

October 2017

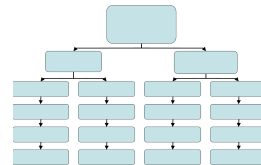
October 9	Columbus Day <i>No School</i>
October 14	BPA Harvest Festival 10 am - 1pm
October 20	Professional Development Day <i>No School</i>
October 25	Berrybrook Board Meeting 7:30 pm
October 26	Connections Night 7 pm

Notes from the Head of School

Who knows what this is?



How about this?



Back in the day, in order to relay information to Berrybrook families, both of those items were used. Take for example a snowstorm blew in quicker than originally forecasted and afternoon kindergarten in Duxbury was canceled. In that case, Berrybrook would also cancel the afternoon session and once we received the news the teachers would each pick up the phone (Image 1) to call the first parent at the top of the Class Phone Tree (Image 2). If both classes were trying to call out at the same time (remember, this was before everyone had cell phones!), we'd have to jockey for one of the two lines and hope that someone wasn't trying to call in and then a line would be tied up. By the time the message got to the sixth row of calls, you would hope that the message stayed consistent and the families all got the same message in time before they left for school. What to do if no one answered, and you had to leave a message? Do you assume to go to the next row in fear that the phone tree would halt and the rest of the families didn't get the message if the family didn't check their answering machine(!) and keep passing the message? These days, I am set up for text and email alerts and once I get the news I will send out an email and all the families receive the same message, at the same time, from the source. While email, texting, and all the technology we have are time-savers for things like this (another example, years ago if a child had some contagious illness - say strep throat - I would type up a memo, photocopy the paper, write the names on the memo for each of the students, and place them in the cubbies for arrival and/or dismissal. If the parent didn't check the cubby, they didn't get the memo. This was a very time-consuming task. Now I can send out a quick email to everyone at the same time and if your child was feeling ill you know a little bit quicker to perhaps call the pediatrician to get their advice sooner rather than later).

However, technology can also be not-so-helpful. There are so many sources of information these days, but not all places have the correct or most current information. I was at my middle child's 4th grade Open House a few weeks ago, and the Interim Principal starting speaking about social media. I expected he would be giving another lecture on watching our children's use of technology and social media, but my head snapped up when he started speaking to the parents in regards to our use of social media. His message was brief but very much to the point: Social media is a wonderful tool for communication, but it can also be a means of misinformation. " Oftentimes parents look to other parents for advice and information, and at times that information may simply be wrong. If anyone has questions, the best place to ask is the school itself". It was a strong reprimand to the parents, but a fantastic message nonetheless (and delivered in his Irish brogue, not so harsh sounding!) It did make me stop and think, especially how social media might impact Berrybrook. I think it's wonderful for parents to have ways to connect to each other, and again for everyone to receive information at the same time (Harvest Festival, holiday sing-a-long information) but it's my job to ensure that Berrybrook's message is never diluted. Our school history and traditions, our vision and values, are simple and even though I know that times are always changing and evolving, I strive to keep our message as pure as possible. The same foundation Mrs Mann wanted to provide in 1954 is the same in 2017, and even though the message delivery may be different the message is no doubt the same:

"Berrybrook School was founded to provide a place for healthy emotional development, a place to develop self-esteem and confidence, to help a child not to be afraid to fail - to learn by trying." (Katharine Bailey Mann).

I am looking forward to a fantastic year continuing to spread Mrs. Mann's message, which is just as important now as it was more than sixty years ago. It is such a simple, timeless sentiment.

Mrs. Watts

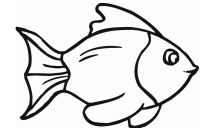
Lunch Bunch



The first day of Lunch Bunch will be Tuesday, October 3.

Thank you to all of the families who will participate in our Lunch Bunch program this fall.

Mrs. Capasso, Mrs. Dunn and Mrs. Neal want to thank all parents ahead of time for being so careful to pack allergy safe lunches for their children. We appreciate everyone taking the extra time to ensure all Berrybrook children are safe.



Beginners Notes

The Beginners program is all about what its name represents – a beginning, a foundation, a starting place, a place to prepare. The beginning of.....? The foundation that allows for.....? The starting place where children will continue onto.....? The place to prepare for.....?

Let's answer these questions here!

The Beginners program is the beginning for children to ...
learn how to separate from caregivers.
have an experience of their very own.
realize their independence.
get to know and feel secure with others.

The Beginners program is the foundation for children that allows for...
communication with others to express what they need.
ownership of their very own classroom.
the ability to make new discoveries.
laughter and the experience of joy.

The Beginners program is a starting place where children will continue onto...
understanding what someone else needs.
feeling comfortable in new experiences.
expressing their creativity.
sharing their ideas and opinions.

The Beginners program is a place for children to prepare for...
having joy in learning.
finding meaning in learning.
connecting learning to personal experiences.
believing in themselves.

You and your child have just embarked on a wonderful journeylet's begin!

~ Mrs. LaForest

Mrs. LaForest teaches in the Beginners, 3 Day Room 3, and 4 Day Room 2 classes

First Year Notes



There are many traditions at Berrybrook. One of my favorites happens in the first weeks of school for our first year students when we read the book Rock Finds a Friend. In this story a lonely rock develops a friendship with a young boy. “Rock” guides the boy to become more socially aware and kind to others. Eventually the two form a great friendship. This story parallels the type of relationship development we see in the first few weeks of school with our first year students. “Rock” had never had a friend. The boy did not understand “how to be a friend”. Together they “figure it out”! Social and emotional growth is a key element to our first year program.

To follow through with the story, children can choose a rock to paint. For our first year students, project is a choice. So if your child did not paint a rock, don't be disappointed. They simply chose not to paint. We will always ask them if they want to make a project.

Although this may seem like a simple project, there are actually several steps involved:

- 1) Children must choose a rock. This can be more difficult than you might think.
- 2) Children are then asked to write their name or make a mark on the paper plate/bowl their rock was on.
- 3) Next they choose a seat at the table and begin painting.
- 4) The painting process is unique to each child. Some children use a lot of paint. Some use very little paint. Some use all colors available, others prefer one color.
- 5) Once they are finished painting, children carry their own rock on the paper plate/bowl to the drying area. This is actually quite challenging and involves a lot of coordination. Some rocks end up rolling around on the floor! That is a “teachable moment” and the teachers help the child problem solve a solution.
- 6) Lastly, children wash their hands to remove excess paint.

In this one activity children have been challenged in several key development areas: *social and emotional development* (learning about friendship, choosing a rock, sharing space and paint at the project table), *language development* (making their mark/ writing their name, listening to instructions from the teacher), *social studies* (sitting in a group for story, learning how to be a kind friend, choosing a seat at the project table), *art and motor development* (choosing paint and painting their rock, coordinating movements to carry their rock to the drying area, washing paint off their hands). This all happened in one activity! In the coming weeks we have so many more exciting and enriching activities in store for your children. But please remember **playing** is the greatest form of learning! So if you don't see a project come home, maybe it is because your child was busy building a friendship!

~Mrs. Capasso,

Mrs. Capasso teaches in the 3 Day Room 1 and 2 Day classes

Second Year Notes

Getting to know you....

September was a month of many transitions as we moved from the lazy days of summer into a more structured and scheduled school year. One of the big transitions for the children was adjusting to their new routine here at Berrybrook. Whether the child was new to the school, or returning, there were many new aspects that take time to learn in the month of September. Children were given so much information at the beginning of the school year which assisted them in becoming more comfortable with their new surroundings as they acclimated within new class dynamics.

There were many things that were being addressed in September after saying good-bye at the door and walking into the classroom independently. (That in itself could be challenging and helps to teach self-reliance to children within this age group!) Among the numerous lessons that the teachers develop during class time include:

- learning responsibility by cleaning up after themselves
- developing respect and empathy for classmates
- becoming familiar with the open snack routine - when there is a chair available at the table, they can find their name on the snack list, cross it off, wash hands and pick out snack
- working on the daily art project - remember to mark it with name and take the time to follow the steps
- participating in circle time - listen to others' ideas and thoughts and give their own
- on the playground learning will to pump swings independently and practice going across the horizontal bars

Getting acquainted with new teachers and classmates is another important part of the first month. Children are learning the names of their classmates, where cubbies and trays are located, and becoming familiar with classroom rules and routines. These skills and many more will develop as the year progresses with lots of encouragement from the teachers. As the children succeed with these tasks, they will feel proud of their accomplishments; their growing independence will become more evident each day.

We are off to a great start. Thank you for sharing your children with us.

~ *Mrs. Rosen*

Mrs. Rosen teaches in the 4 Day Room 1 class

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 **10-1** on **Saturday, October 14th!** Early bird tickets are available until October 6th and can be purchased through Venmo or by 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 auction items 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 Wednesday, October 11th. The Harvest Festival would not be a success without the support and generosity from Berrybrook families!

Our enrichment coordinators have been planning too. They have organized a great Family Fun Friday (FFF) for **Friday, October 27th** 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. Children under 2 are free.

Enrichment is also beginning this month. The BPA is happy to welcome back Kim Spires from Inspire Kids Yoga. Mrs. Spires is a certified children's yoga teacher and has worked with Berrybrook students for the last five years. She brings yoga postures to life through music, stories and activities. The second year students will begin this month and continue where they left off from last year, while the first year 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 BPA dues! If you have yet to do 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. Be on the lookout for an email inviting you to our next meeting.

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

Diana Stewart and Jenna O'Donnell Co-Presidents
berrybrookparentsassociation@gmail.com

The Berrybrook Staff would like to thank the Parents Association for arranging snacks for our monthly after-school meetings. Each month we have a 2 hour meeting to discuss curriculum and other matters. These meetings are scheduled from 4:15-6:15 and we appreciate having a snack to fortify us. We are thankful for all of the support and encouragement we receive from parents. It is very thoughtful of parents to take time from their busy schedules to prepare refreshments for us.

Thank You Very Much!!

From The Board of Directors

“Nurturing the Whole Child” at Berrybrook

Every day at Berrybrook, you can see evidence of the school’s values in the hallway, classrooms, and playground. Students are joyfully, respectfully greeted and welcomed into a new day at school. Teachers pay attention to each student’s mood and needs for that day, sometimes backing off and letting a student independently explore and problem-solve, while other times spending more time with a student who may be missing home or feeling sad. Each day, students have opportunities to identify their own interests and challenges, listen to and share with others, and take responsibility for themselves and one another. Teachers at Berrybrook take seriously the school’s mission to create a child-centered environment that, among other things, fosters respect, caring, and interconnectedness. Because of this consistent approach, students at Berrybrook develop important social-emotional skills that they will carry to elementary school and beyond.

As a parent and as an educator, I understand the academic demands that are placed on our children. Working in public education for the past 13 years, I have seen the pressures of standardized testing and more academic accountability for younger and younger students. Having high academic standards, for all students, is an important goal, but it is also important to not lose sight of the other purposes of education. In our state, the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks are what guide public school educators in developing curriculum for students, in all disciplines, grades preK-12. This year, the state released revised Frameworks for English Language Arts & Literacy and Mathematics, two of the most influential Frameworks given the cross-curricular nature of the skills and content. In the revised versions, the authors now include social-emotional learning as a goal of these disciplines, stating that, even in academic classes, students should have the opportunity to “practice self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, responsible decision-making, and relationship skills.” In an English class, students may build self-awareness and social awareness by finding themselves reflected in a seemingly very different character from literature. Before embarking on a project in science class, students may learn about how scientists collaborate in the field and then use that information to more successfully work together, building decision-making and relationship skills. Students struggling with difficult math concepts may reflect on where their difficulties lie and create strategies to persevere, in the process developing greater self-awareness and self-management. Revising the Frameworks to include social-emotional learning is significant; educators across all disciplines and age groups are realizing the importance of teaching the “whole child” and that students are much more likely to succeed, in school and in life, if they are given authentic opportunities to learn and practice these social-emotional skills.

Since its founding, Berrybrook has emphasized the importance of social-emotional skill development. Every day at Berrybrook, students practice skills like naming and managing their emotions, making safe choices on the playground, or noticing that a friend might need some help. As parents, we can capitalize on these lessons as our children grow up and progress through school, reminding them that the skills they learned at Berrybrook will help them as they face new experiences and challenges, in and out of the classroom.

Rachel Ezell

Berrybrook Board of Directors, President

For more information on the MA Curriculum Frameworks, please visit this link:
www.doe.mass.edu/frameworks/

For a recent article on addressing social-emotional skills in schools, please visit this link:
www.gse.harvard.edu/news/ed/16/01/theres-nothing-soft-about-these-skills



**BE SURE TO CHECK OUT OUR
FACEBOOK PAGE!**

**IT IS A GREAT RESOURCE TO
LOOK AT CURRENT EVENTS,
ARTICLES AND EVEN GIVE
BERRYBROOK A REVIEW.**



CONNECTIONS

Please join the Connections team on Thursday, October 26, at 7:00 p.m. We will delve into all things Berrybrook!

New and returning families will gain insight into the *Berrybrookisms* you will see and hear in the classrooms and on the playgrounds. Come and learn why we encourage children to walk into school, instead of being carried, and why we answer their questions with a question! Why do the teachers wait so long before helping a child? How come the teachers are just standing around?

You will also learn how our programs build upon each other as the children grow through the Berrybrook years!

Please plan on joining us,

~ *The Connections Team*



Berrybrook would like to welcome a new addition to the community.

Baby Matthew VanHaur
(Big sister Harper is in 4 Day Room 1)

CONGRATULATIONS!



Wonderful New School

Education Extended Now To Four and Five-Yr.-Olds

By CRAIG FLEMING

DUXBURY—Thirty-two South Shore children will enter Duxbury's Berrybrook School next month with one hand clutching mommy and the other a blanket.

So begins an "exciting adventure in education" for the four and five-year-olds venturing into the strange and wonderful world of nursery school and kindergarten.

Berrybrook is an endowed, non-profit school operated by Mrs. Richard D. Mann and directed by Miss Helen M. Wheeler, both of Duxbury.

Both are graduates of what once was known as the Nursery Training School of Boston and now is the Eliot-Pearson School, a Tufts University affiliate.

'Can Be Brutal'

Miss Wheeler is also a former public school teacher and director of Boston's South End Day Nursery.

Both will readily admit that not every child should have schooling before the first grade or that lack of kindergarten experience need be a major handicap in the years of formal education.

"But," Miss Wheeler added quickly, "the evidence is that nursery and kindergarten training do help, not only in the first grade, but all the way through."

"For the child leaving the shelter of home for the first time, first grade can be a brutal experience." One reason is the "appalling schedules of many first grade teachers."

The Berrybrook teachers are aware that nursery school can be a brutal experience and take every precaution to insure that the child has no unhappy associations during the first crucial days.

Mothers Go, Too

A mother is expected to remain with her child until the youngster himself indicates he no longer needs her loving presence. Some get waved off almost at the door. Occasionally a mother

will attend school for a week or two before the youngster emerges from his cocoon and enters into group activities.

One of the "great thrills" of Miss Wheeler's previous teaching career came from a five-year-old who one day suddenly took over the leadership of his playmates after standing quietly on the sidelines for a year and a half.

There is a consistent rhythm to the day's program at Berrybrook, periods of romping activity alternating with periods of calmness—including a rest time with the precious blanket from home. But there are no "subjects" to be taught.

If a child happens to learn the important and difficult skill of tying shoelaces, all to the good. But such an achievement is a mere side product.

Group Feeling

One of the biggest problems facing the youngster is in learning that the school's toys don't belong to him but to the group, the teacher said. Often a youngster will sneak one of the toys home.

"But to crack down on him for such a little thing could scar the child mortally," Mrs. Mann said. The school asks only that he return the toy and request permission the next time.

By the age of four, children need the company of other children the same age, Miss Wheeler said.

"The biggest thing they learn here is how to get along, not only with other youngsters, but with adults other than their parents.

Constant Adventure

If this experience is good and happy they can accept additional new experiences more easily."

New experiences lie in every corner and cubbyhole of the eight-room school, a former farmhouse



Announcing The Opening Of BERRYBROOK SCHOOL

RFD Winter Street, Duxbury

For Children of Nursery School Age

Hours 9 to 12 Monday thru Friday

For Further Information

Call Miss Helen N. Wheeler (Kingston 2426)
or Mrs. Richard D. Mann (Kingston 2081)

on 50 acres west of Route 3.

"Everything should be first-hand," said Mrs. Mann, and a "pair of wet mittens drying on a radiator can provide a fascinating first-hand experiment in science."

"We try to follow through," she continued. "A fire in a boy's home upset him and other members of his class. We all went to the house after the debris had been cleaned up and we returned for another visit when the carpenters had repaired the damage.

"Things happen to us, yes. But there is something we can do about it."

Interest Is Key

The teachers are convinced that parents are "drawing their children out more."

One result is the addition of a book about Sputniks to the library of Mother Goose.

But bright children always have asked questions such as "what happens to the sun at night?"

A grapefruit and a flashlight were the props used to satisfy one kindergartner at Berrybrook.

"What the children learn," said Mrs. Mann, "they learn because they are interested. And the residue at the end of the year should be the finest kind of teaching because nothing is imposed on them."