



November 2023

November 2	4 and 5 Day field trip
November 10	Veterans Day - no school
November 22, 23, 24	Thanksgiving Break - no school
November 29	Board meeting 7:30



Notes from the Head of School

Considering that the statistics going into the week before the Harvest Festival showed that fourteen of the prior twenty weeks (70%) had been rainy, it was no surprise that we were all on edge regarding the weather for our annual event. In the past we've had hot, humid festivals, and chilly, cloudy festivals. Last year we had a near perfect day with sunny, clear skies. While I personally would prefer a seasonable day where I am in jeans with a chunky autumn sweater and not in a raincoat or sweating profusely, regardless of the weather the common theme of the Festival is fun. The children really could care less if it's raining, but it's the safety piece of the likely slippery playground equipment or the possibility of a tractor stuck in the mud that is always in the back of my mind. Thankfully those worries were far from my mind on October 14, after worrying all week about controlling the uncontrollable. So much planning and hard work goes in to the day, and it's near impossible to schedule the vendors for a rain date that won't break the bank.

Once we knew we were in the clear for the weather, a tiny bit of stress let up. But only a little bit. Keeping an eye on everyone during the Festival can be a lot, making sure that no one gets through the gate without an adult and trying to have a pulse on where everyone is at all times. I don't move much from the gate during those three hours so I don't get to see much around the bend toward the climbing structure but I do still get to see a lot from my vantage point. This year I saw the newest ones from the Baby Boom over these past months joining their older Berrybrook students ~ there were strollers and baby carriers as far as the eye could see! This year there seemed to be an abundance of Berrybrook alums too, and I think there were a few times I could almost hear the song "Chariots of Fire" as former classmates reunited ~ slow run to each other and all!

Each year I sweat the logistics of the Festival, but I need to remember at the end of the day, the measure of success is all the smiles I see on everyone's faces. And this year might have been one of the most successful Fests yet!

~ Mrs. Watts



Colder weather is on its way.....

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 November. Once the snow flies, children should bring snow pants and snow boots with them every day. 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

Making New Friends

“There are no strangers here; only friends you haven't met yet” - William Butler Yeats

Empathy, Loyalty, Trust, Honesty and Respect: 5 virtues we should all strive to embody. While these qualities are arguably the most important to cultivate within yourself to be a good friend; there are many more aspects to maintaining true friendships. Most of all friendships start at school, some come from our jobs and others at social events.

At Berrybrook we start to see friendships forming between the students as young as three years old. Developmentally, the children all start with parallel play - they may play side-by-side without many interactions. Then as the students are ready, they start to learn each other's names. They might find something in common or they comment on each other's clothes or backpacks. Some children have a clear idea by then of who are their friends and can name them. They might look for their friends when they arrive at preschool and play with just them. They might even take interest in having playdates.

Other children at this age might not have a “special” friend in particular or even name all the children in the classroom but they are just as content with playing in a group setting in and out of the classroom.


By four years of age, we start to see children that will tell the difference between “my friend” and other children they know in the classroom. Some children seem to make friends easily and get energy from being around a lot of other people. Others can find this tiring and overwhelming. They might be slower to warm up and need time to watch what happens before joining in with a group.

Children need to learn and practice friendship skills. As children play with others, they build these skills that help them with friendships now and in the future. These are skills like sharing, taking turns, cooperating, listening to others, managing disagreements and being respectful. We encourage and practice all these skills everyday at Berrybrook. Some of the ways we “practice” at Berrybrook is during group time. We will ask the children, “What they think a friend is?” or we ask, “What do friends do for each other?”. This provides an open discussion with the children about friendships. Another skill we practice is team building. In our classrooms we provide a variety of blocks and encourage the children to build a tower, castle or even a city. This will give the children an opportunity to work together to build something, take turns, and share ideas.

Preschool is the age at which children start to make friends and build relationships with their peers. We, at Berrybrook know that friendships are important during the early years because this is a time children learn about the ‘give and take’ of relationships. By sharing experiences, feelings, and interacting with one another, children learn how to meet the social needs of themselves and others.

At Berrybrook we sing a song about friendship with the children entitled “Make New Friends”. In the 2 and 3 Day classes we sing this every day at snack time, you might hear your children singing it at home. The older children in the 4/5 day classes also sing this song, but they additionally learn how to include some sign language with the song. It has been a very special song here at Berrybrook for many, many years.

“Make new friends and keep the old, one is silver and the other's gold.

A circle's round, it has no end, that's how long I want to be your friend”. 

~ Ms. Connell

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

Parent Association Notes

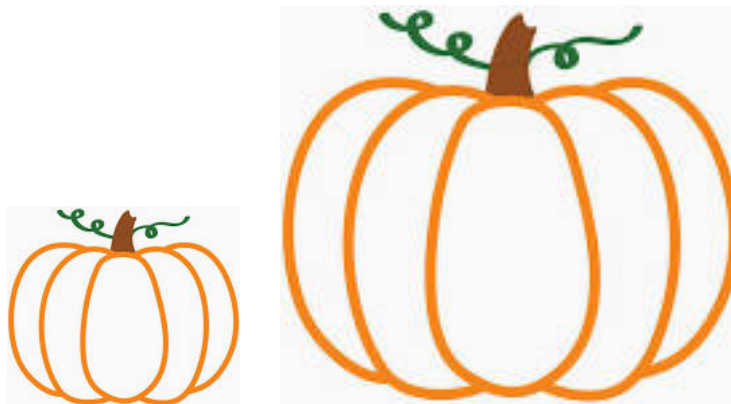
What an outstanding turnout for this year's Harvest Festival! As we were biting our nails while viewing the weather report all week, Mrs. Watts kept her cool and stated, with conviction, "it does not rain on the Harvest Festival." That prophecy rang true, as the sun shined down on Berrybrook in more ways than one that day! Our creative, generous, and dedicated Berrybrook families showed up BIG this year. We'd like to give a giant **THANK YOU** to everyone who attended, donated, offered your creative skills, and volunteered your time! We couldn't have done it without you, nor the steadfast support of Mrs. Watts and Mrs. Piccuito. The proceeds from this year's Harvest Festival were enough to support substantial yoga and percussion programs for our children!

A portion of BPA funds are also used to support our community outreach efforts, one of which will be initiated this month. We are coordinating a (gently used) **clothing and baby gear drive for the Bethesda House**; a local shelter that provides a temporary home that is safe and nurturing for young mothers, either pregnant or parenting their baby. We will be sending out an email soon with more details!

Our Family Fun Friday at Sauchuk Pumpkin Patch & Corn Maze had a great turnout! We were so happy the rain held off and the children were able to enjoy all the fun activities. Thank you to all who attended. Our next Family Fun Friday event is planned for Friday, November 17th at Tumblefun in Marshfield. Please let us know if you'd like to be added to a waitlist.

Alex Casamassima and Stephanie McGarry
Co-Presidents

berrybrookparentsassociation@gmail.com



From The Board of Directors

Have you ever been into the basement of Berrybrook? You really should, although I'm not sure how Mrs. Watts or Mr. Murray will feel about me suggesting it. I'll describe it to you instead:

The basement is huge, running under the whole school, with a dedicated room for the furnace and other mechanics, but the majority is a large space with the storage of all the Berrybrook magic not in active use. The basement has rows and rows of shelves, tidily organized, filled with labeled bins of activities and supplies running (almost) to the ceiling. You walk up and down the aisles, and it feels like a treasure trove, or a museum, or a toy store. All of this, right under the main floor of Berrybrook, maintained by the staff. You don't see it, but it's there. Some of the items are years and years old. I love to think about the basement when I walk in sometimes, right under our feet. How many teachers and children have touched those artifacts. How many little minds and humans are shaped by them, a community built on tradition from one year to the next.

The November newsletter is often about gratitude, and I think most of us feel that every day for Berrybrook. Thanksgiving is also about community and tradition, and how history shapes us. This year, I want to recognize the invisible and visible history that lives on at Berrybrook, under the literal and figurative floorboards of the school.

Claire Gochal

Berrybrook Board of Directors



Snow Days/School Cancellation

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 will be cancelled as well as Lunch Bunch.**

A Season of Giving

Kingston Animal Shelter Donations

The month of November, as everyone knows, is traditionally the start of the holiday season. Here at Berrybrook, it is the time of year that teachers share yet another meaningful tradition with the introduction of a Berrybrook Community Service Project that was started many years ago. Families may bring in donations of supplies needed to benefit the Kingston Animal Shelter. To receive these donations, boxes will be decorated by the children in each class with cut-out pictures of dogs, cats, and other animals. These boxes will be placed near the front door to collect items brought to school. There will also be “Pennies For The Pound” jars in the classrooms for the children to add their coins brought from home. There will be class discussions about “what is an animal shelter?”, “adoption of pets”, and “being respectful of all living things.” It is important for children to develop empathy and practice kindness. Taking care of pets and other animals is a meaningful way for children to develop these traits. Any and all donations will be appreciated by the animals and the shelter. Thank you for your help!

Some of the items needed are:

- * Lowes, Petsmart, Petco, etc. gift cards
- * Cat Litter (Clay, Clumping)
- * Paper Towels
- * Canned Sardines, Tuna, Anchovies (for humane cat trapping)
- * Kitchen Trash Bags (13-15 gallon size)
- * Bleach
- * Baking Soda
- * Cheese (string or squirting can type to fill KONG toys)
- * Copy Paper (8 1/2 x 11)
- * Classical Music or Nature Sounds CDs
- * Laundry Detergent (HE)





CANDY FOR THE TROOPS

We're gifting extra Halloween
candy to our soldiers for a
sweet treat!

**Collecting now through
Friday, November 17th**

In the Berrybrook School office!

