

New Outreach Approaches

During the 2013-2014 year, Children's School educators have experimented with several new approaches to sharing our best work with regional colleagues. For example, Mrs. Rosenblum and Mrs. Bird have begun experimenting with providing mentoring for novice early childhood educators in other centers by interacting with them during observations at the Children's School, as well as by visiting them in their own classrooms to offer support and resources relevant to the areas of growth identified by the educators and their directors. They are currently exploring ways to extend this mentoring to include family providers.

- **Observation Days** – On Columbus Day in October and Martin Luther King, Jr. Day in January, we offered our first “observation days” for educators whose centers were closed for those holidays. We focused this year's events on Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Math (STEAM) Education, so we provided seminar, discussion, and observation time related to the ways we integrate STEAM topics into our daily activities and our thematic units. In October, about 20 educators observed during the preschool *Recycling* unit and the kindergarten *Elements of Art* unit, while about 10 educators and our 12 Duksung practicum students observed in January during our *Building* unit.



- **Tailored Workshops** – In February, Miss Mangan and Dr. Carver designed a full morning workshop for the educators at the three Angels' Place centers (North Side, Brookline, and Swissvale). These centers offer free child care for single parents so that they can stay in school, and they offer parenting classes and other resources to support engaged and effective parenting. At the time of our workshop, the organization had just experienced a sudden leadership change, so we spent the morning emphasizing the ways that considering varied perspectives can help open the teams to new possibilities for the future that can be achieved via committed partnership. We used *The Art of Possibility* framework that has been the basis for our own staff development this year, and we shared many of the children's books that have helped ground our discussions (as well as being the basis for Dr. Carver's Director's Corner articles this year).

