

April 2015



Friday, April 3

Good Friday, No School

April 20-24

Spring Break

Wednesday, April 29

Berrybrook Board of Directors 7:30 pm

Tuesday, April 28

School Pictures, 3 Day & 4 Day

Friday, May 1

School Pictures, 2 Day, 5 Day

& Beginners

Notes from the Head of School

Berrybrook possesses many special characteristics, but one of our most unique qualities is the cohesiveness of our community. Berrybrook parents enjoy each other. How often are there groups of parents lingering after arrivals to chat? On how many nice days do parents bring lunch or a snack at dismissal to stay and play with other families on the playground? (Hopefully the weather will allow for that activity soon!) I wonder how many other preschools have parents arranging to meet on the playground even when school is not in session, or parents who volunteer to send home meals to families with a new baby? Berrybrook families are also especially supportive of their child's teachers. Families provide snacks for staff meetings, volunteer in classrooms, and teachers can count on families to bring in items needed for class projects (seriously, how many other preschools have 103 families who will spend time blowing eggs for their children to paint!) Our BPA is another way parents add to the life of our school. BPA President Donna Hillary, Treasurer Danielle MacKinnon, and Classroom Parent Liason Amy Murray deserve special thanks for their efforts this year, and also Jill Cooney and Sabrina Kaplan who arranged the children's enrichment programs and Family Fun Fridays. I must also mention the Grandparents who contribute to our community in great numbers by helping with drop off and volunteering in classrooms. Their love and experience benefit their children and grandchildren, and also provide a richness to the Berrybrook community. I love watching new-to-Berrybrook parents who think they are simply enrolling their child in a quality preschool slowly discover that they have actually enrolled in a unique experience that includes the whole family. The family connections at Berrybrook provide just as many rewards for adults as the classroom experiences provide for the children.

Pat Keeley

Time flies!

Congratulations to the Berrybrook Class of 2001-2002 soon to be High School Graduates!

Alexandra Andrews	Cole Haas	Christopher O'Toole
Maggie Arana	Madison Hadley	David O'Toole
Maddie Beatson	Stephanie Herron	Lucy Quigley
Kelsey Becker	Daniel Hickey	Luke Rafferty
Ben Brandeis	Isabella Horan	Kaley Rudicus
Max Butcher	Catherine Hunter	Teagan Saitta
Freddie Clifford	Julianna Labriola	Trevor Scollins
Erik Cox	Christina Listernick	Logan Snelling
Caroline Cruise	Haley Lyons	Amanda Stayton
Joseph Dacey	Andrew Maher	Jared Sullivan
Alana DiBiase	Molly McCormack	Christopher Tibbets
Nicholas Dickinson	Justin McGilvary	Matthew Tomlinson
Niall Dillon	Ryan McSheffrey	Cara Vetsch
Meghan Driscoll	Drew Michelson	Mary Kate Ward
Darin Fantoni	Annabelle O'Neill	Jack Wolff

Spring Time at Berrybrook

As spring gets underway, we will be able to fully enjoy the beautiful outdoor environment at Berrybrook. Please remember to have your child wear sneakers or other sensible shoes that will allow your child to run and climb safely.

We are lucky to have such a wonderful playground and families are welcome to take advantage of our space by staying to play with friends after school. We ask that you sign your child out with your teachers and empty your child's cubby as soon as you arrive. Teachers must be able to account for everyone before leaving the playground and we want to be sure children have all of their belongings and creations to take home. It is also important for families to arrive on time for dismissal. Children worry when parents are late picking up.

All Berrybrook students are well aware of the playground rules and teachers can count on them to follow them. However, once teachers leave the playground parents are responsible for enforcement. Unlike teachers, parents often have older and younger children to attend to and that makes supervision tricky. Parents should feel free to remind all children about the Berrybrook rules they know so well.

Thank you for your cooperation. Enjoy!

Beginners News

April brings with it the observation of many things in nature beginning from just a seed then blooming and blossoming into something beautiful...just like the Beginners since last September up until now! Growth in all areas of development has soared for all children in the Beginners Class. There is strength in their physical and language capabilities, more creative thinking in the areas of math and science, and - most noticeably – the amazing awareness of themselves in relation to others. Our Dramatic Play Area transforming from an office to a grocery store has enabled children to practice conflict resolution skills when deciding on roles to have, how to take turns with certain props, and working together to map out the direction of their play. Teachers are nearby to model words needed for practice; however they are in awe of the patience and compassion practiced by their students when playing together. This is true for all areas of play in our classroom, as well as during group times of Circle and Story. Our theme of movement and all that our bodies can do will be the focus of April as we move more, laugh more, and (with much anticipation) get outdoors more! Watch us as we bloom!

Happy Spring!

Mrs. Piccuito, Mrs. Rosen, Mrs. LaForest

First Year Program News

Spring is finally here, the snow is melting away, and our classrooms are alive with Berrybrook traditions. An early spring tradition is the tapping of our very own sugar maple tree. Students will be able to see the bucket, try a drip or two, and

have homemade maple syrup on a special classroom snack.

Another traditional way we celebrate spring at Berrybrook is carefully painting blown eggs. We've encouraged families to attempt at least one egg at home for a fun family activity. This is not always the easiest task, and we would to thank families for the time they put in to carrying on a beautiful spring tradition.

Over the past month, we enjoyed Learning about dinosaurs, different ways of transportation and even had our own grocery stores set up in our classrooms. Tony the Drummer came for another fun-filled visit, and we celebrated St. Patrick's Day with some very talented Irish Step Dancers from Maureen Haley Studios.

After this extremely long winter, classrooms will be looking forward to learning about changes that comes with spring-sunshine and rain, nature's new growth in seeds, trees and flowers, and life cycles of turtles & frogs. After April vacation, students will be eager to play outside, enjoy some nature walks, and take in that wonderful spring air!

Sincerely,

First Year Teachers
Mrs. Barlow, Mrs. Capasso,
Mrs. Delano, Mrs. Dunn
Mrs. McDonough and Mrs. Savoy



**The Berrybrook
Summer Nature Program!
Tuesdays, Wednesdays
and Thursdays during June and
July. Information and applications
are available in the office.**

Second Year Program News

Spring is here!

“A time of new beginnings, fresh buds bloom, animals awaken and the earth seems to come alive again.”

Throughout the year children observe nature while playing outside, on nature walks, or just by watching out the windows. They have seen a variety of birds come and go. In the fall, they observed large flocks of Canadian Geese in the fields, Wild Turkeys strutting by, and birds at the feeders. The second year students studied Owls, specifically Snowy Owls, who happened to be visiting Duxbury Beach. During story time, they listened to fictional stories about birds; “Owl Babies” by Martin Waddell and “Gertrude McFuzz” by Dr. Seuss. Bird reference books were used in the classrooms to help answer questions, discovering that some birds swim, (Penguins, Ducks), some are large and run very fast, (Ostriches), and some are very small but have the ability to flap their wings at a speed of about 80 times a second (Hummingbirds). *A Field Guide To Feeder Birds, Eastern North America*, by, Roger Tory Peterson, is a good reference book to have on hand. To extend learning further, children were given the opportunity to use various art materials to create their own birds which were proudly displayed in the classroom and hallway.

Through this long, cold and snowy winter, children continued to have the opportunity to observe birds at the feeders. Berrybrook teacher, Mrs. O’Neil, through dedication and concern, has kept the feeders full... no matter how difficult it was. She has taught us the importance of food being available when birds awake in the morning and before retiring in the afternoon. This is

necessary to insure their survival. We would like to thank her for her efforts. Keeping feeders full and seeds spread out on the ground for the ground feeders has made it possible for the children to observe Cardinals, Doves, Blue Jays, Woodpeckers, and many more birds that winter over.

Soon we will be seeing Red-winged Blackbirds returning to nest in nearby fields, Hummingbirds looking for sweet nectar, Wild Turkeys parading by and Robins “bop, bop, bopping along” ...

Spring is coming,
Spring is coming,
How do you think I know?
I saw a pussy willow
And that is how I know.



Thank you so much for your support!

The Second Year Teachers -
Mrs. Caddle, Mrs. Fosdick,
Mrs. LaForest, Miss McNulty,
Mrs. O’Neil, Mrs. Neal, Mrs. Piccuito
and Mrs. Rosen

A special thank you to all parents for providing the blown eggs!
The children really enjoyed this Berrybrook tradition.



Berrybrook Parents' Association

According to the calendar spring is finally here, however it seems that mother nature hasn't gotten the memo. So, let's hope she gets that memo and we see some warmer temperatures. It is time for the children to enjoy running and playing on the playground minus the snow!

Enrichment

April is a busy month. Between decorating those beautiful eggs, spring celebrations, a Friday off and vacation-we have managed to sneak in yoga with Kim Spires and Soule Homestead will be in on April 1st and 2nd.

Family Fun Friday

Thanks to all who attended Big Ryan in March. The children all had a great time laughing away at all his stories! Again, since this month is a bit hectic, we have planned a casual get together for April 17th at MyGym. Once again be on the

lookout for an email from Sabrina Kaplan with all the details. Just wanted to give a heads up that our May Family Fun Friday will be Plymouth Cruises, Sundae Cruise date TBD with more details to follow.

Spring Fling

Please save-the-date for the spring fling on May 27th from 4-6 p.m. with a rain-date of May 28th. The spring fling is an annual event that helps us celebrate the year as a community. Join us for dinner and fun! It is still not too late to support the BPA with dues. We ask each family to donate \$30 or whatever is appropriate for you.

If you have any questions, comments, or concerns email me at

berrybrookparentsassociation@gmail.com

Thank you!
Donna

Strategic Planning

One of the goals in the current Berrybrook Strategic Plan is to
"Commission a professionally designed Master Plan of the property to fully utilize all available resources at Berrybrook."

The first objective under that goal is to form a committee of board members, parents and teachers to work with the assistance of professional consultants to design a plan for the entire Berrybrook property that identifies appropriate use for all playgrounds, outdoor areas, and buildings.

The Board of Directors would like to invite any interested parents to attend the very first meeting of this group on Tuesday, April 7 at 4:15pm in the multipurpose room. Everyone is welcome!

Evolution of a Question

Jesse Martin

A simple question really
Yet so different now
From how it used to be

It was a distraction
To ease a transition
And make the separation

I wonder,
I wonder what it will be today
And next week!

I wonder what it will be
Excitement, anticipation
Building over time

And then it was over!
Or so we thought!
Because now...

“What is in the water table?”
He asks his younger brother
Every Monday night!

Jesse Martin is a member of the Berrybrook Board of Directors. His son Charlie is a Berrybrook alum and is in first grade. His son Patrick is in the 3 Day - Room 3 class. Jesse and Karoline Martin also have a baby daughter Claire.

The following is an interesting article about getting ready for Kindergarten and what parents can do to help children prepare for their next big step.

NewsObserver.com

Parent to Parent

Preparing for kindergarten: Beyond the ABCs

Published: May 28, 2012 By Betsy Flagler

Sure, it's fun to boast when your little one knows all his letters and can count to 30 before hitting kindergarten. But look beyond academics. Early learners also need to work on several social and emotional skills to make it through school – and life. Preschoolers need to use playing and pretending to gain confidence, develop friendships, show empathy and take baby steps toward resolving conflicts without adults acting as referees.

Foster these social and emotional areas to help prepare your child for kindergarten.

- **Entering a group.** Kids must learn how and when to join a group of kids without bulldozing in, knocking down block towers in progress or insisting on “being the mommy.” Help them learn how to briefly observe what friends are doing before joining in.
- **Impulse control.** Following the rules of simple games such as “Simon Says,” “Duck, Duck, Goose” and “Red Light, Green Light” help a preschooler focus, take turns and control basic impulses to run ahead or jump when “Simon doesn't say.”
- **Self-awareness.** This includes learning how close is too close to another person, and asserting oneself with phrases like “I need some space” rather than whining. It also means seeing oneself as part of a larger group, and accepting being the “odd man out” once in a while. Or, as one 4-year-old remarked during an activity limited to four children: “You're the person making it too many people here.”
- **Expressing feelings through words.** Help them express themselves with phrases like “I feel angry when my sand castle gets knocked over. I worked so hard to build it,” or “I feel sad and shy when Mommy leaves.” Along with naming feelings comes the all-important developmental step of learning to care about the feelings of others – that words like “poopy head” or “you're a baby” or “your lunch smells gross” are hurtful. Listening to a friend's show-and-tell, sharing your favorite stuffed dragon or helping to pick up a mess go a long way toward learning empathy and building friendships.
- **Problem-solving.** Confident kids resolve conflicts – such as two Thomas the Tank Engine toys for three kids – without always enlisting the help of a teacher. They're able to ebb and flow and not melt down when a game doesn't go their way. And they're learning to look within themselves, not to teachers, for self-satisfaction about their ability to climb the monkey bars, hop on one foot, catch a ball or draw a funny face.

Betsy Flagler, a journalist based in Davidson, is a mother and preschool teacher.