



# Kindergarten Syllabus



## George H. Conley School

450 Poplar St.  
Roslindale, Ma. 02136  
(617) 635-8099

**Teacher:** Ms. Perry – Room 106

**Paraprofessional:** Ms. Faison

### **Focus on K2:**

Focus on K2 is a comprehensive, integrated curriculum that combines the most current research on teaching and learning and supports the high standards for achievement put forth in the Common Core State Standards. Research shows that kindergarten---aged children learn best from hands---on experiences in which they can interact with the world, ask questions, and seek answers to these questions. The Focus on K2 approach supports children in engaging and applying the skills articulated in the Common Core State Standards necessary to be successful in the 21st Century, values each child as a learner, and allows each child to reach their highest potential.

### **Focus on K2 Units of Study:**

Focus on K2 includes four in-depth units of study that structure the yearlong implementation. The Focus on K2 Units are: **Our Community, Animals and Habitats, Construction, and Our Earth**. Each theme builds on the concepts and skills learned in previous themes, allowing children to deepen their understanding and apply these skills and concepts with creativity and innovation.

Starting in September, the first six weeks of school are devoted to building **Our Community**. This is a time for establishing a supportive community of learners, building relationships, fostering peer collaboration, and becoming confident with the routines and expectations of kindergarten while experiencing how individual needs can be met in a group setting. The lens of community and the concept of citizenship introduced in this unit permeate the year, with children first learning what it means to be a citizen in their own classroom communities and gradually applying this idea to broader contexts.

From October to December, the **Animals and Habitats** unit focuses on caring for living things and learning about animals through investigation and research. Students will

engage in author/illustrator/ artist studies and collaborative projects, and will explore concepts of care and safety, responsibility, courage, and respect.

Beginning in January, the **Construction** unit invites children to make physical science connections through construction of structures, measurement and comparison, and experimentation with materials. Children are introduced to a design process that involves envisioning, researching, planning, executing and revising. The definition of construction is expanded to include constructing buildings, songs, dances, plays, and stories. The unit culminates in the Our Boston project, with children working as a class to build a model that answers the question of how to make our city a fairer and more interesting place for children.

From April through June, the **Our Earth** unit explores the natural world through investigations and research of the earth's properties and systems, including the earth's surface, gardening, recycling, and reuse. Concepts of sustainability, urban renewal, economics, healthy lifestyles, authority, honesty, respect, courage, responsibility, and stewardship frame discussions and projects. The unit and year culminate in a capstone project where children choose a sustainable practice and work towards convincing a local audience to adopt this practice.

### **Daily Focus on K2 Components:**

**Centers:** At the heart of Focus on K2 are rich, interdisciplinary centers in which children learn through play, projects, peer interaction and hands-on materials. Kindergarteners engage in critical thinking and creativity, integrate concepts, and practice new skills independently and with peers. They explore literacy concepts, for example, by making a shopping list in the Dramatization center, labeling structures in the Block center, and recording observations in the STEM center. Center activities are authentic, motivating, and connected to the lives of the children. Children develop organizational and self--regulation skills as successful learners and problem solvers.

**Whole Group:** Children meet for whole group instruction in read-alouds of literature and non-fiction texts, storytelling, discussions about ongoing integrated projects, and reflections on classroom life. Foundational language and literacy skills such as phonemic awareness and vocabulary development are embedded during these group times.

**Small Groups:** Teachers meet with small groups of children to teach and support specific reading foundational skills and to facilitate ongoing project work. Writer's Workshop: Through mini-lessons, mentor texts and independent writing in different genres, children are provided time each day for motivating, authentic writing activities.

**Storytelling and Story Acting:** Supporting literacy development and social and emotional development, children are given frequent opportunities to share their stories, which are then enacted by their peers.

**Phonics/Word Study**

Each day children will receive direct phonics instruction using the Wilson Foundations program. This program focuses on letter identification, letter/sound correspondence, sight words and beginning reading skills.

**Writing:**

Children will write, draw, and dictate stories for a variety of purposes (narrative, informative, and argumentative). Children will engage in a feedback/editing writing process, answering questions and adding details to pieces of work based on adult and peer feedback. Children will participate in shared writing and research experiences to produce and publish writing with friends.

**STEM:**

Children will engage in a scientific process to make discoveries that includes planning and carrying out investigations by:

- making predictions
- experimenting and testing their predictions
- gathering evidence,
- recording what is happening
- determining and evaluating results through analysis
- answering comparative questions, and reflection
- adding or subtracting variables to see change in results, then following the process again

Children will also use inquiry to make decisions – forming a question and defining the problem.

- Children will compare questions to learn more about, observe, and reflect on information, concepts, and problems
- Children will use evidence to engage in an argument regarding STEM related topics with peers to solve authentic problems and answer and ask provocative questions.
- Children will think of themselves as scientists, technicians, engineers, and mathematicians engaging in larger concepts related to engineering and physical science, life and earth science, robotics, measurement and data, geometry, number sense, counting and cardinality, and operations and algebraic thinking.

**Social Studies/History:**

Children will honor themselves as individuals, as part of a family, as part of a community, as part of a community of learners, and as part of a world.

- Children will honor, respect and value individuals and their similarities and differences, and families and their similarities and differences.
- Children will understand the need for rules to keep our community, our environment, and ourselves safe.
- Children will understand that citizenship involves responsibility for themselves and to others.

- Children will understand and participate in problem solving processes to solve disagreements in a peaceful and democratic way.
- Children will understand that organizations have leaders.

**Assessments:**

Students will be assessed on Dibels (Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills), Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System, as well as district wide and teacher created assessments.

**Math Workshop**

Every day the students receive one hour of math instruction using the TERC Investigations Program. We will establish counting routines, calendar activities and attendance activities. Students will use a variety of concrete hands on manipulatives to help develop math skills. Areas covered are number sense, patterns, exploring data, geometry, counting and number systems.

**Assessments:**

Students are evaluated on their class performance teacher, created assessments, and End of Unit tests.