



March 2015

Friday, March 13

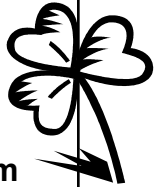
Professional Day, No School

Friday, March 20

Enrollment Contracts Due

Wednesday, March 25

Berrybrook Board Meeting 7:30 pm



Notes from the Head of School

I am very proud to announce that Berrybrook School has once again earned the mark of quality from **National Association for the Education of Young Children**. It is professional recognition for our commitment to reaching the highest professional standards. NAEYC Accreditation lets families in our community know that children in our high-quality program have teachers who create engaging classrooms, enhance relationships with their parents and families, and develop rich experiences for their students.

To earn our NAEYC Accreditation, which will be valid through 6/1/2020, the entire Berrybrook staff conducted an extensive self-study process, measuring our program and services against the ten NAEYC Early Childhood Program Standards, and more than 400 related Accreditation Criteria. Our school received NAEYC Accreditation after an on-site visit in December by NAEYC Assessors to ensure that our program meets each of the ten program standards. Just 7,000 programs, or 8% of all preschools and early childhood programs have achieved accreditation.

“It’s a lengthy and rigorous process to achieve NAEYC Accreditation, and Berrybrook School should be commended for seeking high standards,” said Rhian Evans Allvin, executive director of NAEYC. “Caring for children is not ‘rocket science’ – it’s brain science. Studies prove that the brain connections made in the first few years of life set a child’s path for success in school and in life. That’s why quality educators are so crucial. For parents and caregivers of young children who are searching for a high-quality early learning experience, Berrybrook’s NAEYC Accreditation is a sign that it offers a high-quality education in a nurturing and stimulating environment.”

Berrybrook has maintained NAEYC accreditation since 2003. Why? Because we are committed to using the newest studies and analysis on positive child outcomes to ensure young children continue receiving the highest-quality care and education possible.

Pat Keeley

Professional Development Update

I know I speak for all of the staff when I say how much we appreciate the support of our professional development. The Berrybrook Board of Directors sets aside time and funds for all of us to keep up to date with current best practice in Early Childhood Education. In addition to the three professional days scheduled during the year, Berrybrook Teachers attend workshops and training in the evenings and on weekends, including offerings through South Shore Therapies, COMPASS for Kids, the South Shore Natural Science Center, the Parent Connection and the Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care. Because Berrybrook values professional development, it has a faculty who are informed, and inspired to provide the best possible early childhood experience for students.

On our February 4th Professional Development Day, Berrybrook teachers were at school participating in 2 workshops Presented by Melanie Austin, MS, CCC-SLP from South Shore Therapies. The first presentation was entitled “Promoting Speech and Language Development in the Classroom”. When teachers assess children’s speech and language, it is important to consider all components:

Articulation	speech and sound production
Oral Motor	muscle movements involved in sound production
Fluency	natural pace and rhythm of speech
Voice	quality of the voice (pitch, loudness)
Receptive Language	comprehension of language
Expressive Language	formulation of ideas using words, gestures, speech, etc.
Pragmatics	social use of language
Play	natural activity essential for children’s healthy development

Our afternoon presentation, “Auditory Processing Disorders: Symptoms, Assessment and Treatment.” was nicely linked to our morning discussion. We know that If teachers have any concerns about a child’s speech and language development, it is essential to make sure the child has normal hearing. However, It is possible for a child to be unable to understand spoken language in a meaningful way in the absence of a hearing loss.

Our Auditory Processing discussion focused on the Hierarchy of Listening:

- Step 1: Auditory Awareness - *I hear a sound.*
- Step 2: Auditory Discrimination - *It’s a voice.*
- Step 3: Auditory Identification - *It’s my mother’s voice.*
- Step 4: Auditory Comprehension - *She is asking me to put on my coat.*

An auditory processing disorder may be misinterpreted as a behavior problem - “The child just doesn’t listen!” As teachers, it is important for us to be aware of the complexity of the hearing process so we can better serve our children and families. Only an audiologist can formally diagnose an Auditory Processing Disorder during a complete audiological evaluation.

I am fortunate to be working in a community where everyone has opportunities to learn and grow. I often have discussions with parents about the latest parenting book or parenting presentation. "Family Matters" activities organized by teachers offer relevant topics and resources. Berrybrook parents stay informed and use everything at their disposal to raise intelligent, happy, healthy and respectful children. The combination of teachers and parents working together ensures that children have the best possible outcomes - children have appropriate, meaningful, and enjoyable early childhood experiences and they are well prepared for the next step in their education, and for life.

In addition to the variety of professional development opportunities I've already mentioned in this article, there is one more that is perhaps the most important. All of us, teachers and parents, have the opportunity to learn from the children. If we are observing them carefully, they help us learn the most important lessons.

Mrs. Keeley

Beginners News

Welcome back! We hope everyone had a fun and relaxing February vacation. With so much snow on the ground we will continue to incorporate it into our classroom activities as much as possible. We are all looking forward to warmer weather and some fun spring time activities. As spring comes we will be learning new and exciting things to spark each child's interest. Spring is about new beginnings, and with it we hope to encourage new opportunities for education and exploration. It is amazing to think how quickly our school year has passed, and it has been so much fun to see the Beginners grow and blossom.

Our housekeeping area has been a lot of fun lately. The children have seen it transformed from a hospital to a veterinary office and finally a post office. We learned about mail and how letters are moved from person to person. We enjoyed our special Valentine's Day celebration. The children each made a watercolor heart. We enjoyed our sugar cookie snacks and had fun passing out valentine cards to friends.

In March we will focus on cars, dinosaurs, healthy foods and instruments. It should be a fun month for the children. We would like to thank all the parents and grandparents that have spent time volunteering in our classroom. It's such a treat for us all. We look forward to other parents visiting us. We appreciate the help!

Mrs. LaForest,
Mrs. Piccuito
and Mrs. Rosen



Save the Date!
3 and 4 Day Classes will have
School Pictures taken
on Tuesday April 28, 2015.

2 Day, 5 Day and Beginners will
have School Pictures taken
on Friday, May 1.

First Year Program News

During the month of February, children enjoyed celebrating Valentine's Day by delivering Valentines and enjoying a special snack. We also played a favorite Berrybrook game about sending Valentines. Although some celebrations were delayed, fun was had by all! The children enjoyed playing with snow inside in our water table. We used pails and shovels, trucks and bulldozers and even painted the snow and ice. Later in the month, Mrs. Reilly, a dental hygienist, visited us. She taught us how to keep our teeth healthy and clean.

As we begin the month of March, we are all looking forward to spring. We are anxious to return to outdoor play. As the temperature rises and the snow melts, we will soon be able to play on our playground again. Please remember to bring snow pants and boots, as the playground will be wet and muddy. Since we have not been able to take our much loved nature walks, we will be observing nature from our classrooms and porches. These observations will facilitate discussions about the changes that occur around Berrybrook as the snow melts and spring approaches.

March is a month full of activities. Some classes will be talking about transportation. Children loved to learn about ways to get from one place to another. Dinosaurs are another popular topic at Berrybrook. Other classes will be learning about birds. We hope to see many birds coming back to Berrybrook over the next few weeks. A favorite holiday to celebrate is St. Patrick's Day.

We will celebrate with our traditional Berrybrook Irish Soda Bread. We will even learn about rainbows! During the month of March classes will also talk about healthy eating habits and the grocery store. As the month winds down

we will be working on spring projects. All the children will have the opportunity to paint blown eggs, a Berrybrook tradition! We will conclude with an egg hunt and spring celebration in our classrooms.

During the month of March teachers will be meeting with parents for our final parent-teacher conferences. Once again, this is a great time to chat with teachers about your child's development. Teachers will inform you when sign-up sheets are available.

Think and Wonder,
Wonder and Think!

~Dr. Seuss

Happy Spring!

Mrs. Barlow, Mrs. Capasso, Mrs. Delano,
Mrs. Dunn, Mrs. McDonough, Mrs. Savoy

Reminder!

Friday, March 13 is a
professional day.
Berrybrook teachers will be
attending a BAEYC conference at
Bridgewater State University.
Thank you!

Second Year Program News

Last month we had a busy time with activities concerning nutrition and health. Our dramatic play area was set up as Berrybrook Hospital. Children enjoyed taking great care of each other as well as the babies. Also in February, the children were busy decorating their special Valentine mail boxes and delivering valentine cards to friends within the class. We finished off the month with a visit from dental hygienist Claire Reilly, who demonstrated to us how to maintain good dental health.

In March we look forward to our annual traditional tree tapping of the maple trees. To begin this process we need ideal weather conditions with warm days and cold evenings. The maple sap will drip into special buckets on our Norway Maple tree for several days. We then will boil the sap which turns into maple syrup, and enjoy our Sugar on Snow Party.

March is the time we learn about planets, space, and phases of the moon. The full moon this month will be on March 16.

Another Berrybrook tradition is making Irish Soda Bread for our St. Patrick's Day celebration. We will learn about Ireland and be introduced to Irish music and dance.

March 20 is the first day of spring. We look forward to warmer spring-like weather after many cold and snowy days of winter. We will be learning new spring time songs, and observing nature for its first signs of spring.

Spring is coming
Spring is coming
How do you think I know
I saw a pussywillow
And that is how I know!

The children are now beginning to have that more mature, "kindergarten look" to them and they delight in exploring in all areas of the curriculum and classroom. Learning is fostered through ideas in math, science, social studies, art and music on a daily basis. Social interactions among peers are enjoyable and satisfying. The children have built their skills of expressing their feelings and being good listeners!

Mrs. Caddle, Mrs. Fosdick,
Mrs. LaForest, Miss McNulty, Mrs. Neal,
Mrs. O'Neil, Mrs. Piccuito, Mrs. Rosen,

Family Matters

Let's bring the feeling of **LOVE** we still have from February into March!
Please join Mrs. LaForest ~

Tuesday, March 10th 2015
at 9:10 am

for this month's
Big Room Chat Room
entitled...

"Let's LOVE Our Children" by...

L: Looking closely
O: Offering choices
V: Valuing their ideas
E: Evolving to a new understanding

Mrs. LaForest will discuss topics such as friendships, discipline, quality time with family as well as balance for ourselves. Come and see how you can show love for your children when you put into place safe boundaries and limits, provide choices to foster responsibility and self-control and still come from a place of love and caring.

Share the love! See you there!



Summer Enrichment
The Berrybrook Summer Nature Program
will be offered again this year during
June and July,
on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and
Thursdays from 9:00 – 1:00.

Berrybrook Parents Association

Happy March! Don't know about you, but I am glad to put February behind. Hopefully, by the end of March we will be saying good-bye to this frigid and snowy winter and enjoying the beauties of spring. March is a very busy month for BPA programming. We hope the children enjoy it!

Enrichment Update

March will bring three events to the children sponsored by the BPA. Yoga will continue this month with Kim Spires. To help celebrate St. Patrick's Day, the Haley School of Irish Dance will be sending dancers to demonstrate their skills sometime during the month, and Tony Fonesca from all Hand Drumming will be visiting again. Be sure to ask your children to share their thoughts about these fun visits!!!

Family Fun Friday

Join us for March's Family Fun Friday. We hope you are all able join us for storyteller and comedian Big Ryan, who is scheduled for 2 shows on March 27th at 1:00-1:45PM and 2:15-3:00PM (\$5 per/child-thank you). Please be sure to look for the sign up sheet located at the BPA table.

There is also a Kingston Sports Center play date scheduled for 3/13 (NO school for children). We are still working on the firming up a time so be on the lookout for additional information at the BPA table along with an email.

Spring Fling

Each year the BPA sponsors a casual end of year celebration for all the families. Please be on the lookout for more information regarding this fun afternoon.

BPA Dues

The BPA has been very busy this year with lots of programming and activities. If it is at all possible for your family to support our work it would be very much appreciated. We suggest \$30 per family, but all amounts are welcome!

Here's to spring!! Please don't hesitate to reach out to any members of the BPA if you have any questions, comments, or concerns!

Thank you-Donna

berrybrookparentsassociation@gmail.com



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Berrybrook Board of Directors

In last month's newsletter, Mrs. Keeley wrote about the importance of play-based learning for encouraging curiosity, fostering creativity, developing content knowledge, and promoting social skills. By engaging in authentic, play-based learning, young students are becoming thoughtful citizens who can work together to creatively and confidently face challenges. Parents, educators, employers, and policy makers would agree that these are sought-after qualities long after preschool, yet as children progress through the grades, school can become much less exploratory and oftentimes, much more pressured and stressful. How can we, as parents and educators, help our children to retain that sense of curiosity and love of learning that the teachers and staff at Berrybrook have so lovingly fostered?

We all know that children are innately curious, as evidenced by the countless questions they ask as soon as they begin to talk. They want to understand every aspect of the world around them, and every experience is an opportunity to gain more skills, knowledge, and understanding. Some of us who work with or have older children, also know that for many, this insatiable quest for new information can fade over time. Susan Engel, a professor at Williams College, in her article, "The Case for Curiosity", discusses this phenomenon and focuses on ways adults can continue to encourage curiosity as children get older. One way is for adults to explicitly model curiosity, asking our own, sometimes unanswerable questions, and displaying our genuine interest in different aspects of our world. From Engel's research, she has observed that older children's interest in an activity with new materials is very influenced by the level of interest an adult shows in the same materials. According to Engel, "children's curiosity can be fostered or squelched by the people they spend time with." (p. 37)

Besides modeling our own curiosity, we can also actively ask questions of our children. Questions like "What do you notice?" or "What do you think might happen?", when reading a book, observing something in nature, or conducting a simple experiment, allow children to share their thoughts, without the pressure of a correct answer. As children get older, asking questions, like "What do you want to learn about? Why does that interest you? How would you go about finding information about that? How will you know the information is accurate?", helps children to explore their interests and navigate the world.

Even more important than posing questions to children, is honoring and validating their questions, which the teachers at Berrybrook do so well. Children at Berrybrook learn to think critically about the world around them, asking important questions and respecting their own and others' ideas. These are life-long skills that hopefully we can continue to encourage even after our children have finished their time at Berrybrook.

Rachel Ezell, Berrybrook Board of Directors

Engel, Susan. "The Case for Curiosity." *Educational Leadership*. 70.5 (2013): 36-40. <http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational-leadership/feb13/vol70/num05/The-Case-for-Curiosity.aspx>



Dear Mrs. Keeley &
Berrybrook Families,

Hello! My mom told me that you have been eagerly waiting for news about the Jumpstart book drive. Berrybrook families and teachers have donated so many books over the past three years, thank you so much for your help! Jumpstart is a leading nonprofit organization dedicated to ensuring that every child in America enters school prepared to succeed. Corps Members work with low-income preschoolers twice a week for two hours at Head Start schools in Taunton and Brockton. Jumpstart at Bridgewater State University is again holding the now annual book drive this year. The classroom libraries at the Head Start schools are often sparse because books are expensive, lost, or read so often that they fall apart. At home most of the low-income preschoolers unfortunately only have a few, if any, books. Jumpstart at Bridgewater State serves about 240 preschool children in the Brockton and Taunton areas. It is our hope that with this book drive we will be able to donate a few books to each of the classrooms and send each Jumpstart child home with several books as well.

I volunteered with Jumpstart for four years while attending Bridgewater State University and absolutely loved every minute of it! I can tell you from witnessing it firsthand that these books will be loved and cherished by the extremely excited children who receive them. This past May I graduated and am now teaching at Gates Middle School in Scituate. I am ecstatic that the now annual book drive will continue even though I am not a current Jumpstart volunteer! Berrybrook has graciously participated in the book drive for the past four years and I would love for that tradition to continue as it not only helps less privileged preschoolers but is also a great learning experience for the wonderful Berrybrook kids.

We are looking to collect gently used preschool aged books for the Jumpstart Head Start classrooms and the Jumpstart children. There is of course no obligation to donate books or go out and buy new books.

Thank you in advanced for your help!

To learn more about Jumpstart please visit the website at www.jstart.org

Thank you! Kate Capasso
(Mrs. Capasso's daughter)