

October Curriculum

Our October curriculum is designed to focus on nature and teach our children to be “scientists” while making observations and conducting experimental research. We will use seasonal changes as a means of opening an ongoing discussion about the cycle of life and our feelings about death. This month, we will document our observations in nature and learn all about trees. We will also talk about our feelings; specifically our fears, what makes us feel brave and what friendship feels like.

October work for ongoing 2017-2018 Projects:

Friendship Study:

We will create a list of friendly ways to greet each other in the mornings

We will begin our classroom rules and culture book and document our problem solving

We will conduct friendship studies in pairs and learn about each other!

Family sharing with a friend project

Each child will design their own family page and answer the following questions:

Who are your family members?

What school do you go to?

Tell me about a friend...

What special activities/projects/.play do you take part in? With whom?

What does your mom/dad/brother/sister like to do? (hobby, teacher, artist etc...)

Content Areas:

Mailboxes:

Mailbox set up

Birthday cards to: River, Soren, Xavi, Adan, Amalia, Nathaniel

Content Areas:

Journals:

One picture/or reflection

Content Areas:

Global Wall: South America

We will draw maps of South America and draw pictures of things we would like to learn about in South America

We will each add something from home that is South American to the wall



Content Areas:

Elder-Child Community Project

Establish a connection with the retirement community on Pratt St. behind the school and a plan for the year. Plan our first visit for the end of the month/beginning of next month



Content Areas:

Language Room

We will sing songs in different languages and learn how to say a few words in different languages and write in different languages on our language room walls!

Content Areas:

Nutrition, Mindfulness and Community Outreach

Learn about Columbus Day/Indigenous People’s Day, Sukkot, Diwali festival of lights, Jain New Year, Ashura, World pasta day and Halloween!
Practice our before naptime meditation/visualization
Learn about the peace place
Enjoy delicious meals together harvested from our garden and Ollin farms
Connect with the Our Center and see what would be the most supportive activity to start with.

Nature Walks and Math and Science Activities:

Plant new winter vegetables
Nature walks and outdoor adventures: Tuesday and Friday mornings
Observe our surroundings within our community
Focus on trees/lifecycles and weather patterns
Harvest vegetables from our garden!
Count items in and around our school and in our outdoor environment

September Projects and Activities:

Continent of the month: South America
Herb and herbal infusion of the month: Herbs from trees, cinnamon, star anise, cloves
September Calendar Events: Fundraiser, Columbus Day/Indigenous People’s Day, Sukkot, Diwali festival of lights, Jain New Year, Ashura, World pasta day and Halloween!

Wednesdays	Thursdays
10/4 Changes of the seasons (Earth and Sky), clothing activity	9/7 Friendship Study: Pair up to do an activity with a friend and observe what you like about your friend

10/11 Learn about healthy foods and healthy habits	9/14 Tree day: Learn about trees!
10/18 Harvest learning, before and after, (Pumpkins, apples, pine cones, Squirrels)	9/21 Story writing project
10/15 Imaginary play vs. real experiences, dressing up and pretending: Monsters, witches, super heroines	9/28 Story writing project

Indoor Environment and Set Up:

Seasonal Tree

We plan to continue to decorate our seasonal tree and decorate it for fall.

October Calendar

There are lots of exciting events that we are looking forward to this month. Six birthdays, our fall fundraiser, and Halloween of course! We are going to add them all to our October calendar and countdown to our upcoming special events.

Table to Honor the Dead

This October we would like to continue with our tradition and create a table to honor the dead from Monday, October 19th through Monday, November 2nd.

General Information about Our Table to Honor the Dead:

We are going to create a space in our school to learn about and honor things, pets and people that have died. We will use our table as a tool for expressing our thoughts about death, to discuss our feelings, and document our ideas. We will also use it as an opportunity to discuss the cycle of life on our planet earth and the seasonal changes we observe. We will follow your child's lead whenever talking about death, and explore his/her thoughts with him/her. We will, of course, have age appropriate conversations with your child, and honor your beliefs and limits- so please let us know what they are! Feel free to email us if you have any questions about this activity.

In the past, we have noticed that children are very open and excited about the opportunity to discuss death. We would like to provide the space for them to do so if they wish.

Show and share:

Week 1 (October 2-6): Free-choice show and share

Week 2 (October 9-13): Something scary or something that makes you feel brave

Week 3 (October 17-21): Bring in something South American for our South American wall. Ideas include items from South American countries, a picture of something from South America (Could be hand drawn), a map, a word etc. We will return these items at the end of October.

Week 4 (October 24-28): Our show and share theme for week four of October is “something that died”. If your child has known a person or had a pet that has died, and wants to share, please bring in a picture, story or poem about or to that person or animal. We also welcome any dead plants, tree branches, leaves or flowers. Children can even bring in dead bugs (as long as they are in a jar that can be sealed). Please bring in something we can keep until November 2nd on our table to honor the dead. Please also feel free to bring in any pictures, stories, and items your child would like to add to our table from October 16th through November 2nd. Thanks!

October Birthdays: *River, Soren, Xavi, Adan, Amalia, Nathaniel*

On your child’s birthday we will make birthday cards, bake a cake and invite you to lunch for a special celebration. Please email us to set up an exact date. Thanks!

Dance Class

For October, November and December we will focus on moving across the floor performing different movements such as jumps and leaps. We will work on jazz isolations, basic kicks and turns! We will also practice our dance for the holiday show and learn some fun partner dances

October 27: Costume Ball (Your child may dress in a costume for school or dance this day. Please make sure it is a costume that they can move freely in.)

Books

The books of the month are on the bookshelf next to the cozy corner and on the science table. October books are about nature, plants and trees, the life cycle and death.

Special Class Activities Schedule:

Spanish class with Ms. Kena on Mondays

Science and math with Ms. Amy on Tuesdays

Music class on Wednesdays

Herbs, Art, Literacy with Ms. Rachael Thursdays

Dance class with Ms. Amy on Fridays

Ongoing School Year 2017-2018 Curriculum

Ongoing Activities and Projects for the School Year!

Work Sampling Portfolios

To enable each of our children and their parents to chart progress, we are going to have each child create a portfolio with samples of her or his work. Inside each portfolio will be samples of individual work that illustrate each child's developmental progress. In addition, students are able to share their work with classmates and teach one another. Children are able to take home their portfolios at the end of the school year or upon graduation!

Why We Choose Work Sampling Assessment

Work sampling provides an avenue for children to view their accomplishments as well as cultivate a sense of pride and achievement. Parents, students, and teachers can view their child's individual profile to admire the progression of the work. Allowing children to create items of personal meaning and interest for their portfolio helps them to take ownership of their learning.



Ongoing Project Design

Our ongoing projects for 2017-2018 were designed with the intention of cultivating the foundation for the 21st century skills our students will use throughout their lives as productive, educated and empathetic Community and Global Citizens. Those 21st century skills are: Invention, Critical Thinking and Reasoning, Collaboration, Self Direction, Information Literacy and Inclusion. The first five are adapted from the Colorado Early Learning and Development Guidelines and the last is a BellaVita invention. Please see our detailed philosophy or Parent Handbook for more information about Inclusion: Global and Community Citizenship. We also use the Colorado Academic State Standards as a guideline for all of our ongoing work.

Curriculum Design and Intentions

Our 2017-2018 curriculum is designed to inspire our students, encourage innovation and creativity. We plan to use the Reggio Emilia Approach to education by asking open ended questions to foster curiosity and encourage children to collectively and independently problem solve and investigate. This design will allow our children to take ownership of their learning, experiment with their interests, question, and think critically. This year our primary focus is to build connections and relationships with other people in our school community, local communities and our global community.

Our projects this year were designed through a collaborative process involving of all our teachers and staff. The project design is intentionally open ended and we will refine our

ideas each month and share them with you in our monthly curriculums. We will also share with you our ongoing documentation.

Student Journals

Student journals create a venue for children to document their learning, plan for the day, and reflect on their experiences. Visual cues and a visual timeline of their lives instills mathematical concepts, documenting their language builds literacy skills, children's illustrations and written words promote fine motor skills. We strive to complete at least one entry per month for each student.



Self-direction

The children will use logic and reasoning to discuss events, experiences and reflect upon the knowledge they gain over time. Children will use their journals to work independently and explore topics they wish to learn about and discuss.

Collaboration

Children will work together with a teacher to create an autobiographical account of their preschool experiences. Children will reflect upon collaborative acts depicted in their picture entries.

Invention

By conducting a short “social study” of him or herself each child will begin to understand how to expand ideas and create for the future.

Critical Thinking and Reasoning

Children will be encouraged to think critically and build upon past knowledge. Children will describe games and dramatic play activities expressed in their pictures; children will learn to make reasonable statements about what is going on in their pictures.

Information Literacy

Student journals are all about language development! Children learn to use language to be understood, heard, and to convey their messages to the reader.

Inclusion

Journals will include examples of inclusive activities in which we will all take part in throughout the school year!

Student Mailboxes

We will use mailboxes to teach literacy, math, fine motor skills, social-emotional and cognitive development. This project focuses on children working with self expression, communicating with one another, and builds relationships. It is an on-going project that we will return to throughout the course of the year.

Self-direction

Children will be encouraged to communicate with one another and learn friendly and fun ways to do so. Children will pass messages on show their feelings and be encouraged to use mailboxes as a communication tool on their own.

Collaboration

We will work together to create birthday cards for fellow students. We will demonstrate imagination and inventiveness in our communication as well as use mailboxes as an avenue for artistic expression.

Invention

Mailboxes are an open ended social tool that children may use as they wish.

Critical Thinking and Reasoning

Mailboxes can be used to accomplish tasks, share about events, and solve problems. Mailboxes can also be used for dramatic expression.

Information Literacy

Teachers will help children compose messages and eventually many students will learn to write their own messages and create independent works for one another.

Inclusion

Mailboxes are a community space created to encourage children to communicate, collaborate and practice acts of kindness.

Global Wall

The global wall is going to be a large map created with recycled materials by students under teacher supervision and guidance. The wall will serve as a space for visual representation of monthly regional focus, and will incorporate the Colorado Early Learning and Development Guidelines.



Self-direction

The children will exercise their approaches to learning by seeking new information and asking questions about particular regions of the world. They will be setting goals for what they want to learn, with the goal of maintaining interest in the project throughout the year.

Collaboration

The physical building of the wall will incorporate the collaboration as the children use materials to make creative and visual art.

Invention

The global wall will teach social studies and science as we explore different climates, nature, cultures, and communities.

Critical Thinking and Reasoning

Building and using the map will teach the children about representation of places. Learning about different cultures will engage the children in compare and contrast scenarios, which will aid in their logic and reasoning.

Information Literacy

We will be exploring different languages, which will give the students a base in information literacy and language development, in English and in world languages.

Inclusion

The wall will help children place their focus on citizenship that is larger and more inclusive than their own country or continent. They will get a sense of community both around their neighborhood and see how other cultures express and build their own community bonds.

Friendship Study

Our Friendship Study is designed to encourage children to foster healthy relationships with others in the classroom and within our community. Throughout the year we will work together to create our own classroom culture based on love, kindness, and the needs within our school community.



Friendship Study Components:

Friendship book: Our friendship book will begin with our discussions around important topics such as how to welcome friends in to our community, how to greet one another in friendly ways, what makes a good friend, what is an act of kindness and can we practice acts of kindness in the classroom and in our community.

Friendship Exercises: Children will participate in a variety of friendship exercises that pair them up to learn about one another, appreciate each other's unique values and traits, work together toward a common goal, and create together. Teachers will set up provocations for students to interact, document their interactions, and encourage the classroom to share their personal experiences with their other classmates.

Problem Solving and Classroom Culture: We will document classroom guidelines we feel are important and document how we problem solve and work together. Eventually

we plan to encourage children to use these skills to problem solve outside the classroom and work together to solve real world problems.



Self-direction

Our friendship study projects are designed to foster children's social and emotional learning and to build a foundation in which they can learn about the complexity of interpersonal relationships.

Collaboration

Children will work together and share their unique skills with one another to inspire and create. We will collaborate to create our own classroom culture, rules and guidelines. We will document our problem solving skills.

Invention

We will create our own rules, guidelines and culture. We will use these skills to go to solve real world problems.

Critical Thinking and Reasoning

Children will need to use their logic and reasoning to reflect and create with their friends, problem solve together and create a classroom culture unique unto themselves.

Information Literacy

Our friendship study will be documented in the above mentioned formats and shared with our children in the form of different books we make and read together.

Inclusion

Children will share their abilities with their partner and learn to use them to work together toward common goals. Children will learn to identify emotions. We will practice ways to be kind and thoughtful while being mindful of our differences. We will learn to work together as a community to problem solve, recognizing each other's strengths, skills and virtues.

Nature Walks

We will start our Tuesdays and Fridays by taking a nature walk in the neighborhood. The children will get to know their close community and discover its beauty.

Critical thinking

Children will explore their natural surroundings and observe how everything in nature ties back to their own world.

Information Literacy

As the children walk and observe nature closely, they will become more inclined to inquire about what tickles their curiosity.



Self Direction

The children will gravitate to a specific subject of interest (Birds, Trees, squirrels...), and strive to dig deeper to learn more about it.

Collaboration

While examining a bug on the ground or throwing a rock into a pond, or searching for new and interesting plants, the children will work together and seek each other's help. Children will be encouraged to take care of their walking buddy and communicate with one another.

Invention

Children are curious by nature, so getting close to nature will ignite their scientific thirst and mathematical thinking.

Inclusion

By becoming one with nature, the children will engage in meaningful experiences that will embrace all aspects of learning many subjects of everyday life.

Language Room

Our Language Room will have four world languages on designated walls: English, Spanish, French and Arabic. The children will be the initiators coming up with their own subjects and words of interest they wish to learn in other languages.

Critical thinking

Learning new languages will enrich the children's interactions and will broaden their social horizons.

Information Literacy

The exposure to different languages at a young age is the best tool to stimulate the children's brain while it is still eager to absorb and soak all the new and unfamiliar richness of diverse sounds and words.

Self Direction

Learning a new language will help the children be aware of their own unique identity and will make them think and wonder about other people, they might begin to analyze how we are all different but yet alike in many different ways.

Collaboration

Discovering a new language is the best way to learn about new cultures and working out our differences to resolve and embrace each other's ideas, new perspectives and opportunities of learning.

Invention

The earlier we introduce young children to new languages, the better we help them become successful in the future because bilingual learners can focus on two tasks at once. Multi-language learning is like a workout for the brain, it boosts, processing, comprehension and memory.

Inclusion

By learning different languages, the children open up to new experiences, and become more accepting and tolerant towards diverse friends and cultures.



Elder-Child Community Project

Building a bridge between the elderly and young children is a great opportunity to develop a beautiful friendship.

Both sides crave attention and affection, and to make this is experience successful and fulfilling, we will plan monthly visits to our neighborhood senior citizen community center. This outreach project will benefit both the elders and the children in bringing joy and happiness to all.

Critical Thinking

By visiting the Senior Citizen Center, the children will have contact with older people, and understand more about aging, and the stages of growing up throughout their lives. They will have opportunities to interact and learn from seniors as well as for seniors to enjoy meaningful experiences and relationships with children.

Information Literacy

While visiting the seniors, the children will read, sing or do a puzzle together, even in short back-and -forth interactions, the children will learn rules of communication by taking turns listening and responding.

Self-Direction

Every time the children go to visit their senior buddies, they will anticipate the steps to get ready for their trip and be prepared (picking out a story or a puzzle, learning a new song ...). They will try to obey the Center's rules and respect them (walking feet, quite voices...).

Collaboration

Having this great opportunity to connect with elders in our community will build their trust in others and learn to better share and take turns at reading and listening to a story.

This will also boost their self-esteem and make them proud to give and help those in need.

Invention

While the children are preparing to visit their senior friends, they will brainstorm to come up with new exciting activities to share during their visit. These precious interactions will not only benefit the older people by brightening their day and bringing joy to their lives, the children will develop rich vocabulary, reading skills and new perception of older adults in the long run.

Inclusion

In these busy times, we all get so absorbed in our daily life and forget about getting involved in bettering lives for those who have no relatives or family close by. By encouraging the young children to build a relationship with the elder community, we are including them in our society and helping them feel loved as valued members of the community.

Essential Categories of Learning:

- ❖ Self-Direction
- ❖ Information Literacy
- ❖ Critical Thinking & Reasoning
- ❖ Invention
- ❖ Collaboration

Welcome to BellaVita Nutrition, Mindfulness & Community Outreach Curriculum:

Imagine a world where everyone is well fed and nourished: mentally, physically, emotionally and spiritually. This is the work of the Bella Vita School.

We prioritize inclusion, fostering healthy relationships, and participating in the community as global citizens.

Community is encouraged, individualism is valued and children are treated with love, dignity and respect.

Nutrition, Culinary, Mindfulness & Community Outreach Curriculum

- ❖ Physical Development & Health
 - Culinary & Nutrition: With access to incredible nutrition resources such as Natural Grocers' organic produce, our own garden's produce and a CSA share from Longmont's Ollin Farms, students receive the best possible quality nutrition. Our students have opportunities to actively participate in the food cycle by planting, tending to, and harvesting some of their own food. This gives

them a sense of inclusion, global citizenship and interconnectedness; key ingredients to good health & development.

Our kitchen operates with intention and love, striving to offer students food choices that are appealing, in season (for optimal nutrition), healthy and culturally diverse.

- **Mindfulness:** The Peace Place serves as a place for students to learn and incorporate the importance of introspection and quiet alone time as a way to regroup, rest, and feel peace.
- Before naptime students are lead through a guided meditation to feel the benefits of emotional regulation & relaxation.
- Our staff believes in practicing what we preach. As an embodiment of demonstrating a steady mindfulness practice, mental/emotional resilience, and team building we meditate together on a daily basis. Yay!
- **Community Outreach:** Based on the South African proverb, “Ubuntu” meaning “I am because we are”, Bella Vita is launching new efforts to enrich the health of our students and the community. By collaborating with & contributing to one of the country’s premiere food pantries located in our very own Longmont, The Our Center, we will be able to extend our resources to the community at large. This will take form in the way of fund raising, canned good drives, winter supply drives and potentially volunteer and interactive, face to face participation.



- **Social & Emotional Development:**
 - During meal time students gain valuable experience to learn social skills. This is a key time to learn to engage in interpersonal relationships as well as how to monitor one’s own space, boundaries and body needs. Students participate in storytelling, telling jokes, finding out about one another’s lives, interests and families. Meal and snack times serve as opportunities for students to work on emotional development as they navigate what is appropriate at the table, indoors and with peers. We often find ourselves coming up with creative solutions to find adequate outlets for emotional spurts.

- English Language Development
 - There are often new foods or ingredients that students have never had or are unaware of. The nutrition program invites students to expand their vocabulary by learning the names of what they are eating.
 - For example: Pesto, chutney, snake eye beans, ragout, tomatillo, coolie, whisk, gnocchi, marinate, stock, stew
- Language Development:
 - The Bella Vita Nutrition & Culinary Program uses cross cultural holidays and celebrations to bring in language development. We prepare and learn about other cultures food and cuisine for special days they celebrate. This gives students the opportunity to pick up terms and phrases from languages all over the world.
- Literacy Knowledge & Skills:
 - In preparing recipes we use a chart for students to put together stickers representing different ingredients. This gives literacy from labels, ingredient name and kinesthetic experience for experiential learners.
- Mathematics Knowledge & Skills:
 - On “make your own lunch” days students are able to add what they like to their own meal to get a sense of quantity. There are also opportunities to add measurements and count ingredients to prepare food items.
- Science Knowledge & Skills:
 - We are going to explore by having students experiment with making their own recipes and trying them out. This will start with things as simple as smoothie making and will help the students cause and effect learning. They will be able to make a hypothesis about how something will turn out and then be able to see the results.
- Social Studies Knowledge & Skills:
 - *same as language development and social development
- Creative Arts Expression:
 - MYO (Make Your Own) food days students get to creatively participate in creating their own lunch.



▪ **Music Class Curriculum:**

- Based on the Colorado Early Learning and Development Guidelines, our music classes will include the following
- Counting out and clapping rhythms, beats, and word syllables
 - Learning basic note rhythm values
 - Learning to remember patterns/lyrics/full songs
 - Learning about basic word rhyming/using similar sounding words while creating lyrics and poems to put to music
 - Learning songs with lyrics in various languages while learning about other cultures
 - Learning social skills by using a puppet who is shy, and only sings when made to feel safe by the group
 - Learning about song and lyric writing skills
 - Basic musical instrument introduction
 - Cultivating general creative skills in each individual student
 - Helping each child to find their own voice



▪ **Dance Class Curriculum:**

- Based on the Colorado Early Learning and Development Guidelines, our dance classes will include the following:
- Partner and group dancing and collaborative expression
 - We will have fun dressing up and using props
 - We will explore dancing to a variety of different types of music and explore other cultures through dance and music
 - We will learn to move to different beats and sounds
 - We will explore our connections to the earth, animals, nature and other people through dance
 - We will learn some basics or different styles of dance
 - We will have a ton of fun!

▪ **Story Telling Curriculum:**

- Based on the Colorado Early Learning and Development Guidelines, our story telling curriculum
- Each year we explore different forms of storytelling and different styles, genres and formats for the stories we share. Many stories are shared orally and a story can be shared over days, months or the entire year. Children dictate and share their own stories with teachers and classmates. We are not sure yet what we explore yet this coming year but will keep you all posted!

Approaches to Learning:

The information below is quoted directly from the Colorado Early Learning and Development Guidelines

- All of our long-term projects are designed to include the recommended Approaches to Learning in the Colorado Early Learning and Development Guidelines. For your reference they are listed below:
- Demonstrate flexibility, imagination, and inventiveness in approaching tasks and activities.
- Demonstrate eagerness to learn about and discuss a range of topics and tasks.
- Ask questions and seek new information.
- Maintain interest in a project or activity until completed.
- Set goals and develop and follow through on plans.
- Resist distractions, maintain attention, and continue the task at hand through frustration or challenges.
- Plan, initiate and complete learning activities with peers.
- Join in cooperative play with others and invite others to play.
- Model or teach peers.
- Help, share and cooperate in a group.

Logic and Reasoning:

The information below is quoted directly from the Colorado Early Learning and Development Guidelines

All of our long-term projects are designed to include the recommended skills for Logic and Reasoning in the Colorado Early Learning and Development Guidelines. For your reference they are listed below:

- Seek multiple solutions to a question task or problem.
- Recognize cause and effect relationships.
- Classify, compare and contrast objects, events, and experiences.
- Use past knowledge to build new knowledge.
- Know that problems can be identified and possible solutions can be created.
- Represent people, places and things through drawings, movement, and three-dimensional objects.
- Engage in pretend play and act out roles.
- Recognize the difference between pretend or fantasy situations and reality.