

2006 HONOREE

Jodi L. Crawford

Cambridge-Ellis School, Cambridge, MA
Arts Education • Preschool



Years Teaching: 8

Average Class Size: 10

Classes Taught Per Day: 2

School's % of ESL Students: 4%

School Type: Private, Med. City

Type of Class: Multi-purpose

“When working with children and adults, I find it important to give them the chance to experience materials, music, dance, etc., in an experiential, process-orientated, fun way prior to asking them to create with it. When experiencing a new art material, I often say, ‘I don’t want you to draw a picture, just see what happens with the material.’ They then feel comfortable to explore its possibilities and share their own observations and discoveries. An excitement brews in the room and ideas are shouted out.

Through this process, they are creating a collective vocabulary of creative skills and experiences to share with their peers, and often, I’m hearing, with their families after school. It is a privilege to experience the amazing changes and growth in each of the children from the beginning of the year to the end – not to mention the students whom I’ve worked with from age 2-5, who still visit as alumni. They are taking more creative risks, and the arts are a part of their daily vocabulary and experience. I am extremely fortunate both professionally and personally to be in such a wonderful community of learners who have embraced and supported my program and the creative process.”

“Collaboration is an intrinsic component of my role at Cambridge-Ellis and one of the most rewarding. Our school’s philosophy speaks to an emergent curriculum and it is very exciting both professionally and personally to help develop ideas and projects based on



the daily discoveries that the children and adults are making. Many times when a new curriculum is being formed, the children, teachers and I will explore the idea through guided dramatic explorations. Although I facilitate the journey, we follow each child’s ideas throughout. We use this dramatic exploration as a springboard for the room’s curriculum development.”

“Jodi is far and away the most creative, thoughtful, and innovative educator I have ever known. What seems to be a kind of magic in Jodi’s classroom, was of course, in fact made real and possible by an exceptionally skilled and creative teacher. Jodi is a master organizer; a deeply engaged and engaging classroom teacher, with a striking ability to include everyone in each activity. Jodi is a highly-skilled collaborator and peer educator, a scavenger of rare distinction (how else to afford the remarkable materials the kids use), and an incredibly hard worker.”

—Deborah Azrael,
parent of former student

OTHER HIGHLIGHTS:

Program Coordinator, Ann Murphy Artisans Program • Member, Early Childhood Music and Movement Association, Americans for the Arts, NAEYC, New England Consortium of Artist-Educator Professionals