



December 2021

Wednesday, December 15	3 Day Classes Holiday Sing-Alongs
Thursday, December 16	4 Day Class Holiday Sing-Along
Friday, December 17	Beginners, 2 Day and 5 Day Holiday Sing-Alongs
December 20 - December 31	Holiday Break
December 27	2022-2023 Enrollment Packets mailed
Monday, January 3	2022-2023 Enrollment begins School Resumes after Holiday Break



Notes from the Head of School

You may have heard about the Wheeler Scholarship Fund a few times during your time at Berrybrook. If you had a tour, we mention to all families that we have a Scholarship Fund. Often, the first comment is “Oh, I don’t think we’d qualify”. So what exactly IS the scholarship fund?

What is it?

The Helen Wheeler Scholarship Fund is the primary source of tuition assistance to Berrybrook families. All money raised through the Annual Appeal is earmarked for the Wheeler Fund. The primary purpose of this fund is to provide tuition assistance to parents and/or guardians of children who have been accepted to Berrybrook, and who would not be able to attend without financial assistance.

Who qualifies?

The Wheeler Scholarship Fund was created by Mrs. Katharine Mann, our school’s founder. She created the fund so that finances never prevented a child from attending Berrybrook. All assistance is based on demonstrated financial need, the number of families applying for assistance that year, and the amount of funding available.

Does it need to be paid back?

The assistance is a scholarship, not a loan. Many recipients will make donations to the Fund years later when their financial picture is a bit stronger as a way to pay it forward to other families.

Will the teachers or anyone else know who receives help?

The process is a confidential one. Families complete an online application, and are required to submit supporting documentation such as W2s and prior tax year reports. The Board of Directors receives a report of how much aid has been awarded and the number of children benefiting from the Fund. No names are attached to these reports.

Who is Helen Wheeler?

Helen M. Wheeler was the first director of Berrybrook, when Berrybrook first opened its doors in September 1954. Mrs. Mann and Miss Wheeler were both graduates of what was known as the Nursery Training School of Boston, which is now the Eliot-Pearson School, a Tufts University affiliate.

How is it funded?

All money raised from the Annual Appeal or similar fundraisers (minus fees such as PayPal processing fees) goes to scholarships.

How can I receive more information?

I would be happy to speak with anyone who is interested in applying for the Wheeler Scholarship Fund!

How can I make a donation?

Berrybrook is a non-profit organization, which means any donation made is tax deductible. Donations can be made through cash, checks (made out to Berrybrook School Annual Appeal), or through our PayPal link on our website which can be found at <http://www.berrybrookschool.org/donate>. Also, we are kicking off a new Annual Appeal in the New Year; stay tuned for details!

Thank you to past donors to the Fund, which has helped hundreds of children throughout the years. On the following page, please read just a couple of thank you messages we have received.

Wishing you and your family a safe, healthy, and happy holiday season!

~ Mrs. Watts



Words of Thanks from Recipients of the Helen Wheeler Scholarship Fund

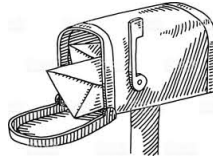
Receiving the Wheeler Scholarship was the best thing to happen for our son. Berrybrook is an incredible community, and we are so happy and proud to be part of it. When we first toured Berrybrook, it was everything we could have dreamed of, but financially we didn't think we could make it happen. The Wheeler Scholarship proved otherwise, and we will forever be grateful, and pay it forward in every way we can.

The Wheeler Scholarship Fund has allowed both of our children to be able to affordably attend Berrybrook School. It is one of the MANY amazing things that sets Berrybrook apart from other preschools. Without this scholarship it would have been a financial struggle to afford tuition. After sending our oldest daughter to Berrybrook when she was three years old in the 2 day class, we knew there was no other preschool we wanted our children to attend. The Wheeler Scholarship made it possible for us to send both kids to Berrybrook over the years and we couldn't be more thankful!

It takes a village to raise a child, and BerryBrook has been a significant part of my families village. Without the Wheeler Scholarship fund my child wouldn't of been able to attend BerryBrook. The Wheeler Scholarship Fund has allowed my child an opportunity to not only attend BerryBrook but to thrive there. BerryBrook has been more than just a school for my child but a place that they know, love, and look forward to everyday. A school with teachers that care, and classrooms that are always full of kindness. Our family will forever be grateful for our village at BerryBrook, and without the Wheeler Scholarship Fund we wouldn't of been able to experience such an amazing school.

We are a one income household, because unfortunately, as many families know, the cost of childcare would outweigh what I would bring in as a salary. When our first child started attending Berrybrook, we were financially secure enough to afford the full tuition, but as things started to change with my husband's business, especially when the pandemic hit, we found ourselves in a position of needing tuition assistance in order for her to continue going to the school. We were so fortunate to be able to take advantage of the Wheeler Scholarship Fund so that our child could finish out her preschool years, with the teachers and peers that she had grown to love. When it became time to consider preschools for our son, we knew that we wanted him to have the same, amazing experience that our daughter did, but the tuition continued to be a concern, given the ongoing impact that the pandemic has had on our family. We were beyond grateful to receive assistance for him as well, and could not be more appreciative of the fact that both of our children were able to attend this wonderful school, due to the Wheeler Scholarship Fund!

It's that time already!!



2022-2023 enrollment information

will be mailed on December 27th. Please be on the look out for Berrybrook mail and let the office know if there are younger siblings (who will be 3 by next December 1st) who need an additional application.



Colder weather is on its way...

It is our policy to cancel classes whenever Duxbury Public Schools are closed due to weather emergencies. Families should watch Channel 7, WHDH for a school cancellation at Berrybrook. Every attempt at notification will be made through email messages, text messages, phone calls via OneCallNow and/or social media.

In the event Duxbury Public Schools require a one hour delay, Berrybrook will have the usual 9am arrival time.

In the event Duxbury Public Schools require a two hour delay, the AM session will be cancelled.

Beyond a formal cancellation, we urge parents to use their best judgment about driving young children to school in inclement weather.

As the weather changes, be sure to dress children appropriately for outdoor play, including the Nook. Now is a good time to locate all hats, mittens, gloves, and warm jackets that will be necessary as we head into December. Once the snow flies, children should bring snow pants and snow boots. Children are welcome to keep slippers, sneakers, or crocs at school to make sure they are comfortable in the classroom.

Please remember to label all clothing with your child's name.

Teacher's Notes

As I was pondering what to write for this month's article, I thought about the fact that I am in a unique position here at Berrybrook. This school year, I am teaching the 2 Day class as well as working in the office. Although I have been working at Berrybrook for 20 years, and have taught pretty much all the classes at one point or another, this year I realized something after being out of the classroom for many years. The importance of all the little details that go into making the classroom ready for the children each and every day.

One way that the little details are weaved into the classroom is achieved through teachers being flexible with classroom planning. Teachers plan a calendar for each month ahead of time with the knowledge that often the topics might shift depending on class discussions and interests. Circle time, in my experience, lends itself to many conversations that might change the course of the week or even longer. Speaking for myself, when a topic sparks a lot of interesting observations and questions, it can lead to many domino effects within the classroom. After the class is dismissed for the day, we will brainstorm and scour the library and our big storage space in the basement for any materials that might facilitate more learning and discussions pertaining the topic. The basement, having an enormous collection of things that have accumulated since the 1950's, can be a treasure trove for teachers looking for materials. We teachers have a limited amount of time to devote to searching, but always seem to find some interesting items when digging down there.

The precious hour that teachers have before classes start at 9:00 and 1:00 are very busy; the hallways and classes are filled with the hustle and bustle of getting the rooms set for the children to walk in ready to start their day. The teachers are actively finding ways to promote the latest topics of discussion into tangible learning opportunities in the classroom. When the children come through the door ready to settle in, they are usually already checking out what is available to play with as they go wash their hands at the sink. And the teachers? They are ready to extend on the learning that took place the day before, and are on the look-out for the next impromptu learning experience.

~ Mrs. Piccuito

Mrs. Piccuito teaches in the 2 Day class

Parent Association Notes

We hope you and your families had a wonderful Thanksgiving! It's hard to believe that the holiday season is officially upon us! There are lots of fun activities and traditions planned at Berrybrook this month for everyone to look forward to!

A huge thank you to all of the families that attended our November Family Fun Friday at Mix it Up Kitchen! Cheryl, the owner, reached out to me to tell me how wonderful all of the children were, and how the parents were also engaged, and extremely helpful, in making everything run smoothly! Our next Family Fun Friday event will take place at Heritage Gardens on December 10th for their Gardens Aglow event. For information on all that Heritage Gardens has to offer, please visit their website <https://heritagemuseumsandgardens.org/gardens-aglow/>

We are excited to announce that yoga with Miss Kim will be returning as part of our enrichment program in January! Be on the lookout for class photos of the children participating in this wonderful program!

BPA DUES! Thank you to everyone who has already paid their BPA dues. If you have yet to do so, it's not too late! We ask for a \$30 contribution per family, which goes directly toward student enrichment in and out of the classroom. Thank you to our Berrybrook families for your continued support and participation!

Best Wishes and Happy Holidays!

Kim Joyce & Molly Buchanan, BPA Co-Presidents

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From The Board of Directors

A Slow(er) Stroll Through the Holiday Season

It's begun. Way earlier and far busier than I remember, the holiday season is here again. It seems like just last week I was enjoying the last few lazy days of summer, when suddenly school was back in session and with it, 18 months' worth of pent-up pandemic demand for events, gatherings, and activities. I had forgotten that Halloween basically lasts an entire month and starts in late September, and this year most of my neighbors had their fall décor up by Labor Day. With my older children in sports, the return of big group birthday parties, and an abundance of fall festivals (the Berrybrook Harvest being the absolutely best of them all, of course) the fall has been passing at breakneck speed and here we are, already in December, with Thanksgiving just a few days past.

December is upon us, but before this season flies by with an exhausting whirlwind of shopping, baking, wrapping, parties, and holiday festivals, I'm pausing to remind myself that my children will never be this young again. If I want time to slow down then I need to help make that happen. And that means that this year, I won't be doing *all the things*, as they say. I plan on participating in a couple of festive outings we have enjoyed as a family in the past, such as this month's family fun Friday at the Heritage Museum and Gardens and the Duxbury Holly Days, but I also would like to focus on cherishing just a few, simple traditions like reading The Polar Express, trimming our tree and decorating gingerbread houses. These traditions won't be things I'm rushing to finish just so I can "check them off the list", but a time where I am fully present with my children while they are still little and eager to participate.

With this (somewhat) short list of activities and traditions that I plan on enjoying this year, comes an even longer list of the things I will pass on. And for those of you that delight in packing in all that holiday fun to the maximum - to each their own! Whether you celebrate this season quietly or go full throttle with merriness, I think we can all agree that after 18 months of being forced to pass on almost everything, having the choice of *how* we can spend and remember this holiday season feels pretty good.

~ *Ellen D'Ambruoso*

Berrybrook Board of Directors