



## Topic: Community and Relationships

### Curriculum Planning Template – Somerville Early Education

### Trajectory for Thematic Inquiry: Planning from the Big Idea

*Consult ELA Pacing & Curriculum Guides, Big Idea Guides, & Building Blocks Math Pacing Guide*

#### Big Idea(s) about Community and Relationships:

- We are members of a group, we belong here.
- We form relationships with each other.
- Members of a group work together for a common goal.
- We are all learning new things and how to do things for ourselves.
- We belong to different groups/communities: family, neighborhood, class, school, city, team, etc.
- There are helpers in our communities.

#### Project Approach: Working with Big Ideas

(Picturing the Project Approach 2017, Sylvia Chard, Yvonne, Kogan, Carmen Castillo)

- Phase 1: Beginning the Project
- Phase 2: Developing the Project
- Phase 3: Concluding the Project

#### Anti-bias Education Goals and Outcomes(Derman-Sparks, Edwards and Goins, 2020)

**Goal 1: Identity** - Each child will demonstrate self-awareness, confidence, family pride, and positive social identities. *Teachers will nurture each child's construction of knowledgeable and confident personal and social identities.*

**Goal 2: Diversity** - Each child will express comfort and joy with human diversity; accurate language for human differences; and deep, caring human connections. *Teachers will promote each child's comfortable, empathic interactions with people from diverse backgrounds.*

**Goal 3: Justice** - Children will increasingly recognize unfairness (injustice), have language to describe unfairness, and understand that unfairness hurts. *Teachers will foster each child's capacity to critically identify bias and will nurture each child's empathy for the hurt bias causes.*

**Goal 4: Action** - Children will demonstrate empowerment and the skills to act, with others or alone, against prejudice and/or discriminatory actions. *Teachers will cultivate each child's ability and confidence to stand up for oneself and for others in the face of bias.*

#### Selected Anti-bias Objectives for Community and Relationships

- I can talk about interesting and healthy ways that some people who share my group identities live their lives.
- I know that all my group identities are part of me—but that I am always ALL me.
- I find it interesting that groups of people believe different things and live their daily lives in different ways.

## A TRAJECTORY OF INQUIRY

### Phase 1 – Beginning a Project: Starting Out And Setting The Stage

Sample Teacher Brainstorm/Planning Web - Add your own ideas!



Create a new web with children once a direction has been defined

#### Surface prior knowledge. Set the Stage:

- **Establish group identity.** Learn or review children’s names in the classroom community (greetings, name games, etc.) Explore shared group identities: we are all in Pre-K, we are in the same class, we are 4 and 5 years old, etc.) Develop or remind children of expectations for safe learning and interactions, establish rules and guidelines for how to play and learn in the classroom community. Introduce or review Explicit Presentations of classroom materials (crayons, pencils, glue, etc.)
- **Prepare the environment for learning about community and relationships.** Include child photos on blocks and community helper figures to the block area. Add books to the book area that reflect different types of communities (varied regions, cultures, ages, interests, languages, etc.)

#### Generate curiosity: Pose questions, read a high interest book, take a field trip

##### Questions you might ask children:

- How are we alike? How are we different?
- How do we work together?
- Who can you ask for help?
- Where do we live? Who are the helpers in our community?
- Where is our school? Who is in our school community? Who helps us?

## Book Suggestions

- Read Counting on Community by Innosanto Nagara to **introduce vocabulary: Community.**
- Last Stop on Market Street by Matt De la Pena
- Maybe Something Beautiful by F. Isabel Campoy
- Jayden's Impossible Garden by Melina Mangel

## Field Trips to Generate Curiosity

- **Take a walking tour around the classroom, school and playground.** Encourage children to notice who and what they observe on their walk. Take photos and write notes about who and what is observed to identify people and places and the roles they serve in the community.

## Make connections to children's lives

- **Invite children to bring in a family photo to display in the classroom.** Add family photos around the classroom and/or create a family class book.
- **Encourage children to collect items found in nature within the local community.** Add found items to the science area for observation and investigation.

## **PHASE 1 – Beginning a Project -Defining A Possible Investigation or Direction:**

Generate KW (Know, Want to know) Chart: What do we know or think we know about \_\_\_\_\_ ?

- What do we think we know about our school?
- What do we think we know about our neighborhood?
- What do we want to know about our community?

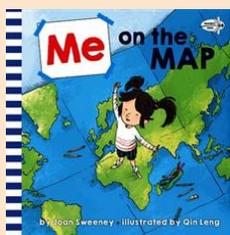
*Expand Children's Thinking: So, now that we know some information and have some ideas about \_\_\_\_\_, What should we investigate?*

*It seems that you are curious about \_\_\_\_\_?*

*Brainstorm a list of all the things the children Want know about \_\_\_\_\_.*

## **Possible Investigations to your explore your topic of interest**

- Read Me on the Map by Joan Sweeney to introduce students to the concepts of geography and maps in relation to the character's connection to her location. Use this text to initiate drawings of maps and inspire children to document their surroundings.
- Read books and watch videos about community helpers in the neighborhood. Introduce community helper books, figurines and dramatic play clothes to the classroom for children to independently explore and demonstrate their existing knowledge of these roles in the community.



## **PHASE 2 – Developing a Project- Exploring And Learning More:**

Continue to add to the knowledge base, add activities and experiences, field trips, find experts, plan class books, family engagement, etc.

### **POSSIBLE FIELD SITES:**

- **Tour the neighborhood**
  - Walk around the local neighborhood.
  - Plan to tour all of a certain type of location in the community depending on interest (i.e. all the libraries, all the community gardens, etc.)
- **Visit community locations** (i.e. library, post office, grocery store, laundromat, fire department, etc.)

### **POSSIBLE EXPERTS:**

- **Members of the community**
  - Community Helpers
  - Local public officials
  - Local business owners
  - Local historians
  - Social Advocacy Organizers
- **Urban Planners/Community Developers**
  - Director of Parks & Open Space

### **Possible Projects (Use one of the following ideas, or co-create an emergent project with your children):**

- **Tour the Neighborhood.** Go on a walking tour around the neighborhood, encouraging children to document the experience. Offer children cameras to collect photos and video, clipboards with papers and markers to draw, write, label or make tallies of what they observe.
  - **Map Making.** Use maps to represent the physical layout of the community and identify the special locations and people that help support the community. Map the school or the neighborhood community and encourage children to think of places they go to with their family in the neighborhood (i.e. grocery store, post office, restaurants, library, stores, doctors/health clinic, mechanic, schools, gardens, banks, laundromat, etc.)
  - **Interview Community Members.** Make a list of helpers in the community with children and vote to identify specific community members to interview. Write a letter to the community members of interest with the class and set-up an interview time. Generate questions with the class to learn more about the community member(s).
- **Represent the neighborhood with different materials.** Encourage children to represent the community in different areas of the classroom with varied materials: i.e. in the block area, at the easel, in the dramatic play area, with Beautiful Stuff found materials, drawing and/or dictating stories about the neighborhood, on the playground with items found in nature, etc. Document the creations and collect work samples to cultivate different representations of the community. Encourage children to see themselves reflected in their community, creating elements of the community that are important to them, but also aspects of the community that they are learning are important to classroom peers or other members of the community.

- **Design a new community.** Encourage children to think together about their neighborhood and the communities they have researched and read about. Generate a list of important features of a community, encourage children to think about making everyone feel welcome and finding ways to help many different people know that they belong in the community. Encourage children to consider relationships between different community partners and how members of the community rely on each other.
- **Visit and volunteer at a local community garden.** Get connected with members of the community that organize existing local community gardens and visit the garden, make signs and labels for the garden, plant seeds, remove weeds to help care for the community garden. If a community garden does not exist, if possible, work with the local community to create one and grow food and flowers for the community!

### PHASE 3: Concluding the Project

Reflect on next steps, sharing the work with others, extensions of content, new directions.

#### Ideas for Sharing Learning/Work:

- **Display the maps/models** of the neighborhood for multiple audiences. Post it in the school halls or documentation boards, take a photo or video and send it digitally to families and community officials and stakeholders (Mayor, Parks Planning Department, etc.) **Invite families to view the representation of the community and/or make a video** touring the mode of the community to share with a wider audience.
- Invite families to a **ribbon cutting ceremony** to introduce the new community designed by the children.
- **Create a book** of all the maps created by children or encourage children to make individual books of maps and representations of their own community.
- Invite families and community members to an event at the local community garden - have a **garden party** to show the growing plants and all the additional work completed by the children to support the community garden.

#### Possible Extensions:

- Revisit the maps and documentation of models to see if anything has changed.
- Include a section of blank pages at the end of each child's map book so they can add more maps throughout the year.
- Plan visits to the local community garden throughout the year for children to continue their commitment to the community responsibility and learn about the plant life cycle and how to tend a garden throughout the seasons.

Content and Room Areas	Activities Connected to Big Idea
<b>Blocks</b>	<p><b>Props/Provocations:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Add blocks with children's photos.</li> <li>● Add blocks with photos of other community members (school or neighborhood.)</li> <li>● Add local signs (grocery stores, community landmarks, front of school, etc.)</li> <li>● Post maps or photos of the local community.</li> </ul>
<b>Dramatic Play</b>	<p><b>Generate play props and themes with children:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Add family photos to the dramatic play area.</li> <li>● Depending on child interest, convert area into location of interest (i.e. nurses office, classroom, cafeteria, post office, grocery store, etc.)</li> </ul>
<b>The Arts</b>	<p><b>Group and Individual Projects:</b></p> <p>Invite children to...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Create a picture of their family, house, friends, different parts of their community.</li> <li>● Use found materials (Beautiful Stuff) to make models, maps and representations of their community.</li> <li>● Make collages with community newspaper clippings</li> <li>● Listen to music from different communities (local, family, cultural, etc.) Explore instruments and songs from various communities.</li> <li>● Learn dances or other forms of performance art to represent their communities.</li> </ul>
<b>Sensory</b>	<p><b>Sensory Table</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Add community vehicles and buildings to the sand table.</li> <li>● Borrow sand from a local park or beach to bring some of the community into the classroom.</li> <li>● Add items found in the local nature into the sensory table.</li> <li>● Encourage imaginative play if children are interested in local restaurants, add items to represent ingredients in favorite recipes. Add cooking utensils and post recipes.</li> </ul>
<b>Mathematical Thinking</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Places Scenes for familiar locations with manipulatives for counting and sorting (vehicles, people, animals, etc.)</li> <li>● Sort and count collected nature items.</li> <li>● Review maps and invite children to look for specific markers from the legends to count and compare how many.</li> <li>● While on a walk, looking at photos or online video footage, notice and observe shapes in the community.</li> </ul>

<p><b>Science, Engineering &amp; Technology</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Create and explore collections of items found in local nature.</li> <li>● Encourage children to design structures they observed in the community. Offer children varied materials to construct with, allowing for children to select different materials for different aspects of the structure, (i.e. a stronger, sturdier material for the base of a building, scaffolds for a structure, etc.)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Library/ Read Aloud</b></p>	<p><b>Books:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Counting on Community by Innosanto Nagara</li> <li>● Last Stop on Market Street by Matt De la Pena</li> <li>● Maybe Something Beautiful by F. Isabel Campoy</li> <li>● Jayden’s Impossible Garden by Melina Mangel</li> <li>● Say Hello by Rachel Isadora</li> <li>● My Friends by Taro Gomi</li> <li>● Look Where We Live! By Scot Richie</li> <li>● Quinito’s Neighborhood/El Vecindario de Quinito by Ina Cumpiano</li> <li>● The Lemon Tree by Katherine Graham</li> <li>● The One Day House by Julia Durango</li> <li>● Me on the Map by Joan Sweeney</li> <li>● Whose Hands Are These?: A Community Helper Guessing Book by Miranda Paul</li> <li>● Career Day by Anne Rockwell</li> </ul>
<p><b>Balanced Literacy</b></p>	
<p><b>Vocabulary</b></p>	<p><b>Provide, teach and practice key vocabulary</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Community, Relationships, Responsibility</li> <li>● Family, Culture, Language, Traditions</li> <li>● Diversity</li> <li>● Neighborhood</li> <li>● Change</li> <li>● Environment</li> <li>● Map, legend, compass</li> </ul>

<p><b>Oral language and Concept Development</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● During Morning Meeting, perform greeting songs and rituals that prompt children to share about themselves and their families</li> <li>● Take a classroom inventory of the qualities that demonstrate the ways we are alike and the ways we are different <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Identify connections where things might seem different at first, but are actually similar upon further investigation (i.e. foods that are from different cultures but have the same ingredients, songs that are in different languages but have the same topic or instruments, words in different languages with the same meaning, etc.)</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Use CROWD Strategies during Read Alouds</li> </ul>
<p><b>Fine Motor, Drawing, and Writing</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Draw and label maps of the classroom, school, neighborhood, etc.</li> <li>● Make signs for different parts of the classroom, school, neighborhood, etc.</li> <li>● Draw pictures of family, home, neighbors, etc.</li> <li>● Add tools for fine motor development of local community members <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Bolts, screws, screwdrivers from the local hardware store</li> <li>○ Clay from the local pottery studio</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>Expressive and Writing Language</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Journal entries about family, culture and traditions</li> <li>● Create class books about different families, homes, languages, favorite parts of the community, plans for community development, etc.</li> <li>● Draw and write messages to local members of the community (members of the school community, local government officials, business owners, community helpers, etc.)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Phonological and Phonemic Awareness</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Sing songs about community and coming together</li> <li>● Build a word wall with words from the local community</li> <li>● Invite children to bring in items or photos that are significant to them (individual identity, family or cultural value, etc.) to share with the class and identify the sound and letter symbols that correspond. Use this opportunity to build language bridges, recording and displaying the word in a child's home language as well as in English.</li> </ul>

**Differentiation/  
Modifications**

- Provide vocabulary in different languages when possible. Talk about the languages we speak.
- Provide sentence starters/scaffolding to help children describe their community membership, (“In my family we \_\_\_\_\_.” “In my school we \_\_\_\_\_.” etc.)
- For non-verbal or limited English speakers, offer selection of pictures and objects to choose from and identify characteristics of their communities