

October 2019

October 14	Columbus Day - no school
October 19	BPA Harvest Festival 11 - 2
October 23	Berrybrook Board Meeting 7pm
October 25	Professional Development Day - no school



Notes from the Head of School

Our Beginners program has a distinctive age criteria - a child needs to turn 3 between September and December 1, which creates a small pool of children who are eligible for the class. This year we have nine children in our Beginners program, with THREE sets of twins. This would be remarkable in any classroom but in a room that draws from such a small set of age-eligible children it blows my mind that two-thirds of the class is a multiple! Each of our classes at Berrybrook is one-of-a-kind, with the blend of personalities, family dynamics, and more (and that's just the children!). The teachers supervising the class also bring in their own personalities, and their personal and professional history, which helps add to the unique blend creating the particular community that is your child's class.

One other thing that is unique about Berrybrook is our Parents Association. For those who may not know, once you enroll a child at Berrybrook you are automatically a member of the Berrybrook Parents Association. Their biggest task is to coordinate the enrichment programs for the children. The most successful enrichment program, in my opinion, is our monthly yoga visits. Starting in October, Miss Kim visits our 4 and 5 Day classes once per month and then in the New Year the Beginners, 2, and 3 Day

classes start their monthly yoga sessions. The skills Miss Kim teaches them extend past the multipurpose room ~ once when my youngest child was particularly annoyed with her older brothers she stated, "I'm going to do my calm 'oga (yoga) breathing that Miss Kim taught me!" It helped her get past her frustrations with "her boys" and she was able to calm down and speak to them in a reasonable manner.

I have worked in other schools that did not have a Parents Association, and I can honestly say that the benefit of the BPA to our school is tremendous and one I didn't feel in my previous schools. We are a school that does not fundraise per say, meaning that we aren't sending home wrapping paper sales sheets for you to meet a minimum for sales. No bugging your extended family every month to buy cookies or pizza! With that said, the BPA does ask for a one-time annual contribution of \$30 to help with the cost of enrichment programs. The only true fundraiser we have during the year is the Harvest Festival, which is scheduled for Saturday October 19 from 11am - 2pm. The admission fee for the whole family includes hayrides, food (pizza, cider doughnuts, chili, apple cider, and more), games, music, a photo booth, and the opportunity to mingle with other Berrybrook families - both old and new. There will be raffle ticket sales for a chance to win one or more of the donated baskets, as well as a chance to bid on the many donated silent auction items.

None of this is possible of course without the generosity of the Berrybrook families. Each and every year I am amazed at the creativity and thoughtfulness of our families. Whether you donate a jug of cider or a silent auction item, any and all contributions are welcome. All money raised from the Festival benefits the children through the enrichment programs we are able to bring to Berrybrook.

The day of the Festival is always a bit hectic with all the moving parts, and we are always a little crazed with the potential of cold, rainy weather but I always have at least one moment of calm while I am supervising at the gate where I look out at all the smiling families of our families on the playground and think, "Wow. We should ALL be proud of ourselves for this beautiful

day of families connecting with each other, and any money raised is only the cherry on the top”.

This is part of what makes us such an exceptional school, and one to be so very proud of. As Head of School and as a parent of three Berrybrook alum students, I cannot tell you how proud I am to be a part of Berrybrook. And I’m so very glad your family is a part of our history too.

~ Mrs. Watts

Lunch Bunch

The first day for Lunch Bunch will be Tuesday, October 1st.

Mrs. Rosen and the office would like to thank all parents in advance for being so careful to pack allergy safe lunches for their children. We appreciate our families taking the extra time to make sure all Berrybrook children are safe.

We hope that families are enjoying the new weekly recaps the teachers are sending you via Mrs. Watts’ email.

We also hope that you enjoy our new “Teacher’s Notes” article that will be written by a different teacher every month.

Teacher's Notes

The Power of Words

Visiting Day at Berrybrook is always an exciting day. The gatherings on the playground leading up to coming to school allow children and families to get to know one another. Teachers, after days of preparing for a new school year, eagerly await Visiting Day because it is then that their relationships with families begin.

During group time on Visiting Day, as each teacher shared one of their favorite things about teaching at Berrybrook with their new 4 or 5 Day class, I shared my love of words and the power inside them which is often concealed.

I wrote 3 important words that day - 3 words I hope will be with us all school year.

TRY
PRACTICE
MASTER

It was our Berrybrook's founder, Mrs. Mann, who intended for Berrybrook to be a place where children can feel safe to TRY new things and make mistakes. It is in PRACTICING new things that one builds confidence, belief and pride in oneself that they can do anything they want to do. It is hoped that one day we MASTER those things that are most important to us; things that perhaps we can teach to another. Trying, practicing and mastering go far beyond learning to write one's name, cut with scissors, pump on the swings or cross the horizontal ladder independently. TRYING to join others in play, PRACTICING to solve problems together and MASTERING the art of the give and take of friendship...there's power in it all!

Now in the month of October, Visiting Days seem so long ago. We are all becoming accustomed to our daily routines and getting to know one another. Laughing and singing can be heard from the classrooms, as well as conversations among children and their teachers - all allowing for the perfect foundation for learning to begin.

I've decided to TRY, PRACTICE and MASTER some things myself this school year. Hmmm.....perhaps,
I'll TRY to think of others before myself.
I'll PRACTICE this by asking others genuinely how they are and how can I help them.
Maybe one day I'll MASTER the act of kindness....
The good thing about mastery? It can always be fine-tuned. And that involves returning to step 1 - TRY.....then PRACTICE.....wow, it keeps on going!

Here's to a great school year!

~ Mrs. LaForest

Mrs. LaForest teaches the 4 Day and 5 Day classes

Parents Association Notes

School is officially underway and it is wonderful to see all of the students in action! While the children have been exploring their classrooms, Mrs. Watts, Mrs. Piccuito, the BPA and many parents have been busy putting the details together for our annual **Harvest Festival**. Hopefully many of you can attend and enjoy the crafts, hay rides and food from **11-2** on **Saturday, October 19th!** Early bird admission and raffle tickets are available until October 11th and can be purchased through Venmo, cash, or check.

Thank you to those individuals who have already donated a themed basket for the raffle. Many Berrybrook families and local companies have donated some fantastic silent auctions as well. It is not too late if you have a wonderful idea for a themed basket or a resource for a silent auction item. Donations are accepted until Tuesday, October 15th. The Harvest Festival would not be a success without the support and generosity from Berrybrook families!

Our enrichment coordinators, Kim Joyce and Samantha Kecman, have been planning too. They have organized a great Family Fun Friday (FFF) for **Friday, October 4th** at **Sauchuk Farm**. Sauchuk Farm is a wonderful place to visit and a fall favorite for many of our families. Enjoy pumpkin picking, jumping pillows, and of course some fresh air! To register for this event and all other FFF visit the BPA table. Tickets are \$10 per person, but siblings under 3 are free.

Enrichment is also beginning this month. The BPA is happy to welcome back Kim Spires from Inspire Kids Yoga. Miss Kim is a certified children's yoga teacher and has worked with Berrybrook students for the last six years. She brings yoga postures to life through music, stories, and activities. The 4 and 5 Day students will begin this month and continue where they left off from last year, while the younger students will begin in January. Make sure to ask your child what they have learned this month!

Thank you to everyone who has already paid their annual BPA dues! If you have not yet done so we ask for a \$30 contribution which goes directly to student enrichment in and out of the classroom. Every Berrybrook parent is automatically a member of the Parents Association and welcome at all BPA meetings. We encourage you to join us at the meetings to share ideas and volunteer to help in any way you can. We are actively seeking help with games for the Harvest Festival as well as assistance with silent auction items.

Thank you for your support and participation! For any questions please email the BPA.

Diana Stewart and Jessica Bisceglia - *Co-Presidents* berrybrookparentsassociation@gmail.com

From The Board of Directors

Valuing the Natural World at Berrybrook

Last month, I attended a Board of Selectmen meeting in Duxbury to advocate for the preservation of a historic farm on Temple Street. Luckily, the Selectmen rescinded their earlier vote to pass on purchasing the land, which affords the town and its many concerned residents time to find a solution that hopefully maintains this special property and conserves its many acres of land. The day after that meeting, I was at Berrybrook and again reminded of how lucky we are to have a school in this area situated on over 27 acres of land, surrounded by over 40 acres of conservation land. Not only the Berrybrook community, but the community at large, benefits from the foresight of Mrs. Mann, who placed her farm in trust for the continued operation of a preschool. We are also indebted to those at the school and in the town who worked together to find a solution that conserved the land when a new school building was needed and built in 2008. Today, driving down Winter Street, the Berrybrook property and the adjacent Berrybrook Fields stand out as an obvious sanctuary for children, families, and wildlife.

I learned recently that in order to be accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAYEC), preschools need to have 75 square feet of outdoor playspace per child. At Berrybrook, where 60 children could be at school at a given time, that would mean 4,500 square feet are needed. Berrybrook has 80,000 square feet of outdoor playspace. This number alone signifies the importance Berrybrook places on outdoor play and exploration, providing students with opportunities to engage with the natural world in ways that promote understanding of and respect for our planet.

The outdoor offerings at Berrybrook, including the Nook, are unique and provide children with varied nature-based experiences. Though we are very proud of these offerings, we want to continue to improve our outdoor spaces. That is why, in the three-year Strategic Plan that the Board adopted last year, we included goals related to making improvements on the main playground and better maintaining the walking trails behind the school. If you are interested in providing input on either of these goals, please be in touch with the Board. We are excited to work together to ensure that the Berrybrook property continues to be a sanctuary for generations to come.

Rachel Ezell

President, Berrybrook Board of Directors

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Berrybrook Open House

Admissions 2020-2021

Saturday, November 16, 2019
10 a.m. - 12 p.m.

Spread the Word!!!



Berrybrook Families are growing!!!!

Welcome

McKinley Collentro
(big brother Lincoln is in 5 Day)

Rose Dugan
(big sister Olivia is in 5 Day and big sister Grace is in Beginners)

Evelyn Combs
(big brother Patrick is in 3 Day room 1)

Natalie Stewart
(big brother Troy is in 5 Day)

Bernadette (Birdie) Luzitano
(big sister Norah is in 4 Day and big brother Linus is in 2 Day)

Kensington (Kenzie) Picard
(big brother Hunter is in 5 Day)

Boden McGraw
(big brother Brooks is in 4 Day)

