

## June 2025

<b>Wednesday, June 4</b>	<b>3 Day class Ice Cream Day</b>
<b>Thursday, June 5</b>	<b>4 Day class Ice Cream Day</b>
<b>Friday, June 6</b>	<b>Beginners, 2 Day and 5 Day classes Ice Cream Day</b>



### Notes from the Head of School

♪♪ I Scream ,You Scream, We All Scream For Ice Cream ♪♪

With temps the last week of May in the mid-forties it doesn't seem possible that here we are on the cusp of our traditional Ice Cream Days! Yet here we are and once again it seems like time is a thief. The students who cried every day those first few days are confidentially striding into their classroom and ready for their next journey. "Senioritis" of the 4 and 5 Day students is in full effect, where they have almost outgrown their Berrybrook selves and are SO ready for kindergarten.

It is not without the contributions of so many that makes Berrybrook. We are in the middle of our NAEYC reaccreditation (by the time this newsletter comes out, our visit should be complete!). Part of the process involves creating program and classroom portfolios which is a huge undertaking. At the beginning of my program portfolio, I include some thoughts to share with the validator which to me tries to explain Berrybrook. In part, my prelude says:

*I am so proud of Berrybrook and all it represents. I am humbled each and every time I walk into this school with its seventy year history and traditions. Berrybrook, through my various roles during my over twenty years here, has helped shape me as a professional, a mom, a colleague, a wife, a leader, an aunt, a friend, and more.*

*The portfolios are a beautiful way to demonstrate that Berrybrook follows and adheres to all state and national regulations, and in fact, goes beyond those requirements. I also*

*feel compelled to write about what cannot be measured, but I am certain that whoever walk into Berrybrook can feel it.*

*We often speak of the “Berrybrook Way” which is not simple to describe but yet is so simple. The Berrybrook Way is a state of mind, a way of being. It’s a feeling you get when you walk through the front gate. It’s knowing that the focus is on the children, and helping shape them into productive members of society. It’s a place where we know that we are all teachers, regardless of age, and that we all learn from each other. It’s stopping to think of another’s perspective as well as our own. All of us who work Berrybrook have had a family member at least once comment that we are ‘Berrybrooking them’ ... What does that mean you ask? It’s a way of rephrasing things from a negative to a positive. “Don’t run” becomes “Please walk”, “Don’t whine” becomes “Please use a speaking voice so I can understand you”, “Get off the table” becomes “We sit in chairs at the table”. Respect and validation is crucial at Berrybrook, whether we are working with children or adults, and our goal is to be spreading the Berrybrook Way through our families, who can then spread it throughout the world. The impact could be exponential and amazing. There is a venue in town where many families have birthday parties, and the owners of the venue often remark that they know when it’s a group of Berrybrook students celebrating because “you can just tell, from the way they speak to each other”.*

*What also cannot be measured is the amount of activity in all our our minds, both in and out of school, and how we can really never turn our minds off. It’s the calls and texts before and after school between teachers who think of other ways to reach a child who may be struggling. It’s not “checking off a box” in regards to curriculum, because for us each and every lesson plan is a life lesson. It’s also the alumni who, on a half day from school, RUN into Berrybrook to see their former teachers and the administration to report all about their “big school” and to also tell how much they wish they could be back at Berrybrook. It’s the parents who we run into many years down the road who also tell us now much they wish they could be back at Berrybrook when things were simpler, and to thank us for how much Berrybrook impacted not only their child(ren) but also their family, their friendships, and more. It’s the support that families give to other families in the class - Meal Trains to celebrate a new baby, helpful advice to those who have experienced similar situations, support when a family experiences a tragedy.*

*I wish the reader of this portfolio could read every “Notes from the Head of School” I have written throughout the years for our monthly newsletter. I am proud of them, and feel they exude what and who we are.*

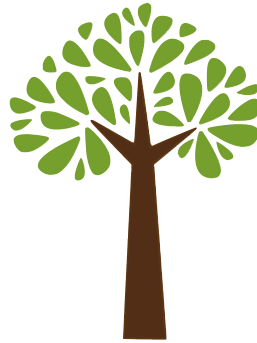
*In 1954, Mrs. Katharine Mann founded Berrybrook with a dream “to provide a place to develop self esteem and confidence, to help a child not to be afraid to fail – to learn by trying.” She wanted children to have the opportunity to explore and create, to learn from hands on experience, to learn to handle feelings and to accept them, to search out beauty in the world around them, to delight in exercising their bodies and to find out what they can do; a program that gives children time to develop their own ideas and to find their own answers.”*

*Not a day goes by where I don't think of her and her impact on not only the thousands of children associated with Berrybrook (my three included), but also what an amazing woman she was. As a pioneer in the early education field, along with being a female small business owner in the 1950s - WOW! What a woman, and I am so very proud to help carry out her vision each and every day.*

Thank you for your part in Berrybrook's history this past year. Whether you are moving on to a new chapter or staying with us another year, know that the Berrybrook gates are always open to you and your family.

Enjoy the summer!

☀️ Mrs. Watts



## Berrybrook School Summer Nature Program

We have limited spaces left in our Summer Nature Program:

Week 3 - July 1, 2, 3

Week 4 - July 8, 9, 10 (1 spot)

Week 5 - July 15, 16, 17 (1 spot)

Week 6 - July 22, 23, 24 (1 spot)

Reach out to Mrs. Watts if you are interested in joining us this July!

# **Teacher's Notes**

## ***Learning Through Summer Fun***

Summer is the perfect time for preschoolers to learn through play! Whether they are building sandcastles, pretending to be animals, or running through the sprinkler; young children are discovering new things every day. Play helps them grow their imaginations, solve problems, and build important social skills without even realizing they are learning!

Summer is full of exciting learning moments. Collecting rocks or leaves turns into a nature scavenger hunt. Splashing in the water teaches cause and effect. Making a pretend lemonade stand builds early math and language skills. The world becomes a classroom when children are given the time and space to explore, wonder, and create. Here are some things we do at Berrybrook that you can do at home to continue learning during the Summer ...

*Nature Walk Counting:* Count birds, leaves or steps while walking outside.

*Water Play Science :* Use cups, spoons, and sponges in a water bin to explore pouring, floating and sinking.

*Sidewalk Chalk Games:* Draw letters, numbers or shapes and play hopscotch-style games to identify them.

*Cooking Together:* Measure ingredients, count scoops, or talk about colors and textures while making simple snacks.

*Scavenger Hunts:* Make a list of things to find by color, shape or size. This is great for vocabulary and observation skills.

*Sing and Move:* Sing favorite songs, add hand motions and props, or make up dances. Music builds memory and rhythm.

*Story Time Anywhere:* Bring books to the park, beach, or backyard for a relaxing read-aloud under the sun. Adding props to a story time is always a plus!

Families can help support this kind of learning by keeping things simple and playful. Reading books under a shady tree, building a blanket fort on a rainy day, or baking together can all spark curiosity. Spending time together, adding a little creativity and some summer fun can make learning joyous and meaningful at home.

Here are some wonderful picture books to enjoy with your child this summer:

\* *And Then Comes Summer* by Tom Brenner..... A joyful celebration of all things summer, from lemonade stands to barefoot days.

\* *A Day at the Seashore* by Kathryn and Byron Jackson..... A sweet, classic Little Golden Book about a day spent exploring the beach.

\* *Jabari Jumps* by Gaia Cornwall..... A beautifully illustrated story about courage and trying new things, perfect for summer pool days.

\* *Ice Cream Summer* by Peter Sis..... A clever and colorful book that mixes learning and ice cream, what could be better?

\* *The Watermelon Seed* by Greg Pizzoli..... Silly and fun, this book is a big hit with preschoolers who love juicy summer snacks.

\* *Llama Llama Sand and Sun* by Anna Dewdney..... A simple, friendly board book that celebrates beach day fun with a familiar character.

### **Wishing You A Wonderful Summer!**

As we wrap up a wonderful school year, we want to thank you for sharing your amazing children with us. It has been a joy watching them grow, learn, and play together each day. We hope your summer is filled with laughter, discovery, and lots of sunshine. Whether you are traveling, exploring your backyard, or just enjoying quiet moments together, remember that every experience is a chance to learn.

Have a safe and happy summer !

~ *Ms. Connell*

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

## ***Berrybrook Parents' Association***

### **Berrybrook Parents!**

Thank you to everyone who participated in the Berrybrook Parent Association this year! With your support we continue to cultivate a strong sense of community by bringing together families and enriching our children through the special events and programs that the BPA coordinates throughout the year. Whether it was attending a Family Fun Friday, Moms Night Out, contributing to the Flower Project, Holiday Giving Tree, children's enrichment programs or the teacher lunch, the BPA couldn't have done it without you. Your support and involvement was greatly appreciated!

A big THANK YOU to all volunteer BPA officers including the classroom parents, Mrs. Watts, Mrs. Piccuito, Co-Presidents Stephanie McGarry and Emma Kender, and the Family Fun Friday coordinator, Michelle Crowley.

**BPA Officers 2025-2026:** We are looking for a new co-president and will be filling several other roles for the 25-26 school year! If you are interested in a BPA officer role or becoming a classroom parent next year, please reach out to us, Mrs. Watts or Mrs. Piccuito.

We wish you and your family a wonderful summer!

Stephanie McGarry, Emma Kender and Michelle Crowley

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

The month of June seems to come more quickly with each passing year. I always find that the busy, chaotic month of May seems to sweep me up, tousele me around and then drop me on June's doorstep. At Berrybrook it is easy to tell when we have arrived in June without even glancing at a calendar. The volume of excited voices in the classrooms have become noticeably louder and the rain filled days of early spring have made way for warm, sunny afternoons to linger a bit longer on the playground.

As my youngest prepares for his first Ice Cream Day next week, my oldest is celebrating his last days of elementary school. This all seems quite literally impossible. I could have sworn I dropped him off at school here on Winter Street just last week. Apple recently highlighted a photo memory from his first Ice Cream Day back in 2018 and I was shocked at just how similar he looked at the time, to my now 3 year old; his little voice caught on video, almost identical.

Preschoolers change and grow so much in their first five years of life. The round baby-faced, wobbly toddler I dropped off in September as a Beginner has sprouted up into a much more coordinated and opinionated little boy. One who has cultivated friendships, discovered new interests, developed independence and expanded his vocabulary exponentially. As my older children have grown I have found it harder to see such noticeable change each year, that is until an old photograph or memory book pops up to pull at my parental heartstrings.

Somewhere along the way my oldest traded his trucks and trains for sports, friends and other interests. Despite this normal progression of childhood, certain deeper rooted qualities have remained steadfast; his empathetic heart, his willingness and desire to include all friends treating them with kindness and respect, his calm approach to trying new things, his curious mind always full of questions. It was these qualities that were truly ingrained in him during his time at Berrybrook, so patiently encouraged day after day by his teachers. Their unwavering dedication to meet the needs of each individual child has for years allowed children to thrive and feel confident not only at Berrybrook, but into elementary school and for years beyond.

As my youngest wraps up his first year here at Berrybrook I can already see the beginnings of his own little road map forming. I hear the Berrybrook teachers' voices in the words he uses as he interacts with friends and siblings. I feel his joy and curiosity as he explores the world around him. I share his pride as he accomplishes new challenges and displays his many creations. Regardless of how many years have passed, one thing has remained exactly the same for all of my children; each milestone is best shared with friends over a simple but perfect cone of ice cream. I look forward to seeing you all out there!

*Emily Balboni*  
Berrybrook Board of Directors



## **Berrybrook's Annual Appeal and Helen Wheeler Scholarship Fund**

Every year, the Berrybrook Board of Directors conducts an Annual Appeal to raise money for the Helen Wheeler Scholarship Fund. This year, we set a goal to raise \$5,000. Every dollar donated to the Annual Appeal reinforces our commitment to provide tuition assistance for families who wish to send a child to Berrybrook but cannot because of financial constraints. The funds also enable current families who may experience a sudden financial emergency to continue at Berrybrook.

We would like to acknowledge the generous donors to this year's Annual Appeal which has raised \$4,170 to date. We are so grateful for their financial support and their dedication to Berrybrook. Gifts to the Annual Appeal have made a lasting difference in the lives of many children and their families who are experiencing Berrybrook because of their generosity.

### **2025 Berrybrook Annual Appeal Donors**

Jeff and Lauren Allen

Kathryn Bray

Tom and Kristen Delano

Jonathan and Brittany Dellot

Joseph and Claire Gochal

Jon and Katie Hanlon

Pat Keeley

Joanne LaForest

Kevin and Deedee Lowenberg

Steve and Stephanie McGarry

Amy Meehan

Bob and Barbara Mello

Derek and Sherry Monroe

Nancy Newman

Michael O'Keefe and Rachel Ezell

Conor and Meghan Quinn

Elliot and Amanda Rizzo

Andrew Rudolph and Meredith Philbin

Keith and Stacy Watts

It's not too late to donate! Please consider a tax deductible gift to the fund that has allowed hundreds of children to experience Berrybrook when financial means may have otherwise prevented enrollment at our amazing school.



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