

## October 2016

<b>Monday, October 10</b>	<b>Columbus Day <i>No School</i></b>
<b>Saturday, October 15</b>	<b>BPA Harvest Festival 10 am - 1 pm</b>
<b>Monday, October 24</b>	<b>Professional Development Day <i>No School</i></b>
<b>Wednesday, October 26</b>	<b>Volunteer Orientation 7 pm, Berrybrook Board Meeting 7:30</b>



### Notes from the Head of School

Change is hard. Merriam-Webster defines change as “the act, process, or result of changing, such as the act of becoming different or of causing someone or something to become different” or “the act of replacing one thing with another”. That very definition almost brings out a sense of fear or stress....why change or replace something that seems to be working? The phrase “if it ain’t broke, don’t fix it” comes to mind. However, under certain circumstances things need to change, and those circumstances aren’t always negative. Yes, certain events are stressful and/or unavoidable and can rock one’s world. Regular change events, no matter how much one is prepared for the event, can also toss around someone’s world.

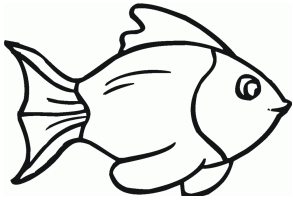
As I see the 4 and 5 Day students walk with their families to their new classroom, you can feel the emotions of change. Parents are excited to see their children embark on a new adventure but feel a twinge of sadness to see them move onto their next stage; they are almost in mourning that their child will no longer have the title of a 2 or 3 Day student. It is emotional to send your child off to the next unknown, but children need to know that you have faith in them and that you have made the best decision. If they see your sadness at their growth, they might think they have done something wrong or that this change is not good for them.

At Berrybrook, we are always changing. The teaching teams change, the children in the classroom change, the families in the hallway change. Arguably, one of the biggest changes lately happened over the summer with the retirement of Patricia Keeley after sixteen years. This spring after the announcement of my new role as Head of School, many teachers thought it was their time to make a change. When the dust settled with all the switching, there was only one teaching team staying the same - and side note, that team will have their own change when Mrs. Savoy goes on maternity leave in the spring (see.....change is a good thing!).



Even with all the switching of teams, the philosophy of Berrybrook holds strong. Regardless of who holds the teacher roles in the classroom, the traditions of Berrybrook are still present and the children will not feel that “rocking of their world” often associated with change. By the time Ice Cream Day arrives, you may not believe the metamorphosis that has occurred in your student, and perhaps your whole family. On more than one occasion, I have had families tell me that Berrybrook has impacted their whole family in such a positive way. Change can be scary, but I’m excited for all the changes coming our way. Let’s embrace change together!

Mrs. Watts



## ***Beginners Notes***

Our Beginners year is off to a great start! The children are becoming comfortable in their new environment and are excited to explore the classroom activities. Friendships are forming with both their peers and teachers. There are lots of smiles and laughter during our mornings together.

Our Beginners program is different from that of the 3 and 4 year old programs. The focus in our classroom is more on play, growing independence, and forming friendships. While we aren’t a project-based classroom, projects are a part of our daily program. While optional for this age group, most children choose to participate daily. On Thursdays, we work on a large group project. Directions and visuals are given after we read our daily story and the children are usually very excited to come to the project table and give it a try. On Friday the project is very similar but on a smaller scale and more of an individual effort. The repetition of skills is very important for this age. As with any skill, the more they practice, the more confident they become. The understanding of knowing what to do next is exciting for them.

One example of a project we worked on are the goldfish we made the first week of school. On Thursday our project table was covered in white paper and had a large fish drawn on it. The students all helped “color” our fish using small pieces of orange and yellow tape the teachers had ready for them. On Friday, they were given an individual fish and tape to repeat the project. This large project/small project process will continue throughout the year. Some of the projects they will be working on in the weeks to come are color mixing (using red and blue to make purple), gluing paper to make red, green, and yellow apples, and painting bright orange pumpkins.

Thank you for sharing your children with us. We are excited to help them learn and explore.

~ *Mrs. Rosen*

*Mrs. Rosen teaches the Beginners and 4 day classes*

# ***First Year Project Notes***



One of the first traditional projects for the first year students at Berrybrook is rock painting. We read the book Rock Finds a Friend, in which a lonely rock develops a friendship with a young boy. In the story “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 chose not to paint. We will always ask them if they want to make a project.

In order to paint their rock, children must complete several steps:

- 1) They 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 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 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 how to remedy the situation.
- 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, language development, social studies, art and motor development. 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 3 Day/2 Day Room 1*

# ***Second Year Project Notes***

## **The Cutting Edge**



The 4 and 5 Day classes are different in many ways from the 2 and 3 Day classes, and indeed they should be. The children are an entire year older, developmental skills are stronger and expectations in the classroom match their increased social and emotional levels.

This year is a very preparatory year for kindergarten. There are more experiences to practice social skills such as conflict resolution and problem solving, and there is daily practice with writing and cutting skills as well. Children will be coming to the project table daily, just like they would visit a table area in kindergarten. They will be writing their name daily (which may even be just a mark or one letter to start) as well as gluing, painting, tracing and cutting. The skill of cutting increases strength and coordination in the fingers and hand, and will ultimately help with the skill of writing.

One of our first cutting projects sounds very simple but contains many valuable lessons in cutting and strengthening fine motor skills. It also takes a lot of thinking and concentration. The children are shown an apple and we talk about its shape. They are then given a square piece of paper and asked how they can turn the square into the shape of an apple. "Cut it!" they say. When given the scissors, the children soon try out snipping the corners of the square and realize the square is changing shape. It is becoming more round. They then continue to cut a bit more to create, what they feel, is the shape of an apple. You see, an apple is not perfectly round. No two apples are exactly the same. When each child finishes and adds a piece of tape for the stem and hangs it on a real, live tree in the classroom ...voila! They have just helped create an apple tree by thinking, planning, cutting, cutting some more, and deciding when it becomes their finished apple! This first cutting experience becomes the foundation for all cutting with projects to follow throughout the year to create and change the shape of their paper from just "paper" to a "pumpkin", a "face", a "ball"....you get the picture!

We're off to a great start in the 4 and 5 Day classes. Your children are working hard every day and are very proud of their projects. Children love to hear a heartfelt "Congratulations!" followed by things you notice about their work when they bring it home. Thank you for your help in fostering their creativity in their work.

*~ Mrs. LaForest*

*Mrs. LaForest teaches in the 4 Day and the Beginners classes*

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!!

## ***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 15th!** Early registration forms are pouring in and are due Friday, October 7<sup>th</sup>. Additional forms are available in the office.

Thank you to those individuals who have already donated a themed basket for the raffle or purchased supplies! 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 12<sup>th</sup>. 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 7th at Bog Hollow**. Bog Hollow is one of our most popular trips as children take a hay ride to the pumpkin patch, explore the play structure and enjoy the fall air! Stay tuned for more info about our **November 4<sup>th</sup>, FFF** when **Clay Chick** travels to Berrybrook! To register for this event and all other FFF visit the BPA table.

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 four 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 monthly 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.

Jill Cooney & Danielle MacKinnon Co-Presidents     [berrybrookparentsassociation@gmail.com](mailto:berrybrookparentsassociation@gmail.com)

## ***Connections Notes***

**Connections** is a group of teachers who serve as a resource for Berrybrook families.



Join **Connections** this month on **Wednesday, October 26<sup>th</sup> at 7pm** to learn about **“Volunteering In the Berrybrook Classroom.”**. This first **Classroom Connections** event will provide all the information you need to know to volunteer in your child’s Beginners, 2 / 3 Day Class, or 4 / 5 Day Program. We look forward to seeing you there!

Also offered this month is our first **Conversation Connections** on **Tuesday morning, October 25<sup>th</sup> from 9:15 -10am** in the Multipurpose Room. Stop by to chat with a teacher and connect with others to discuss common family challenges when raising children.

We hope to see you there!

*Mrs. Capasso, Mrs. Dunn, Mrs. LaForest*

### **FROM THE LUNCH BUNCH TEACHERS**

Thank you to parents for carefully packing lunches that are safe for everyone. We appreciate your cooperation, understanding and your attention to checking ingredient labels.

Thank You!



## ***From The Board of Directors***

Fall is my favorite time of year. The weather is perfect; the leaves are beautiful and there are still lots of outside activities that are easy to do with little ones. Getting them outside is so very important.

One of the things that attracted me to Berrybrook was its nature-based curriculum. I love that the teachers bring the children outside whenever possible. Being outside just seems to be the right place for children. But it's so much more than that.

Research shows that outside play has a positive influence on the overall wellbeing of children. Children that play outside on a regular basis report lower stress, have stronger immune systems, play more creatively, and have more active imaginations. They are happier, healthier and stronger!

And now we have an amazing outdoor classroom in the Nook at Berrybrook. I recently visited with two of my children. Lucy, my 9 year-old Berrybrook alumni said "I always thought Berrybrook was perfect, but this was just what it needed." I couldn't agree more!

The Nook is so much more than just another outdoor playground. Using research-based and field-tested principles, the space was designed as a dynamic nature-based play and learning space. Beyond being an amazing space, it means the school has committed to providing comprehensive programming that uses the natural world as an integral part of learning. This unique environment will inspire teachers and students to explore nature in a variety of new ways.

If you haven't had a chance to visit, I encourage you to do so as a family before or after school someday soon. I think the place will speak for itself!

Allyson Frazier

Board President

The Board of Directors is currently looking for people who have finance experience to lend their expertise to Berrybrook. If interested in contributing your thoughts and ideas, please contact the board at:

[berrybrookbod@gmail.com](mailto:berrybrookbod@gmail.com)





**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.**

The Berrybrook Community  
has grown by two this September!

We would like to welcome:

Teddy Barry  
(Big brother Christopher is in 3 Day room 1)

and

Owen McMillan  
(Big sister Hannah is in 2 Day)

**Congratulations!**

**SAVE THE DATE AND SPREAD THE WORD**



**BERRYBROOK OPEN HOUSE**

**SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 5TH 10A.M. - 12PM.**