of everyone involved- parent and teachers -coming together to tackle any issue that might arise, all of it done with the spirit of making LNS the best it could be. At the heart of it all was the LNS commitment to “letting kids be kids.” This is no more evident in than in the work of the teachers who seamlessly meet every child at their unique individual level of development.

As an LNS parent, I always found the staff to be a tremendous resource- providing comfort and reassurance when needed but also, able to help with the many challenges that are inherent in parenting a preschooler. Their doors were always open- my questions were always answered. LNS is a place where connections are made and relationships are nurtured. It gives me the greatest joy to see that my children have continued many of the friendships that began at LNS so many years ago.

When news of the recent partnership of LNS with the deCordova Museum spread, the most common reaction was “WOW”! I suppose, however, that to those of us who have first hand experience of LNS, such an amazing transition should really come as no surprise. Earlier this spring, I had the pleasure of attending the annual LNS annual fundraiser and gala. What an evening it was! Set against a backdrop of exquisite contemporary art, I saw once again the real spirit of LNS- young families making lifelong connections around their children. The setting may have changed but the core values remain constant. LNS- you are a gem- a gift- to our children, our families and our community.

 — Nancy Wilcox




We would love to hear from you!

Please send us news about your family, and especially your kids, to be featured in the next newsletter! Either send us a note in the mail or email us at alumni@lincolnnurseryschool.org.

Next year we will be going electronic!!

We will be transitioning from doing a printed newsletter to an electronic newsletter. Please be sure we don’t miss you — send us your e-mail address! You can do this by e-mailing alumni@lincolnnurseryschool.org.

Every little bit helps!

 We earn **8-10% back** on any Amazon purchase! Please just launch it from our website www.lincolnnurseryschool.org and shop! It’s an easy way to help us raise money for the school.

Donating is easy!

You can make a secure online donation to LNS through Paypal. Just visit us at: www.lincolnnurseryschool.org/about/alumni



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Insights into our Curriculum

deCordova and LNS Connections



Studio Red

The deCordova Sculpture Park and Museum encompasses thirty-five acres and provides a constantly changing landscape of large scale, contemporary sculpture and site-specific installations. The park is open ended and it inspires. It invites interaction and participation. It evokes emotions that support learning and remembering.

Children explore and experience the sculptures and environment with multiple senses, asking questions and creating a cycle of inquiry within themselves and amongst their peers.



Approaching the work, "Lincoln," from its left, the vastness and length become evident.


The openings of the circles are like entrances calling us forward. A clear vision allows us to feel safe. As we run towards it, it gets larger and larger. Our perspective changes and we realize how small we are in comparison!

Which one will I fit in? How many of us can fit in here? Can I stand up or do I need to crawl? Look how tall I am! Where are you?

As we become more familiar, our pace slows. We start to listen. The rocks beneath our feet seem different. We speak and we listen again. Our voices echo. We whisper, the tube becomes an amplifier. The sound seems to bounce. The rocks, they ping against the metal.

We run again. It's a hole. It's a house! It's a tunnel! I'm up here! I'm weaving through! Follow me!

From the other side we suddenly notice the hill and how far the sculpture stretches.

We run from the top to the bottom, measuring with feet. Our bodies barely stop, what stops the circles? What stops the questions? Absolutely Nothing. 





Studio Purple

"How do you feel about people calling your artwork something else?" a four year-old asks artist Franklin Evans. Studio Purple visited the museum during the installation of the exhibition "Paint Things" and met Franklin Evans who was creating a site-specific work entitled "paint thinks." This question came from the child's own experience of having peers label her artwork something different than the identity she had for her work. A very challenging position for a 4 year old whose thinking is in the concrete stage of development.


Franklin Evans responded to the child's question with several thoughts:

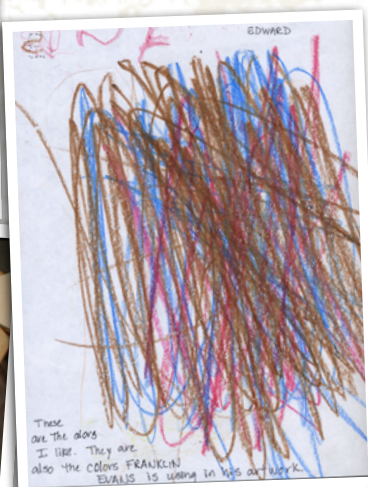
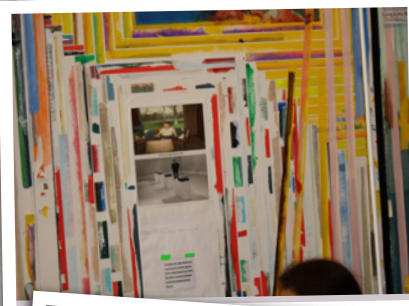
"You can't control [what other people say] ... You could try to discuss with them what is going on [with your artwork] ... maybe their eyes see differently. It's a hard one, there's no right answer, but you, kind of, know what you're doing, you like it [what you're doing], you're comfortable with it, but you also want to talk to people [about it]."

The child who had asked the question nodded and said, "yeah" as Franklin responded.

This exchange highlights the opportunity for a child to engage in action research by initiating a dialogue with an artist. How does an artist feel when other people make their own, differing interpretations of their artwork?

Inquiry forms the foundation for our teaching; we strive to ask children questions that will facilitate their own theory or understanding of an experience/activity. We also invite children to formulate and ask their own questions, encouraging curiosity and thinking critically. This way of working helps children deepen their understanding by connecting new information with previous knowledge.

Questions encourage dialogue that, in turn, develop relationships and promote creativity. Franklin told us: He goes into his studio every day. He looks around, sees things, gets ideas. There are no rules; you just have to try a lot of things. It's okay to make messes and move things around. It helps when your friends help you. Learning by doing and "messaging around with materials" are the hallmarks of a quality early childhood education. 



These are the colors I like. They are also the colors Franklin Evans is using in his artwork — Edward





Studio Yellow

Studio Yellow had the opportunity to meet artist Franklin Evans as he worked on his mixed media installation for "Paint Things, Beyond the Stretcher", January 27 - April 21, 2013 at the deCordova museum. The children were in awe as they watched Franklin work with materials that were familiar to them: sticky colorful masking tape!

Inspired by this experience, we began exploring all things tape in our classroom. Painting and peeling simple tape pictures led to several extraordinary weeks, as the children transformed their loft space into their own "tape exhibit." Carefully painting, peeling, cutting, weaving, forming lines, hanging things just so, taking individual and group ideas into consideration ... they cooperatively created their own inspirational space. So, it was a proud day in Studio Yellow, when artist Franklin Evans visited to see the children's work that was inspired by his installation.

Of course, things did not end here. The culmination of our tape exploration was small-group work to create unique linear designs on a child-sized rocking chair. The children chatted while working on the chair project. *"I think we should make an X." "I think it will look beautiful." "I'm going to go straight down. It makes a snowflake."*

Their work of art was auctioned and sold at the Annual LNS Gala, for an above market price! The hand painted chair and the documentation illustrating the process of the children's work was photographed by Franklin Evans. Learning of his interest in their work, Studio Yellow decided to create a photo book, titled "A Chair Inspired by Tape". Franklin requested a copy of the book!

This story demonstrates one of the many opportunities for children and teachers to make connections with people and ideas offered by the amazing environment of deCordova Sculpture Park and Museum. ✂



Artist Franklin Evans visits the studio and documents the students work





Studio Blue

Up-and-Down Leads to Rocket Ships and Simple Machines.

Montana, a three-year-old, has been interested in "Up-and-Down" since early in the school year. She drew lines going up and down, saying "up... down...up...down..." and climbed up hills and ran down them. Later in the year, when a large wardrobe box was brought into the classroom and became a "rocket ship," it seemed that this play theme might intersect with "Up-and-Down." Soon cardboard tube rocket ships were suspended on overhead supports, drawing interest from Sawyer, who liked pulling the string, making the rocket ship go up, flip over the support and fly down.

At the Studio Blue team meeting, LNS teachers Mark, Andrea, Nancy and Julie - Director of deCordova's Learning & Engagement Dept. - discussed how to connect the "Up-and-Down" and "Rocket Ship" themes. The next morning, two simple pulley systems were in place. The children were immediately drawn to them, placing rocket ships and other items in the buckets, propelling them up and down. Seeing the children's interest in this simple machine, Mark and Andrea extended the play by introducing another up-and-down simple machine: a door used as an incline. Mia saw it, lay on it, and rolled down!

This vignette illustrates the teaching at LNS as inspired by the schools of Reggio Emilia, Italy: children possess their own rhythms of growth and development, building from their current knowledge and experience to make meaning of their world. Teachers listen and document children's play, then respond by planning and designing the environment and offering opportunities for participation, and not by means of applying predefined curricula.

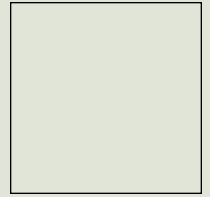
More materials that roll have since been offered; our journey continues! 🌀





LINCOLN NURSERY SCHOOL

PO Box 6075, Lincoln, MA 01773



We welcome your support!

Fundraising is an important piece of keeping LNS thriving. Many thanks to those families and individuals who have already generously donated contributed! If you are interested in making a contribution, please fill out this form and send it to **Lincoln Nursery School, PO Box 6075, Lincoln, MA 01773**



I would like to make a tax-deductible contribution to LNS in the amount of:

My check, payable to Lincoln Nursery School, is enclosed.

Name: _____

Address: _____

E-Mail: _____

Comments/Volunteer Skills and Availability: _____

Amount Enclosed:

(Payable to Lincoln Nursery School)