



February 2023

February 20 - 24
Wednesday, February 15

Vacation week
Board meeting via Zoom 7:30 pm



Notes from the Head of School

In the past two months, our community has endured traumatic events that no one should endure in their lifetime. Shortly before Christmas Laney Ladd, the older sister of a Berrybrook alum, died after a brief illness. The outpouring of support, along with the color purple swirling through the town, was nothing short of amazing. Days later in a neighboring town a young man, a senior in high school, took his own life. And then just a few short weeks after, children the ages of our students were killed in a horrific act of violence less than a mile from our school. The support for the surviving family, coupled with the plethora of unanswered questions, was also overwhelming.

All of these events upturn the natural order of things.... parents burying their children, violence in our quiet community. In the aftermath we are left with so many feelings - unease, grief, and the notion of trying to make sense of events that make no sense. So many people want to DO something, but are left wondering WHAT that could be. Grand gestures such as donation pages and meal trains are wonderful and provide comfort immediately, yet it's the weeks after a loss that can feel the most empty.

As with a mass shooting, the calls for reform and support are swift . . . and then quiets down until, unfortunately, the next act of violence. I urge everyone to not let their support ebb. Of course support others in the immediate aftermath but also reach out to those suffering on holidays, birthdays, and those milestones missed. Thoughts and prayers are great, but what we really need is support - financial funding for services

and more mental health providers to start. It's no secret that our whole world is in a mental health crisis and that resources are limited. The COVID pandemic only helped spotlight how stretched our mental health support services are, but little has changed. The cries for help were shouted, but not heeded.

While the majority of us are not mental health professionals, we can all be kind. Smile more at everyone. Hold a door open for the person behind you. Wave at a cute kid. Give a tired parent a "you're doing a good job" wink and a nod. You never know how much that smile might have turned someone's day around just a tiny bit. Tiny bits add up. Remember that any one of us can be impacted by grief, bereavement, traumatic events and that mental illness is NOT something to be ashamed of. When you have a sinus infection, you take an antibiotic. Why the shame if you are diagnosed with depression and take an anti-depressant? Even more so, why the shame to admit that we're not perfect? Of course there are some situations that would require a "game face" but why are we pretending that we've got everything handled one hundred percent of the time? Are we bad people for having a bad day? Of course not. I long for the day that the stigma of mental health is eradicated. And remember, we never know what other people may be dealing with or going through. As Glennon Doyle Melton, author of numerous books including *Carry On, Warrior* says, "People who need help sometimes look a lot like people who don't need help."

I say it often, and will repeat it again: Berrybrook is not just here for the enrolled student. My office is always open to anyone who wants to talk, cry, vent or all of the above. I may be able to offer advice, and if I cannot do so at that moment, I will do my very best to research and help find solutions if that's what you are seeking. But I repeat - we are here for you all, not just for the preschoolers. And we are here all the time even (and perhaps more importantly, especially) in the quiet moments.



~ Mrs. Watts



Valentine's Day Celebration

All of our classes will be celebrating Valentine's Day by delivering cards and enjoying a special Berrybrook snack.

We ask that the children bring a valentine for each classmate. Please remember, because we have children with food allergies, valentines should not include candy.

ALL CANDY SHOULD REMAIN AT HOME



The Berrybrook Summer Nature Program
*is offered during June and July on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and
Thursdays from 9:00 – 1:00.*

Children must be 4 by September 1st, (or a Berrybrook Beginner!) to register.

We also welcome children up to 7 years of age.

***Information about the program and registration process
is planned to be sent out the week of February 27, 2023.***

Teachers Notes

The "Month of Love"

Happy February! This month holds a celebration of the national holiday, Valentine's Day. Many people recognize this day special day by showing appreciation and love for one another. These days people are very busy and never seem to stop. The holiday can be a great opportunity to slow down and remind those you care about how much they mean to you. Aside from gifts and lots of chocolate, expressing compassionate feelings to your children is a year round occurrence. No matter what age, children seek comfort and warmth within the unconditional love they receive from trusted adults. Positive physical and emotional attention lead to both children and adults releasing lower amounts of a stress hormone called cortisol. In a world where times change so fast and it feels hard to keep up, let's think about little ways to connect more with your child both during and beyond the famous "month of love".

1. ***Eat meals together!***

Meal time offers your child an opportunity to decompress and open up about their day. This setting for dialog builds a great foundation for communication skills away from the hectic outside world. It can be as simple as a conversation of what you are having for dinner which may lead into a new understanding of health and nutrition.

2. ***Acknowledge artwork, and don't be afraid to get messy!***

In our classrooms we often see that children are most proud of their artwork when it is smothered in paint and glitter! As we like to say - it's all about the process. Children often create artwork based on what they may see or how they are feeling. It's important to ask questions about what they have created and understand that what might look like a scribble to the adult eye is your child's family in a spaceship all having ice cream and having the best day ever. Art is a form of expression and is a fun family activity to connect with each other, no matter what age.

3. ***Careful consideration of technology.***

Technology - where would we be without it!? It seems as if every day there is a new development in science and technology that helps adults navigate daily life ... from "hey Siri where can I buy more applesauce pouches" to making appointments online. However it also has negative effects on children. Less screen time has shown an increase in attention span and a decrease in overstimulation. Videos and online games are fun, but even adults sometimes find it difficult to limit time spent online. Adults and children alike greatly benefit from a balanced environment of technology within their daily schedules.

Being a second year teacher here at Berrybrook, it is clear to me that these children are loved both in and outside of their homes. The children often share funny and loving stories about family members and pets. In celebration of the "month of love" the children will be partaking in conversations about love and what it means to care for someone or something. Please know that each family is deeply appreciated by both your children and their teachers!

~ Miss Antoniou

Miss Antoniou teaches in the Beginners, 3 Day Room 3, and the 4 Day classes



2 and 3 Day Classes

Duxbury Post Office Field Trip 56 Depot Street

Remember to save the date, and meet your teachers there at 9 a.m.

3 Day Room 3: Tuesday, February 7

3 Day Room 1: Wednesday, February 8

2 Day Room 1: Friday, February 10



Snow Cancellation Reminder



Colder weather is here.....

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 9 am arrival time. In the event Duxbury Public Schools require a two hour delay, the AM session, as well as Lunch Bunch, will be cancelled.

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

Once the snow flies, children should bring snow pants and snow boots with them every day. Children are welcome to bring slippers, sneakers, or crocs with them to make sure they are comfortable in the classroom.



Parents Association Notes

Winter is in full swing and early January brought us some milder temperatures which provided the students the opportunity to play outdoors and explore the Berrybrook Nook. We welcomed the first snowstorm of the year, which arrived mid-month, and gave the children a different perspective at the school as they took wintery walks outside, built snowmen and enjoyed some snow related activities inside their classrooms!

Enrichment

Yoga is officially underway for the entire school. It is amazing to see the smiles on the first year students when they see Miss Kim in the big room and learn that she is there to teach them. The Beginners and the 2 and 3 Day students are just beginning their yoga journey, but the 4 and 5 Day students are now proficient at many yoga poses. The older students will continue to learn how yoga is beneficial to their bodies. Make sure to ask your child about their yoga experience. Some upcoming enrichment activities include our annual visit from the dental hygienist and Jesse from Jesse Stiglich Music School.

Family Fun Fridays

Thank you to all the families who attended our Family Fun Friday event at Tumblefun. It was a packed house and the children enjoyed jumping and tumbling with friends.

Registration is open for the February Family Fun Friday at MixItUp Kitchen in Duxbury! Each child will decorate freshly baked sugar cookies (made ahead) in assorted heart shapes with royal icing and sprinkles. We'll decorate a bakery box to bring our treats home along with a recipe. Register [here](#) for the event!

Resources for Maternal Mental Health

We would like to share a resource for pregnant or postpartum mothers, of which there are many in the Berrybrook community. Postpartum Support International is an organization that promotes awareness, prevention, and treatment of maternal mental health. Please visit their website [here](#) to learn more information about these various mental health conditions, find support groups, and access a directory of providers in your area that have specialized training in perinatal mental health.

Help Support Your Child's Enrichment Program

As always, thank you to those who have already paid their BPA dues! If you have yet to do so, it's not too late! Forms are available at the BPA table for contributions. A big thank you to our Berrybrook families for your continued support and participation! Please let us know if you have any questions, comments, or concerns. You can email us at berrybrookparentsassociation@gmail.com.

Alex Casamassima and Stephanie McGarry
Co-Presidents

From The Board of Directors

Joy in the everyday

An amber autumn leaf. A wooden block tower built with a friend. A six rung set of monkey bars, a picture book, freezing water into ice. Flower buds, dew drops, a baby doll, a wagon. A slide, a stick, a happy song, a sunbeam lighting up a prism. A vanilla ice cream cone.

All of these things are so simple, so everyday, but also so extraordinary in the eyes and hands and minds of our children. I have always loved Berrybrook because of its celebration of these things...for the beauty of an unadorned, uncomplicated lesson, or moment of play.

There can be so much joy in everyday things. I remember marveling at the slowing down and savoring my children learned to do during their time in these classrooms and yards. I feel it is something special they carry with them as they go off into the world...a special appreciation of simple, everyday things and their magic.

- ***Beth Marois***

Berrybrook Board of Directors



From our friends at Duxbury Public Schools:



Please see our developing news at duxburyplaygrounds.com about Laney's Playground! We at DEPP are working tirelessly to get Laney's Playground built in 2023. To do this we need to raise \$280k by Valentines Day! ❤️💜



We need your help! How can you help?



Make a gofundme donation [here](#)



Buy a brick to show your support!: <https://www.fundraisingbrick.com/online-orders/chandlerpta/>



Ask your company about donation matching!

Stay tuned over the next month to follow our progress towards the goal of building Laney's Playground this fall!

[#laneylove](#) [#lovethewayweplay](#)