

# The Boston Globe

## Schools should partner with early education providers

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THE ARTICLE on the unanticipated increase of special needs children in the Boston Public Schools (“Special needs students on rise; City schools strain to make room for preschoolers,” Page A1, Feb. 26) reminds me of another increase seen in recent years: the number of 4-year-old children enrolled in early kindergarten - called K1 classes - to support their readiness for regular kindergarten.

Both of these expansions have taxed the schools in different ways. The special needs challenge is one of space; the challenge presented by K1 classrooms is the need of many parents for full-day, year-round early education.

BPS can meet both of these challenges by working with community-based early education programs, such as ours, that have experience supporting children with special needs and experience supporting readiness for kindergarten in all-day, year-round settings.

While this is not a new idea, and some alignments already exist between early education and public schools, such a partnership would reduce the need and cost of reopening closed public schools, maximizing the existing infrastructure and available resources while meeting the needs of parents and children.

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