

## December 2022

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| <b>Wednesday, December 14</b>  | <b>3 Day Classes Holiday Sing-Alongs</b>                  |
| <b>Thursday, December 15</b>   | <b>4 Day Class Holiday Sing-Along</b>                     |
| <b>Friday, December 16</b>     | <b>Beginners, 2 Day and 5 Day<br/>Holiday Sing-Alongs</b> |
| <b>December 19 - January 2</b> | <b>Holiday Break</b>                                      |
| <b>December 27</b>             | <b>2023-2024 Enrollment Packets mailed</b>                |
| <b>Tuesday, January 3</b>      | <b>2023-2024 Enrollment begins</b>                        |

### Notes from the Head of School



As we shift into the second third of the school year, we see students get *really* comfortable and start to really test the boundaries. Obviously the rules and expectations at home are different from ones at school, and as the back-to-school routine become super solid, children may move out of the honeymoon period and occasionally will push the line to see how far they can go. The Berrybrook teachers of course know this pattern, and each year await to see when this phase presents itself in the classroom. Regardless of the types of boundary pushing, the teachers' approaches always have the same tactic.

Recently I was listening to a podcast and the guest was Dr. Becky Kennedy. She is a clinical psychologist, mom of three, and has a parenting advice website that offers (for a fee) workshop videos "for every problem" as well as other support services. I was half listening to the podcast until she told her "Airplane Pilot" allegory. I knew her practices aligned quite well with our Berrybrook philosophies and that I wanted to write about it in a future newsletter. To the best of my abilities, here is a summary of the podcast of the pilot story:

*"Imagine you're on a plane and it's really turbulent, everyone is screaming in the background. Three pilots could come on:*

*Pilot Number 1 yells 'Stop screaming; it's no big deal. Nothing's going on; you're making a big deal out of nothing.'*

*If that's my pilot, I would say 'Are you not aware of how turbulent it is? I don't feel great that you're yelling as a pilot and it actually is turbulent and you not recognizing that doesn't feel good.'*

*Pilot Number 2 says 'I'm going to open the pilot door and if anybody wants to fly this plane, and knows what to do, come on in because I'm not feeling so sure.'*  
*Any one of us would say it's not the turbulence that's scaring us, it's the pilot that's scaring me.*

*Pilot Number 3 says 'Hey, you guys are screaming back there, it's really turbulent, yes it is - I believe you that it feels bad AND I know what I'm doing, I've done this before, we're still landing at Los Angeles at the same time. I'm going to go off the loudspeaker so I can do my thing. If screaming continues to be your thing, do it and I'll see you on the ground.'*

*Kids want that third pilot embodying authority while validating experience makes the pilot so sturdy and safe."*

As Dr. Becky says it's our job to hold boundaries but allow children to have feelings about those boundaries. On the flip side, kids should not dictate our boundaries but we should also not dictate their feelings.

So what does that mean? It means that is our job to make the rules even if it upsets children, but we need to allow children to have feelings about the rules. Even if they are mad about the rules, our job is to hold those boundaries.

I tell parents to dress their children as if the Berrybrook playground is ten degrees colder than your backyard, due to the wind across the Berrybrook Fields. Children don't always like to adhere to that, because in their minds jackets and coats slow them down! Each day I hear teachers say something along the lines of "The temperature is telling us that we need to wear coats today. I understand you are frustrated because you didn't wear a coat to school, but the temperature is telling us that to keep you safe you'll need to wear another layer." That's just a simple example of how to acknowledge a child is upset but that you are not going to change your mind about the rules if they are having a tantrum. Dr. Becky also said "When you change your mind later after your kid freaked out, what you're saying is that was so out of bounds that I can't be the boss anymore. I'm scared of your reaction."

Does that mean you can never "go back" on something you've said to your child? No, but it needs to be clear that you are revising your decision based on other data and not due to their reaction.

Dr. Becky was easy to listen to and has a funny personality if you want to check out any podcasts with her. She says her approach works with kids, partners, and coworkers - not just with children....another plus in my book!



~ Mrs. Watts

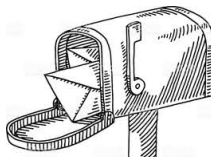


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**It's that time already!!**

### **2023-2024 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.**



# **Teacher's Notes**

## *Traditions*

When I think of traditions, I think of holiday traditions. My family always gave special pajamas to each other on Christmas Eve and we always have my grandmother's special mashed potato recipe on Thanksgiving. Traditions can connect and strengthen our group and generational bonds. They increase our sense of belonging and provide comfort and security, or in your family it could be a belief that is passed down through generations. It can be something that is done time after time or year after year. They can bring families together and enable people to reconnect with friends, such as an annual holiday party that you might go to every year. But my favorite thing about traditions is the memories they create.

I always cherished my family traditions that we did at home but when I started at Berrybrook I learned about a whole new set of traditions that were cherished just as much. These traditions at Berrybrook were passed down by past generations of teachers that really wanted to create some memories for the children as well as the parents and future teachers. They wanted to strengthen our connection with the school and the children; to help them learn respect, compassion and integrity.

Children love routine and consistency; family and school traditions can provide this to them year after year. It also helps the children manage changes throughout the year and gives them something to look forward to.

Some of the traditions at Berrybrook that I look forward to:

- \*Home visits - teachers conduct these visits to build a strong connection between home and school and also with their teachers. This helps the child to come to school with a sense of familiarity.

- \*Tapping the maple trees in the spring - all children see the sap that has been tapped by the older children drip into the buckets. Part of the tradition is that the children place their fingers under the running sap to get a taste. They learn the process of tapping, cooking it down to syrup and having it for snack.

- \*Making jelly - The children clean and pick the grapes off the vine, see how the grapes get boiled down into mush, then strained into juice with their help. They learn that the teachers then cook the juice on the stove with some other ingredients and it turns to jelly (hopefully!). The children really love to have the jelly for snack the next day and to share with their families.

Some of our cooking traditions also include making cornbread and butter for our Thanksgiving feasts, making sugar cookies for our Holiday Sing-along and making latkes to celebrate Hanukkah. The children really enjoy cooking for each other and it provides skills in areas such as math and science, as well as strengthening the home-school connection. These are just a few of the beautiful traditions at Berrybrook.

Some traditions do get lost in the shuffle from time to time at home and at school. We all get busy and staff may come and go but we will all continue here at Berrybrook to keep those traditions going. We hope all of you enjoy and cherish them just as much as we do.

Have a wonderful holiday season enjoying your own special traditions and creating many memories to last!

Happy Holidays!

**~ Ms. Connell**

*Ms. Connell teaches in the Beginners and the 3 Day Room 3 classes*

## ***Parent Association Notes***

We hope all of you and your families had a Happy Thanksgiving! The holiday season is a very busy time of year for everyone, and that includes our Berrybrook students and families. There are lots of fun activities and traditions planned at Berrybrook this month for everyone to look forward to.

We are excited to partner up with Friends of the Homeless of the South Shore this holiday season to help provide gifts for local families in need. You can find our Giving Tree in the school lobby!

There were some amazing masterpieces created at Plaster Fun Time, including sparkling superheroes, creative cupcakes, and decorative dinosaurs! Our next Family Fun Friday event will take place at Heritage Gardens on December 2nd. Gardens Aglow is a festive celebration of lights that has become a treasured holiday tradition, and we're looking forward to seeing those who can join us!

If you have any questions about this event, please reach out to Michelle Crowley at [Michelle.Megnia@gmail.com](mailto:Michelle.Megnia@gmail.com).

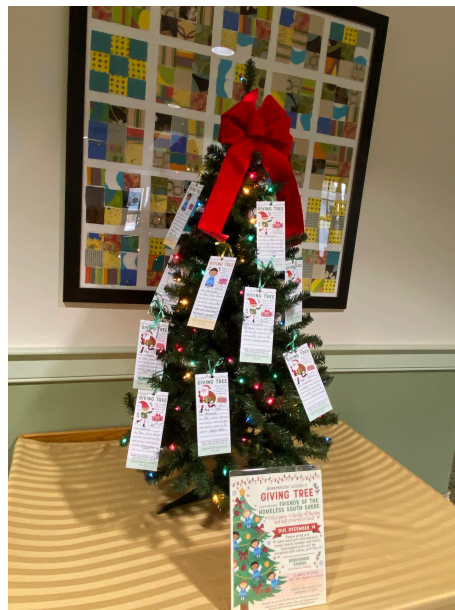
A big thank you to our Berrybrook families for your continued support and participation!

Thank you to everyone who has already paid their annual BPA dues. If you have not already, you may still send in your \$30 suggested contribution which goes directly to our student enrichment programs. Enrichment typically begins in October for the 4 and 5 day classes, and in previous years has included yoga, Irish step dancers, community workers and more! The Beginners, 2 and 3 Day classes will join in starting in January. Every Berrybrook parent is automatically a member of the Parents Association and are welcome to all BPA meetings.

Best Wishes and Happy Holidays!

*Alex Casamassima and Stephanie McGarry, Co-Presidents*

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



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

A Slow(er) Stroll Through the Holiday Season

With Thanksgiving behind us and the winter holidays upon us, I have been reflecting on happy memories from my childhood and ways to create special memories with my own children this season. It occurred to me that I associate many of my happiest holiday memories with particular songs, and it made me think about how important music has become to my five-year-old son over his last 2.5 years at Berrybrook.

I am continually struck by how excited he is to share the songs he learned at school when I pick him up, or to chat happily about how his class painted to music that day, often asking me to find the song so we can listen to it together; there is always someone humming a Berrybrook song at our house throughout the day.

Watching his love for music grow and knowing that songs from his childhood will always invoke happy memories has inspired me to bring more music into our home this holiday season. I look forward to many nights filled with Berrybrook holiday-sing-along songs with my children, and I would like to wish our community a peaceful Holiday and Happy New Year.

*Katie Parker*

Berrybrook Board of Directors





## **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.**