

June 2022

Wednesday, June 8	3 Day classes Ice Cream Day
Thursday, June 9	4 Day class Ice Cream Day
Friday, June 10	Beginners, 2 Day and 5 Day classes Ice Cream Day



Notes from the Head of School

Thanks to social media, it's helpful to help mark the passage of time. Last week my memories showed that eight years ago that day I had received in the mail both an invitation to a significant high school class reunion of mine AND an invitation to a former student's high school graduation party. I felt old then, but last week in my feed was news of a child I used to babysit who had just received his MASTERS degree . . . and this wasn't a child who I cared for when I was in high school - I was a legit adult, married and expecting our first child, and beginning the process of building our house.

This time of year we are especially reminded that time goes quickly and we can't stop it. Prior to FaceBook, when children left Berrybrook they were etched in my mind as 5 year olds forever. I am thankful to keep in touch with Berrybrook families through social media and I celebrate their milestones as I see them.

As the final weeks of school approach quickly, I want to remind you that the Berrybrook gates are always open to you and your family. I love to see FaceBook updates, but we love to see families 'IRL' too. Thank you for another wonderful year, which happens to be my 20th year at Berrybrook. I'm so lucky to love my job, which I know isn't always the case for many people. It makes me think of Steve Jobs who said "The only way to do great work is to love the work you do". And I ❤️ Berrybrook.

Have a fun and safe summer!

~ Mrs. Watts



Teacher's Notes

As I was reflecting upon this entire school year, in addition to the year prior and all that we have been through...and how this year in June 2022 we will celebrate *together* with Ice Cream... it seemed fitting to share again this article that was written in *May 2012* (when our school year ended in May). How wonderful to know the idea of "it" never changes, no matter what obstacles we face!

*Adjustments have been made to staff names appropriate to now and back then we used terms such as "First Year" and "Second Year" students because the Beginners Program didn't even exist! I renamed children for our purpose here to the categories of "younger" and "older" students.

Enjoy!

Seeing "It"

Teachers and staff at Berrybrook are fortunate to see "it" every year. Yet "it" is never anything less than amazing. Parents have to go through a lot to see "it." Teachers may need to encourage families to "Hold on" or "Give it time"... and, ultimately, "it" unfolds. The growth and development in our children, our students, from September to June is astounding. By Ice Cream Day parents see "it." Teachers see "it." Mrs. Watts and Mrs. Piccuito see "it." Do the children see "it?" I believe they do. If they could express "it" to us this is what they might say:

"I See" ~

"I see that now I can trust."

Our younger Berrybrook students can now trust that when their caregiver says goodbye, they will return. They can trust their emotions. They can feel safe when they are sad, angry or frustrated. They can trust that they will be respected. Older students can trust to say goodbye and they can now walk through any door on their own or with a friend, eager to see what awaits them. They can also trust that new teachers can become just as special as their first teachers.

"I see that now I belong."

Both younger and older students realize now that everyone is included and we are all connected here on this earth together. They see strength when they are together. They see joy when they are together. Most of all, they see fun!

"I see that now I am a friend."

Our younger students have learned that being a friend means you may have something in common with another and find comfort together, or have a world of differences

between you and learn from each other. Older children recognize that friendships take communication, patience, and forgiveness and make you a better person for having them.

“I see that now I can communicate.”

Children in our younger programs communicate their feelings by learning about their own emotions and they can now listen to others. Our older students can now relate to others with true understanding and compassion. They know that the written word can be just as powerful as the spoken one.

“I see that now I can do more than I used to.”

Our younger students may have observed first, then experienced. All of them have practiced first, and then mastered skills for their strong foundation of living and learning. The older students may have tried something new through the encouragement of a friend. They have strengthened their abilities both mentally and physically to create and imagine more fully.

“I see that now I am comfortable being who I am.”

Students in our younger programs make statements such as “I feel”, “I think”, “I like” and know they are valued and respected. They know their ideas mean something, whether or not they are the same as someone else’s. The older students take the above mentioned and can see how it connects and relates to even more people around them. This adds to their own sense of self, just like when a kaleidoscope is rotated and the small bits and pieces move in a communion of color and light.

“I see that now I am ready to move on to what is next for me.”

All students are ready to take what they have mastered this year into their next as a foundation upon which to discover more about themselves in relation to others. Like a web of miraculous interaction, as more connections to people are made, more of themselves they can share. Therefore, more expression of love, kindness and respect can be brought forth to all around them.

“It” has officially arrived!
Happy Summer ...and beyond!

~ *Mrs. LaForest*

Mrs. LaForest teaches the 5 Day and 4 Day classes

From The Board of Directors

That Berrybrook Feeling

As a parent to pre-teens, I'm curious how many other parents of children in the same age group will, from time to time, reflect upon fond memories. Adventures and activities you used to do with your then toddler-aged children, only to have them quip that they have zero recollection of said events? It does cause me to briefly question my own memory (brain fog is real!), but then there's all the photographic evidence. I recently switched phones and there were over 11,000 photos and 99% were of the children. Okay, full disclosure, there were probably closer to 6,000, as half were taken in some form of an "abstract modern" *by* the children. All that to say, I feel vindicated from my alleged memory lapses.

There are opposite instances that occur as well, however. The most recent of which was during my sister's 40th birthday. The cake, which was served one piece at a time, sat there eagerly waiting to be devoured, yet untouched. My children's younger cousin turned to them with a mouth full of cake and inquired why they weren't eating. Did they not like the cake? It was my turn to forget as I turned to children and asked is everything ok? Do they have temperatures...time to see a doctor perhaps? It was my youngest who spoke up first. "Mom, Aunt Amy hasn't taken her first bite yet." Of course!! The Berrybrook way of celebrating a birthday.

Yet another instance occurred this past month when we spotted spring's first robin. All three of the children broke into song "The red red robin goes bop, bop, boppin' along". Now this was one I can say I never heard of, though my children would disagree. ("Mom, we sang this *all* the time at home. Ok brain fog, you win.) I was able to go back into my middle child's memory book with her and found the page with the song and craft sure enough.

Of course there are certain things that I could never forget. Like the feeling I would get seeing my child's face at pickup. Or the casual afternoons after pickup when I would stroll through the beautiful grounds with the children. The time when my child's teacher told me that my ultra shy son who never spoke to a soul, seemed to be making a friend. When my daughters would get to pick up their younger sibling and earnestly be filled with joy at simply saying hello to their oldest and best teachers. Mostly, what my children and I can mutually agree on remembering is that "Berrybrook Feeling" and if you know, you know.

Sarah Murray

Berrybrook Board of Directors

Berrybrook Parents' Association

As I sit here typing the final BPA notes for the school year, I can't help but feel overwhelmed with a plethora of emotions. I'm sad that our family's time at Berrybrook has come to an end, and am fascinated by how quickly it went by! I'm remembering all of the special projects and events that we were able to be a part of, but mostly, I'm grateful. I'm grateful for the amazing teachers and staff who gave my two children the absolute **best** preschool experience, and who also gave me the comfort and confidence in their ability to handle my two teary eyed children, as they ventured off to school for the first time. I'm grateful for the friendships and memories that we have made these last five years, and I'm grateful that I had the opportunity to volunteer my time, and give back to this wonderful school in the many ways I was able to. Any time I see a social media post about a local family looking for a preschool, my answer is always the same - visit them all, and when you find the right one, you will know. I can wholeheartedly say that the minute we walked into Berrybrook, *we knew*.

Enrichment

The BPA was able to offer the children several enrichment opportunities this year. The South Shore Conservatory conducted a "Music Together" class, Miss Kim worked with the children on the many benefits of yoga, Jesse Stiglich led a percussion demo, and the kids enjoyed watching the Irish Step Dancers perform. As a reminder, the BPA dues that are collected throughout the year help fund these programs, so a huge thank you to all who contributed this year!

Family Fun Fridays

Thank you to everyone who joined us for our May event at the Duxplex for the Scoops Lacrosse Class! It was a huge success, and I know many families (including my own!) that signed up for the class after attending! We're keeping my fingers crossed for good weather on June 10th for the ice cream cruises! As a reminder, both cruises are currently full, but we do have a waitlist in case anything opens up.

BPA Officers 2022-2023

The BPA is looking for new officers for the 2022/2023 school year! New faces bring new ideas, and your commitment can be as little or as much you'd like! If you are interested, please reach out to the BPA or Mrs. Watts/Mrs. Piccuito. We're happy to further explain the different roles, and also answer any questions you may have!

- Kim Joyce and Molly Buchanan
BPA Co-Presidents



Berrybrook's Founder's Day and Helen Wheeler Scholarship Fund

Every year, the Berrybrook Board of Directors conducts an Annual Appeal to raise money for the Helen Wheeler Scholarship Fund. This year, we set a goal to raise \$5,000 by March 30, in honor of Mrs. Mann's birthday. Every dollar donated to the Annual Appeal reinforces our commitment to provide tuition assistance for families who wish to send a child to Berrybrook but cannot because of financial constraints. The funds also enable current families who may experience a sudden financial emergency to continue at Berrybrook.

We would like to acknowledge the generous donors to our inaugural Founder's Day Annual Appeal which raised \$4,515. We are so grateful for their financial support and their dedication to Berrybrook. Gifts to the Annual Appeal have made a lasting difference in the lives of many children and their families who are experiencing Berrybrook because of their generosity.

2022 Berrybrook Founder's Day Annual Appeal Donors

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