



May 2025

***Tuesday, May 6**

***Thursday, May 8**

Monday, May 26

3 Day, 4 Day, and 5 Day Class Pictures

2 Day and Beginners Class Pictures

Memorial Day - no school

***Rain dates will be scheduled as needed**



Notes from the Head of School

**** Below is a reprint from 2021, which gave me a chuckle when I reread it as my middle now has his drivers license and some things never change ****

A few weeks ago I was listening to a podcast about intermittent fasting and the guest speaker was a former NFL player. I thought about skipping that episode, believing that what he had to say might not be meaningful. A few minutes in I heard him say “Choice - that’s a superpower. Our choices are our superpowers.” Wait, WHAT?!? How could I have almost missed hearing one of the most profound phrases I’ve ever heard?? Studies show we are faced with up to 35,000 choices each day. We don’t tend to think of “how much toothpaste should I squeeze onto my toothbrush” as a major choice but who knows which of our ‘small’ choices will have larger impacts on our lives? I’m not sure about you but it’s exhausting just thinking that we make that many decisions every day!

I started this newsletter on a Saturday morning while my oldest was at an appointment and I took up my usual spot in the waiting room. I was trying to reflect on how many choices I had made already; at 10:05am, I couldn’t have made that many choices right? But then I thought about it...my son has his driver’s permit and just the drive alone to the appointment was an abundance of choices. First, do I even let him drive us here? Do we take the back roads or the

try the highway for the first time (!)? When do I tell him that he's too close to the mailbox? Am I setting a bad example catching up on some emails while he's driving since he's doing well, or will that set a bad example? Should I tell him when he can go a bit faster, or should he learn that on his own? WHEN DO I TELL HIM THAT HE'S TOO CLOSE TO THE MAILBOX?!? After the appointment was over (and my blood pressure returned to baseline) we got to do this all over again - with the added choice of: drive-through or carry-out for the traditional after appointment milkshake stop at Chick-fil-A? After that two hours, it was easy to see how quickly opportunities for choices can grow exponentially.

I try to teach my children that life is all about choices, even when you may not think you have any. It's also important to remember that by not deciding, you are deciding to do nothing; to quote philosopher William James "When you have to make a choice and don't make it, that is in itself a choice." I try to give them confidence-traction with smaller choices before they are faced with bigger life decisions. I also want them to know that all choices have consequences - both positive and negative. You chose to study longer and then you earned a higher grade than you expected? Wise choice! You decided to stay up later than your bedtime and now you're falling asleep in your cereal? Not so-good-choice. When they make a not-so-great choice, I often ask them later if they would have made a different choice if they could. Hopefully such scenarios will help mold their later-in-life choices, as they have these earlier experiences to reference. Our superpower of making choices is unique to us, as only we can make choices for ourselves (but must learn to live with the consequences). We're responsible for modeling good-choice making until our little ones have the experience to make their own but for now, help give them the confidence and allow them choices along the way. If you have time, let them choose which way to go home. Let them choose to take a left or a right turn to get to your house, and see which way might take longer if you choose to head in a direction different than you usually take. Just make sure that both choices will lead you where you need to end up and don't get too close to the mailbox!

~ Mrs. Watts

For the record, I decided that I wasn't brave enough yet for the highway OR for him to maneuver those tight drive-through lanes!!

Teacher's Notes

Inside the Berrybrook entry gate, if you turn to the left, you'll see a little wooden playhouse. On a panel of the playhouse there is a sign that reads, "There's no place like Berrybrook". It's a fairly new addition to the space, and was handmade by our very own Mrs. Knight. The moment I first saw the sign I was struck with a mash-up of memories and feelings, all culminating in a deep sense of nostalgia and love for this magical place called Berrybrook.

In September of 2013 my daughter Stella and I walked through the gate and into Room 1 on her Berrybrook Visiting Day. We had recently moved to the area from the Midwest, and were still adjusting to a new life. The classroom was filled with strangers – little ones and adult ones – watching, wondering, and eventually greeting each other. Any tension or unease we felt was replaced by an invigorating promise of making new friends. Over the months that followed, names and numbers were exchanged, playful afternoons were planned, and strong bonds were formed; we started to feel grounded. Both Stella and I still count the friends we made that year among our closest and most cherished.

Nine Septembers later, I started my job as a teacher in Room 3 at Berrybrook. Stepping through the gate on my first day, I was both nervous and comfortable at the same time; being back at this place felt natural. Several months into that year I was at my house sorting through a box of mementos in the basement, and discovered a letter, carefully archived by my mom, dated September 1983. The paper was yellowed and decorated with teddy bears. It was a hand-written letter from my preschool teachers to me, welcoming me to my first year of school. A wave of that same feeling - the warmth of nostalgia - hit me.

Here we are, in 2025, time lurching forward seemingly faster every year. Teaching at Berrybrook reminds me that there is always a place you can go to slow down, to lose yourself in the dreams of childhood. It also reinforces my belief that just as change is inevitable, so is the fact that some things stay the same. So the next time you walk through the Berrybrook gate and notice the sign, maybe it will make you think, remember, or imagine. Or maybe it will just make you feel happy, like the way it feels when you come home.

~ ***Meg McLaughlin***

Mrs. McLaughlin teaches the 3 Day and Beginners classes

Parents Association Notes

Hello Berrybrook Parents!

We hope everyone enjoyed April vacation! We are wrapping up the school year with a couple more fun events, and we hope you can join us!

We are looking for a new co-president! If you are interested in volunteering for this position, please email us at berrybrookparentassociation!@gmail.com for more information.

UPCOMING BPA DATES

- May 5-9 - Teacher Appreciation Week

Family Fun Fridays: We are so excited to be bringing back our annual ice cream cruise for our last Family Fun Friday of the year! The cruises are booked for Friday, May 30th. You can still register [here](#). Please email Michelle at berrybrookparentsassociation@gmail.com to be added to a waitlist, if needed.

Apparel: If you haven't already, be sure to check out our Berrybrook apparel. We have toddler/kids sweatshirts, t-shirts/long sleeves, hats and fleece blankets available for purchase. All proceeds go towards enrichment program funding.

Stephanie McGarry, Emma Kender, and Michelle Crowley
BPA Co-Presidents

The Board of Directors

It has been a few years since I have written a note for the Berrybrook newsletter. I served on the Board from 2014-2020, as president the last four years. I rejoined this year for another three year term, as a new member of the Development Committee. I appreciate the opportunity to reconnect with the school and the community and to hopefully provide some wisdom and guidance from my prior experience on the Board, when we oversaw the creation of the Nook, the transition to Mrs. Watts becoming the Head of School, and the school's early response to the pandemic.

Much has changed in our world since 2020, but amidst all those changes, I am heartened to see that Berrybrook has remained a constant, providing children and families with a nurturing, engaging environment that prioritizes joy, exploration, and connection. I am also heartened to see that Berrybrook, though always true to its mission and traditions, is open to new ways of serving children and families, piloting an expanded Lunch Bunch offering this year and ensuring that the Nook remains easily accessible for years to come. Additionally, I have a renewed sense of pride in Berrybrook, as they have remained committed to providing an exceptional preschool experience to **all** children, setting themselves apart with the tuition assistance program that helps any family access all that Berrybrook has to offer.

Much has also changed in my own family since my early days on the Board. My oldest, who finished the four-day program in 2015, is now in high school and just returned home from a school-sponsored international trip. Though we missed him, we knew he was ready for such an adventure, in part because he carries with him so many lessons from his Berrybrook days. Through the painstaking process of putting on his own snow gear and learning to pump on the swings without a push, he learned independence and resiliency. Through free play and a focus on nature, he developed confidence and gained skills in communication and observation. During his time at Berrybrook, he cultivated curiosity and interest in the world around him, while building friendships he still has. He was not the only Berrybrook alum on this trip; among others, one of his very first friends from the three-day class was there with him. As a parent and a Board member, it is so rewarding to see these kids grow and thrive, building from their strong Berrybrook foundation.

Rachel Ezell
Berrybrook Board of Directors