



March 2025

Friday, March 14

Enrollment Contracts Due



## Notes from the Head of School

Last week over winter break, my middle child and I drove to look at a college in Virginia. Twelve hundred miles, 9 states traveled, two nights in a hotel. By the time I unfurled my body from the car late Thursday night, all I wanted was two Tylenol PM and my own bed. As I ascended the stairs to Slumberville, Mr. Watts mentioned that to celebrate his younger sister's birthday, his family was going to a casino on Sunday, two hours away (and in a state I had JUST driven through), and would I also like to go? I grimaced and said, "probably not but let's chat tomorrow".

The next morning, my answer was now a "Heck No". Although disappointed, my husband knew that I was making a good choice for me. As I have said to him before, when you say "yes" to one thing you are saying "no" to another. In the same vein, when you say "no" to one thing you are saying "yes" to another. Saying yes to traveling to a place I wasn't thrilled to be at, meant I was saying no to enjoying the last day of break and getting myself into a good head space for school the next morning. Saying no meant I was saying yes to spending time with my daughter, who had been schlepped around between home and Nana's while we were traveling. Saying no meant I was saying YES to me.

Did I feel guilty? A tiny bit. Does this mean that we should be always putting ourselves first and just saying no to everything that has not one iota of interest to us? Of course not. However I do think that many parents - and especially moms - tend to drench ourselves in that ever present Mom Guilt and we frequently find ourselves saying yes to things that our inner self is screaming NO! Let's reframe that. Rather than feeling that we are saying NO to things, let's be sure we are saying YES to our important selves!

~ Mrs. Watts

## **Teacher's Notes**

### *Springtime Science at Berrybrook*

Spring is just 3 weeks away, and I for one am eagerly awaiting her arrival. I have decided to focus my article on our Springtime curriculum since the season of rebirth and growth brings with it hope for warmer days ahead. The 4 and 5 Day Classes will be busy with many spring themed activities. As I thought about writing this article, it stood out to me how so many of these activities are science based.

Science in preschool should encourage experimentation, investigation, exploration, and observation. Preschoolers are naturally curious about the world around them. As preschool teachers, it is our responsibility to nurture that curiosity and provide them with opportunities to participate in many science activities.

In Room 2, the 4 and 5 Day children have been watching our pumpkin plants and bulbs grow in our classroom. From time to time we will take out a ruler and measure the growth. They take turns watering the plants. The children make observations and comparisons about the plants' growth. Sometimes this is a large group activity, where we talk about the plants and form a hypothesis about how much growth may or may not have happened since our last discussion. We then investigate with our ruler, and observe by making comments and documenting the growth on a chart. But there are many times that the children discuss the plants on their own, in small groups. They compare the plants, and make thoughtful guesses about why one is so much bigger than the other. This is preschool science!

Color mixing is a big component of our spring curriculum. We use the water table for hands-on, open ended experimentation as well as incorporating art activities into the fun. Finger painting with a piece of plastic wrap on top so fingers stay clean makes this activity do-able and enjoyable for those children who prefer not to touch paint. There are also some great pieces of childrens' literature that teach the topic of color mixing while also being thoroughly entertaining, such as *The Great Blueness* by Arnold Lobel and *Little Blue and Little Yellow* by Leo Lionni.

We will be tapping the maple trees soon! What an amazing experience! To be able to see first hand where and how maple syrup is created! I myself have learned so much over my years at Berrybrook, and feel very lucky to be a part of it all. These young children take it in stride, to them it is just another fun Berrybrook activity. But to have the experience of being there when the trees are tapped, tasting the sap as it drips from the tree, helping to strain it when it is brought inside, watching it boil on the stove, and then getting to taste it on top of ice cream! Not only did they witness it all happen, but they were active participants!!! This is preschool science above and beyond what most people ever get to be a part of.

The 4 and 5 Day Classes will be doing art projects that are based on pussy willows and forsythia. We will have the actual plants there for the children to look at, touch, and observe. Most adults I know have no idea what forsythia is, these 4 and 5 year olds will

know. As they use their creativity to represent each plant in the form of artwork, they will use science based language to describe what they see. Again, this is preschool science!

The entire school will be so very excited to see the bulbs we planted back in the fall sprout up from our playground garden beds. How special it is for each class to have their own garden bed to care for and observe. Not only is this a class science and nature activity, but it is teaching responsibility and empowering the children. They are coming to understand that they have the ability to foster life and bring more beauty to our world by doing something as simple as planting a bulb.

I walked down to the Nook recently, and I saw a chipmunk scurry by. I heard the beautiful bird song of springtime approaching. On the way back I saw a turkey off in the distance pecking at the ground, and the majestic hawk soaring over the Berrybrook field. I thought to myself, how lucky we are as teachers to have all of this nature based science around us everyday. From my experience, science is probably the most overlooked component of many early childhood curriculums, but certainly not here at Berrybrook. Here, science is all around us, it's hands-on, it's a part of our day-to-day life. It is something that seems very normal and regular to the children of Berrybrook. But for this preschool teacher, who grew up in a city, and taught in mostly urban environments, I was always struggling to find appropriate science activities for preschoolers. Here at Berrybrook, I find preschool science to be almost as magical as childhood itself.

*~ Mrs. Bonner*

*Mrs. Bonner teaches in the 5 Day class*



## Parents Association Notes

Hello Berrybrook Parents!

We hope everyone had a wonderful February vacation! The BPA has been busy this year coordinating enrichment opportunities, organizing Family Fun Fridays, and preparing for the Spring Fling. As it's finally beginning to feel like Spring is just around the corner, our ticket PRESALE for the Spring Fling will begin next week. Keep an eye out for a Sign Up Genius, we will be offering tickets at a discounted price for a short period of time! The Spring Fling will be held **Saturday, May 17th** from 1 - 4.

### UPCOMING BPA DATES

- March 14 - Family Fun Friday at Berrybrook with Ryan's Tall Tales
- May 17 - Spring Fling Family Event

**Family Fun Fridays:** Thank you to all who joined us at Little Hands Craft Corner for our February Family Fun Friday! The children explored their creative side at the various play areas and also got to partake in a Valentine's Day craft.

We are looking forward to our next FFF in March with Big Ryan's Tall Tales at Berrybrook! If you are interested in joining the waitlist please email Michelle Crowley at [berrybrookparentsassociation@gmail.com](mailto:berrybrookparentsassociation@gmail.com).

**Spring Fling:** Please keep an eye out for the Sign Up Genius with volunteer opportunities in the next few weeks. We rely on the BPA members to help make this a fun-filled event for the kids and their families. We hope that you will consider volunteering for one of the openings!

**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.

**Other News:** We are looking for a new co-president! If you are interested in volunteering for this position, please email us at [berrybrookparentsassociation@gmail.com](mailto:berrybrookparentsassociation@gmail.com) for more information.

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! We ask for a \$40 contribution per family, which goes directly toward student enrichment in and out of the classroom. A big thank you to our Berrybrook families for your continued support and participation!

[CLICK HERE FOR A FULL CALENDAR OF BPA EVENTS](#)

Stephanie McGarry, Emma Kender, and Michelle Crowley  
[berrybrookparentsassociation@gmail.com](mailto:berrybrookparentsassociation@gmail.com)

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

I have been reflecting lately on how much has changed since our very first day at Berrybrook with our first born – who is now 7. I remember the morning vividly. My heart was racing as I hugged Ben goodbye and watched him walk into school, then sat in the car feeling terrified to leave the parking lot. I watched as all the other families left. I even called my husband “I can’t seem to start the car and drive away; you might have to come get me!” Really, it was weight of all the questions and fears. Will he be okay? Will he make friends? Will he thrive without me? Who will watch out for him the way I do? — it all pressed heavily on my heart.

But something magical happened. Something I am sure we all see in our children...

Little by little, as the days turned into weeks and the weeks into months, I started to see a transformation. Ben was excited to share stories about new friends and discoveries and coming home with a sense of pride and joy in his independence.

What I didn’t expect was how much we would grow during this time, too. As our child learned to trust his teachers and peers, we learned to trust the process. As he gained confidence in his abilities, we found more confidence in our parenting. Berrybrook didn’t just nurture our child—it has nurtured us as parents too. When it came time to send our little guy Zac to school, the weight of leaving him and all the same fears came back, just as heavy. Except this time, I knew he was going to blossom in ways he maybe wouldn’t without Berrybrook.

The community here has been such an instrumental part of our journey. From the teachers who always see the best in every child, to the fellow parents who shared kind words and smiles. Berrybrook has felt like a second home—a place where we are growing together and that weight of parenthood that we carry gets a little lighter as the days pass. While our focus is always on our children – let’s also remember the growth we are making as parents with the help of our Berrybrook village!

~ *Katie Hanlon*  
Board of Directors

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**C o n g r a t u l a t i o n s  
t o t h e P a t t e r s o n F a m i l y !**



**W e l c o m e  
R o r y P a r k s  
( b i g b r o t h e r A r c h i e i s i n t h e 4 D a y  
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