



January 2015

Monday, January 5	2015-2016 Enrollment Begins
Saturday, January 7	Open House 10:00-noon
Monday, January 19	Martin Luther King Day, No School
Wednesday January 21	Berrybrook Board Meeting 7:30 pm
Saturday, February 7	Admissions Open House
Wednesday, February 5	Professional Day, No School

Notes from the Head of School

During October, November and December, I spent many hours with parents who came to Berrybrook to look at our programs for next fall. They are in the process of deciding which preschool will be a good match for their child. Admissions at Berrybrook has turned out to be one of the most pleasurable parts of my job as Head of School. I am always happy to share what I love about Berrybrook with visitors. Parents and children visiting the school can see for themselves the busy, happy children in the classroom and the caring teachers attending to them. They can see the activities and materials that have been carefully chosen and our beautiful natural surroundings are obvious. My goal is to convey to them the wonderful things about our school that they may not see on a first visit. I let them know that our school is a non-profit institution governed by a volunteer board of directors who have thoughtfully managed the school for 60 years. I think it is important for visitors to know about our home visits and about our many traditions - from making jelly to ice cream day. It is important that I tell visitors about our active Parents Association and their enrichment programs and fun family get togethers. I enjoy telling prospective parents about our families who bring snacks at pick up time and stay to play with other Berrybrookers on the playground after class. I also share with families our NAEYC accreditation - the mark of a high quality program that provides a safe and nurturing environment, and one that demonstrates quality by meeting the 10 NAEYC Early Childhood Program Standards which are based on the latest research on the education and development of young children. When parents first decide to enroll their children at Berrybrook they know the quality of our program, but what they may not know is what all of you know by now - Berrybrook is also a community of families who care about each other. Families who help each other out, care for each other's children, and share the rewards and challenges of raising young children. Thank you, parents, for helping to make Berrybrook a unique experience and for contributing so much to the success and well being of the Berrybrook School.

Happy New Year

Pat Keeley

Beginners News

Welcome back and Happy New Year, Beginners!

We are happy to be together again and hope there is snow in the forecast for our focus on cold, ice and all - things - fun in cold weather! We will be exploring how things change when cold and how we keep warm with lots of practice dressing in our “snow clothes”. We will also be moving in many ways to keep warm – stretching, yoga and using new equipment in the Big Room... to name a few.

Our volunteer sign-up sheet will be posted as soon as we once again become accustomed to our daily routine after a long holiday break. We look forward to having you! Children in the Beginners Class truly enjoy the simple gifts of visitors – a spontaneous story read in the Book Area, “cooking” for guests in the Dramatic Play Area, adult onlookers who can observe creative building in the Block Area, or simple conversation while exploring with playdough, sand or water. Teachers will give all volunteers/visitors our *Visitor Guidelines for Beginners* informational sheet with helpful tips before joining us for the morning.

Be sure to check our Shutterfly site for recent photos. When families look through the photos together, children use an abundance of cognitive skills to remember activities, songs and stories and lots of rich language to explain what the photos represent. It is a true learning experience.

Watch us grow!

Happy New Year!

Mrs. LaForest,
Mrs. Piccuito,
Mrs. Rosen



First Year Program News

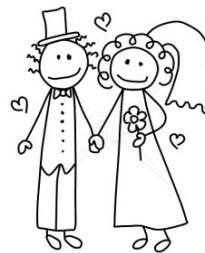
Welcome back! We all made it through the Holidays in one fashion or another, on to the New Year! The students in the First Year Program are now feeling very comfortable at school. They are ready for new discoveries, activities, and personal challenges.

New areas to explore this month will include animals in winter such as Birds and Bears, and we will also be spending time learning about dinosaurs. Another focus in January is Health. We will be talking about healthy foods, how to dress appropriately in the winter, and the dramatic play area in the classrooms will become a Hospital and a Veterinarian's office. We welcome any parents in the medical field to join us to share information about your profession at circle time. All parents are welcome to sign up on the volunteer sheet when you have a morning available to spend with us.

Thank you to all parents for attending our gathering in December. We as teachers continue to enjoy getting to know your children and your family. Please keep in touch as we all work together for the good of the children and the Berrybrook Community. Happy New Year!

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

Congratulations!



Ms. McSharry and Robert Savoy
were married on New Year's Eve!
Best wishes to Mr. & Mrs Savoy!


Enrollment 2015-2016

All first year families should have received enrollment information over our holiday break. January is the month reserved for all current and alumni families to enroll at Berrybrook for the 2015-2016 school year. The second year program offers one 5 Day morning group and two 4 Day afternoon groups. When submitting an application, parents should circle their program preference. The placement of children into classes is a process which takes into account individual needs of children, balance in the composition of each class, and parent preference. While we would like to honor every preference, space or other factors may limit the number of children assigned to an individual class.

In 1964, Mrs. Mann placed legal responsibility for the welfare of Berrybrook in the hands of the Berrybrook Board of Directors and they continue to be dedicated caretakers of her legacy and to provide an early childhood experience that families have loved for six decades. The Board keeps a close eye on expenditures while sparing no cost to ensure children have a safe, quality, early childhood education delivered by trained, experienced and professional educators. Because of Katharine Mann's foresight, the school is very fortunate to have an operating budget that is not 100% tuition driven. Her ongoing charitable gift through the Lurcetia Prentiss Bailey Trust enables Berrybrook to set tuition rates 27% below the true cost of our programs. The Board strives to keep tuition competitive while maintaining low student-teacher ratios, plentiful resources, competitive salaries, and one of the most stunning settings on the South Shore. The Berrybrook Board of Directors sets aside funds for tuition assistance through the Helen Wheeler Scholarship Fund. **The FACTS Grant and Aid Assessment system is available for families to apply for tuition assistance for the 2015-2016 school year.**

Families are able to apply online quickly and easily on the FACTS web site that is completely safe and secure. There is a FACTS link on the Berrybrook website. If you are interested in receiving information about tuition assistance please contact Mrs. Keeley.





Berrybrook
discover | play | learn

Open House

Please let your friends and neighbors know that Berrybrook will be having an Admissions Open House on Saturday, February 7, 2015 10:00-Noon

It will be a chance to tour our school and ask questions about our philosophy and programs.

All Welcome!



Snow Cancellation

Berrybrook will cancel school if **Duxbury Schools** or the **Silver Lake School District** close due to a snow or other emergency. Please watch 7NEWS (NBC) for cancellation notices. There will also be notification on the school voice mail message.

NEW YEAR'S DAY

Last night while we were fast asleep,
The old year went away.
It can't come back again because,
A new one's come to stay.

Family Matters

Hopefully we all tried our best to **Keep Calm and Carry On** and we made it through the Holidays! Thank you to the many parents who joined us for the Big Room Chat Room gathering in December. It was helpful to hear strategies from others who were also feeling overwhelmed with holiday activities and demands. In preparation for NEXT year's holiday season, remember:

*keep as close to regular family routines/schedules as possible

*allow yourself to say "no" to commitments rather than feeling guilty for not carrying on long-standing family traditions, choose the ones that are most meaningful to your family

*nearby neighborhoods offer miraculous light displays- check them out!

*remember to hydrate, especially during the holidays-maybe purchase inexpensive festive cups for children as an incentive

*ask for help!

*wrap books or small, inexpensive gifts for the days leading up to a holiday to share together as a family

*prepare children before an event by explaining what types of sensory experiences will be there (large/small crowd, types of food, activities) as well as gently reviewing manners when saying hello (even simply waving) or when receiving gifts

*cherish the moment!

On to the New Year! If you are feeling **FROZEN** in your busy schedule, join us **Wednesday, January 14, 1:10 pm** for another Big Room Chat Room where you can... **Let It Go...Free Yourself From Guilt, Clutter and Stress!** Make this New Year the best it can be by **Letting Go** of what is cluttering your life. Make a plan, set priorities. Learn how to focus on what is truly meaningful in your life. Come with your

"baggage" and leave with a clearer focus for the New Year! As always, children welcome.

Wishing everyone a Happy 2015!

Mrs. Delano, Mrs. Dunn and Mrs. LaForest
Second Year Program News

Second Year Program News

Happy New Year! We hope you all had a safe and happy winter break. Thank you to those of you who volunteered to make cookies and latkes with us. We also want to thank all who came to our Holiday Sing-a-Long. The children practiced many days for the presentation and we are happy to share it with everyone.

As we continue into winter, the children will be discussing cold weather, snow and wind. More importantly we will talk about how to dress in the cold weather. As you know we ask children to dress themselves for outside play. We ask that you continue to send your child to school with a warm coat, hats and gloves or mittens. Snow pants and boots will also be needed for outdoor play in the snow. Berrybrook has some extra warm clothes for children to wear but as teachers we notice that some children prefer their own warm weather clothes.

In the month of January we start to learn about health. Children will be exploring our new "Berrybrook Hospital" in the housekeeping area, which will later turn into a veterinary office. As a class we will talk about healthy eating, and try new healthy snacks.

Don't forget to check our your Shutterfly web site to see what great things are happening in the 4 and 5 Day Classes!

The Second Year Teachers,

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

Parents Association News

Happy New Year, hope you all had a joyous holiday season! We can't believe we are entering the second half of the school year. The BPA has had a great start to the school year and we certainly look forward to what is in store!

We wanted to thank the entire Berrybrook community for its support of our giving tree for the Carolina Hill Homeless Shelter. We filled their list of holiday wishes and more! A special thank you to Erin Martin for heading up the project. Giving such a generous amount to the shelter made us feel proud to be part of the Berrybrook community and offered an opportunity to reflect upon what is important during such a hectic time of year. Also, thank you to all who participated in the all day shopping event and Rhyme n' Reason toy store (special shout out to Jessica MacFarland). All proceeds go to our fabulous enrichment program.

Family Fun Friday

Be on the lookout for a January Family Fun after the New Year. We are hoping to get some sledding days in at Berrybrook this winter.

Enrichment

January is the beginning of some exciting enrichment. Inspire Kids Yoga will be beginning their monthly yoga program with our first year students, which will focus on not only yoga, but self-esteem and body awareness. The children are also going to start learning about music/percussion in another enrichment program starting in the new year.

BPA Dues

We are happy that about 30% of families have already contributed support to the BPA through dues this year. It is still not too late to increase that number. Each year we ask parents to support us with \$30 in dues. We appreciate any support and checks can be placed in the basket at the BPA table.

Here's to a Happy 2015!

Donna Hillary

berrybrookparentsassociation@gmail.com

PS..be on the lookout for the date of the next BPA meeting

The Snowman's Resolution

Aileen Fisher

The snowman's hat was crooked
And his nose was out of place
And several of his whiskers
Had fallen from his face.

But the snowman didn't notice
For he was trying hard to think
Of a New Year's Resolution
That wouldn't melt or shrink.

He thought and planned and pondered
With his little snow-ball head
Till his eyes began to glisten
And his toes began to spread;

And at last he said, "I've got it-
I'll make a firm resolve
That no matter what the weather
My smile will not dissolve."

PRESENT

by Katie Szczesny, Treasurer, Berrybrook Board of Directors

As you read this newsletter, the holidays, the presents and the accompanying chaos have passed. The kids have gone back to school, and hopefully, you feel like you can breathe, just a little bit, again. I'm not the only one that feels like this, right? My two Berrybrook boys are now 8 ½ and almost 7 years old. They have moved on from sand tables and stuffed paper bag pumpkins to spelling tests and flag football. But to me, they are still "Berrybrook kids," as are the other alumni that surround them in first and third grade. And I'd like to think that the Berrybrook philosophies and lessons they learned are those that we all will keep with us for life.

So, with the recent holidays came presents, but what I wanted to write to you about was being "present." "Present" and "mindful" are popular buzz words these days. Even 60 Minutes had a segment recently with Anderson Cooper about how hard it is to be "present" in each task you're doing every day. Meanwhile, we see teachers at Berrybrook being present and mindful with our children so many times each day – kneeling on the floor to be at eye level with the kids, asking questions rather than telling answers, building self-esteem rather than criticizing, and being genuinely interested in each and every word that comes out of their mouths.

The interactions they have with the teachers, whether they last 5 seconds or 5 minutes, mean the world to our children. The teachers at Berrybrook have been "present" with the children for the last 50 years; long before it was a buzz word or the latest blogging trend. How amazing is that? I also think that as adults we have many opportunities each day to be more mindful of those around us. Hold the door open a few extra seconds for that person behind you, let that next car go ahead of you in traffic, smile and say hello to the runner passing by on the road. Smile. Say hello. You could change the direction of someone's day.

Every day I look forward to my kids coming home from their long days at school. My first grader gets off the bus, smiles at me, and always grabs my hand to cross the street. He squeezes my hand tightly, every day, as if to say "I'm here now, Mom. And I missed you today." I cherish that moment; it never gets old. Recently, I read an article that talked about how easily, in just a few seconds, you could change someone's day for the better. I think the teachers at Berrybrook are changing our children's days constantly, and for that I am forever grateful.

Below is an excerpt from "How to Change Someone's Story" from www.handsfreemama.com.

The 6 Second Challenge - By Rachel Macy Stafford

In 6 seconds you can kiss someone like you mean it.
In 6 seconds you can hold open a door.
In 6 seconds you can wait for a little straggler to catch up. "I'll wait for you," you can even say.
In 6 seconds you can take a deep breath.
In 6 seconds you can let it go. "It's not worth it," you can say.
In 6 seconds you can tuck a note in a lunch box or in a pocket. It takes 2 seconds to make a heart.
In 6 seconds you can say you're sorry.
In 6 seconds you can cut yourself some slack.
In 6 seconds you can throw away that picture, that pair of pants,
that inner bully that keeps you from loving this day, this you.
In 6 seconds you can feel the sunshine.
In 6 seconds you decide it's time to stop looking back.
In 6 seconds you can whisper, "It's gonna be okay," to yourself or someone who's scared.

I used to sound like a broken record. "I don't have time," I would always say.
But then I realized what could happen in a mere 6 seconds.
It's enough to make a bad day good ...
It's enough to bring life back to your weary bones ...
It's enough to change someone's story ...
It's enough to remember what really matters in the midst of so much that doesn't.